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THE STRUCTURAL AND SYMBOLIC SCHEME OF EDWARD FITZGERALD'S RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

by
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Abstract

THE STRUCTURAL AND SYMBOLIC SCHEME OF EDWARD FITZGERALD'S RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

By Donald Alireza Shojai

This study attempts to show that FitzGerald's major innovation, in translating the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, was to create out of the poems in Persian a single "poem" in English. First, he remolded the "rubāi," a two-line poem with four divisions, into the stanzaic quatrain. Second, setting aside the "dīvān" arrangement of the original, whereby the Persian poems succeed each other according to alphabetic rhyme (in FitzGerald's words, "a strange succession of Grave and Gay"), he strung the English verses together "into something of an Eclogue." Third, he conceived of a thematic development for his "poem," whereby the narrator, an old man, tries in vain "to unshackle his Steps from Destiny, and to catch some authentic Glimpse of To-morrow," only to fall back on "To-day" as the only ground he had to stand upon, "however momentarily slipping from under his Feet." This progression, in turn, is reflected in the passage of Time, which functions in the "poem" not only as a motif, but as an integral part of the framework as well: the period covered corresponding simultaneously with the passing of a day, beginning with Dawn and ending with Night, and to the cycle of a year, beginning with the joyous Now Ruz, the Persian New Year which falls on the first day of spring, and concluding with Ramadan, the month of fasting when spirits are low. Fourth, not

only did he set aside the mystical utterances which appear in the original, but he conceived of the "poem" (especially in the later editions, which appeared after the publication of the versions by J. B. Nicolas) as an attack on the Sufi point of view.

FitzGerald's conception of a "scheme" for his "poem," however, extended beyond these structural considerations. Examining the opening section of the Rubaiyat, it is shown that he had in mind a symbolic framework as well, whereby he could retain, omit, or elaborate on the imagery in the original: his aim being, again, to synthesize a series of disconnected poetic statements. Accordingly, he dispensed with the love imagery in the "day poem," fashioned the "spring song" into an expression of lament, and created out of the satirical, blasphemous, and devotional utterances of Khayyam an argument exposing the dilemma of man, who is pitted against the forces of nature and fate, who acknowledges his own weakness and fallibility, but who cannot bring himself to acknowledge another set of circumstances.

The study is comprised of five chapters: the introductory chapter providing an account of the critical reception of the Rubaiyat in England and the United States; the second giving a concise account of FitzGerald's Persian studies from the time he met Edward Byles Cowell, his instructor in Persian, in 1845 until the publication of the Rubaiyat in 1859; and the third presenting FitzGerald's views on translation, emanating from his work on Calderon Jami and Attar. The fourth and fifth chapters deal with the specifics of FitzGerald's translation of the Rubaiyat: namely, the structural and symbolic scheme of the work.

PREFACE

My work on FitzGerald began in January, 1965, when I was attending Professor Arthur J. Carr's seminar on romanticism at the University of Michigan. I was hoping at the time to write an essay on the nature of the symbolism in the Rubaiyat. I found, however, that before this could be properly done, it would be necessary to examine the structure of the work. The project at that point became more complicated than I had anticipated. I put aside the study on symbolism and concentrated on structure. By April I had completed at least one portion of my examination of the structure, and had arrived at some definite views concerning the composition of the Rubaiyat. These views were presented in a paper delivered at the 1966 meeting of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters. The paper, titled "The Structure of FitzGerald's Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam," was subsequently printed in Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters, LII, 1967.

The present study is an extension of my previous work, and was carried out under the supervision of Professor Radcliffe Squires. The study is comprised of five chapters: the introductory chapter providing an account of the critical reception of the Rubaiyat in England and the United States; the second giving a concise account of FitzGerald's Persian studies from the time he met Edward Byles Cowell, his teacher, in 1845 until the publication of the Rubaiyat in 1859; and the third presenting FitzGerald's views on translation, emanating from his work on Calderon, Jāmī and Attār. The

fourth and fifth chapters deal with the specifics of FitzGerald's translation of the Rubaiyat: namely, the structural and symbolic scheme of the work.

I am exceedingly grateful, first, to Professor Squires for his careful and sympathetic reading of my work and for his guidance, which has been invaluable, and likewise to Professor Donald Hill for reading the work in its parts. I am also much obliged to Professor Kenneth Luther for his advice pertaining to Persian studies and for leading me to some important source material, and to Professor Gernot Windfuhr for instructing me in the reading of the Persian "rubāi" and directing my attention to his extremely instructive essay, "Die Struktur eines Robai," which is to be published soon. Finally, my fond thanks to Professor Reza-zadeh Shafagh, my first mentor in Persian literature; to Professor A. M. Terhune for his correspondence and Life of Edward FitzGerald, and to Professor A. J. Arberry for his encouragement of this study and his monumental work in Persian literature, without which this study would never have gotten under way.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE CRITICAL RECEPTION OF THE RUBAIYAT

There are two particularly useful and comprehensive accounts of the critical reception of the Rubaiyat. The first appears in the introduction to the variorum edition of the Rubaiyat, edited by Nathan Haskell Dole and published in 1898, the appendices to which also contain excerpts from a number of critical essays and reviews arranged in chronological order. The second is Sol Gittleman's unpublished doctoral dissertation, "The Reception of Edward FitzGerald's Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam in England and in Germany," accepted at the University of Michigan in 1960. Other, less exhaustive accounts are given in FitzGerald biographies by A. C. Benson and A. M. Terhune, and in the introductions to editions of the Rubaiyat by Edward Heron-Allen and A. J. Arberry, and the centennial edition edited by Carl J. Weber.

The purpose of this chapter, in view of these sources, is not to present the material which has already been adequately covered, but to provide a summary of the critical reaction to FitzGerald's translation, and in the process to draw a distinction between what one might regard as the "initial" response to the work as a "poem" (the response of those English and American literary figures of FitzGerald's time who read the work in translation only) and the later response to the work as a "translation" (the response of

scholars of oriental literature who, having been introduced to Khayyam by FitzGerald, evaluated the work by comparing it with the original).

"Few books," Terhune writes, in his Life of Edward FitzGerald, "have so dramatic a history as has FitzGerald's Rubaiyat"; few "have so narrowly escaped oblivion and yet survived; none have so nearly perished, finally to achieve so great a triumph."[1] Of the 250 copies of the Rubaiyat FitzGerald printed at his own expense, FitzGerald placed all but forty on sale at Quaritch's bookstore on Castle Street (he kept the forty for his own distribution). For almost two years the copies remained on Quaritch's shelves. Finally, as Terhune points out, "the pamphlets were dumped into the bargain box outside the door of 15 Picadilly, to which the dealer had moved from Castle Street; and the poem seemed doomed to vanish ignominiously."[2]

Early in 1861, however, a member of the editorial board of the Saturday Review (Whitley Stokes, according to both Dole and Weber) stopped by Quartich's remainder box and bought a copy for the celebrated price of a penny.[3] The "poem" apparently did not merit any kind of mention in the magazine, but its circulation from hand to hand was now begun. Stokes (again according to the accounts of Dole and Weber) showed the book to Dante Gabriel Rosetti, who spoke of it to Algernon Swinburne, and the two bought copies for themselves. "The unprecedented demand," Terhune adds, "caused the price to soar. 'Next day,' Swinburne told Lady Burne-Jones several years later, 'when we were returned for more, the price was raised, to the iniquitous and exorbitant sum of twopence.'"[4]

R. L. Megroz writes that Rossetti ("whose extraordinarily acute perception--stimulated always by temperamental predilection--[anticipated] critical respect for neglected work") "sang" the Rubaiyat's "praises until the mighty 'boom' which overtook it was in its birth-throes of eclectic appreciation."[5] Despite Rossetti's enthusiastic verbal response, however, no mention is made of the "poem" in any of his works or in the Family Letters collected by William Rossetti. Rossetti did not know who had written the "poem" until 1875, when the well-guarded secret was finally made public and a certain "Rev. Edward FitzGerald" was acknowledged to be the translator of the Rubaiyat.

Until then FitzGerald, to Rossetti, was merely "the finest" translator of Calderon into English;[6] he was "that wonderful creature" whose version of Salaman he had recommended as a "masterpiece" to friends such as Theodore Watts-Dunton and J. L. Garnett.[7] It is somewhat odd, in fact, judging from Rossetti's favorable reactions to FitzGerald as a poet-translator and to the Rubaiyat as a poem-translation, that his "extraordinarily acute" critical perception did not automatically link the two together.

Swinburne's ebullient response to the Rubaiyat is described by Harold Nicolson: "Waving the book above his flaming head he fluttered into Meredith's cottage at Copsham, and that afternoon with the music of the quatrains in his brain, he wrote the 'Laus Veneris' while dancing like a scarlet leaf on Copsham Mound."[8] Meredith gives another account of the incident in his letter to the London Times, dated April 15, 1909:

> It happened that he [Swinburne] was expected one day on a visit to me [at Copsham], and he being rather late I went along the road to meet him. At last he appeared, waving the white

> sheet of what seemed to be a pamphlet. He greeted me with a triumphant shout of a stanza new to my ears. This was Fitz-Gerald's Omar Khayyam, and we lay on a heathery knoll beside my cottage reading a stanza alternately, indifferent to the dinner-bell, until a prolonged summons reminded us of appetite. After dinner we took to the paper-covered treasure again.[9]

It was not until 1875, some fourteen years later, however, that Swinburne recorded his views on the Rubaiyat. In a footnote to his essay on "Matthew Arnold's New Poems" in Essays and Studies, he compared FitzGerald's "poem" with the version by Nicolas:

> Far better than in the long literal version of Omar Khayyām which is all that the French language can show, may the soul and spirit of his thoughts be tasted in that most exquisite English translation, sovereignly faultless in form and colour of verse, which gives to those ignorant of the East a relish of the treasure and a delight in the beauty of its wisdom.[10]

Later, in his essay on "Social Verse" in Studies in Prose and Poetry (1894), he added that FitzGerald's "daring genius" had given Khayyam "a place for ever among the greatest of English poets":

> the very best of his exquisite poetry, the strongest and serenest wisdom, the sanest and most serious irony, the most piercing and the profoundest radiance of his gentle and sublime philosophy, belong as much or more to Suffolk than to Shiraz.[11]

After showing the "poem" to George Meredith and then to William Morris, Swinburne gave a copy to Edward Burne-Junes, who in turn gave it to John Ruskin. Ruskin was immediately taken with the work and wrote a congratulatory note, dated September 2, 1863, "To The Translator of Omar Khayyam." The note reads as follows:

> My dear and very dear Sir,
>
> I do not know in the least who you are, but I do with all my soul pray you to find and translate some more of Omar Khayyam for us: I never did--till this day--read anything so glorious, to my mind as this poem--(10th. 11th. 12th. pages if one were to choose)--and that, and this, is all I can say about it--More--more--please more--and that I am ever gratefully and respectfully yours.
>
> J. Ruskin.[12]

The note passed through the hands of a number of people--including Charles Eliot Norton (who had brought the "poem" to the attention of James Russell Lowell and Ralph Waldo Emerson)[13] and Thomas Carlyle--and crossed the Atlantic twice before reaching FitzGerald ten years later.[14] By then the Rubaiyat had already run through two more editions--due largely to the volume of sales in the United States--and was gaining public attention through reviews.

It is significant to note, almost by way of contrast to the enthusiastic manner in which Rossetti and his circle received the "poem," the curiously mild, if not detached and belated responses of those literary figures who were closest to FitzGerald: i.e. those of his own generation. It was not until 1867--six years after the famous "discovery"--that Tennyson acknowledged his "admiration of the Rubaiyat" in a letter to FitzGerald written by his wife.[15] Fitz-Gerald's reaction is expressed in his correspondence with Cowell:

> To think of Alfred's approving of my old Omar! I should never have thought he even knew of it. Certainly I should never have sent it to him, always supposing that he would not approve anything but a literal Prose translation--unless from such hands as can do original work and therefore do not translate other People's![16]

In 1873, while walking with Carlyle, Norton mentioned his admiration for the Rubaiyat; Carlyle had never heard of it.[17] And in 1863

"Old Thack"[18] died without knowing about either a Rubaiyat or an Omar.

Apparently the only "friends" who were aware of the work's existence around the time of its publication, according to Terhune, were Cowell, William Donne, and "that omnivorous student of languages," George Borrow:[19] all three were linguists and scholars.

At a much later date, Tennyson thought he detected some lines in the Rubaiyat which FitzGerald had "copied" from his "Gardener's Daughter."[20] The lines in Tennyson's poem were:

> The summer pilot of an empty heart
> Unto the shores of nothing.

And FitzGerald's alleged "copy" was:

> The stars are setting, and the caravan
> Starts for the dawn of nothing! O make haste!

When the matter was brought to FitzGerald's attention, he stormed back at Tennyson in a letter to his wife:

> I! I! crib from the "Gardener," which the paltry poet charges me with! Oh, Dem!. But really, I should like to hear what this Paltry-Innuendo-maker alludes to: if it be any gloss of mine on "Omar," very little doubt it came from some of those paltry poems: but if it should be Omar, not even the spite of a poet inferior to Browning can accuse the old Persian of theft. I should like to find that the so-called poet had jumped at one thought. So do tell me what rankles in poor Alfred's mind, and I will relieve him at once.[21]

In 1883 (the year of FitzGerald's death), however, Tennyson made public his tribute to the Rubaiyat in the preface to "Tiresias," dedicated "To E. FitzGerald":

Who reads your golden Eastern lay,
Than which I know no version done
In English more divinely well;
A planet equal to the sun
Which cast it, that large infidel
Your Omar; and your Omar drew
Full-handed plaudits from our best
In modern letters, and from two
Old friends outvaluing all the rest.[22]

The first review of the Rubaiyat appeared a year after the publication of the second edition of the "poem" in the October, 1869, number of the North American Review. The reviewer, Charles Eliot Norton, compared FitzGerald's version with that of Nicolas, which had been brought out in 1867. Commenting on the "dry version of M. Nicolas," Norton wrote: "In a literal translation much of the charm of the original must be lost, and much of its spirit evaporates."[23] FitzGerald's version, on the other hand, struck him as being (as Dole puts it) "a perfect paraphrase":[24]

> There is hardly to be found a more admirable example of the most skilful poetic rendering of remote foreign poetry than this work of an anonymous author affords. It has all the merit of a remarkable production, and its excellence is the highest testimony that could be given, to the essential impressiveness and worth of the persian poet. It is the work of a poet inspired by the work of a poet; not a copy, but a reproduction, not a translation, but the redelivery of a poetic inspiration.[25]

Norton perceptively touched upon several major distinctions between the "poem" in English and the poems in the original:

> The sequence of the Persian quatrains, depending on the rhyme and not the contents of the verse, admits of no progressive development of feeling and no logical continuity of thought. The poet is compelled by his form into sententiousness, into gnomic sayings, into discontinuous flashes of emotion, and finds himself obliged to recur often to the same idea, in order to present it

> under a new image or in a different aspect. The English Omar has not troubled himself to follow this peculiarity of his model. He has strung his quatrains together in an order which, if it fail to unite them all in a continuous and regularly developed whole, into a poem formed of the union of the separate stanzas, does at least so bind together many of them that the various portions seem like fragments of an Oriental eclogue. Moreover, a minor key of sadness, of refined melancholy, seems to recur in the English composition more frequently than in the Persian. The sentiment of the original Omar is often reenforced by the English, is expressed in stronger, tenderer, and more delicate strokes. Every now and then a note of the nineteenth century seems to mingle its tone with those of the twelfth; as if the ancient Oriental melody were reproduced on a modern European instrument. But it is very striking to see, and much more to feel, how close the thought and the sentiment of the Persian poet often are to the thought and sentiment of our own day. So that in its English dress it reads like the latest and freshest expression of the perplexity of the doubt of the generation to which we ourselves belong.[26]

Finally, Norton concluded the review by stressing the quality of the translation as a "poem":

> There is probably nothing in the mass of English translations or reproductions of the poetry of the East to be compared with this little volume in point of view as English poetry. In the strength of rhythmical structure, in force of expression, in musical modulation, and in mastery of language, the external character of the verse corresponds with the still rarer interior qualities of imagination and of spiritual discernment which it displays.[27]

The keynote of praise by Norton was taken up by Thomas W. Hinchcliff's review in the June, 1870, issue of Fraser's Magazine. "It would be difficult," Hinchcliff wrote,

> to find a more complete example of terse and vigorous English, free from all words of weakness or superfluity. The rhyme of his stanzas is admirable, and that with which the poem begins

> may be taken as a fair specimen of the pointed force with which he expresses himself.[28]

This was the first review of the Rubaiyat to appear in an English journal.

Between 1870-1875 a number of articles on the Rubaiyat were printed in the United States, but (aside from Hinchcliff's review) none appeared in Britain. One of the American periodicals, Old and New, however, had a large circulation in England; in the May, 1872, issue Reverend John Chadwick, a Unitarian minister, considered the mood of the "poem":

> It is his poetry, not his science that, makes him interesting to us. It is the poetry of an epicurean, but not of a merry one. It is too deeply interested in the problems of life, death and futurity for that. The epicureanism is a transparent mask through which we see a very sober countenance. Some one has called Ecclesiastes "the saddest of all sad books." He had never read Omar Khayyām. These verses are far sadder than Ecclesiastes. For one reason, because they are so much sweeter; for another, because they are so much more desperate; for another, because we feel behind the written word a far, far nobler spirit.[29]

After 1875 (three years after the publication of the third edition; sixteen years after the Rubaiyat's first appearance) there was a sudden increase in English reviews and articles. In February that year FitzEdward Hall, writing for "Our Monthly Gossip" column in Lippincott's Magazine, credited FitzGerald with being the translator of the Rubaiyat.[30] More significantly, in March, 1876, the Contemporary Review carried a criticism by its literary editor, H. Schütz Wilson, who had applied through Quaritch for permission to use FitzGerald's name.[31] "The translation," Wilson wrote,

> may justly be termed masterly; the preface and notes are decidedly the work of a thoughtful scholar. Mr. Fitzgerald has . . . by no means rendered the whole of Omar's poetical work. . . . He seems to have left untranslated all the amatory and sensual parts of the work, and to have devoted his attention chiefly to Omar's philosophy, and to those views of the relations of man to the Infinite which so deeply occupied that great wild heart. It is the soul's essence of Omar that Mr. Fitzgerald has delivered to us.[32]

The "soul's essence of Omar," to Wilson, was "that unconscious faith which complains to the Deity of its inability to comprehend the Divine."[33] Accordingly, rather than attempt to evaluate the translation as a "poem," Wilson focused his attention on "Omar's philosophy" as conveyed by FitzGerald:

> His was a sincere and earnest soul, profound in its dark depths, gay with sad humour upon its light surface. To him negation affords no repose; he does not rest content in it, but has to set the struggles of his soul to music, to express sorrow in song. He flies, defiantly, from the unrest of ceaseless questioning to Epicurean enjoyment; he seeks to drown doubt in the wine-cup, to stupefy mental yearning in the arms of beauty. He tries to employ his senses as allies to assist him in stilling the voice of the ever vainly searching soul. Love and wine are called in as narcotics to soothe restless attempts to solve the mystery of life and death, to read the riddle of the earth, to help him to bear the burden of this unintelligible world. His grief is that no thought, no effort of his, can pierce behind the veil. He does not deny the existence of the Divine Idea behind appearances; but he despairs because he cannot attain to any insight into thickly hidden things. Despair is commensurate with desire. He is not victor, but he never ceases to struggle and to long. He eats, drinks, and sleeps, because to-morrow he dies, and because he cannot recognize life through death. His doubts are the doubts which have perplexed so many noble thinking souls.[34]

As C. F. Prideaux points out in his Notes for a Bibliography of Edward FitzGerald, Wilson's article was one of the earliest

pronouncements of the "Omarian Cult." It propounded an "Omarian theory," he writes,

> that has been the groundwork of nearly everything that has since been written about the philosopher-poet. Mr. Wilson, like Prof. Cowell before him, compared Omar with Lucretius, but thought the Roman poet "inferior in depth, in force, in beauty, and glory of rhythm." The English translator, and not the Persian poet, is clearly indicated by the last comparison, and on this point Mr. Wilson fell into a confusion which no later exponent of the "Rubaiyat" seems able to escape.[35]

Shortly after Wilson's article appeared, a reply was published in the March 11, 1876, issue of the Spectator. Taking the opposite view, the anonymous critic insisted that FitzGerald's translation

> should . . . take rank as the poem of Revolt and Denial, the song of speculative Nihilism and cynical Sensualism, than as a poem of the stamp which the Contemporary Review claims for it,--namely, one which "denies divinely the divine." . . . Of this character, we confess we cannot find a trace in Mr. Edward Fitzgerald's magnificent translation,--a translation which confessedly selects all the finest verses of the Oriental poem, and leaves only the most sensual still under the veil of the Persian original. With something of the cynical force of Byron, and something, too, of the humourous and familiar ease of Goethe, the writer of this poem . . . expends his whole power in showing what a mockery of man is implied in irreversible laws of creation; and he accomplishes his task with all the bitterness of a defiant heart.[36]

As for "nobleness in any moral sense," the reply continued, "it seems to us as utterly absent from this fine poem, which, of course, should be judged by a Mohammedan, and not by a Christian standard."[37] The critic summed up his counterargument by bidding the reader to "turn to this far from pious poetry, the very poetry of revolt and despair, and observe with what majesty the mere

infinitude of the panorama is depicted, even on the author's assumption that the whole panorama is an illusion and a snare."[38]

In these two conflicting reactions contained in the Contemporary Review and the Spectator, Prideaux suggests, one sees that "more than seven years before FitzGerald's death the cult and anti-cult of Omar had each its prophet."[39]

The controversy, however, also gave way to another kind of critical response: by now the readers of the "poem" were attracted to the original itself, and attempts were made to evaluate Fitzgerald's version not, from Norton's standpoint, as "the work of a poet inspired by the work of a poet," but strictly as a "copy." The first important attempt to make an extended exposition of Khayyam's poetry and philosophy, as contrasted with FitzGerald's "poem on Omar," was Jessie E. Cadell's article "The True Omar Khayam," which appeared in the May, 1879, issue of Fraser's Magazine. "As very beautiful English verse," Cadell wrote,

> no one can doubt that Mr. Fitzgerald's Khayam fully deserves its fame. As a translation, we are less satisfied with it. While acknowledging that the translator has been on the whole successful in catching the sounds of the Persian lines, wonderfully so in setting thoughts and phrases from the Persian in his English verses, we contend that this is hardly enough to satisfy us in the translation of a set of epigrams. It is a poem on Omar, rather than a translation of his work, and its very faults have, to English readers, taken nothing from its charm and added much to its popularity. Its inexactness has allowed for the infusion of a modern element, which we believe to exist in the Persian only in the sense in which the deepest questions of human life are of all time. Its occasional obscurity, too, has rather helped than hindered the impression of the whole. People expect obscurity in a Persian writer of the 12th century--even like it--as it leaves dark corners which the mind can light up any way it pleases, and regard what it finds there as one of the peculiar beauties of Eastern thought. These points have

> less attraction for those who, knowing Khayam in the original, have learnt to value him for himself.[40]

Cadell went on to show by comparing her own literal translations with some of FitzGerald's quatrains, how

> in many respects Khayam contradicts preconceived notions of Oriental character. Though fond of pleasure, he was not attracted by a sensual paradies. He was not indifferent to death--he was not passive under the hand of Fate, or at all remarkable for resignation. He is a discovery, a light on the old Eastern world in its reality, which proves, as do most realities, different from what suppositions and theories would make them.[41]

The next article of this nature was H. G. Keene's "Omar Khayyam," which appeared in the November, 1887, number of Macmillan's Magazine. Like Cadell, Keene (a retired East Indiaman, familiar with Persian)[42] acknowledged the appeal of FitzGerald's translation as a "unique and beautiful poem," but as far as accuracy was concerned, it did not "in truth show the real Khayyam":

> Unquestionably among the fine things in modern English verse, these quatrains give no accurate representation of the original in any of their versions. . . . The Persian rubaiyat are by no means the coherent strain of contemplative philosophy which Fitzgerald's work affords, being rather a not too harmonious "song-circle" (as the Germans say) in which the real intention of the poet, if indeed he had one, cannot be clearly ascertained.[43]

Without intending to "shock the admirers of Mr. Fitzgerald by an attempt to compete with his poetical treatment," Keene proceeded to give a historical account of "this unparalleled figure in the usually conventional literature of the East" by interspersing his narrative with a number of original versions. These versions were,

> with one exception, taken from other quatrains than those used by Fitzgerald, and . . . offered as illustrative of the real Khayyam in his disjointed manner. Yielding to every passing impulse he will be seen to be little more than a casual writer of epigrams: the only thread running at all thoroughly through his tetrastichs being a uniformity of metre, and a plea for peace and freedom in a rough polemic age.[44]

Following Keene, C. J. Pickering wrote an article titled "'Umar of Nishapur" for the December, 1890, number of the National Review. "The brilliant paraphrase of Edward Fitzgerald," Pickering began,

> has made the name of 'Umar somewhat of a household word. As an English poem it is so nearly faultless that, for those to whom its haunting music has been a companion of years, to balance calmly its merits and defects would be no easy task. But when we compare it with the original, we are surprised to find how much of the English version is original too. And this is not all the indictment. I traduttori traditori [translators are traitors], runs the Italian proverb, and rarely could it find an apter illustration than the case in point. . . . The translator, while investing his subject with a beauty of rhythm and phrase that reminds us rather of the Laureate than of any Eastern songster, throws the sceptical side of 'Umar's genius into still darker shadow, so that the vacillating doubt and despondency of the Persian grow in his hands a paean of passionate denial and defiance.[45]

But whereas Cadell had concerned herself with reinterpreting the "Oriental character" of the themes (or "leading ideas") in the Persian poems,[46] and Keene with presenting the "outspoken heterodoxy of the [original] rubaiyat" (as opposed to the "coherent strain" in FitzGerald's paraphrase,)[47] Pickering focused his attention on the mystical element in Khayyam's poetry. He denied any kind of "philosophic kinship" between "'Umar" and Lucretius: "Whatever he was, he [Khayyam] was not an Atheist. To him as to other

Muhammadans of his time, to deny the existence of the Deity would seem to be tantamount to denying the existence of the world and of himself."[48] Quoting from an English verse translation of Nicolas' versions, Pickering pointed out that "the formalism of current orthodoxy . . . exercised the mind of 'Umar in no little degree, and accounts for much of his apparent irreverence."[49] Accordingly, he accounted for the "heterodox" quality of the Persian poems by dividing them into three broad categories--early, middle, and late:

> We may consider 'Umar's earlier compositions to have been influenced if not inspired by the prevailing fashion of the time, with its princely symposiums and feasts of reason, and not a little by the graceful wine-songs of Avicenna (d. 1037), in whom also science blossomed into poetry; as in his after days, grown wiser by the discipline of intellectual defeat, he became more and more in harmony with that profounder cast of thought and feeling which found, a few years later, so grand an exponent in Jalālu'd-dīn of Iconium [Rūmī], and an interpreter to the world in Sa'adī of Shirāz.[50]

Pickering closed his argument by examining "a few rubā'iyāt of the strictly mystical class":

> that which we would consider characteristic of his later and graver years. But between these and the rest there is no hard and fast line to be drawn; there is no sudden conversion, but a gradually growing conviction of eternal realities, not objectively merely, but as existent in the Self, the individual consciousness.[51]

Khayyam's poetry, in other words, reflected, to Pickering (despite the nature of its "heterodoxy"), the gradual emergence of the Sufi spirit.

Despite their disagreements with FitzGerald, however, all three critics were influenced, to some degree, by his translation. In formulating her views on "Khayam," Cadell not only dealt with the

same themes that cropped up in FitzGerald's version, but did so in the same order that they appeared in the Rubaiyat. In this practice, she followed the example of H. Schütz Wilson, who wrote of the structure of his article: "I have been guided, in my choice of extracts, by the principle which has actuated Mr. Fitzgerald in translating--that is, I have sought to present the passages which exemplify the heights and depths of Omar's philosophy."[52] Could she have grasped such a "schematic" view of the "rubā'iyāt" from Khayyam alone?

Keene, who objected to any "coherent" view of the "rubāiyāt" --and who declared: "In Fitzgerald . . . we are not sure whether we are reminded most of Horace or of Ecclesiastes"--looked to "Martial" as a more plausible model for comparison.[53] Likewise, his remarks on the "setting" of the original reflect a certain concern for a "cohesive" view of the poems:

> We must picture to ourselves the poet in his garden, looking out on the well-watered valley below Meshed, with vines and fruit-plots around, and a bright sky overhead assuaged by shadowy plane-trees, while streams lapsed softly through the meadow-grass. It was a retreat, yet with loopholes, for the neighbourhood of the town afforded some choice of society. Omar's hospitality was open to pleasant persons of both sexes--to all, indeed, but zealots.[54]

And despite Pickering's comments about FitzGerald taking excessive liberty in rearranging the poems--"Phrases scattered here and there throughout the Rubā'iyāt are given an emphasis and used in a sequence their author would probably have been the first to disown"[55]--he, too, formulated a structural pattern along the lines FitzGerald conceived: the only difference being that, whereas FitzGerald's "Omar" remained a Free-thinker, Pickering's ended up a Sufi.

In all three cases the critics were just as influenced by FitzGerald's treatment of the original as they were by the original itself.

Aside from the comments in English and American periodicals, there were "many articles," Dole writes, "buried from general knowledge in the volumes of the Calcutta Review and other Indian journals."[56] In 1878 Friedrich Graf von Schack brought out a German translation of 336 "rubāiyāt": "thirty or more of which," Dole adds, "seemed to have been made from the English of Fitz-Gerald."[57] After the printing of Friedrich von Bodenstedt's edition of the "rubāiyāt" in 1881, the German reviews began to appear, providing within a matter of years an "encyclopedic collection of various judgments."[58] And in 1883, with E. H. Whinfield's translation, other English versions of the "rubāiyāt" began to make their way into print.

As Terhune points out, by the time of FitzGerald's death in 1883, the Rubaiyat was "recognized as a masterpiece," but Fitz-Gerald did not "live to see . . . 'the little Craze' for the poem which swept the world."[59] This phenomenon came about in the latter part of the '80's and '90's, culminating perhaps in the rose-planting ceremony at FitzGerald's grave: whereby a cutting of a rose bush taken from Khayyam's tomb in Nishapur was grafted onto an English plant and placed at the head of the grave.[60]

By 1900 G. K. Chesterton spoke of the "Cult of Omar," and the daily newspapers were continually printing the goings-on of Omar Khayyam Clubs throughout Britain.[61] Dole expressed the degree to which the Rubaiyat had come to be identified with the spirit of the times when he wrote in 1896:

> It has been thought by some that the interest in Omar Khayyam, which is now so widespread, is only ephemeral; the contrary is true, for there is a constantly increasing number of thinkers to whom Omar's utterances appeal as the clearest expression of their own half-melancholy, half-jocular, but wholly serene and trustful views of life and of the future.[62]

There were those, of course, who regarded the "mania" as a fad, and to whom the more ludicrous aspects of the Cult were obvious. After a generation of constant acclaim for the gem-like wisdom of the East and the inescapable "romance" of how the Rubaiyat came to be put into English and made available to the public, a reaction against the work had set in. In an article titled "The Cult of Omar," written for the July, 1900, number of the Academy, an anonymous critic suggested half-seriously that:

> Some one who has a dry sense of humour and keen insight ought to write the history of the modern cult of Omar. . . . Those who desire to do this thing should dip their pens at once. Every day the inducements to the task are becoming more and more irresistible. . . . The whole story is curious, picturesque, and pathetic in high degree. Consider how the historian's mere rough notes would crackle with possibilities. . . . FitzGerald's death. Then the slow discovery. Mr. Swinburne's appreciation. Mr. Meredith's. The Whisper as a force in literature. Tennyson's "divinely well." . . . And then the noising abroad of the miracle. The first choice allusions in journalism. . . . The paragraphs on the spelling of Rubaiyat; on its accent; and, lastly, on its meaning. The slow casual awakening of the public. The evolution of the boom. the BOOM![63]

If the writer of this piece had really wanted to look for such a "history"--setting aside the need for "humour"--he would have found at least a half-dozen available. Dole's account, written around the turn of the century, for example, deals with much if not

all of the details. Even the more recent "histories" by Terhune and Arberry follow the pattern of events outlined above.

For the fact is that the story--or "romance" as it has come to be called--tells itself; the "concatenation"[64] of incidents and reactions exists--just as a document exists--both as an expression, to quote J. H. Buckley, of "the manifold developments of a changing society,"[65] and as a record of "the spirit of the times within a certain age."[66]

To summarize, then: it has been noted that the Rubaiyat was brought out and mentioned for the first time in 1859; properly speaking, then, it is a work of the '50's. Yet the "poem" did not come to be read or talked about until the '60's; for a decade it remained in private circulation among literary figures and artists in England and America. When the reviews appeared during the '70's, the work was presented to the public as a novelty in English literature, and this notion in turn gave way to the aura of mystery surrounding the "poem" and its translator. Attempts were made to evaluate the original "Omar" as well as the translation; what led to the discovery of the translator's identity, however, was not scholarship of any kind, but enterprising journalism. By the '80's and '90's, when the poet-translator was dead and the circulation of his work had exceeded all expectations, the Rubaiyat had come to be regarded as an "expression of the times."

Notes to Chapter I

[1]A. M. Terhune, The Life of Edward FitzGerald (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), p. 206.

[2]Ibid., p. 207.

[3]Carl J. Weber, ed., FitzGerald's Rubaiyat (Waterville, Maine: Colby College Press, "Centennial Edition," 1959), p. 19.

[4]Terhune, p. 208.

[5]R. L. Megroz, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (London: Faber & Gwyer, 1928), pp. 67-68.

[6]Terhune, p. 342.

[7]Megroz, p. 10.

[8]Harold Nicolson, Swinburne (London: Macmillan Co., 1928), pp. 67-68.

[9]Weber, pp. 21-22.

[10]A. C. Swinburne, Essays and Studies (London: Chatto and Windus, 1875), p. 132.

[11]A. C. Swinburne, Studies in Prose and Poetry (London: Chatto and Windus, 1894), pp. 105-6. Swinburne was mistaken in both his references: FitzGerald's home was not in Suffolk, but in the adjacent county of Norfolk, and Khayyam, of course, was from Nishapur, not Shiraz.

[12]Terhune, p. 212.

[13]Weber, p. 23.

[14]The History of the circulation of Ruskin's note is given in Terhune, pp. 208-12.

[15]Terhune, p. 290.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid., p. 211.

[18]Thackeray.

[19]Terhune, p. 207.

[20]Hallam Tennyson, Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Memoir by His Son (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1905), II, 160.

[21]Hallam Tennyson, p. 161. Letter dated 1874.

[22]Alfred Lord Tennyson, Poetical Works (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 499.

[23]C. E. Norton, "Nicolas' Quatrains de Kheyam," North American Review, CCXXV (October, 1869), 571.

[24]Nathan Haskell Dole, ed., The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, (Boston: L. C. Page & Co., 1898), Vol. I, liii.

[25]Norton, p. 575.

[26]Ibid., p. 576.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Quote taken from Dole, p. liii.

[29]John W. Chadwick, "The Poems of Omar Khayyām: Fitz-Gerald Ed. II," Old and New, V (May, 1872), 611.

[30]Terhune, p. 213.

[31]Ibid.

[32]H. Schütz Wilson, "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam," Contemporary Review, XXVII (March, 1876), 561-62.

[33]Wilson, p. 562.

[34]Wilson, pp. 562-63.

[35]C. F. Prideaux, Notes for a Bibliography of Edward Fitz-Gerald (London: Frank Hollings, 1901), p. 31.

[36]Quote taken from Dole, pp. 538-39.

[37]Quote taken from Prideaux, p. 32.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Jessie E. Cadell, "The True Omar Khayam," Fraser's Magazine, New Series, XIX (May, 1879), 654.

[41]Ibid., p. 659.

[42]Dole, p. 414.

[43]H. G. Keene, "Omar Khayyam," Macmillan's Magazine, LVII (November, 1887), 27.

[44]Ibid.

[45]C. J. Pickering, "'Umar of Nīshāpūr," National Review, XVI (December, 1890), 506.

[46]Cadell, pp. 659 and 652.

[47]Keene, p. 32.

[48]Pickering, "'Umar," p. 507.

[49]Ibid., p. 512. The underlining is my own.

[50]Ibid., pp. 512-13.

[51]Ibid., p. 517.

[52]Wilson, pp. 569-70.

[53]Keene, p. 27.

[54]Ibid., p. 29.

[55]Pickering, "'Umar," p. 506.

[56]Dole, p. lxxxi.

[57]Ibid., p. lxxvi.

[58]Ibid., p. lxxxi.

[59]Terhune, p. 213.

[60]An account of the rose-planting ceremony is given in John Glyde's Life of Edward FitzGerald (London: C. Arthur Pearson, 1900), pp. 318-20. See also Edward Clodd, "A Pilgrimage to the Grave of Edward Fitz-Gerald" (privately printed for the members of the Omar Khayyam Club, 1894).

[61]Sol Gittleman, "The Reception of Edward FitzGerald's Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam in England and in Germany" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, 1960), p. 1.

[62]Dole, p. cxxii.

[63]"The Cult of Omar," Academy, LIX (July 21, 1900), 55.

CHAPTER II

FITZGERALD'S PERSIAN STUDIES

There are two dates of particular importance in Edward FitzGerald's study of Persian literature: 1845, when he met Edward Byles Cowell, who induced him to take up Persian in the first place, and 1859, when he published The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. Between these two dates, FitzGerald completed most if not all of his work in Persian literature. After 1859 he did little more than revise what he had already written and make a few necessary changes and additions.

As a linguist and a poet-translator, FitzGerald passed through several phases of literary activity. Preceding what one might call the Persian phase is the Spanish one, during which he brought out his Six Plays of Calderon. Considerably later he turned his attention to Greek drama, making translations from Aeschylus and Sophocles. And intermittent with these periods of concentrated activity, he read Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and German, and translated fragments from Lucretius, Livy, Catullus, and Petrarch. To assume, on the basis of his versions from Jami, Attar, and Khayyam, that FitzGerald devoted a disproportionate amount of his attention to the study of Persian, is actually to emphasize only one aspect of his work as a translator.

It is not really possible to ascertain how much FitzGerald knew about Persian literature before he met Cowell. A. C. Benson

mentions in his biography that FitzGerald as a child knew "a portly old Anglo-Indian, Major Moor," who

> was always ready to walk with the boy, and would talk for the hour together about . . . his Eastern experiences. To this influence we can confidently trace FitzGerald's early . . . interest in Oriental literature.[1]

John W. Draper suggests in an article that FitzGerald may have picked up a good deal of random information about Iran from another retired Indian Army officer, Major W. B. Hockley, who tutored Cowell in Persian and later helped FitzGerald as well.[2] And A. M. Terhune points out in his definitive biography, The Life of Edward FitzGerald, that as early as 1843 FitzGerald's interest "had been caught by a bit of Persian literature . . . fourteen lines of poetry which he remembered 'versifying . . . out of a passage in one of old D'Israeli's books.'"[3]

Whatever his early knowledge of Oriental matters may have been, it is fairly evident that FitzGerald did not give them any serious thought. If anything, such matters repelled rather than attracted him.[4] On February 6, 1845, he wrote to Frederick Tennyson:

> Eliot Warburton has written an Oriental book. Ye Gods! In Shakespeare's day the nuisance was the Monsieur Travellers who had "swum in a gundello"; but now the bores are those who have smoked tschibouques with a Peshaw! Deuce take it: I say 'tis better to stick to muddy Suffolk.[5]

This attitude did not change significantly until FitzGerald was well into his study of the Persian language.

At the time of his meeting with Cowell, FitzGerald was thirty-six years old. Aside from his letters, which give detailed accounts of his movements and impressions, his literary output had

been conspicuously small. His only published work was a poem titled "The Meadows in Spring," which had appeared twice in 1831, both times anonymously: first in the April issue of Hone's Year Book, and then as a reprint in the July 9 issue of the Athenaeum.[6]

Cowell, on the other hand, was barely nineteen and already at work at what was to be his future career. He had at school, Terhune writes,

> revealed an insatiable hunger for languages, which the prescribed study of Latin, Greek, and French failed to satisfy. . . . Abandoning his formal education, he applied himself to . . . Spanish, Italian, old Norse, and various dialects, and [resumed] Sanskrit, which he had found too difficult as a schoolboy. . . . When he first met FitzGerald . . . he had already established a modest reputation as an Oriental scholar through translations from Persian poetry contributed to magazines. Admiration for Cowell's intellectual powers and indefatigable industry, no doubt, first attracted FitzGerald to him.[7]

The two read together the classics, Greek drama and history, and began, in Terhune's words,

> a prolific correspondence in which they exchanged scholarly criticisms of books they were reading. At one time they carried on what Mrs. Cowell described as "the hottest correspondence" in Latin.[8]

Presumably they touched upon Persian as well; in 1846, when Cowell sent FitzGerald some of his translations, FitzGerald was sufficiently familiar with Persian poetry to write back:

> Your Hafiz is fine: and his tavern world is a sad and just idea. . . . It would be a good work to give us some of the good things of Hafiz and the Persians; of bulbuls and ghuls we have had enough.[9]

And early in 1848 he wrote again:

> I liked your paper on the Mesnavi very much; both your criticism and your Mosaic legend. . . . Ten years ago I might have been vext to see you striding along in Sanscrit and Persian so fast; reading so much; remembering all; writing about it so well. But now I am glad to see any man do any thing well; and I know that it is my vocation to stand and wait, and know within myself whether it is done well.[10]

FitzGerald's period of standing and waiting, however, was coming to a close. Although his interest in Persian was still passive at the time and confined largely to those subjects that Cowell wrote about, he was nevertheless influenced by Cowell to take up the study of languages. In August, 1850, he informed Frederick Tennyson that he had "begun to nibble at Spanish: at their old Ballads which are fine things," and had "bounced through a play of Calderon."[11] Three years later he published Six Plays of Calderon, his first major translation.

He had also taken on three other projects. In 1849 he edited The Memoirs of Bernard Barton, a collection of poems and letters by a friend who had recently died. In 1851 he brought out Euphranor, a Dialogue on Youth, his only piece of inventive prose. And in 1852 he published Polonius, a Collection of Wise Saws and Modern Instances.

It was not until December, 1852, seven years after his first meeting with Cowell, that FitzGerald began his study of the Persian language; before then, his reading of the literature had been limited to what was available in translations. How he actually set out on his study is described by Terhune:

> FitzGerald frequently visited Oxford while Cowell was in residence at the University. He took lodgings near those of his friends [the Cowells] and spent a portion of each day in their company. . . .

> On one of these visits Cowell persuaded FitzGerald to learn Persian. "The first step was taken one wet Sunday," Cowell later told Dr. H. F. Stewart, Dean of Trinity College, Cambridge. "I suggested Persian to him and guaranteed to teach the grammar in a day. The book was Jones's Grammar, the illustrations in which are nearly all from Hafiz. Fitz-Gerald was interested in these and went on to read Hafiz closely."[12]

A Grammar of the Persian Language by Sir William Jones, first published in 1771, contained together with the illustrations from Hafiz excerpts from Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, Rumi's Masnavi, and fragments by Sadi and Ruzbahar among others.

FitzGerald went through the book somewhat lethargically at first. When he finished it some ten months later, in October, 1853, he wrote to Cowell: "I am not greatly impressed with the desire to poke out even a smatter of Persian."[13] And on December 27 he informed Frederick Tennyson: "I also amuse myself with poking out some Persian which E. Cowell would inaugurate me with: I go on with it because it is a point in common with him, and enables us to study a little together."[14]

By January, 1854, however, FitzGerald's reaction had notably changed. "This Persian," he wrote to Cowell, "is really a great Amusement to me":

> The idioms of the Language & forms of Eastern Thought are becoming more familiar to me. . . . As to Jones' Grammar, I have a sort of Love for it! Instead of such Dry as dust Scholars as usually make Grammar, how more than ever necessary is it to have men of Poetic Taste to do it, so as to make the thing as delightful as possible to learners.[15]

After finishing the Grammar, FitzGerald turned to Sadi. He had bought a copy of E. B. Eastwick's edition of the Gulistan, possibly on Jones's advice that "the first book that I would recommend

to [the learner] is the Gulistan or Bed of Roses, a work which is highly esteemed in the East."[16] He went through the book with the aid of translations by Eastwick and Ross, and a lexicon by John Richardson. On January 24 he commented to Mrs. Cowell that he was getting on "famously (as I think) with Sadi, whom I like very much"; but he qualified this remark by adding that Sadi "is just one of the Writers who can't be seen in a Translation: his merits are not strong enough to bear decanting I think."[17] He reiterated the point to Cowell in his letter of February 14:

> It is wonderful how unreadable the Translations are: & perhaps must be. The Gulistan is the Model of what a Book of Morals ought to be--so various, & picturesque. . . I have bought . . . also a little copy (or Selection) from the Bustan.[18]

FitzGerald did not spend a great deal of time on Sadi. He was having difficulty with the Arabic element in the language, and having bought three volumes of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, he proposed "to read some pure Persian. For the Arabic words seem to me the ugly ones, though perhaps needed to give muscle to the Persian."[19] He also purchased the Bakhtyar Nameh, a series of Persian tales "written in the most pure and simple style,"[20] and translated into English by Sir William Ouseley: "I dare say a stupid Book enough."[21]

During the spring of 1854 FitzGerald visited Cowell again at Oxford, and together they read Jami while Cowell was working on Hafiz. About this time FitzGerald began to make his first translation from Persian: the Salaman and Absal of Jami, which he pursued at intervals for the remainder of the year. His lexicon by now was Francis Johnson's A Dictionary of Persian, Arabic, and English, which displaced the earlier work by Richardson.[22] Later he

translated Jami's Yusuf and Zuleikha as well, using a German text to clarify difficulties.[23] This version, however, has never been published.

While he was making progress with Jami, Cowell's enthusiasm for Hafiz soon had its influence on FitzGerald. On June 8, when he was staying with Alfred Tennyson, FitzGerald wrote to Cowell:

> Tennyson & I have been trying at some Hafiz in Sir W. Jones' Poeseos. Will you correct & send back the enclosed as soon as you can--giving us the metre & sound of any words very necessary to the music--Also tell us of any Odes to be got at in the Poeseos or Elsewhere, giving us the metre. A.T. will only look at Hafiz--in whom he takes interest. . . . You would do a very good deed to send A.T. some of the 12 Odes you have Translated, written in the Roman Character (metre marked) & a literal Translation under.[24]

Later he informed Cowell that he was "about to get Hammer's Hafiz"--the German edition and translation by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, published in two volumes in 1812-13 and the best text available then.[25] Cowell replied by sending him another "capital" copy of Hafiz.[26] When Cowell's translations appeared in the September, 1854, issue of Fraser's Magazine, FitzGerald recommended them eagerly to friends. In 1855 he wrote to Thomas Carlyle:

> Please to look at the September Number of Fraser's Magazine where are some prose Translations of Hafiz by Cowell which may interest you a little. I think Cowell (as he is apt to do) gives Hafiz rather too much credit for a mystical wine-cup and Cupbearer; I mean taking him on the whole. The few odes he quotes have certainly a deep and pious feeling: such as the Man of Mirth will feel at times; none perhaps more strongly.[27]

FitzGerald subsequently added several other works to his growing library: the Pendnameh of Fariduddin Attar, edited and

translated by Silvestre de Sacy (Paris, 1819), the Vienna 1846 publication of Jami's Baharistan, edited by O. M. von Schlechta-Wssehrd, and V. Edlem von Rosenzweig-Schwannau's "folio" of Yusuf and Zuleikha.[28] He also read many books about Iran and its people:[29] among them Ouseley's Travels in Persia and Sir John Malcolm's Sketches in Persia.[30]

In January, 1855, FitzGerald completed his translation of Salaman and Absal. On February 9 he sent a copy of his "metrical Abstract" to Cowell. How much this version owed to the guidance of Cowell is evident in FitzGerald's remarks: "I have always used the English rendering I found pencilled after your dictation, as the best--the best in English as well as the safest in regard to accurate Translation."[31] In April FitzGerald submitted the version to J. W. Parker, publisher of Fraser's Magazine, "by way of a little Monument" of his studies with Cowell.[32] The publisher, FitzGerald later wrote to Cowell, "was afraid it was too long: and on showing it to his Editor, doubts if it would be of a nature to suit his Mag."[33] Parker, however, brought out Salaman and Absal in book-form the following year. The work was reviewed in the Athenaeum of August 2, 1956: "It shows," the critic wrote,

> some poetic feeling, a diligent use of the dictionary, but a very moderate acquaintance with Persian . . . mistakes are numerous. . . . As a first attempt, however, to make Jami accessible to the English reader, this little volume is deserving of commendation.[34]

The review, as A. J. Arberry points out, was "supercilious," and FitzGerald did not bother to mention it to Cowell.[35]

On July 14, 1856, the Cowells left England for India, where Cowell had been offered a position as professor of English history at the Presidency College in Calcutta. Before his departure,

however, Cowell had called FitzGerald's attention to one other work which he "discovered" while looking over a mass of uncatalogued oriental manuscripts of Sir William Ouseley in the Bodleian Library: this was a manuscript of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, later known as the Ouseley MS., containing 158 verses and dated 865 (1460-1). Cowell copied the verses and made a second transcript for Fitz-Gerald while FitzGerald was visiting him in Ipswich. On July 26, 1856, FitzGerald wrote to Alfred Tennyson:

> I have been the last Fortnight with the Cowells. We read some curious Infidel and Epicurean Tetrastichs by a Persian of the Eleventh Century--as Savage against Destiny, etc. as Manfred--but mostly of Epicurean Pathos of this kind--"Drink--for the Moon will often come round to look for us in this Garden and find us not."[36]

After a cursory examination of the text with Cowell, Fitz-Gerald put aside Khayyam and turned once again to the poets with whom he was more familiar. On January 22, 1857, he wrote to Cowell in Calcutta:

> I have read really very little except Persian since you went. . . . I have gone carefully over two thirds of Hafiz again with Dictionary and Von Hammer: and gone on with Jami [Yusuf and Zuleikha] and Nizami [Haft Paikar or The Seven Castles].[37]

The letter also mentions another text he proposed to translate:

> My great Performance all lies in the last five weeks . . . when I wrote to Napoleon Newton to ask him to lend me his MS. of Attar's Mantic uttair; and with the help of Garcin de Tassy have nearly made out about two-thirds of it. . . . I mean to make a Poetic Abstract of it.[38]

FitzGerald worked on the translation of Attar's Mantik uttair or Bird-Parliament until March, when he put it aside "so as to happen on it again one day with fresh eyes."[39] He then returned

to Hafiz and Khayyam. By the middle of March he had compiled a list of words and phrases from the Ouseley MS. of the Rubaiyat.[40] On March 20 he wrote to Cowell: "Hafiz and old Omar Khayyam ring like true Metal. The Philosophy of the Latter is, alas!, one that never fails in the World. 'To-day is ours, &c.'"[41]

In April FitzGerald struck up a brief correspondence with Garcin de Tassy. FitzGerald wrote to de Tassy to ask if there were any manuscripts of Khayyam in the libraries in Paris (the reply was apparently negative), and later sent him a copy of the one in his possession. De Tassy made use of this copy and wrote back that he would "'honourably mention' E.F.G. and E.B.C." in an article which he was preparing for the Journal Asiatique titled "Note sur les Rubâ'iyât de Omar Khaïyâm."[42]

As much as FitzGerald enjoyed reading Hafiz, however, he found his poetry too difficult to translate. "His best," he commented to Cowell,

> is untranslatable because he is the best Musician of Words. . . . I am sure that what Tennyson said . . . is true: that Hafiz is the most Eastern--or he should have said, most Persian--of the Persians. He is the best representative of their character, whether his Saki and Wine be real or mystical.[43]

The lyrics of Khayyam, on the other hand, had a more familiar quality and were easier to cope with. "Omar breathes a sort of Consolation to me!" he wrote to Cowell:

> You will think me a perfectly Aristophanic Old Man when I tell you how many of Omar I could not help running into such bad Latin. . . . I think of him and Oliver Basselin, and Anacreon; lighter Shadows among the Shades, perhaps, over which Lucretius presides so grimly.[44]

FitzGerald turned thirty-two verses into Latin altogether: all were taken from the Ouseley MS.; and these were actually his first translations from the Rubaiyat.[45]

On June 14, 1857, FitzGerald received from Cowell a second copy of a manuscript of the Rubaiyat.[46] This text, which became known as the Calcutta MS., was not dated and contained 516 tetrastichs.[47] FitzGerald began to work on it immediately. On June 23 he wrote to Cowell:

> I am looking into the Omar MS. you have sent me, and shall perhaps make some notes and enquiries as I go on. . . . I think this MS. furnishes some opportunities for one's critical faculties, and so is a good exercise for them, if one wanted such![48]

On July 1, still working on the text, he added:

> June over! A thing I think of with Omar-like sorrow. And the Roses here are blowing--and going--as abundantly as even in Persia. I am still at Geldestone, and still looking at Omar by an open window which gives over a Greener Landscape than yours.[49]

Finally, on July 14, exactly a year after his parting from the Cowells at Ipswich, he finished his "first Physiognomy of Omar, whom I decidedly prefer to any Persian I have yet seen, unless perhaps Salaman."[50] He wrote the following to Cowell:

> I have been (rather hastily) getting to an end of my first survey of the Calcutta Omar, by way of counterpart to our joint survey of the Ouseley MS. . . . I suppose we spoke of it this day year. . . . I must repeat I am sure this Calcutta is, in the same proportion with the Ouseley, by as good a hand as the Ouseley: by as good a hand, if not Omar's; which I think you seemed to doubt if it was, in one of your letters.[51]

FitzGerald closed the letter by asking Cowell to

> observe 486, of which I send a poor Sir W. Jones' sort of Parody which came into my mind walking in the Garden here; where the Rose is blowing as in Persia. . . .
>
> I long for wine! oh Saki of my Soul
> Prepare thy Song and fill the morning Bowl;
> For this first Summer month that brings the Rose
> Takes many a Sultan with it as it goes.[52]

This was FitzGerald's first attempt to put Khayyam into English verse; and it is worth nothing that he did not follow on this occation the AAXA rhyme-scheme of the original, though he had done so previously with some of the Latin versions.[53]

FitzGerald spent the next six months translating from the two texts at his disposal. In January, 1858, at Parker's suggestion, he selected thirty-five of his "less wicked" stanzas for contribution to Fraser's Magazine. He then turned his attention once again to the Mantik. By November 2 he wrote to Cowell that he had "nearly finisht a metrical Paraphrase and Epitome" of the poem:

> but you would scarce like it, and who else would? . . . As to Omar, I hear and see nothing of it in Fraser yet: and so I suppose they don't want it. I told Parker he might find it rather dangerous among his Divines: he took it however, and keeps it. I really think I shall take it back; add some Stanzas which I kept out for fear of being too strong; print fifty copies and give away; one to you, who won't like it either.[54]

The versions from the Rubaiyat remained at the editor's office almost a year before FitzGerald decided to "shame the fools" and print the verses himself.[55] What happened thereafter is explained by Terhune:

> He retrieved his manuscript, added forty quatrains, and had two hundred and fifty copies of the poem printed and bound in ordinary brown paper. Forty of them he kept; the remainder

he turned over to Bernard Quartich, a bookseller who specialized in Oriental works, to be placed on sale in his shop in Castle Street. On April 9, 1859, the following advertisement appeared in the Athenaeum and the Saturday Review:

> Just published, price 1s.
> Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, the
> Astronomer-Poet of Persia, translated into English Verse.
> B. Quartich, London, Castle Street,
> Leicester-square.

Review copies were sent at FitzGerald's request to various magazines.[56]

The poem did not receive any immediate response, and FitzGerald's disappointment is evident in his letter to Cowell of April 27:

> I sent you poor old Omar. . . . The Bird Epic might be finished at once: but "cui bono?" No one cares for such things: and there are doubtless so many better things to care about. I hardly know why I print any of these things, which nobody buys; and I scarce now see the few I give them to. But when one has done one's best, and is sure that that best is better than so many will take pains to do, though far from the best that might be done, one likes to make an end of the matter by Print.[57]

A very brief publication notice appeared in the Literary Gazette of October 1, 1859;[58] thereafter, however, no mention was made of the Rubaiyat until ten years later, when the poem was reviewed for the first time.

FitzGerald put the finishing touches to the Mantik uttair in 1861. At one time he had intended to submit his version to the Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society,[59] but he refrained from doing so because the work

> would never do to publish. For this reason; that anything like a literal Translation would be, I think, unreadable; and what I have done for amusement is not only so uniliteral, but I doubt unoriental, in its form and Expression, as would destroy the value of the original without replacing it with anything worth reading of my own.[60]

The version remained in manuscript-form until FitzGerald's death, and was brought out for the first time in W. A. Wright's Letters and Literary Remains of Edward FitzGerald in 1889.

With the completion of the Mantik, FitzGerald's study of Persian literature, for all purposes, came to an end. On December 7, 1861, he wrote to Cowell: "I scarce ever see the Persian Character now."[61] From this point on, only the later editions of Salaman and Absal and the Rubaiyat returned his attention to oriental matters.

Notes to Chapter II

[1]A. C. Benson, Edward FitzGerald (London: English Men of Letters Series, Macmillan & Company, 1905), p. 5.

[2]John W. Draper, "FitzGerald's Persian Local Color," West Virginia University Philological Papers, XIV (1963).

[3]Terhune, p. 171.

[4]Edward Heron-Allen, The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (Boston: L. C. Page & Company, 1898), p. 295.

[5]W. A. Wright, Letters and Literary Remains of Edward Fitzgerald (London: Macmillan & Company, 1889), Vol. I, 150. The title of Warburton's book was The Crest and the Crescent, or Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel (London, 1845).

[6]Terhune, p. 49.

[7]Ibid., p. 138.

[8]Ibid., p. 141.

[9]Wright, pp. 163-64. "Bulbul" in Persian means "nightingale" and "ghul" can be translated as either "flower" or "rose." The exact date of the letter is not specified.

[10]Ibid., p. 184. Letter to Cowell, January 25, 1848. The "Mesnavi" referred to is that of Jelaluddin Rumi.

[11]Quotes taken from Terhune, pp. 141-42. The play was El Magico Prodigioso.

[12]Ibid., p. 170.

[13]Ibid., p. 172. Letter to Cowell, October 7, 1853.

[14]Wright, p. 227.

[15]A. J. Arberry, FitzGerald's Salaman and Absal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), pp. 8-9. Letter to Cowell, January 5, 1854.

[16]William Jones, A Grammar of the Persian Language (London: W. & J. Richardson, 1771), p. xviii.

[17]Arberry, Salaman, p. 9. Letter to Elizabeth Cowell, January 24, 1854.

[18]Ibid., p. 10. Letter to Cowell, February 13, 1854.

[19]Ibid., p. 9. Letter to Elizabeth Cowell, January 24, 1854.

[20]A. J. Arberry, Classical Persian Literature (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958), p. 171. Quote taken from Ouseley's "Advertisement."

[21]Arberry, Salaman, p. 11. Undated letter to Cowell.

[22]A. J. Arberry, The Romance of the Rubaiyat (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1959), p. 14.

[23]Terhune, p. 172.

[24]Arberry, Salaman, pp. 11-12. The full title of Jones's book is Poeseos asiaticae commentariorum liber (Oxford, 1774).

[25]Arberry, Romance, p. 15.

[26]Arberry, Salaman, p. 12. The reference is made in FitzGerald's letter to Cowell, August 21, 1854.

[27]Wright, p. 232.

[28]Arberry, Romance, p. 15.

[29]The point is made in Terhune, p. 172. Terhune, however, does not specify the titles.

[30]Arberry, Salaman, p. 15. These works are mentioned in a letter to Cowell, 1854.

[31]Ibid., p. 17. Letter to Cowell, February 9, 1855.

[32]Ibid., p. 19. Letter to Elizabeth Cowell, 1855.

[33]Ibid. Letter to Cowell, May 2, 1855.

[34]Athenaeum, no. 1501, August 2, 1856. Quote taken from Terhune, p. 177.

[35]Arberry, Salaman, p. 31.

[36]Terhune, p. 204. Letter to Tennyson, July 26, 1856.

[37]Wright, p. 243.

[38]Ibid., pp. 243-44. The reference to de Tassy concerns his Memoire sur la poesie philosophique et religieuse chez les Persans (1856).

[39]Terhune, p. 276.

[40]Arberry, Romance, p. 16.

[41]Wright, p. 251.

[42]Ibid., p. 257. Letter to Cowell, April 22, 1857. Wright mentions in a footnote that de Tassy "scrupulously observed this injunction" in his article.

[43]Ibid., p. 251.

[44]Ibid., pp. 261-62. Letter to Cowell, June 5, 1857.

[45]A "corrected edition" of the Latin versions appears in Arberry's Romance, pp. 58-64.

[46]The MS., according to Arberry, Romance, p. 16, has since vanished, but was then available at the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

[47]Ibid., p. 48. Letter to FitzGerald from Cowell, December 20, 1856.

[48]Wright, p. 262.

[49]Ibid., p. 263.

[50]Ibid., p. 264. Letter to Cowell, July 13, 1857.

[51]Ibid. Letter to Cowell, July 14, 1857.

[52]Ibid.

[53]Arberry, Romance, p. 80.

[54]Wright, pp. 268-69. Letter to Cowell, November 2, 1858.

[55]Quote taken from Terhune, p. 206.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Arberry, Romance, 97.

[58]The point was made by Michael Wolff at the 1959 Modern Languages Association meetings in Chicago, in a paper he read titled "An Early Mention of FitzGerald's Rubaiyat."

[59]Benson, p. 95.

[60]Wright, p. 249. Letter to Cowell, March 12, 1857.

[61]Ibid., p. 281.

CHAPTER III

FITZGERALD'S METHOD OF TRANSLATION

There is nothing definite to indicate that FitzGerald began formulating his views on translation before he actually set out to do some translating himself. Communicative as he was on other matters, he was apparently silent on this one until his own initial attempts were ready for print. His first remarks on the subject appear in the preface to Six Plays of Calderon, published in July, 1853.

The original title of this work--the one specified by FitzGerald himself--was Six Dramas of Calderon, Freely Translated by Edward FitzGerald. The title was changed in later editions by FitzGerald's publishers. The original designation, however, is worth calling to attention. FitzGerald did not, as a rule, allow his name to appear on the title-page of his translations. This may be explained in part by his sensitive and modest disposition and even by his craving for privacy, as some critics have suggested (most notably Elizabeth Drew in a chapter on FitzGerald in her Literature of Gossip[1]). But then it also had to do with his views about translation. As far as his own original publications went, all of them bore his own name; there was no need for discretion here. But a translator's task was not the same as an author's: a translator, to him, was almost by nature an anonymous person; whatever changes he made or nuances he introduced, the work was always essentially

that of the author. The only reason FitzGerald allowed his name to appear on the title-page of his version of Calderon was that he wished to avoid confusion between his own translation and that of Denis Florence M'Carthy, which was brought out at the same time.

Also, in phrasing the title the way he did, FitzGerald clearly wanted to emphasize the fact that his translation was a "free" one. The preface itself, in fact, is an apology explaining why he had found it necessary to be so unliteral with "so famous a poet as Calderon."[2] He defended his position on the following grounds.

First, the plays he had selected were not necessarily those which might benefit from a rigid approach: "I must plead that I have not meddled with any of his more famous plays; not one of those on my list being mentioned with any praise."[3] The greater works required "another translator and another form of translation."[4] The ones he had chosen, on the other hand, called for some degree of licence and an exercise of critical judgment; for these were the "less famous plays" which "still seemed . . . suited to English taste, and to that form of verse in which our dramatic passion prefers to run."[5]

Second, he did not believe that an "exact translation" of Calderon would be successful; a literal version would retain

> much that . . . is still bombast to English ears . . . conceits that were a fashion of the day; or idioms that, true and intelligible to one nation, check the current of sympathy in others to which they are unfamiliar; violations of the probable, nay possible . . . repetitions of thoughts and images . . . so much, in short, that is not Calderon's own better self, but concession to private haste and public taste.[6]

FitzGerald had calculatedly avoided retaining such elements in his version. He summed up his efforts as follows:

> I have, while faithfully trying to retain what was fine and efficient, sunk, reduced, altered, and replaced, much that seemed not; simplified some perplexities, and curtailed or omitted scenes that seemed to mar the breadth of general effect, supplying such omissions by some lines of after-narrative; and in some measure have tried to compensate for the fullness of sonorous Spanish, which Saxon English at least must forgo, by a compression which has its own charm to Saxon ears.[7]

Finally, he concluded his defense by specifying his major objective in translating "so freely": "If these plays prove interesting to the English reader, I and he may be very sure that, whatever of Spain and Calderon be lost, there must be a good deal retained; and I think that he should excuse the licence of my version till some other interests him as well at less expense of fidelity."[8]

Clearly FitzGerald had formulated some definite views about translation, even though this was his first statement on the subject. As a translator he was not interested in conveying exact meanings; he was concerned with preserving only that which he thought could be preserved, which often meant cutting out certain passages from a work and compressing others--as he saw fit. Moreover, he did not relish the task of taking on works of major scope and stature, since works of that kind invariably constrained him to do too many things at once (the only possible exception to this being his version of Agamemnon, a project which took many years of pondering before he actually settled down to work on it). He preferred rather to deal with material that was relatively minor and unknown--and "suited to English taste." But perhaps the most important point of all was his insistence that the final product was to be a work in English, which necessarily involved the translator in matters of style. And since this was the case, then the ultimate criterion for

determining the value of a translation was whether or not it was "readable."

The translator's task, in this respect, lay somewhere between that of a literary critic and that of an artist: on the one hand, he had to determine the substance of his author's work; on the other, he had to search for the proper means of expressing it and thereby bring it to life. If he were faced with the choice of keeping strictly to his author's words or adhering to his spirit, then he would do better to adhere to his spirit. "Better to live Sparrow than a stuffed Eagle," FitzGerald wrote to Cowell upon completing the Rubaiyat.[9]

No doubt these views arose, in large part, from the work FitzGerald had done on the Six Plays. But then his remarks on these plays go beyond what he had to say about Calderon; they also define his broader outlook on translation. In practice FitzGerald found it extremely difficult to be literal and readable at the same time. This was always the case. After publishing the Six Plays he continued to work on a more literal version of Calderon, spurred on by the criticism he had received in the September 10, 1853, issue of the Athenaeum that his translation had been too free; but "doing it slavishly," he found, "so vulgarizes the original" that he abandoned the task.[10] Some twenty-three years later he made the same kind of remark about his Agamemnon. In 1876, when he had completed his version (or "Per-version" as he called it) of the play, he commented that a literal translation "if possible, would scarce be intelligible."[11] His intention, as he had written earlier to Cowell--when the idea of a version from Aeschylus was still brewing in his mind--had been to write "not for Scholars, but for those who are ignorant of Greek, and who (so far as I have seen)

have never been induced to learn it by any translations yet made of these Plays."[12]

Moreover, the problems he had pointed to in the preface were essentially those of a type which he had come to look upon as being relevant to his purpose; these were the problems he would encounter again. His approach to each work, in this sense, was to remain the same. How he sought to deal with these problems, on the other hand, was another matter. Each work called for its own characteristic solutions, and each provided him with a further grasp of the process of translation; so that even though his approach to translation was fairly well defined from the start of his career, his method continued to develop as he applied his principles from work to work. The result of this development was the eventual emergence of a highly polished translator, who, by the time he took up the Rubaiyat, had mastered the technique of "free" translation.

The question is: what specifically did this development of method involve?

It involved, in the first place, a consideration of "Style," a word which frequently appears, often capitalized and underlined, in FitzGerald's letters to the Cowells. FitzGerald was chronically aware of the shortcomings of weak translations. He was particularly impatient with those which kept as closely as possible to the originals, regardless of what their outcome might be in English. His answer to these was straightforward: if the English was bad, then the translation was bad. It had a lopsided effect. It showed at best that the translator had grasped the idiom of one language, but had failed to do the same with that of another; whereas, clearly, what was required of him by his reader was some sort of balance between the two.

Yet attaining such a balance was not simply a matter of turning out readable English; the translator also had to be guided by the quality of the original. He had to consider whether or not his version adequately reflected the particular merits of his author's prose or verse.

FitzGerald became somewhat more explicit on this point when he turned to Persian; for here he came upon a number of works by orientalists who had tried, in one way or another, to deal with this problem. In January, 1854, when he was attempting to read Sadi in Persian, he made the following comment about the translations he was using as aids:

> Certainly Eastwick is wretched in the Verse; & both he & Ross (I know both Versions) seem to me on a wrong tack wholly in their Style of rendering the Prose. Because it is elegant Persian they try to render it into Elegant English.[13]

His quarrel with Eastwick and Ross was basically that they had made an error in judgment: instead of fashioning their "Style" to reflect the quality of the original, they had fashioned it after their own conventional usage.

FitzGerald had not yet begun to translate from Persian himself, nor was he to do so for several months. Nevertheless, he was sufficiently familiar with the language to postulate an alternative approach. If the translator was concerned with conveying some sense of the quality of the original, then he had to conceive of his work in terms of a model. He had to detach himself from the norms of "modern" English, and express the quality he sought to convey in the manner most suited to it. FitzGerald's suggestion in the case of Sadi was that "it shd. be translated something as the Bible is translated."[14] Moreover, he proposed that the "Idiom . . . be kept

as Oriental as possible, only using the most idiomatic Saxon words to convey an Eastern Metaphor.''[15]

FitzGerald did not actually go so far as to render Sadi along these lines himself; as stated before, he found his "elegant Persian" too difficult to cope with in English. All the same, he regarded his views as tenable, and he continued to hold to them as he read further in Persian. His emphasis on the right kind of "wording" and on "Saxon," for example, was particularly strong. In 1854, when he was looking over some of Cowell's rough translations of Hafiz, he complained about the way in which a number of words--in this case "mast" ("drunk")--had been turned into English:

> As to not daring to translate such phrases as . . . "Drunk"--surely not only Milton, Taylor, & even Cowper (who wrote to suit Mrs. Unwin too) use the word--but the Bible Translators too. You don't find it, "Be not tipsy" or "intoxicated" with wine, wherein is Excess &c--Fiery Hafiz, who deals so in Wine (whether Spiritual or Bodily) must have it. The fierce Lyric is akin to the fierce Dramatic--Fancy altering Lady Macbeth's "That which hath made them Drunk hath made me bold"--one laughs at Ducis for diluting the terse Saxon "Thrift, thrift, Horatio!"--to "Economie, Economie, Horace!"--I say again, it is quite necessary in these days to plunge away out of modern Monflatherism into the real great Masters of English Thought & Language. I shd. not talk such Treason to you . . . if I did not hope you would do much more Hafiz for us.[16]

Also the Bible remained as the example to emulate. The following May he wrote to Cowell:

> I always refer back to the Bible: which Selden says is translated so strangely as no Book ever then was, keeping so close to almost unintelligible idioms both of Country and Era. Well--it is done: & has succeeded: and, whether well or ill, has

> prepared all Englishmen at least for the reception of other Oriental works under the same forms: both of words, & grammar.[17]

Furthermore, he was now

> more and more convinced of the Necessity of keeping as much as possible to the Oriental Forms, & carefully avoiding any that bring one back to Europe and the 19th Century. It is better to be orientally obscure than Europeanly clear.[18]

When Cowell completed his translation of Hafiz in the summer of 1855, he sent FitzGerald a copy. FitzGerald discerned in these versions (as he had done in those of Eastwick and Ross) a tendency on Cowell's part to lean a little too heavily on conventional "literary" mannerisms. His remarks by this time had a certain note of persistence:

> I like the Hafiz Ode you send me; though that shd. be weeded of some Idioms not only European, but Drawing room-European. All is lost if one does not keep as near as possible to the Antique and Oriental simple forms of Grammar which the Bible Translation has prepared us for--& as far as possible from aught that recalls modern Sentiment.[19]

It is somewhat odd that FitzGerald, who classified his own translations as "free" and dealt with his texts as he saw fit, was nevertheless inclined to take issue with the scholarly and methodical Cowell for making his versions "so modern: & . . . unliteral."[20]

Such, at any rate, were the views of FitzGerald the critic: i.e., the views he espoused in making critical estimates of the versions of others. When he came to translate from Persian himself, however, he was in no better position to follow his own advice. On the one hand, he wished to keep to his purpose and "rub off as little Oriental Colour as possible";[21] on the other, he found it

extremely difficult to do so along the lines he had stipulated. In working on Salaman, for example, he spoke of retaining only "the original Persian Names," using "'Shah' for 'king' . . . 'Yusuf and Suleiman' for 'Joseph and Solomon' &c.," adding that

> the Persian is not only more musical, but removes from Europe and European Prejudices and Associations. So also I think best to talk of "A Moon" rather than "A Month," and perhaps "sennight" is better than "week."[22]

But considerations of this kind, he admitted, were only "a little Matter";[23] they did not encompass his broader intentions.

What was more to the point was that, in translating from Persian himself, he had failed to preserve the Persian "Idiom" by "only using the most idiomatic Saxon words." After finishing his first draft of Salaman he wrote to Cowell: "I have also done that for which I blamed Eastwick; namely, losing the Eastern Grammar in a terser European--& English--Idiom."[24] Later he added:

> I admire what I don't practice: for my Salaman just fails in that it loses its Oriental Flavor, & takes an English, if not a Modern, Dress. But I had to choose between being readably English, or unreadably Oriental.[25]

One recalls, in connection with the last remark, his words to Cowell about the need to be "orientally obscure" rather than "Europeanly clear."

Also the model he had chosen--"the Bible Translation"--as a means of directing attention away from "modern Sentiment" had turned out to be only moderately useful; it provided him with a sense of the "wording" he required. Yet in order to render Jami into English verse he needed the use of a verse form as well; for "the very structure of the Persian Couplet . . . so often ending with

the same Word, or Two Words,"[26] was much too confining to be copied in English. The one he fixed upon--despite his earlier comment about "the Necessity of keeping as much as possible to the Oriental Forms"--was the "blank Verse" of Shakespeare and Milton: or rather the "easy road of Verse," as he called it, "easiest as unbeset with any exigencies of rhyme."[27]

The result of this combination was less effective than he had hoped: "It is still in a wrong key," he wrote, "Verse of Miltonic strain, unlike the simple Eastern."[28] And again: "There are many pretty things in it, though the blank Verse is too Miltonic for Oriental style."[29] Reconsidering his version in terms of what might have been more appropriate steps to take, he claimed: "He who could do it well, might best translate Jami in a sort of Chaucer simplicity of narration--with it's repetitions and simple form of Expression."[30]

The notion of selecting a model for the purpose of translation, in this sense, had not proved to be altogether successful. Whereas in principle the Bible struck him as being the most appropriate example to follow--having "prepared all Englishmen at least for the reception of other Oriental works"--in practice FitzGerald was much less inclined to emulate any one prototype in particular. He was concerned rather with conveying the various qualities he perceived in an original in a manner which would create a uniform impression; in order to do this he drew upon his readings from literature at large.

If one wishes to see where the consistencies lie between FitzGerald the critic and FitzGerald the translator, perhaps one ought to put aside Salaman and his comments about it altogether and turn to his later translations; for his work on Salaman was

essentially experimental in nature. The first version he made of the poem (or "idyll" as Arberry calls it) was ready for print only one year after he began his study of Persian, and when he revised it in 1879 he did so on altogether different lines--following the techniques he had come to perfect in working on the Rubaiyat.

How is it, then, one could ask, that FitzGerald carried out his intentions with such apparent ease in translating from Calderon, and yet encountered such discrepancies with Jami? One answer to this is that we do not really know what FitzGerald's intentions were in translating Calderon. All we have are his comments in his preface to the plays. Like all the comments he made in his prefaces, these came after the fact: they had more to do with the results of his labors than with his intentions. The preface to Salaman, which he "cast . . . into the Shape of a Letter" to Cowell,[31] for example, touches upon only a few of the difficulties described in his letters: the most conspicuous ones being the difficulty of trying to cope with the "Persian Couplet" in English, and "the confined Action of Persian Grammar, whose organic simplicity" seemed to him "its difficulty when applied."[32]

Another reason is that the first version of Salaman is by no means the work of one man alone: a good portion of it was written together with Cowell during the summer of 1854. As Arberry points out in the introduction to his edition of Salaman, FitzGerald was often baffled by the text he was translating and relied to a large extent on the help of his "Master."[33] Not only did he use the "English rendering . . . pencilled after [Cowell's] dictation,"[34] but he was also "indoctrinated,"[35] as he put it himself, with Cowell's desire to see the work accurately translated. "The first version," Arberry concludes, "is in the main amazingly close to the original

Persian. . . . Cowell, the exact scholar, must have been well pleased to find his advice so faithfully followed.''[36] However much FitzGerald enjoyed working with Cowell--and there is a great deal in his writings to show that this was one of the happiest periods of his life[37]--this close association must have hampered to some degree his own handling of the text.

And yet the experience he obtained in working on Salaman was extremely important to his development as a translator. What had happened, essentially, was that he had found himself in the position of making a number of concessions which he had not altogether anticipated; so that having started out with certain ruling principles in mind he ended up having to formulate others. Between his rendering of Salaman, during the latter part of 1855, and the time he began serious work on the Rubaiyat, FitzGerald abandoned each of the tenets he had advocated in his letters to the Cowells. He no longer held to the notion of keeping rigidly to oriental "Idioms" and "Forms"; rather, both form and idiom became matters of compromise between the author of one language and the translator of another. Instead of trying to convey the "obscurity" inherent in all classical Persian lyric poetry, he rejected its most characteristic element: its ties with mysticism. Finally, he put aside the choice of a model for the creation of a "Style" suited to the expression of the translation itself, rather than to the expression of the original.

This change in direction becomes more clearly apparent with the Bird-Parliament of Attar, which he undertook to translate shortly after completing Salaman.

One aspect of his method which he did not care to alter, however, was his use of "compression." He had found this device particularly helpful in his versions from Calderon. But whereas with

Calderon he had merely "sunk, reduced, altered . . . and curtailed or omitted" only those passages which "seemed to mar the breadth of general effect," with Jami his intention was nothing less than to cut the whole "into a very readable form."[38] In mentioning this matter to Cowell he said: "You brought all the Scholarship, and really the Intellect; perhaps I may have the tact to dish up the poem neatly: I mean in shape."[39] By putting the poem "in shape," of course, he meant reshaping it, as his further comments testify:

> The Poem will improve by cutting away the long & rather silly Account of Absal's Beauty: which comes too near upon that of Salaman--They both are disproportionate to the Whole Poem; but the Easterns must have their say about Eyebrow "Nūns" &c.[40]

And again after he had sent off the text of Salaman to print:

> I have cut away even more than when you [Cowell] saw it; lightened the Stories . . . cut out all the descriptions of Beauty &c. which are tedious, & are often implied; and I think advantageously condensed & retrenched the Love-making.[41]

One reason, in fact, why he had come to be attracted to Jami in the first place--rather than to Sadi or Ferdowsi, whose works impressed him as being unwieldy in scope and nature--was that Salaman had "the advantage of being shorter & compacter--a great thing in Eastern Literature."[42]

As Cowell rightly observed, FitzGerald's concern with "compression" was actually sparked by his desire to see the original in a more favorable light. "FitzGerald," he wrote to Bernard Quartich,

> disregarded being literal as long as he caught the spirit of his original. His translations are often finer than the

> original; and sometimes I am afraid he boldly improved upon it, where he thought he could do so.[43]

To Cowell, such a course of action was perhaps a little unsettling and certainly inappropriate for the purposes of scholarship. To FitzGerald, who wrote "not for Scholars," however, it was merely in keeping with his views about what the goals of a translator should be. He could not have "boldly improved upon" his texts had he maintained an entirely uncritical attitude; nor would he have felt the need to do so had he found the Persians as accomplished in their artistry as "the real great Masters" of the "North." In October, 1855, when he turned to "Schiller's Plays" for respite from Persian, for example, he noted to Cowell:

> It is something to get out of the Sweet-meat, Childish, Oriental World back to the vigorous North! But I shall still go on with a page of Persian daily, having pickt up what I have. . . .[44]

In another letter he added: "It is an amusement to take what Liberties I like with these Persians, who (as I think) are not Poets enough to frighten one from such excursions, and who really do want a little Art to shape them."[45]

In turning Jami into English, then, he had no qualms about "compacting the Narrative."[46] As long as he remained faithful to Cowell's demands of rendering the parts accurately, he could do with the "Whole" more or less as he pleased. As he stated in a letter to H. Schütz Wilson, "I have undoubtedly improved the whole by boiling it down to about a Quarter of its original size."[47]

His approach to the Bird-Parliament, in this respect, was much the same. The poem by Attar is an elaborate allegory containing between nine and ten thousand lines. FitzGerald simplified

and reduced "the Mass into something of an Artistic Shape," giving, as he wrote to Cowell, a "'bird's-eye view" of the whole.[48] "What I have done for amusement," he said, "is not only so unliteral, but I doubt unoriental, in its form and expression, as would destroy the value of the original without replacing it with anything worth reading of my own."[49]

Likewise, when he drafted his first version of the Rubaiyat, out of the 158 tetrastichs provided for him by Cowell from the Ouseley MS. and the 516 from the Calcutta MS. he "mashed together" some,[50] omitted a good many others, and finally reduced the whole to 75 quatrains. The second version (1868) was enlarged to 110 quatrains, and the third (1872) and fourth (1879) versions were shortened again to 101.

And yet "in Omar's case," he acknowledged, "it was different": unlike Jami, who told of what everybody knew "under cover of a not very skilful Allegory," Omar "sang in an acceptable way . . . of what all men feel in their hearts, but had not exprest in verse before."[51]

Moreover, as Arberry declares, he did not have Cowell to contend with:

> FitzGerald had Cowell too near him when he chose and worked on Salaman and Absal. He tried to be faithful; he tried too well to be faithful; he selected the wrong author and the wrong poem for his first essay; it was an error from which he could never recover, though he made a belated and rather half-hearted effort to do so [referring to his second version of the work]. When Cowell went to India, having schooled him in Omar for only a fortnight, what FitzGerald felt at the time to be a catastrophe proved in the issue to be the greatest of blessings. He was free at last to cast scholarship to the winds, free to write out of the fullness of his heart; spreading the wings of his genius to the fair eastern breeze of inspiration, he soared to the heights of pure poetry, and so enriched

> mankind with that most unfaithful but loveliest of translations--the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.[52]

To these remarks one can add one final point about Fitz-Gerald's development as a translator: namely, his handling of verse in English. The Persians, Oliver Elton writes in his Survey of English Literature,

> charged FitzGerald with the colour, the poignancy, and the intensity which gradually get into his verse. And he was thus impelled, we may think, to search among the English poets for a technique that should faithfully convey those qualities. He did not find it at once.[53]

His inclination at first, as mentioned before, was to put aside the "Persian Couplet" form altogether and to fashion his meter instead after the "blank Verse" of Shakespeare and Milton. When this choice of verse form proved to be unsatisfactory, he turned in the Bird-Parliament to the heroic rhymed couplet. To quote Elton again:

> We can hardly doubt of its origin. There are triplet-rhymes, and there is a cunning use of polysyllables, in themselves hardly poetical, yet raised into poetry--"integument," "irrelevant," "obliterate"--
>
> > "As Water lifted from the Deep, again
> > Falls back in individual Drops of Rain
> > Then melts into the Universal Man."
>
> But this is sheer Dryden, Dryden translating Lucretius! More than that, it has the very accent, rhythm, and speech of Omar-FitzGerald. . . . The style of the Rubaiyat is not yet clarified, but it is there. . . . For, as in the case of Chaucer, the line, which is the base of metre, is the real discovery. When discovered, it is doubled into a couplet; and each verse or "rubai" of the Rubaiyat opens with a couplet, and that couplet often has Dryden's ring.[54]

The couplet, however, was only the "foundation" of Fitz-Gerald's "discovery"; the lines in the Rubaiyat are more "freely run on and broken" than those in The Hind and the Panther:

> And the foundation is disguised by the device which above all others has lodged FitzGerald's quatrains in the general mind, and which is a modification of one found in the Persian originals, namely, the usually unrhymed third line. . . . But the internal modulations are endless, and are best studied in the successive versions of the poem.[55]

What the further results of FitzGerald's work on the Rubaiyat were, however, would entail a study of the structure he gave to his "poem."

Notes to Chapter III

[1]Elizabeth Drew, The Literature of Gossip (New York: Norton, 1964).

[2]Edward FitzGerald, The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam & Six Plays of Calderon (London: Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent, 1928), p. 45.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid., pp. 45-46.

[8]Ibid., p. 46.

[9]Arberry, Romance, p. 13. Letter to Cowell, April 27, 1859.

[10]Terhune, p. 170.

[11]Wright, III, 267.

[12]Terhune, p. 327. Letter to Cowell, 1857.

[13]Arberry, Salaman, p. 9. Letter to Elizabeth Cowell, January 24, 1854.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid., p. 14. Letter to Cowell, September 1, 1854.

[17]Ibid., p. 20. Letter to Cowell, May 7, 1855.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid., p. 21. Letter to Cowell, September 4, 1855.

[20]Ibid., p. 20. Letter to Cowell, May 7, 1855.

[21]Ibid., p. 23. Letter to Cowell, January, 1856.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid., p. 17. Letter to Cowell, February 9, 1855.

[25]Ibid., p. 21. Letter to Cowell, May 7, 1855.

[26]Wright, III, 400. Preface to Salaman and Absal.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920), Vol. IV, 116. Quote taken from context.

[29]Dole, p. xxxviii.

[30]Arberry, Salaman, p. 17. Letter to Cowell, February 9, 1855.

[31]Ibid., p. 28. Note to Cowell, undated.

[32]Wright, IV, 400.

[33]Arberry, Salaman, p. 45.

[34]Ibid., p. 17. Letter to Cowell, February 9, 1855.

[35]Ibid., p. 23. Letter to Cowell, January 3, 1856.

[36]Ibid., p. 47.

[37]One can refer, for example, to the preface to Salaman and Absal and also to his letters written between 1855-56, one of which ends: "Should I care much for it Salaman if I had not had the

pleasure of poking it out with you in the original?" Quote taken from Arberry, Salaman, p. 22.

[38]Ibid., p. 16. Letter to Cowell, January 10, 1855.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid., pp. 18-19. Letter to Cowell, 1855. The letter "Nūn" (ن) is arched, and is sometimes used in Persian poetry to describe the curve of the eyebrow.

[41]Ibid., p. 22. Letter to Cowell, January 3, 1856.

[42]Ibid., p. 16. Letter to Cowell, December 17, 1854.

[43]C. Quartich Wrentmore, ed., Letters from Edward Fitz-Gerald to Bernard Quartich (London: Bernard Quartich Ltd., 1926), p. 104. Cowell's letter to Quartich, September 5, 1887.

[44]Arberry, Salaman, pp. 21-22. Letter to Cowell, October 1, 1855.

[45]Quote taken from Dole, p. xxxvii.

[46]Arberry, Salaman, p. 17. Letter to Cowell, February 9, 1855.

[47]Dole, p. xxxviii. Letter to H. Schütz Wilson, March 1, 1882.

[48]Quotes taken from Terhune, p. 277.

[49]Ibid. Remarks taken from FitzGerald's letter to Cowell, December 1, 1862.

[50]Heron-Allen, p. xxiv. Letter to Cowell, September 3, 1858.

[51]Dole, p. xxxviii. Letter to H. Schütz Wilson, March 1, 1882.

[52]Arberry, Salaman, p. 50.

[53]Elton, p. 116.

[54]Ibid., p. 117.

[55]Ibid., pp. 117-18.

CHAPTER IV

THE STRUCTURAL SCHEME OF THE RUBAIYAT

I

The first step in trying to determine the structure of FitzGerald's Rubaiyat is to make a distinction between the Persian "rubāi" and the English quatrain. The two forms have certain features in common, but they are not identical. As Terhune points out, it is simply for convenience that the term "rubāi" is translated into English as "quatrain."[1]

The "rubāi," to begin with, is not a regularly repeated division of a poem, but a poem in itself. It is a highly compact literary form which has often been compared to the epigram and the limerick. Reuben Levy describes it in his Persian Language as being

> complete in itself both in form and content and [depending] for its effect on its theme, which may be anything at all of interest to the mind of man. Accordingly, it may be religious, eulogistic, mystical, satirical, erotic, grave, or gay.[2]

Moreover, "the simplicity of the form," Levy continues, is such that

> there is hardly a Persian versifier who has not composed ["rubāiyāt"], generally extempore, with the result that authorship is often a matter of uncertainty and conjecture. Thence arises the stock of what have been called "floating" quatrains, assigned sometimes to one person of note, sometimes to another.[3]

The basic unit of the "rubāi" (as in all Persian poetry) is the "bayt" or line, which consists of six or eight feet (or "arkān" meaning literally "supports"; the nomenclature of these "supports," as well as the reasons for them, are given by H. Blochmann in his Prosody of the Persians[4]). The "bayt" in a "rubāi" is divided into two symmetrical halves, each half known as a "misrā." Usually the last word or words in the first, second, and fourth "misrā" rhyme, resulting in an a-a-x-a rhyme scheme. Occasionally the a-a-a-a rhyme scheme is also used. Both types are found in Fitz-Gerald and Khayyam.

Thus, for example, "rubāi" 31 in the Ouseley MS. and Fitz-Gerald's translation--quatrain 53 in the first edition--both follow the a-a-x-a pattern:

z-īn pīsh neshāni būdanīhe būde-ast
paivaste alam zi nīk o bad nāsude-ast
dar rūze azal har ān che bāyast bedād
gham khordan o kūshīdane mā bihūde-ast.

and, to a lesser extent, the a-a-a-a form for the a-a-x-a:

Calcutta MS. 403

asrāre azal rā na to dānī o na man
v-īn harfe mo'ammā na to khānī o na man
hast az pase parde goft o gūye man o to
chun parde bar oftad na to mānī o na man.

32

There was a Door to which I found no Key:
There was a Veil past which I could not see:
Some little Talk awhile of ME and THEE
There seemed--and then no more of THEE and ME.

Besides he was not so much concerned with demonstrating the variety of sound structures in the "rubāi" as he was with conveying

a uniform effect in his versions. The great majority of the quatrains in all the editions of the Rubaiyat follow the a-a-x-a pattern. Out of the seventy-five quatrains in the first edition, for example, only four (10, 26, 32, and 49) keep to the a-a-a-a form; whereas in the Persian texts about a third of the "rubāiyāt" (53 out of 158 in the Ouseley MS.) are fashioned in the same manner.

The term "rhyme," however, ought to be qualified. There are two kinds of so-called "rhyme" in Persian: the "qāfiyeh," which approximates the notion of "rhyme" in English, and which Blochmann describes as "that which either must be repeated at the end of verses, or which to repeat is agreeable, provided that the repeated part, when pronounced, [does] not become in meaning independent of the preceding, but be a part of a word, or stand in the place of a part of a word";[5] and the "radīf," which is the "name given to one or more words which, without alteration are repeated at the end of all verses."[6]

Thus, of the verses given, Calcutta MS. 70 and Ouseley MS. 21 are samples of the "qāfiyeh" rhyme, and Ouseley MS. 31 and Calcutta 403 exemplify the "radīf" kind. In some cases, however, as in the latter two verses, the two rhymes are used together, with the "qāfiyeh" preceding the "radīf."[7] Both rhymes are used with equal frequency in the "rubāiyāt" of Khayyam; in the Ouseley MS., for instance, 87 of the end rhymes are "radīf" and 71 "qāfiyeh."

John Payne attempted to convey the notion of the "radīf" rhyme in his versions from Khayyam, and one of his quatrains reads as follows:

Bethink thee that soulless and bare thou
shalt go;
The veil of God's mysteries to tear thou
shalt go;
Drink wine, for thou knowest not whence thou
hast come;
Live blithe, for thou knowest not where thou
shalt go.[8]

FitzGerald, on the other hand, avoided making any such attempt, on the grounds--as he stated in his preface to Salaman--that what was "verbal Ingenuity" in Persian was unmanageable in English.

Two other conspicuous features of the "rubāi" are its meter and rhythm. There is no uniformity of meter within a group of "rubāiyāt," as is usually the case in a sequence of quatrains. Instead, as Ali Asghar Hekmat points out in his Glimpses of Persian Literature, "All rubā'īs have [their own separate] metre":[9] by which is meant that all four hemistichs in a "rubāi" are constructed along the lines of the same metrical pattern. Thus, Ouseley MS. 96, which reads as follows,

bar rūye gol az abr neqāb ast hanūz
dar tab'e delam meyle sharāb ast hanūz
dar khāb maro che jāye khāb ast hanūz
jānā mey dah ke āftāb ast hanūz,

has basically one meter (-- -- x / x -- -- x / x -- -- x / x --; or in the written form of "taqtī" or scansion: "maf'ūlu" / "mafā'īlu" / "mafā'īlu" / "fu'ūl") which is repeated four times. Another "rubāi" will have another pattern, a third another, and so on. Blochmann, quoting from Francis Gladwin's Dissertations on the Rhetoric, Prosody, and Rhyme of the Persians, lists twenty-four distinctly different metrical patterns used in the "rubāi," though perhaps more might be added.[10]

The meter which determines the structure of the "rubāi," however, is not to be confused with its rhythm which determines the way in which the poem is read. Whereas the meter is measured quantitatively according to the rules of prosody or "ārūz," the rhythm follows the inflections of the spoken language. Consequently, even though the metrical scheme of the "rubāi" is designated as being constant, its rhythm varies. The "rubāi" given above, with the metrical pattern -- -- x / x -- -- x / x -- -- x / x --, for example, could be read as follows:

```
--  -- x --  x  --  x --   x  -- --
bar ruye gol az abr neqab ast hanuz
--  --  x --x   --x  -- --   x  -- --
dar tab'e delam meyle sharab ast hanuz
--  --   x x  --  -- x --    x  -- --
dar khab maro che jaye khab ast hanuz
-- -- --  x  x  -- --  x  -- --
jana mey dah ke aftab ast hanuz.
```

Or it could be read differently, depending upon which stresses are preferred. The rhythm of the "rubāi," in this sense, is much more flexible than that of the quatrain, which is more or less fixed, arising from the beat of the foot rather than the "weight" of the inflected words.[11]

Also in connection with rhythm Arberry writes that

> it is a part of the classical theory of Islamic poetry that each verse should be independent in itself, and not require assistance from any previous or subsequent verse to complete its meaning. Therefore the "rubai" should, and in most instances does, contain two distinct or distinguishable elements; it runs from its beginning up, and falls gently down to its close; and the squib or sting, the surprise or supreme touch of beauty, comes in the second half of the second verse--the fourth line of the FitzGerald quatrain.[12]

This is an important point to keep in mind; for, as Arberry suggests, FitzGerald evidently modeled the "rise and fall" of his quatrain after the Persian original. But this does not mean that he did not take any liberty in the process. Quatrain 59 (fourth edition), for example, is clearly divided into two parts, but cannot really be said to have a "rise and fall" movement. It is only part of a statement; the effect is one of a "rise" throughout, and the "fall" does not come until the thought is completed in Quatrain 61:

59

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
  The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

60

The mighty Mahmud, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
  Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

61

Why, be this juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
  A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse--why, then, Who set it there?

The "rise and fall" technique as employed by FitzGerald, then, is not always nor necessarily limited to one quatrain alone, but can stretch over a number of them.

A final distinction between the "rubāi" and the quatrain lies in the arrangement of the verses within a collection as a whole. There is no continuity of thought in the Persian "rubāiyāt"; the verses are strewed in the alphabetical order of the "dīvān" or collected works, with the last letter of the "rhyme" word

signifying the position of the poem in the collection. FitzGerald abandoned this tradition altogether in arranging his quatrains, and constructed a sequence which was more in keeping with English practice: i.e., one involving a progression of thought and motif. In doing this, he provided the work with an organic movement which was lacking in the original.

To sum up the points mentioned so far, then, the quatrains of FitzGerald can be distinguished from the Persian "rubāiyāt" in the following ways:

1. The basic unit of the Persian poem is the "bayt" or line, whereas in English it is the foot. Hence, the sense of metrical unity in Persian is confined to the "rubāi" itself; in English, on the other hand, the meter, being more or less uniform, is extended throughout the sequence as a whole.

2. In Persian two kinds of "rhyme" are used: the kind which involves a repetition of sounds, and the kind which involves a repetition of the same word or words. Occasionally both types are combined. The end result in each of these cases is to provide the poem with a definite, emphatic, autonomous structure; whereas in English "rhyme" there is only a repetition of sounds, and although repetition of sound gives a sense of unity to a poem, it does not necessarily determine its structure.

3. In the Persian "rubāi" the rhythmic pattern is not necessarily fashioned after the meter, as is usually the case in the English quatrain. Moreover, there is a distinct "rise and fall" in the movement of the poem; whereas in the English version, although the Persian example is often closely observed, the movement occasionally varies.

4. In the Persian "rubāiyāt" the poems are so arranged as to do away with any sense of the structure outside the "rubāi"; whereas in FitzGerald's versions the arrangement of the sequence is conceived as an integral part of the structure of the quatrain itself.

The Persian "rubāi," then, is a poem with an essentially closed structure; all the movement is concentrated within the poem itself. Once a statement is made, nothing more is added or developed.

FitzGerald's quatrain, on the other hand, has an open structure; the movement derives from both internal organization and the sequence as a series. A thought does not necessarily end with the so-called "squib or sting"; the poet's mind turns over in an analytical fashion; the imagery develops; what is perhaps most striking of all, a mood is created, a consistent sense of reaction to being, which is altogether lacking in the original.

In giving his quatrains this kind of dynamic quality, FitzGerald turned whtat was originally a series of poems into a series of stanzas. This change in itself delineated the whole course of his translation.

II

FitzGerald finished the first draft of the Rubaiyat during the summer or autumn of 1857. On December 8 he had written the following in a letter to Cowell:

> You must know I had again taken up my rough sketch of a translation which, such as it is, might easily be finished. But it is in truth no translation, but only the paraphrase

> of a syllabus of the poem; quite unlike the original in style too. But it would give, I think, a fair proportionate account of the scheme of the poem. If I ever finish it, I will send it you.[13]

The fact that FitzGerald directed one of his first comments concerning his own translation at the "scheme" of the Rubaiyat is significant in itself. But what is even more relevant here is that he regarded the Rubaiyat as one "poem."

On September 3, 1858, after submitting his manuscript to Fraser's Magazine, he wrote again to Cowell:

> My translation will interest you from its form, and also in many respects in its detail, very unliteral as it is. Many quatrains are mashed together and something lost, I doubt, of Omar's simplicity, which is so much a virtue in him.[14]

It is not exactly clear whether "form" here refers to the structure of the quatrains or to the shape of the "poem." The term could conceivably apply to both. The distinction between "form" and "detail," however, is fairly explicit. It is the "detail" that is "unliteral": the wording, the "mashing together" of the "rubāiyāt," all those aspects of the translation that have to do with the quatrains. The "form," then, would appear to relate to the superstructure imposed by FitzGerald himself: the deviation from the pattern of the "dīvān," the arranging of the verses in some kind of schematic order.

A more explicit statement of the framework FitzGerald had in mind for his Rubaiyat appears in the preface to his first edition. Here he writes:

> As usual with such kind of Oriental Verse, the Rubaiyat follow one another according to Alphabetic-Rhyme--a strange succession of Grave and Gay. Those here selected are strung into something of an Eclogue.[15]

FitzGerald was constantly finding similarities between Khayyam and the Roman poets. Cowell himself took up the matter in detail in an article which appeared in the January, 1858, issue of the Calcutta Review. To what extent FitzGerald shared the views of his former instructor can be seen by comparing this article with the last few pages of FitzGerald's essay, "The Astronomer-Poet of Persia."

Both Cowell and FitzGerald emphasize the stoical-hedonism of Khayyam's poetry over the mystical element. "Omar lived in an age of poetical mysticism," Cowell writes, "but he himself was no mystic":[16]

> We find no trace of Sufeyism in his book. His roses bloom in an earthly summer, his wine is of mortal vintage; unlike all other Persian poets, everything with him is real and concrete.[17]

To which FitzGerald adds:

> He is said to have been especially hated and dreaded by the Sūfis, whose Practise he ridiculed, and whose Faith amounts to little more than his own when stript of the Mysticism and formal Compliment to Islamism which Omar would not hide under. . . . His Worldly Pleasures are what they profess to be without any Pretence at divine Allegory: his Wine is the veritable Juice of the Grape: his Tavern, where it was to be had: his Sāki, the Flesh and Blood that poured it out for him: all which, and where the Roses were in Bloom, was all he profess'd to want of this World or to expect of Paradise.[18]

Likewise both stress in their arguments the historical differences between the eleventh-century poetic tradition of Khayyam and the fourteenth-century tradition of Hafiz; and finally, in attempting to see Khayyam in broader terms, both look upon Lucretius as a favorite object of comparison. To Cowell, Khayyam's skepticism belonged "to a similar phase of mental history with that of

Lucretius. He lived in an age of religious darkness, and the very men around him who most felt their wants and misery had no power to satisfy or remove them":[19]

> In too many of his poems we find a settled gloom, which stands in striking contrast to the assumed carelessness. Omar is ill at ease within, and his internal discord reflects itself in an angry defiance of the world and its opinions and beliefs. Like the Roman Lucretius, his very science leads him astray; he has learned enough to unsettle his ancient instincts, but not enough to rebuild them on a surer basis.[20]

To FitzGerald:

> Both indeed were men of subtle Intellect and high Imagination, instructed in Learning beyond their day, and of Hearts passionate for Truth and Justice; who justly revolted from their Country's false Religion, and false, or foolish, Devotion to it; but who yet fell short of replacing what they subverted by any such better Hope as others, upon whom no better Faith had dawned, had yet made a Law to themselves. Lucretius, indeed, with such material as Epicurus furnished, consoled himself with the construction of a Machine that needed no Constructor, and acting by a Law that implied no Lawgiver; and so composing himself into a Stoical rather than Epicurean severity of Attitude, sat down to contemplate the mechanical Drama of the Universe of which he was part Actor. . . . Omar, more desperate, or more careless, of any such laborious System as resulted in nothing more than hopeless Necessity, flung his own Genius and Learning with a bitter jest into the general Ruin which their insufficient glimpses only served to reveal; and, yielding his Senses to the actual Rose and Vine, only diverted his thoughts by balancing ideal possibilities of Fate, Freewill, Existence and Annihilation; with an oscillation that . . . . generally inclined to the negative and lower side . . . of his general Philosophy.[21]

The choice of a particular framework for his "poem" would therefore seem to qualify, at least partially, FitzGerald's cohesive view of the "rubāiyāt." In stringing his quatrains "into something

of an Eclogue," he was correlating, in a sense, two similar but nevertheless distinct, literary impressions.

After preparing the first draft of the "poem" in English, FitzGerald, as pointed out before, translated twenty-nine of his quatrains into "monkish Latin" verse, writing to Cowell on May 7, 1857, that "Omar" made him "think of . . . Oliver Basselin, and Anacreon; lighter Shadows among the Shades, perhaps, over which Lucretius presides so grimly."[22] This desire to see Khayyam in Latin verse was no passing fancy; FitzGerald referred to the matter again in a letter to Cowell dated January 13, 1859:

> My translation has its merit, but it misses a main one in Omar, which I will leave you to find out. The Latin versions, if they were corrected into decent Latin, would be very much better.[23]

The Latin eclogue, then, provided FitzGerald with a suitable alternative to the "strange succession" of the Persian "rubāiyāt." The scene of his eclogue, however, was to remain in Persia. On November 2, 1858, he wrote again to Cowell describing his versions as being "most ingeniously tesselated into a sort of Epicurean eclogue in a Persian garden."[24]

Arberry gives an illuminating example of FitzGerald's conception of this "Persian" setting (and contingent on that, his brand of Epicureanism as well) by comparing the most famous of his verses, quatrain 12, with a literal translation of the original. Here is the quatrain as it appears in the fourth edition of the Rubaiyat:

> A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
> A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread--and Thou
> Beside me singing in the Wilderness--
> Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

And here is Arberry's literal version:

> If hand should give (i.e. if there should be at hand) of the pith of wheat a loaf,
> and of Wine two-maunder (jug), of a sheep a thigh,
> with a little sweetheart seated in a desolation,
> a pleasure it is that is not the attainment of any sultan.[25]

The comparison reveals, according to Arberry, that the setting and sentiments in FitzGerald's quatrain are more in keeping with Victorian England than with medieval Iran:

> To begin with, Omar sets out to use commonplace, rustic images--a characteristic of the quatrain in its original form. . . . Nevertheless he is a fastidious "bucolic": his loaf must be baked of the finest wheaten flower, he will not be satisfied with the crude barley-meal of the true peasant. He asks for the thigh of a sheep, for his meat is to be succulent and tender. His companion is to be a pretty young boy (boy rather than girl for Persian poetic taste); the diminutive is used, to prevent us from imagining a strapping country bumpkin. And in order to bring home the artificiality of the situation created in the first three lines, all in pure Persian, in his concluding verse he introduces no fewer than three Arabic words, thus giving a very urbane finish to the poem. We are to observe the mention of several parts of the body . . . there are some obscene echoes in certain other words. The image of desolation . . . is required in order to balance with the picture of splendid palaces themselves destined, in Omar's philosophy of life, some day sooner rather than later to become desolations. . . . "Kingdoms" are limited by their confines, whereas the carefree lover's life which the poet seeks, in the desolation of noman's-land is boundless.
>
> Now going back to FitzGerald, it is to be remarked that Omar says nothing about a Book of Verses underneath the Bough, though a later copyist credits him with having done so. And indeed the idea would never have occurred to him; first because an educated Persian of his time would scarcely dream of taking a manuscript with him on a picnic in the desert

> having by heart enough poetry to suffice him for many picnics, and secondly for the simple reason that in a Persian wilderness there are not apt to be any trees, and in any case the mention of green shady boughs will chime ill with the austere note struck by the reference to deserted ruins. Nevertheless this was FitzGerald's compensation for omitting the third item in Omar's panier, the thigh of mutton, which naturally appeared to the English poet as a most unromantic object, totally alien to his Victorian theory of literary proprieties.[26]

John W. Draper does not concur with Arberry's views. In his essay, "FitzGerald's Persian Local Color," he attempts to show that, contrary to some notions, "the content and references" of FitzGerald's translations are "truly Oriental."[27] Thus, for example, he agrees with Arberry that the "strip of Herbage" in quatrain 11 and the "Bough" in 12 are FitzGerald's additions; but these additions, he claims, "show a very catholic interest in Iran."[28] "Irrigated Iran," he writes, "even in the midst of the desert often does have poplars, sycamores and the like, planted to shade the water channels and forestall evaporation."[29] Also, according to two of his literary friends in Tehran, "an educated Persian might well take a book of poems to an 'al fresco' collation, perhaps a copy of Hafiz to foretell the future of each guest by a 'fal' or lot, just as the Romans used the 'sortes Virgilianae.'"[30] He concedes, on the other hand, that the "Loaf," as a Victorian would understand the term, "is a most unhappy choice of diction; for traditional Persian bread comes in thin yellow sheets about a foot wide and some two feet long."[31]

Unfortunately, Draper bases his argument on the statement made by FitzGerald in his letter to Cowell dated May 7, 1855, that in translating from Persian it is better to be "orientally obscure than Europeanly clear." The remark could not have applied to the

"rubāiyāt," since FitzGerald did not see the work until the summer of 1856. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the statement was made in connection with Cowell's translations of the odes of Hafiz, which Cowell had sent him. FitzGerald was actually referring to the difficulty involved in conveying the mystical quality of the Sufi ode in English. He never translated Hafiz himself. Moreover--also mentioned before--the statement was one which he later retracted.

Another objection to this line of conjecture is that Draper does not adequately show where FitzGerald could have obtained his knowledge of Persian local color. At the time FitzGerald began to work on the Rubaiyat, he had only been studying Persian for four years. The only suggestion Draper makes is that FitzGerald "could have had this added material by word of mouth from someone who was conveniently at hand": that "someone" possibly being Major Hockley (1790-1878), who had come to know FitzGerald after retiring from service in India.[32]

Now, regardless of how one chooses to deal with the setting in the Rubaiyat, one thing is evident from FitzGerald's remarks and from the "poem" as a reflection of a model: the landscape is drawn to a large extent from literature. To be sure, the "thigh of mutton" does not crop up very often in Victorian poetry; but neither does it in the eclogue in general. The sheep in Virgil's pastorals, for example, are left to graze in the background; but they are not there to be eaten.

The setting, in fact, provides at least as many allusions to classical sources as it does to the Victorian view of poetic composition. Quatrain 11 (fourth edition) finds FitzGerald's Khayyam wandering along

> the strip of Herbage strewn
> That just divides the desert from the sown.

In quatrain 12 he comes to rest "underneath the Bough." The situation itself parallels the ones in Virgil's Eclogues (Meliboeus loafing "in the shade," say, or Menalcus sitting "where the elm twig scrapes on hazel shoot")[33] rather than, as Arberry rightly points out, "the desolation of noman's-land" in the original. Even though the "Book of Verses" does not appear in the Persian, the eclogue provides the poet with his "ready flute";[34] the effects of the two, insofar as they are both accompaniments to poetic expression, are ultimately the same. Likewise, the running brook in quatrain 20 is in keeping with the flowing waters, the "shade and coolness" of the Latin poems. When the poet pauses at a spot such as this, he senses an immediate rapport with nature. Thus in Eclogue II:

> There underneath their branches spreading
> wide,
> Knowing not what to hope for, he would sing
> These artless songs to woods and mountains
> listening.[35]

And in quatrain 20:

> And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
> Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean--
> Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
> From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

The two natures here, of course, have different attributes: in the Latin poem nature is a still, remote, ideal and "listening" world; in FitzGerald's version, on the other hand, it is an active participant in the poet's consciousness: it does not "talk" to the poet in the sense that he talks to himself, but it conveys to him a perception of the living dead. The pattern is reflected throughout the Rubaiyat; "communion with nature" brings with it a sense of

both knowing and not knowing, and the language of perception is symbolism.

Granted, then, that there are aspects in the Rubaiyat that relate to Victorian tastes and possibly even "local color" as Draper puts it, granted also that a deeper perspective is suggested in allusions to classical sources; the point is, these are not loose ends in themselves, but tend towards the making of a definite structure.

The preface to the first edition contains another remark concerning the structure of the "poem." The quatrains, FitzGerald writes, are "strung"

> with perhaps a less than equal proportion of "Drink and make-merry," which (genuine or not) recurs over-frequently in the Original. Either way, the Result is sad enough: saddest perhaps when most ostentaciously merry: more apt to move Sorrow than Anger toward the old Tentmaker [the literal translation of "Khayyam"] . . . who, after vainly endeavouring to unshackle his Steps from Destiny, and to catch some authentic Glimpse of To-morrow, fell back on To-day (which has outlasted so many To-morrows!) as the only Ground he got to stand upon, however momentarily slipping from under his Feet.[36]

This is perhaps as concise a statement as FitzGerald made on the thematic development of his "poem." The mood is predominantly a "sad" one ("far sadder" than the "saddest book of all," according to the Rev. John W. Chadwick, who reviewed the versions in the May, 1872, number of Old and New).[37] The plot, if one can call it that, is that of an old man considering the various "Steps of his Destiny." Each "Step" becomes, in a sense, a withdrawal from life; each argument is met with a silence. He responds to the silence with a call for "Wine"; but when "Wine" can no longer

alleviate his misery, he falls back on the futility of all existence in face of Death.

Masud Farzad summarizes this progression as follows:

> The sun rises and the tavern opens. Khayyam is sober and pensive, but gradually as he drinks wine he sinks deeper into the sea of thought. He is moved by the transience of life, by the inability of the human mind to solve the mysteries of existence, and by many other hardships and miseries. He becomes agitated and rebellious and proceeds to give vent to his thoughts and feelings. Then he is overcome by drink, and when night falls and the moon appears Khayyam is submerged in an ocean of grief, and at the end of the poem is engaged in drawing up his will.[38]

The thematic development, in turn, is reflected in the sequence of Time. The passing of Time is not simply a recurring motif; it functions as part of the framework as well. As Farzad points out, the "poem" begins with Dawn and ends with Night; but also the period covered corresponds to the cycle of a year, starting with the joyous Now Rūz, the Persian New Year which falls on the first day of spring, and concluding with Ramadān, the month of fasting when spirits are low.

How FitzGerald approached his source material to create such a version is a separate issue in itself, and one which Edward Heron-Allen has pursued with great zeal, having spent some twelve years on the project. Aside from the Bodleian codex (the Ouseley MS.) and the Calcutta transcript, Heron-Allen claims, there were at least seven other sources which contributed heavily to the composition of the Rubaiyat. These were:

(i) The Odes of Hāfiz, translated by Professor Cowell in 1846, and published in 1854, and later, the Calcutta text.
(ii) Sir William Jones's Grammar of the Persian Language.
(iii) The Gulistān of Sa'adi.

(iv) The Salāmān and Absāl of Jāmī.
(v) The Mantik-ut-Tair of Attār.
(vi) Binning's Journal [from which FitzGerald drew largely for his notes]; and
(vii) Nicolas's Translations and Text.[39]

In his essay, "Some Sidelights upon Edward FitzGerald's Poem," which was first delivered as a lecture in 1898, Heron-Allen finds significant parallels between the quatrains and each of the sources mentioned above. His conclusion is that FitzGerald's Rubaiyat is not only a "remarkable paraphrase" of the Persian original, but also a "synthetic result of our poet's entire course of Persian studies."[40]

Another approach to the structure of the Rubaiyat lies in the comparison of the various editions themselves. However organized or "tesselated" the first edition may appear (and the quotes from FitzGerald have been directed so far at the original versions), the later editions are more polished as "poems." Not only did Fitz-Gerald clear up the roughness in wording as he went along, but he also turned his attention to two other features.

In the first place, by the time FitzGerald came to edit the "poem" for the fourth time (the last one before his death), he regarded himself as more of an interpolator than a translator. He hardened the "scheme" that had been less clearly suggested in the first edition, and likewise gave a more definite view to his own particular reading of Khayyam.

In 1867 J. B. Nicolas, who had served as Permier Drogman, or Chief Interpreter, at the French Embassy in Iran, and who later became the French Consul at Resht, brought out a French prose version of the "rubāiyāt" containing 464 entries. According to

Nathan Haskell Dole, Nicolas argued eloquently in favor of the theory that Khayyam was a Sūfī, and lost no opportunity

> either in his notes or in parenthetical interpolations to emphasize his favorite doctrine that the fervid addresses to his mistress are in reality prayers to the Divinity, that the intoxication of the wine-cup, which the poet exalts into a religion, is only the hyperbolic symbol of absorption into divine contemplation.[41]

FitzGerald disagreed with this view emphatically. He wrote a reply to Nicolas' versions in the preface to his third edition, in which he stated that Nicolas had regarded the poetry of Khayyam in the same light as that of Hafiz. Khayyam, he further replied, was not only an epicurean and a "Freethinker"; he was also "a great opponent of Sufism."[42]

To stress the issue even more firmly in his own versions, he incorporated into the original framework a number of quatrains which specifically attacked the Sūfī point of view. Thus, for example, quatrains 64 through 67, which form a sort of unit in the fourth edition, are missing in the first:

64

Strange, is it not? that the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,
  Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

65

The revelations of Devout and Learn'd
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn'd,
  Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep
They told their comrades and to Sleep return'd.

66

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
  And by and by my Soul return'd to me,
And answer'd "I Myself am Heav'n and Hell:"

67

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire
  Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerg'd from, shall so soon expire.

Likewise, the wording throughout is altered to give the matter a greater degree of incisiveness. Quatrain 60 in the first edition, for instance, reads as follows:

60

And, strange to tell, among that Earthen Lot
Some could articulate, while others not:
  And suddenly one more impatient cried--
"Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

Here is the altered version in the fourth edition:

87

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot--
I think a Sufi pipkin--waxing hot--
  "All this of Pot and Potter--Tell me then,
"Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

The second feature FitzGerald turned to in his later editions was the relationship between structure and imagery: the latter providing a sort of counterpart for the former. There is a brief reference to this in his letter of March 31, 1872, to Bernard Quartich:

> Surely, several good things were added--perhaps too much of them which also gave Omar's thoughts room to turn in, as also the Day which the Poem occupies. He begins with Dawn pretty sober & contemplative: then as he thinks & drinks,

> grows blasphemous, &c, and then again sober down into melancholy nightfall. All of which wanted rather more expansion than the first Edn. gave.[43]

Another reference to the particular imagery embodied in the "poem" appears in his discussion on Hafiz and the Sūfī poets:

> I must say that I, for one, never wholly believed in the Mysticism of Hafiz. It does not appear there was any danger in holding and singing Sufi Pantheism, so long as the Poet made his Salaam to Mohammad at the beginning and end of his Song. Under such conditions Jelaluddin [Rūmī], Jami, Attar, and others sang; using Wine and Beauty indeed as Images to Illustrate, not as a Mask to hide, the Divinity they were celebrating.[44]

To FitzGerald, then, the issue was clear: whereas the Sūfī poets employ imagery to reveal "the Divinity," Khayyam uses it as "a Mask to hide." He does not set out with the mystics to project himself into a higher reality; he feels instead a tension between two opposing forces, and seeks a resolution. Consequently, even though the nature referred to earlier provides him with a sense of perception into the world of being and nonbeing, he is never transported beyond his own human condition.

The question is, is this truly the substance of Khayyam's poetry, or does this derive from the attempt on FitzGerald's part to give a "form" to his "poem?"

Between Khayyam and his "Glimpse" of the other world there exists an awful awareness of Death, so that whatever he perceives in terms of "Wine and Beauty" is likewise apprehended in terms of Mortality and Decay. This much is certainly relevant to the poet's point of view; but does this necessarily determine the quality of the "Mask" that hides "the Divinity"?

If so, then the "poem" is a much more integrated statement of the human dilemma than the Persian original. The conclusion of FitzGerald's Rubaiyat indicates the point that is reached in the pursuit of formulating a definite view. The first edition of quatrain 73 reads as follows:

> Ah Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire
> To grasp this Sorry Scheme of Things entire,
> Would not we shatter it to bits--and then
> Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

This is tantamount to asking for an entirely new set of circumstances centered around man. FitzGerald later softened this statement (and rendered the translation more accurate) by replacing "Fate" with "Him." The version of Nicolas, by comparison--not presented through any definite structure--conveys the sense of a yearning arising from contemplation rather than frustrated questioning:

> Si je possédais sur les cieux la puissance que Dieu y exerce, je les supprimerais de ce monde, et j'en construirais d'autres à ma façon, afin que l'homme libre pût ici-bas atteindre sans difficulté les désirs de son coeur.[45]

As far as methods of translation are concerned, however, it is not entirely a matter of formulating the "right" conception. FitzGerald and Nicolas had definite views on the "rubāiyāt," and these no doubt affected their versions. But then, it is also significant that two such different conceptions are clearly reflected, and without any apparent discord, in the original. The reason for this, perhaps, is the quality of ambiguity in Persian poetry. In all classical Persian lyrical verse, ambiguity itself is regarded as a characteristic of not only poetic composition, but of appreciation as well. In reading a poem, an experience is acknowledged, a lesson is learned;

but what is also important, a mystery is perceived that retains, even after attempted analysis, its hidden meaning. This point will be further discussed and illustrated in the following chapter.

In trying to interpret such poetry, there is a tendency on the part of the reader to attach different levels of meaning to a significant expression, and to regard one particular word or symbol as representing a number of ideas at the same time. As mentioned before, a series of poems does not in itself provide an organic progression; since this is the case, the wording (i.e., the symbolism) remains as ambiguous as ever, and the translator, or "interpolator" as FitzGerald would have it, is left to his own devices to arrive at a more definite impression. When FitzGerald was confronted with this dilemma, his first concern was with establishing a structure from which the rest of the details would follow. And when he proceeded to do this, regardless of what he had said to Cowell before, he made his translation "Europeanly clear" rather than "orientally obscure."

Notes to Chapter IV

[1]Terhune, p. 220.

[2]Reuben Levy, The Persian Language (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1951), p. 95.

[3]Ibid.

[4]H. Blochmann, The Prosody of the Persians (Calcutta: C. B. Lewis, Baptist Mission Press, 1872), p. 20: "The word for a verse is bait a tent, a house, a verse of a poem (shi'r) being compared to a tent of hair (sha'r). Abul 'Alā Ma'arrī, the great Arabic poet, used to say . . . 'The lustre of beauty is visible in two tents, the tent of hair and the tent of a poem.' Some find a similarity in the importance of a tent, and the reverence in which it is held, as expressed in the Arab proverb, 'Many a tent of hair is better than a tent of gold.' Thus poetry also is held in reverence. Others again say that as a house has certain shape and figure which when departed from, would change the house entirely, so has a verse also a certain shape which when departed from, causes the verse to lose its rythm. Some again say that as the veiled beauties of flesh and blood inside a house burst upon the view of a beholder, so do the veiled beauties of thought burst upon the reader from behind the screen of poetical language. Lastly, some say that as the tenant of a house feels in it homely and comfortable, so does a poet also feel happy and content when with his poem.

"As the verse of a poem is called bait a tent, the parts of a verse are compared with the various parts of which a Beduin tent consists, viz., ropes, pegs, poles and a hair blanket. Thus in Arabic 'sabab' means a rope, 'watad' a peg, 'fācilah' the pole of the tent; and a word of two consonants was called sabab (rope) because it is weaker than a word of three consonants, which is called watad (peg); a watad in its turn is weaker than a word consisting of four consonants, which is called fācilah (pole), the strongest of all. Some take 'fācilah' as expressing the partition between the two ends of a tent. Even 'fazilah' (with the 'zād') in its meaning a hair blanket used for the covering of a tent would agree with the other terms, as it signifies the most important part of a tent."

[5]Blochmann, p. 75.

[6]Ibid.

[7]But whereas the "qāfiyeh" in Calcutta MS. 403 is "perfect" in that "dānī," "khānī," and "mānī," (1) end in the same consonant [ī is a consonant in Persian]; (2) have before it the same vowel, ā; (3) have before this vowel different consonants, d, kh, m; and (4) have the same accents--Ouseley MS. 31 is "imperfect" or "gheyre ma'mūl" in that "gude," "nāsude," and "bīhude" do not meet these requirements. See Blochmann on "Rhyme."

[8]John Payne, The Quatrains of Omar Kheyyam of Nishapour (London: Villon Society, 1898).

[9]Ali Asghar Hekmat, Glimpses of Persian Literature: being a series of seven extension lectures on different aspects of Iranian thought and literature, delivered under the auspices of the Faculty of Arts, University of Delhi, during December, 1954–March, 1955 (Calcutta: Iran Society, 1956), p. 77.

[10]Blochmann, p. 68.

[11]See Blochmann, p. 4: "We measure, Orientals weigh; hence we speak of long and short, and Orientals of heavy and light syllables. We say, this poem has such and such a measure or metre, whilst Orientals fix a certain number of prosodical patterns, consisting of the root 'fa'al,' and then say, that this poem has the same weight (wazn) as such ans such a pattern."

[12]A. J. Arberry, Omar Khayyam (London: John Murray, 1952), p. 33.

[13]Heron-Allen, p. xxiii. Letter to Cowell, December 8, 1857.

[14]Ibid., p. xxiv.

[15]Edward FitzGerald, The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (New York: 1888), p. 45.

[16]Calcutta Review, XXX (January, 1858). Quoted in full by Dole, p. xxi.

[17]Dole, p. xxiii.

[18]Arberry, Romance, pp. 156, 157.

[19]Dole, p. xxvi.

[20]Ibid., p. xxv.

[21]Arberry, Romance, pp. 159-60.

[22]Wright, I, 261-62.

[23]Heron-Allen, p. xxv.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Arberry, Omar Khayyam, p. 22. The original "rubāi" reads as follows:

"gar dast dehad z-maghze gandom nānī
v-az mey do manī ze gūsfandī rānī
bā delbarakī neshaste dar vīrānī
aishī-st ke nīst hadde har soltānī."

[26]Ibid., pp. 22-23.

[27]Draper, p. 26.

[28]Ibid., p. 51.

[29]Ibid., p. 29.

[30]Ibid., p. 30.

[31]Ibid., p. 31.

[32]Ibid., p. 54.

[33]Quotes taken from L. R. Lind, Latin Poetry in Verse Translation (Boston: 1957), pp. 60, 69.

[34]Ibid., p. 69.

[35]Ibid., p. 62.

[36]FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 45.

[37]Quote taken from Arberry, Romance, p. 28. The saddest book of all being Ecclesiastes.

[38]Quote by Farzad taken from Ali Dashti, Damī bā Khayyām [A Moment with Khayyam] (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1344/1965), pp. 231-32. My own translation from Persian.

[39]Heron-Allen, p. 299.

[40]Ibid., p. 320.

[41]Dole, p. lxv.

[42]FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 48.

[43]Arberry, Romance, pp. 22-23.

[44]FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 40.

[45]Dole, p. 192.

CHAPTER V

THE SYMBOLIC SCHEME OF THE RUBAIYAT

It was pointed out in the last chapter that FitzGerald's Rubaiyat opens with an image of Dawn. To quote Farzad again: "The sun rises and the tavern opens. Khayyam is sober and pensive." A description such as this, useful though it is for the purpose of outlining the narrative element in the Rubaiyat, requires a great deal more clarification.

Here is quatrain 1 as it appears in the first edition:

> Awake! for Morning in the Bowl of Night
> Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight:
> And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
> The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light.

And here is the original verse, Calcutta MS. (hereafter designated C.) 137, followed by Arberry's literal translation:

> khorshīd kamande sobh bar bām afkand
> kai-khosrowe rūz mohre dar jām afkand
> mai khor ke monādiye sahargah khizān
> āvāzehe ishrābū dar ayām afkand.
>
> The sun has thrown the lassoo of dawn over
> the roof;
> The emperor of day has thrown the bead in
> the cup.
> Drink wine, for the herald of dawn arising
> Has flung the cry "drink" into the days.[1]

In comparing FitzGerald's quatrain with Arberry's literal version and the original, one notices a number of striking differences: there is no call to "Awake!" in the original, for example; instead the call is to "drink." And whereas a speaker is established in the original ("the herald of dawn"), the voice in FitzGerald's version is unidentified. Other changes are discernible as well. The question here is, what do these differences signify: i.e., in what way does the statement in the quatrain reflect or depart from that in the "rubāi"?

The Persian poem, in the first place, belongs to a category of verse known as the "day poem." E. H. Whinfield, who brought out his own version of the "rubāiyāt" in 1882, classified Khayyam's poetry under six headings, as follows:

> I. Shikāyat i rozgār--Complaints of the "wheel of heaven" or Fate, of the World's injustice, of the loss of friends, of man's limited faculties and destinies.
>
> II. Hajw--Satires on the hypocrisy of the "unco guid," the impiety of the pious, the ignorance of the learned, and the untowardness of his own generation.
>
> III. Firākīya and Wisālīya--Love poems on the sorrows of separation and the joys of reunion with the Beloved, earthly or spiritual.
>
> IV. Bāhārīya--Poems in praise of Spring, gardens and flowers.
>
> V. Kufrīya--Irreligious and antinomian utterances, charging the sin of the creatures to the account of the Creator, scoffing at the Prophet's Paradise and Hell, singing the praises of wine and pleasure--preaching ad nauseam, "Eat and drink (especially drink), for to-morrow ye die."
>
> VI. Munājāt--Addresses to the Deity, now in the ordinary language of devotion, bewailing sins and imploring pardon, now in mystical phraseology, craving deliverance from "self," and union with the Truth (Al Hakk) or Deity, as conceived by the Mystics.[2]

The "day poem," accordingly, comes under the heading Firākīya and Wisālīya: "night" signifying the state of the soul when the lover undergoes a separation ("firāk") from his beloved or the Beloved One, and "day" representing the state of union ("wasl").

The "rubāi" by Khayyam, then, is a love song celebrating the union of lovers as symbolically represented by the rising of the sun. Thus, the "sun" ("khorshīd") in the first "misrā" is the figurative expression of the heroic or triumphant lover--the "kai-khosrowe rūz" or "emperor of day" in the second "misrā"--who throws his "belt" ("belt" being a more accurate word for "kamand" than "lassoo") over the collective "roof" of the world: referring to the sky as well as the roofs of houses.

Once this image is drawn in the first "misrā," it is repeated with varied effect in the second and fourth; and the repetition is reflected in turn in the "qāfīyeh" and "rādīf" rhymes. In the second "misrā," the "emperor of day" throws the "bead in the cup" ("cup" being another figurative expression for the sky), and in the fourth the "herald of dawn" flings the cry "Drink."

There are other forms of repetition as well, such as the repetition of parallel meanings through use of different words and phrases, as in "khorshīd" and "kai-khosrowe rūz" for "sun," "sobh" and "sahargah" for "dawn," and "mai khor" and "ishrābū" for "drink wine"; and the repetition through double-meanings or puns ("tajnīs"): thus, "jām" meaning "cup" could be taken as "jam" meaning the "whole"--i.e., the collective cup which is understood as the sky-- and "mohre" meaning "bead" could be read as "mehr," which is another term for the sun (both "mohr" and "mehr" being written with the same letters--m, h, r--in Persian).[3]

Yet, despite these repetitions, which create the effect of unity in the poem, there is a sense of progression as well; for according to Persian poetic convention, no word, phrase, or idea is to be repeated which conveys exactly the same meaning twice. Consequently, even though the image of dawn presented in the first "misrā" sets a pattern (as does the meter) for the rest of the poem, the image is essentially one which has to be developed. This development is marked in a number of ways.

First there is a progression in time: the verbs proceed from the past tense to the present, and the final note struck in the poem is that of the future; "ayām" means not only "days," as Arberry has it, but "days to come." In the first "misrā," then, the poet describes the sunrise as a thin "belt" of light which appears on the horizon. In the second, the sun comes up like a "bead" in the wine-colored sky. In the third, it reveals itself as the "herald" of those who rise early (rather than, as Arberry writes, "the herald of dawn arising"). And in the fourth, it summons all to "drink," for day has come, and with that day all the days of the future.

Together with this progression in time, there is a progression in motif. Just as the "sun" rises by throwing off its "belt" of light, the lover likewise throws off his "belt" to become the "emperor of day" in the act of love. The call for "wine" in Persian poetry is often synonymous with the call for physical or spiritual union: the effect of wine, like that of love, leading to a state of ecstasy. Thus the poem ends with the cry: more wine and love for the days to come--as long as there is life in the body.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, there are levels of meaning in Persian poetry which tend to render a poem open to

various interpretations. George Roe, for example, emphasizes the pictorial effect in his version of the "rubāi"; if anything moves the poet to "drink," it is the magnificence of the "sun" itself--the "sun" representing the splendor of the Superior Being, who sheds light upon his soul and dispels the "night":

> Now wakes Khurshȳd on yonder flaming height,
> And o'er the city flings a robe of light;
> Kai-Khosru-like he fills the bowl of morn
> With golden wine to pledge the parting night.[4]

Likewise Whinfield interprets the sunrise as a celebration of the glory of God:

> The Sun doth smite the roofs with Orient ray,
> And, Khosrau like, his wine-red sheen display;
> Arise, and drink! the herald of dawn
> Uplifts his voice, and cries, "O drink to-day."[5]

For both Roe and Whinfield the essence of the poem lies in its expression of a purely spiritual experience. Like Nicolas, Whinfield takes the view that most of the "love-poems" of Khayyam

> bear a mystical meaning, for I doubt if Omar was a person very susceptible of the tender passion. He speaks with appreciation of "tulip cheeks" and "cypress forms," but apparently recognizes no attraction of a higher order in his fair friends.[6]

And yet one has to consider whether or not such a view is valid for this poem in particular. Does the poem in fact contain and expression of both physical and spiritual love? If so, can one regard the "sun," for example, as being simultaneously the symbolic representation of the earthly lover and the Lover from Whom All Love Flows?

If one examines the "rubāi" closely, one sees that this is clearly not the case. The poem was never intended to be anything other than a celebration of physical love--a point which comes across through Khayyam's masterful use of the language. The very image of the sun rising is made to convey the notion of the rousing of physical desires. Not only does the figurative "sun" throw off his "belt," but he throws the "bead in the cup"--which is a sexual image, due to the use of the word "mohre," a term which ought to be clarified.

As FitzGerald explains in his notes appended to the Rubaiyat: "Flinging a Stone in the Cup was the signal for 'To Horse' in the Desert."[7] And this is certainly the case; but the idea contained in the poem extends somewhat beyond this general description. Not all cups, in the first place, are mystical in meaning: the "cup" is also the receptacle of human desires. The "Stone" that the poet--the "emperor of day"--throws into it is not a precious item, such as a pearl ("dor"), which symbolizes an object of purity and perfection, but a "mohre" ("bead"), which is a "tajnīs" or play on words on "mohr" ("seal": notably the poet's "seal"), and which further brings to mind the phrase "mohr bardāshtan," meaning "to deflower a virgin," or euphemistically, within the context of the poem: to settle down once again to the act of love with someone who is not too precious ("bead" as opposed to "pearl").[8] Hence the full meaning of the expression "Flinging a Stone in the Cup" as it appears in the second "misrā": as the sun rises, the lovers come together to make love before parting from each other. Hence also the cry "drink," when it is repeated for the second time in the fourth "misrā," refers not only to sipping wine, but partaking in bodily

pleasure as well. It is a call to join in sexual pleasure in the days to come.

In "rubāi" C. 137, then, Khayyam is by no means celebrating the spiritual presence of the Divine Being, but the act of making love to his sweetheart--judging from the bawdiness of his references, possibly a favorite harlot of his.

When Whinfield claims that Khayyam "speaks with appreciation of 'tulip cheeks' and 'cypress forms,'' but apparently recognizes no attraction of a higher order in his fair friends," he is not doing his poetry justice. He is construing Khayyam's "day poems" (as FitzGerald pointed out in his introduction to the Rubaiyat, and Cowell in his article on Khayyam in the Calcutta Review) in the same light as the "love-poems" of the later mystics. His remarks, in fact, are much more pertinent to the odes of Hafiz than to the "rubāiyāt" of Khayyam. Here, for example, are the opening lines of ode 196 (Brockhaus edition) of Hafiz, followed by my own literal translation:

chū āftābe mai az mashreqe payāleh barāyad
z-bāqe āreze sāqi hezār lāleh barāyad
nasīm dar sare gol beshkanad kalāleh sombol
chū az miāne chaman būye ān kalāleh barāyad.

When the wine-sun climbs the eastern rim of
the bowl,
a thousand tulips shine on the garden-face of
the cupbearer;
the breeze that passes over the rose breaks
the cluster of hyacinths
as the scent of that cluster rises from the
fields.

The rising of the sun in this passage, in contrast to the one in Khayyam, very definitely conveys a sense of a mystical experience.

As the sun comes up, the poet is called not only to love, but to the worship of the Divine Creator as well.

Following another line of interpretation, he could also be singing paeans to an earthly monarch--Shāh Shujā, for example, who served at one time as Hafiz' patron--in which case the ode could be further taken as a panegyric. Arberry alludes to this matter in his Sufism:

> It is against the background of [the] allegory of love and worship . . . that the lyrics of Sanā'ī, 'Attār, Rūmī, 'Irāqī, Maghribī, Amīr Khusrau, Sa'dī, Hāfiz, Jāmī and many others must be read. . . . But the matter is not altogether free of difficulties and complexities, for several of the Sufi poets were at the same time earning their livlihood by courting kings and princes, and many of their lyrics must be regarded as double allegories--the reference is made simultaneously to the Divine Beloved, and to the very earthly patron whose favour is no less difficult to win. This caution seems to be especially necessary in the case of Hāfiz, but Sanā'ī and Sa'dī are also to be handled with care.[9]

As a moslem, however, the poet is not allowed to describe the features of the Beloved One in human terms. Consequently, he uses the nature imagery of the Koran. The "āreze sāqi" or "face of the cupbearer" (which could thus be said to have two or three distinct properties, depending upon the reading) is described as a "bāq" or "garden," with the "breeze" ("nasīm") representing desire, the Divine Breath, or simply the abstract bond between the poet and his Love, the "rose" ("gol") the mouth, the "cluster of hyacinths" ("kalāleh sombol") the hair, the "fields" ("chaman") the body, and the "tulips" ("lāleh") the symbol for purity.[10] Hence the term "hezār-lāleh" ("thousand tulips"): suggesting the idea that if the love of the earthly kind can be described as being pure, how much purer must Divine Love be?

The act of union, as presented in the ode of Hafiz, therefore, incorporates both the physical and spiritual ecstasy: these being conceived, however, not as separate conditions, eternally to be divided by the laws of nature, but as counterparts capable of being absorbed into One--the physical into the spiritual. The "cup-bearer"--FitzGerald's "Cypress-slender Minister of Wine"--in this sense, is not only a lover but an intermediary between the poet and the True Beloved. This union itself stands as the link between the mortal and the Divine. The bond between man and God being Love, the spiritual ecstasy, which is God-given (and lasting) is achieved--or presented as being achieved--through the physical, which is a manifestation peculiar to His creature (and fleeting).[11] Hence the need to read the poem as a celebration of both earthly and mystical sensations; and likewise the quality of "ambiguity" in the poem (i.e., the sense of discerning meanings through multilevels rather than through one level alone), which gives expression to this idea, and which is furthermore intended to produce in the reader yet another kind of ecstasy: that of seeing into the mysteries ("mysteries" being equated with "beauties") of God's Love.[12]

To FitzGerald, a reading of the "rubāiyāt" along these lines clearly jarred with "Omar's Epicureanism of Thought."[13] And yet his own reading of C. 137 was no less radical a departure from the kind of "hedonism" expressed by Khayyam. Here are the comments he made to Cowell on June 29, 1857, when he was working on the poem:

> Quatrain 137. "khwurshīd kamand-i subh bar bām afgand" seems one worth understanding: which I do not wholly, not being wholly able to decypher; especially the 2 & 4th. lines. But I write about it now because it reminds me of a passage in Salāmān I have more than once intended to tell you about.

"The Sun has thrown the Noose of Morning over the House-top; the Rouge-faced Day" (?--what else can I make of "kanjrūy-i rūz") "has thrown the Pebble into the Cup" as a sign of breaking up the Party, says Johnson at the word "muhra," though in this case it does not mean breaking up any Party but that of Night, whose departure is a sign for the Drinkers to assemble. It would have been pretty if one could construe "The Sun throws Day--or Day throws the Sun--into the Cup of Heaven as a Signal for Night's retreat."--But, however this be, you must remember how often we have read about the Stone in the Cup &c. Now I have not Salaman with me, but I have often thought that in that passage where the Shah finds the 2 Lovers in their Island, drinking the Cup of Sorrow & Tears--"Unshattered by the Stone of Separation" I believe I have rendered it; but, had I seen Johnson's "muhra" first, I should have translated--"The Cup of Tears" &c, then, "In which Farewell had never yet been flung"--with a Note to explain about the Stone &c. I am not sure whether the original Salāmān does refer to this; but the Image is so pretty & so smacks of the Desert Life--the Pebble thrown into the Cup, & all starting to Horse--that it is worth risking it. So do you--(you in Calcutta!)--emend your Salāmān to this effect, will you?--And so to go on with Quatrain 137. "Drink! for the Crier"--(Qy. whether Cock or Muezzin?) "of the Morning Station arising sends forth a Voice"--(Qy. an Evil-omened Voice?) "about the flight of Time"--No, that's not it; but your Munshi writes the line "awāza-yi shr. ū wz aiyām afkand" What makes me think it may be something as to the loss of a Night of Life, is the last Quatrain but 3 in the [Calcutta] MS. which I happened to glance at the other day: "dar waqt-i sapīda dam hurūs-i saharī."[14]

One element conspicuously missing in FitzGerald's reading of the poem is the element of "love." His only reference to the subject comes in his discussion of "the Stone in the Cup," an "Image" which called his attention away from the poem and the kind of love-making celebrated by Khayyam to the mystical kind found in Salaman. Here are the lines from Salaman referred to by FitzGerald:

> Oh for the Noble Nature, and Clear Heart,
> That, seeing Two who draw one Breath, together
> Drinking the Cup of Happiness and Tears
> Unshatter'd by the Stone of Separation,
> Is loath their sweet Communion to destroy,
> Or cast a Tangle in a Skein of Joy.[15]

Later, in revising his versions, FitzGerald omitted the image of "the Stone in the Cup" altogether (presumably because it conveyed to him a mystical idea), thereby deleting any possible suggestion of love and stressing instead the visual effect of the coming of Dawn. In the fourth edition of the Rubaiyat the quatrain reads as follows:

> Wake! For the Sun who scatter'd into flight
> The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
> Drives Night along with them from Heav'n,
> and strikes
> The Sultan's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

To FitzGerald, then, the "day poem" was essentially a "waking poem" rather than a "love poem"; and the spirit of "hedonism" he discerned in Khayyam had more to do with the way in which the "waking" was brought about--through drinking "Wine" (which he took literally)--than with partaking in bodily pleasures. As he stressed to Cowell, "in this case it [the poem] does not mean breaking up any Party but that of Night, whose departure is a sign for the Drinkers to assemble."

This statement, in effect, describes the central idea contained in the first three quatrains: these three comprising what one might regard as the opening section of the "poem." Here the mysterious call to "Awake" in quatrain 1 is followed by a series of other cries: the "Voice in the Tavern" in quatrain 2, and the crowing of the "Cock" and the shouting of the people before the

Tavern "Door" in quatrain 3. These are the morning sounds the poet hears as he is aroused from his sleep:

2

Dreaming, when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky,
I heard a Voice within the Tavern cry,
"Awake, my Little ones, and fill the Cup
"Before Life's Liquor in its Cup be dry."

3

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted--"Open then the Door!
"You know how little while we have to stay,
"And, once departed, may return no more."

Significantly, the first references to Wine and the Passing of Time--the two recurring refrains in the Rubaiyat--are made not by the poet, who is still in the half-conscious state of "Dreaming," but by the voices he hears. And these voices are "heard" in the literal sense, since they pertain to the physical and temporal world of which he is a part. Later, when the poet himself is fully awake, he too takes up the "Tavern cry."

The voice that actually arouses him from his sleep, on the other hand, is of another essence. It comes to him even before he reaches the stage of "Dreaming," which is only the second stage in the process of waking. The first stage is waking, which is brought about through the natural phenomenon of the sunrise. Thus the same voice that cries "Awake!" and stirs the poet to life, "strikes the Sultan's Turret with a Shaft of Light." Sight and sound are merged into one, and this "voice" carries the loudest cry of all, paradoxically being silent.

The image is one of the most profound and at the same time compact expressions of the human dilemma contained in the Rubaiyat.

The "Sun"--the life-giving force--fells as it rises. It "strikes the Sultan's Turret"--presumably the loftiest edifice within view and representing the temporal heights to which man can reach--with a "Shaft of Light" (in the first edition it is also the "Hunter of the East"), calling all to life, and with that same call dealing the ultimate death-blow. The "Turret" is destined, as is seen in the course of the "poem," to fall to Dust, and the "Sultan" (probably suggested to FitzGerald by "kai-khosrowe rūz" = "emperor of day") will become the fallen figure of quatrain 45 (fourth edition):

> The Sultan rises, and the dark Ferrash
> Strikes, and prepares it [his "realm"] for
> another Guest.[16]

Thus the Voice That Is Not Heard encompasses a whole series of paradoxes which the poet, from his very waking, has to contend with. It parallels the notion of the Sight That Is Not Seen: the Sight behind the "Veil," "THE ME WITHIN THEE BLIND" in quatrain 34 (fourth edition); and the juxtaposition between Time and Eternity in quatrain 42:

> Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTERDAY
> You were--TO-MORROW you shall not be less.

Only in the human sphere are these paradoxes at war with each other (note, for example, the manner in which the parting of "Night" is described in the fourth edition of quatrain 1: the wording--"scatter'd into flight," "Field of Night," "drives," "strikes," "Shaft"--suggests the routing of an army); in the realm beyond--in the absolute, in nature--these paradoxes are reconciled.

Hence the condition of the poet at the outset of the "poem": the "Sun" that marks the end of "Night" merely wakens him to the "Night" in his soul. (Significantly, in the later editions FitzGerald qualified the Dawn in quatrain 2 as being "False," changing "Dreaming, when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky," to "Before the phantom of False morning died.")[17] There can be no total daylight in the spiritual sense until all opposites--Day and Night, Light and Dark, Sight and Sound, Time and Eternity, Truth and Falsehood, the Maker and the Made--are resolved into One.[18]

To the mystic, the contemplation of such a union leads to ecstasy (and there are various stages involved in this state, as R. A. Nicholson explains in his chapter on "Illumination and Ecstasy" in The Mystics of Islam); to FitzGerald's Khayyam--who FitzGerald insists is not of a mystical bent--it can only bring Despair. For whereas the mystic conceives of the transcendent unity of Being as the ultimate nature of reality (referred to in Sufi doctrine as "wahdat al-wujūd"), which is readily accessible to the true devotee or the Universal Man ("al-insān al-kāmil," which Seyyed Hossein Nasr defines as "not just 'the rational animal,' as usually understood, but a being who possesses in himself all the multiple states of being"),[19] FitzGerald's Khayyam regards it merely as a figment of the imagination--something desired by all men, but never to be gained:

32 (4th edition)

There was a Door to which I found no Key;
There was a Veil through which I might not see:
  Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
There was--and then no more of THEE and ME.

Moreover, nothing can alleviate the poet's Despair. Unlike the Khayyam of C. 137, FitzGerald's poet does not wake up to make love to a sweetheart lying by his side. He wakes up alone. In FitzGerald's versions, there is no room for Love at this stage in the "poem." Love--like Wine--is a palliative which the poet turns to for momentary relief after his exhaustive questioning leads to naught.

Both quatrains 2 and 3, in this sense, sustain the mood of the first. Both are based upon "day poems" expressing three common ideas: the Passing of Time, the Call for Wine, and the Making of Love. Arberry traces the source for quatrain 2 to C. 5 and the sources for quatrain 3 to C. 478 and C. 278. He translates these as follows:

C. 5

Came one dawn the proclamation from our
wine-tavern:
"Ho, tavern-haunting, crazy profligate of
ours,
rise up, that we may fill our measure with
wine
ere they fill up our measure (of life)."

C. 478

Since Time is hurrying by O saki,
place in my hand the pure liquor, O saki:
at the time of the morning-draught we knocked
on the door--
"Give wine, for the sun has come up, O saki."

C. 278

It is the time of dawn; rise, O essence of
loveliness,
gently, gently drink the wine and play the lute,
for these who are present will not remain long
and of those who have gone, none will come
back.[20]

(In contrast to C. 137, however, these three verses could conceivably be taken as celebrating a mystical as well as an earthly union: the "pure liquor" in C. 478 being one indication of this, the "essence of loveliness" in C. 278 another, and the "wine-tavern" in C. 5 conveying the notion of a spiritual assembly, or as Arberry explains in his Sufism, "Pure Unity ["wahdat"], undifferentiated and unqualified"; moreover, the "tavern-haunting . . . profligate" could be the "true lover who is freed [by "wine" which stands for the "ecstatic experience due to the revelation of the True Beloved, destroying the foundations of reason"] from the chains of discrimination, knowing all acts, and the qualities of all things.")[21]

Of the three common ideas expressed in the "day poem," both the Passing of Time and the Call for Wine are incorporated into quatrains 2 and 3. But again the notion of Love is left out. And together with this omission there is also another (of a different nature, and one which has to do with FitzGerald's conception of the "poem" rather than with what is said in the originals), which also accounts for the despairing mood of the poet.

Just as Love cannot alleviate the misery the poet feels at the waking hour, likewise the tenets of orthodox religion are of no substance to him. The one morning call which is significantly missing in this Islamic setting is the call of the Muezzin, bidding all the faithful to prayer. (The Muezzin shows up later in the poem, when the poet considers the drawbacks of all doctrinal thinking, as a figure of Death.) FitzGerald's Khayyam, having lost his faith, wakes up to the voices of the "Tavern" people and to the crowing of the "Cock" (an image which does not appear in either of the sources ascribed to quatrain 3, but which, as Arberry points out, is taken from the phrase "khurūse saharī" or "the cock of dawn" in

C. 464).[22] These sounds, in effect, replace the call of the Muezzin, turning the poet's mind away from prayer (which is senseless) to "Wine" (which at least fulfills the needs of the moment).

Summing up the points mentioned so far, then, and returning to the question raised at the beginning of the chapter: in making a comparative analysis of the "rubāiyāt" of Khayyam and the Rubaiyat of FitzGerald, it is not enough to point out the changes FitzGerald made in his versions, and to show how these differences depart from the originals; it is also necessary to relate these changes to the "scheme" of the "poem." For just as FitzGerald conceived of a structural framework whereby he could "tesselate" the "rubāiyāt" selected after a manner which suited his purpose, he had in mind a symbolic framework as well whereby he could do much the same: namely, retain, omit, and alter the imagery of the originals as he saw fit--the end in mind being to create out of the Persian a "poem" in English.

When J. H. Buckley writes in his Triumph of Time that "the bird of Time flutters more relentlessly over FitzGerald's Rubaiyat than over Omar Khayyam's,"[23] he is correct to the extent that the point is made with a degree of consistency that is not found in the originals. Not only are the Persian poems strung together, as pointed out in the last chapter, in "a strange succession of Grave and Gay" (which detracts from the "relentless" pursuit of any theme), but even in the case of an isolated "rubāi," such as C. 137, Time is only one of the factors meticulously interwoven into the fabric of the poem; the imagery, as shown in the analysis, pertains to other matters--notably love--as well.

With FitzGerald, on the other hand, all attention is focused on one central idea. This is why a "Turret," for example, appears in the opening section of the "poem," whereas there is none in the original; and similarly why FitzGerald makes it the "Sultan's" rather than the Muezzin's, and introduces the cry "Awake!" instead of "Drink," and draws upon the image of the "Cock" to complete the picture of Dawn. All these images bear upon the notion of Time: Time as apprehended both in the structural sense (as a given point in the Day which marks the start of an action), and the symbolic (as an essence pitted against Eternity). In other words, one sees through these images the workings of all Time--not just the present, but the past and the future as well.

What FitzGerald did in the opening section of the Rubaiyat is reflected throughout the "poem" as a whole: namely, convey an idea (in this case Dawn) through the structural scheme, and unfold its essence (Time) through the symbolic. These are the two significant principles of organization that determined his approach to the process of translation.

The opening of the Rubaiyat, however, reveals another aspect of the symbolic "scheme" of the "poem." After waking to the "Sun" and the morning sounds in quatrains 2 and 3, the poet reflects on the coming of "the New Year" (which is described significantly as "reviving old Desires"--a notion which will be taken up later) and the signs of "Spring":

4

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
  Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the ground suspires.[24]

"The White Hand of Moses," FitzGerald explains in his notes, is found in "Exodus iv. 6; not, according to the Persians, 'leprous as Snow,'--but white, as our May-blossom in Spring perhaps. According to them also the Healing Power of Jesus resided in his Breath."[25] Both references are found in the original, Ouseley (hereafter designated O.) 13:

> bar har shākhī tulū'-e Mūsā dastīst
> dar har nafasī khurūshe Īsā-nafasīst
>
> On every branch is the budding of a (cluster white as) Moses' hand,
> in every moment is the sighing of a (breeze reviving as) Jesus' breath.[26]

These references, however, as Arberry points out, are also Koranic:

> Omar is thinking of the clusters of white blooms bursting forth among the branches of flowering trees. In Koran XXVI 32 we are told that it was Moses' white hand that converted his dead staff into a living serpent. . . . [and] It was by breathing into the clay, according to Koran V 110 that Jesus turned it into "the likeness of a bird."[27]

But whereas in the original the coming of "Spring" is a signal for the poet to join in the general merriment of the world ("aknūn ke jahān rā be khoshī dast rasīst") and to go out into the wilderness in the company of others ("har zende-delī rā sūye sahrā havasīst": "sahrā" meaning a "wilderness with trees and shrubs," as opposed to "vīrānī" which refers to the "barren wilds"), FitzGerald's Khayyam retires to "thoughtful . . . Solitude."

This deliberate change in mood from joy to pensive sorrow is reinforced in the quatrains that follow. Quatrain 5, according to Heron-Allen, "is a very composite quatrain, which cannot be claimed

as a translation at all, or the main part of any of the C. and O. quatrains":[28]

> Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
> And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows:
> But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine
> And many a Garden by the Water blows.

In his notes on the Rubaiyat FitzGerald explains the allusions to "Iram" ("paradise") and "Jamshyd's Cup" as follows: "Iram, planted by King Shaddād, and now sunk somewhere in the Sands of Arabia. Jamshyd's Seven-ring'd Cup was typical of the 7 Heavens, 7 Planets, 7 Seas, &c., and was a Divining Cup."[29] Jamshyd (to elaborate) is the mythical "peri" ("fairy") king who was forced to assume a human form and to dwell on earth as a result of a boast that he was immortal, and who subsequently reigned over the Iranians for 700 years. He is credited with having discovered Wine and established the "Now Rūz" ("New Year," literally "New Day") festival as well as the yearly calendar which "Omar," as FitzGerald points out, "helped to rectify."[30] The note on "Iram" is a condensed account of a quote from Sir William Jones, which FitzGerald included in his appendix to Salaman:

> "Mahomet," says Sir W. Jones, "in the Chapter of The Morning, towards the end of his Alcoran, mentions a Garden called 'Irem,' which is no less celebrated by the Asiatic Poets than that of the Hesperides by the Greeks. It was planted, as the Commentators say, by a king named Shedād,"--deep in the Sands of Arabia Felix--"and was once seen by an Arabian who wandered far into the Desert in search of a lost Camel."[31]

"What undoubtedly put this conceit into FitzGerald's mind," writes Arberry (who succeeded in tracing most of the sources for

quatrain 5), were the lines "he had written . . . in his Salaman and Absal":

> Here Iram Garden seem'd in Secresy
> Blowing the Rosebud of its Revelation--[32]

the "Iram Garden" alluding to the original earthly paradise, the Garden of Eden. "The idea of wine being a ruby," Arberry continues,

> was certainly inspired by the first line of O 39:
>
> "Mai la'l-i mudhāb-ast u surāhī kān-ast"
>
> Wine is a molten ruby, and the flask is the mine.
>
> The "Garden by the Water" could have been derived from several quatrains, among them line 2 of O 147:
>
> "Khwush khwush be-kharām. gird-i bāgh ū lab-i jūy"
>
> Gently, gently parade around the garden and the river-bank.[33]

The statement FitzGerald pieced together from these sources, then, can be interpreted as follows: the earthly paradise (of the mythical time of Jamshyd and Shaddād) is "gone" with all its "Rose" (splendor or true beauty as disclosed through Divine Revelation); but there is at least Wine to be had in a temporal "Garden."

Quatrain 6 reiterates the same idea:

> And David's lips are lockt; but in divine
> High-piping Pehlevī, with "Wine! Wine! Wine!
> "Red Wine!"--the Nightingale cries to the Rose
> That sallow cheek of hers to' incarnadine.

"David's lips are lockt"; the Divine Music of the past is no longer to be heard. (The reference to David as a minstrel does not appear in the original, O. 67; but the notion, as Arberry mentions, "could have been derived from various contexts in Persian poetry; or specifically from . . . C 92.")[34] The poet hears instead the cry of the "Nightingale" to the "Rose" (not the "Rose" of the "Iram" Garden, but the temporal one), which suggests to him the ancient "Pehlevī" call to "Wine" ("Pehlevī" being the language of the pre-Islamic Iranians, or as FitzGerald puts it: "the old Heroic Sanskrit of Persia").[35] And though this cry strikes him as being "divine," it is "divine" only in the earthly sense, not to be compared with the Divine Music which emanated once from "David's lips"--just as the "Wine" to be had in this world is not comparable with the "Wine" in "Jamshyd's Cup."

The irony, of course, is that the incomparable is compared--much to the poet's anguish. The nightingale's cry does recall the sublime voices of the past. And the reason she cries out to the "Rose" for the "Red Wine" is that she wishes at least to have the color of Life brought to her "sallow cheek": i.e., even though the substance of Life (the "Wine" in "Jamshyd's Cup") is denied her as a mortal, she can in any event settle for the earthly vintage which will give her what comfort there is to be had--which is the same reason the poet sets forth for his drinking.

Hence the poet's cry in quatrain 7:

> Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
> Your Winter-garment of Repentence fling:
> The Bird of Time has but a little way
> To flutter--and the Bird is on the Wing.

He has heard the Bird's cry and taken note: since the link between Man and his Divine Origin is broken by Time (Time rather than "Sin": note that he casts aside the "Winter-garment of Repentence"), he can only alleviate the misery of his solitary, fleeting, and meaningless existence (three "complaints" recurring throughout the "poem") by filling the "Cup"--his "Cup"--to the brim.

Time, then, is conceived of as imposing a dual limitation on Man: on the one hand, it denies him access to the "future" he seeks in Eternal Life; on the other, it cuts him off from his sacred "past" (the primordial era when things were different, and when his illustrious ancestors lived in "divine" harmony with the laws of nature). Doomed to the "present," his "Lot"--regardless of the circumstances of his origin--is no better than that of the "Nightingale" and the "Rose," fauna and flora.

The notion, however, is conveyed through the symbolism. Thus the Dawn with which the poem begins reflects simultaneously both the juxtaposition of Time and Eternity (the sunrise which marks the beginning of the poet's Day, as opposed to the sunrise which occurs as a natural, unending phenomenon) and the juxtaposition of Time and pre-Time (the sunrise of cosmogony, calling to mind the mythical Time "in illo tempore," as Mircea Eliade puts it, "when the foundation of the world occurred").[36] The poet who wakens to feel the sharp edge of his mortality, then, wakens also--out of his longing--to the Time he seeks to recapture: the "'pure' Time . . . of the 'instant' of the Creation,"[37] when he was more than just a plaything in "the Pastime of Eternity"[38] and a part of the cosmos.

Hence the relationship between Dawn and the New Year and the figures from the "past" that come to the poet's mind: "Every New Year," Eliade explains,

> is a resumption of the time from the beinning, that is, a repetition of the cosmogony . . . [denoting] that at the end of the year and in the expectation of the New Year there is a repetition of the mythical moment of the passage from chaos to cosmos. . . . This eternal repetition of the cosmogonic act, by transforming every New Year into an inauguration of an era, permits the return of the dead to life, and maintains the hope of the faithful in the resurrection of the body . . . [and signifies] the hope that the abolition of time is possible at this mythical moment, in which the world is destroyed and re-created.[39]

In Khayyam it is precisely this sense of "revival," "abolition of time," and "hope . . . in the resurrection" that moves the poet to joy. "Now that the world has the means of attaining happiness," he says in O. 13 (and the emphasis on "has" is suggested by the end-rhyme), "every man has a yearning for the wilderness"; this is why he sees on every branch "the budding of a (cluster white as) Moses' hand," and in every moment "the sighing of a (breeze reviving as) Jesus' breath."[40] These are the symbols of the promise of eternal life (although Khayyam has rejected the orthodox Mohammedan conception of paradise, he has not ruled out the notion of ultimate union with the Creator). Thus, just as the "day poem" ("wisālīya") celebrates the coming or presence of Love, the "spring song" ("bāhārīya") has as its main theme the emergence of Life, and with it a new sense of Being.

In FitzGerald's version the poet likewise feels, with the coming of the first Dawn of the New Year, the revival of these "old Desires." But the feeling does not arouse in him the joys of Life; it conveys to him instead a sense of loss:

> Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
> And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows.

"David's lips are lockt." The "fire of Spring," which Eliade describes as playing "an especially important part" in the regenerative process, and which always suggests "a 'resurrection,' a 'new birth,' a 'new man,'"[41] fails to kindle in him the spirit of Life. For him, rather, it is the "fire" of destruction; and he throws into its flames the "Winter-garment of Repentence," thereby rejecting the notion of purgation, and the part that purgation plays in the regenerative process--which is actually just the reverse of the statement made in the original. In the source for quatrain 7--C.447--"the time of the rose" ("vaqte gol," namely "Spring") is presented as being precisely the "season" most appropriate for penitence, since the true sense of joy cannot be had without absolution:

har rūz bar ānam ke konam shab towbe
az jām o payāleh-ye labalāb towbe
aknūn ke resīd vaqte gol tarsam nīst
dar mowseme gol ze towbe yā rab towbe.

Every day I am resolved to repent in the
evening,
repent of the cup and the brimming goblet;
now that the time of the rose has come I
have no fear--
in the season of the rose, O Lord, (give me)
repentence for repentence.[42]

What FitzGerald has done with the "spring song," then, parallels to a degree his handling of the "day poem." Whereas in the latter he deleted the element of Love, in the former he struck out the notion of the renewal of Life and shifted the mood from joy to sorrow. In essence, he conceived of both the "day poem" and the "spring song" as subscribing to the mood of the "firākīya" (the "night poem" having to do with the sorrows of separation) and the

"shikāyat i rozgār" (the "poem of complaint" concerning man's limited faculties and destinies).

What he has also done in the process, however, is to establish in his "poem" a setting which graphically depicts the flow of ideas; in other words, instead of conceiving of the poet's "world" as being something apart from the poet himself--just as an object observed is to be differentiated from the eye that does the observing--he has conceived of it as being a symbolic representation of his state of mind. Whatever is seen or heard in this setting pertains not to a literal "world," but to a figurative one--an allegorical "world"--in which the "Rose" is always the generic Rose, the Rose (both the temporal and the immortal), the "Garden" the Garden, the Cry of the "Nightingale" the Cry (in his soul). Similarly, the "sunrise" is conceived of as being not the historical phenomenon pertaining to a specific time and location, but as the collective "sunrise" of the past, present, and future: a symbolic phenomenon which marks the "awakening" in the poet's thought process.

Thus, although the major theme of the Rubaiyat is the Passing of Time, the sense of progression in the "poem" is spatial rather than temporal. The "poem" moves as the mind does, from one related thought to another; and the time span suggested by the passing of a day, the passing of a year, corresponds not to any flow of events, but to a flow of ideas, marking the beginning and end of the dialectical process.

Having put aside the notion of a Universal Rebirth inherent in the coming of "Spring," then, the poet advances in quatrain 8 the only concept which is of any substance to him:

Whether at Naishāpūr [the poet's native city
in northeast Iran] or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,

and even in the "season of the rose,"

The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

The juxtaposition of the "Leaves" falling in "Spring" is taken up in the following quatrain by the contrast between the "thousand [living] Roses" of today and the one dead "Rose of Yesterday":

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?

FitzGerald, no doubt, attempted to convey some sense of the Persian "tajnīs" or word play by employing "leaves" instead of "lives," thereby connecting the image of the "Leaves of Life" in quatrain 8 with that of the fallen "Rose" in quatrain 9 (no such connection is made in the first edition, where the statement reads: "And look--a thousand Blossoms with the Day / Woke--and a thousand scatter'd into Clay"). Similarly, in the last two lines of quatrain 9 he correlates the image of the fallen "Rose" with the figures from the mythical "past":

And this first Summer month that brings
the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobād away.

The "Summer Rose," in other words, in replacing the "Rose" of "Spring," "takes away" those spirits associated with the process of "rebirth" in the coming of the New Year.

This notion, in turn, leads to another thought: since the spirits of those Time-conquering heroes of the "past" ("Time-conquering" in the sense that both Jamshyd and Kaikobād predated history and reigned for centuries before the establishment of "temporal" rule) can be dispelled by the mere passing of a "Rose," what reason is there for holding them in veneration and celebrating the "past"?

10

Well, let it [Time] take them! What have we
  [the living] to do
With Kaikobād the Great, or Kaikhosrū?
  Let Zāl and Rustam bluster as they will,
Or Hātim call to Supper--heed not you.[43]

With this remark, the poet turns from the "past" of the mythical kings of Iran to the "present" of Mahmūd Shāh the Great, the first of the Ghaznavid rulers:

11

With me along the strip of Herbage strewn
That just divides the desert from the sown,
  Where name of Slave and Sultān is forgot--
And Peace to Mahmūd on his golden Throne!

But here again, the "present" is not the actual "present" of the poet's lifetime, but the historical "present" of an age. The reign of Mahmūd Shāh, as FitzGerald well knew, took place around the turn of the eleventh century, during the time of Ferdowsi; the monarchs of Khayyam's period, he points out in his essay, "The Astronomer-Poet of Persia," were Alp Arsalān and Malik Shāh of the Seljuk dynasty.[44] And yet, for the purpose of the poem, the ruling monarch--the one who occupies "the golden Throne"--is Mahmūd Shāh; for it is this monarch, rather than the ones of

Khayyam's time, that defines the spirit of the age: namely, the zealotry of Islam and the sharp break with the traditions of the pre-Islamic past. "Mahmūd the Ghaznavid," Arberry explains in his Classical Persian Literature, was a

> fanatical conformist [who] dedicated himself to the high cause of rooting out heresy and infidelity wherever they were to be found. When Ferdausī presented his vast epic [the Shāhnāmeh] in praise of Zoroastrian Persia to this man, the auspices were inexorably adverse.[45]

FitzGerald refers to Mahmūd again and to his fanatical devotion to the spread of Islam, which led him to conquer the "black Horde" of India, in quatrain 60:

> The mighty Mahmūd, Allah-breathing Lord,
> That all the misbelieving and black Horde
> Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
> Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

Thus the shift from the mythical "past" to the historical "present" is rendered even more cogent by the contrast between the "divine" age of Jamshyd and the fanatical age of Mahmūd. The "present" is marked both by a sense of Time passing by and by a sense of turbulence and religious fervor. Not only is the poet, as a mortal, denied the "Wine" in "Jamshyd's Cup," but as a Moslem--living in the times of Mahmūd (as opposed to the era before the coming of Islam)--he is forbidden to "drink" altogether. If he swallows so much as a drop of alcohol he is eternally damned in the eyes of the Faithful, who brandish the "whirlwind Sword"--a notion he decries in quatrain 61 and satirizes in 62:

61

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who
dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse--why, then, Who set it there?

62

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink
To fill the Cup--when crumbled into Dust!

The poet, then, who shuns the "Worldly" life (of the court, "of Slave and Sultān") for the life in the "Wilderness," where he can have his

12

Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread--and Thou,

is driven there as much by the circumstances of his "times" as by the desire to enjoy the pleasures of the moment while he may. As a hedonist in his "age," he is an outcast from society.

As mentioned in the last chapter, Arberry describes the environment in quatrain 12 as being entirely out of keeping with what is found in the original, O. 149; and he stresses the point that the "Wilderness" in the original ("vīrānī") is without life--a barren desert, in fact. In objecting to FitzGerald's translation, however, he does not take into account the context of the passage within the "poem" as a whole; he examines the quatrain as an isolated verse. Clearly, what determined the nature of the landscape was not the picture conveyed in O. 149, but the one suggested in the earlier sections of the "poem." The "Wilderness" the poet seeks is the "Sahrā" of O. 13, where there are woods and flowers:

Now that the world has the means of attaining
happiness
every man alive in heart has a yearning for
the wilderness;
on every branch is the budding of a (cluster
white as) Moses' hand,
in every moment is the sighing of a (breeze
reviving as) Jesus' breath.[46]

The "time" is still "Spring." He seeks out an earthly "Paradise" ("Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow"): i.e., a spot reflecting the "Iram" Garden and the "many a Garden [which] by the Water blows," conjured in his mind by the coming of the New Year.

Ironically, however, no sooner does he settle down to enjoy his "Paradise" in the "Wilderness"--with all its "plenty" (as opposed to Khayyam's "desolation")--and set about categorically rejecting other modes of life--

13

Some for the Glories of this World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumbles of a distant Drum--

than he looks "to the blowing Rose." He is moved by the same thoughts and feelings that inspired him to set out for the wilds in the first place. The "Paradise" is no "Paradise" at all. Once again he is in the presence of the "living" Dead: just as the kings of the heroic "past" have "perished" with the imposition of Time and passed into Nature through a process of transformation, likewise the monarchs of the "temporal" world have fallen to provide nourishment for the "Rose"--

19

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Caesar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

And yet, there is something perceptibly different (and bizarre) about the quality of this landscape. Whereas previously, in quatrain 9, the "thousand [living] Roses" of the "Morn" caused the poet to reflect on the one dead "Rose of Yesterday," the "Rose" in the "Wilderness" (quatrain 14) says,

"into the world I blow,
"At once the silken tassel of my Purse
"Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

By tearing open "the silken tassel" of its "Purse" (the whorls of the flower) and throwing "its Treasure [the pollen] on the Garden," it calls his attention to the life-and-death cycle in Nature. The "Rose" is literally Nature's Rose, not the Rose of Time.

As a result, when the poet examines the "Golden Grain" in quatrain 15, he thinks not of the wealth of nourishment it brings (which would be in keeping with the mood of quatrain 12), but of the irony that "those who husbanded" it,

And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

The issue here is not the "fall" of Man from a state of Timelessness into Time (the descent from the "divine" to the human condition), but rather Man's "transformation" <u>through Death</u> into an even lower state of Being (the further descent from the human into Nature). Man cultivates the soil and harvests his crops at the end

of the season; but what happens to him at the end of his "season"? He himself is turned into "Earth." And from his "Dust" and "Ashes" there emerges, to be sure, a form of Life--but a Life transfigured and wholly destitute of human meaning: one which belongs to the world of Nature and holds up his fleeting existence to ridicule.

The "colors" in these passages are of special importance. "Gold" and "Red" are the colors of Humanity and Life. "Gold" signifies well-being and "Worldly Hope" (both in the material and in the spiritual sense): the "mighty Mahmūd" is seated on a "golden Throne"; "the Grape"--the "sovereign Alchemist" in quatrain 59--transmutes "Life's leaden metal [Despair] into Gold [Hope]." But

16

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes--

15

Those who husbanded the Golden Grain . . .
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turned.

Likewise the "Red" of the "Rose" and the "Wine" represents the substance of Life, but a Life which is "mortal": one that is both "fleeting" ("Where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?") and sustained by the cyclical process of Nature (the process whereby "one rose," as Swinburne says in Atalanta in Calydon, is fed "with dust of many men").[47]

Both "Gold" and "Red" are juxtaposed against "Ashes," "Earth," "Clay," the colors of Death--or, more accurately, the Death which marks the end of human Life, but which nevertheless has a Life of its own in Nature.

Man, then, exists in an essentially insensitive and hostile environment (within the tripartite framework of the Cosmos, Society, and Nature). Nothing he creates will last for long:

17

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultān after Sultān with his Pomp
Abode his destin's Hour, and went his Way.[48]

But if that which he builds survives for a while through "alternate Night and Day," his own life span is even more transitory: it lasts but an "Hour."

The image of the "batter'd Caravanserai" causes the poet to brood once again on the heroes of the mythical "past" and the low degree to which their estates have fallen:

18

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep.

And he follows this by considering the fates of the historical kings of the pre-Islamic "past": now that Bahrām, "that great Hunter" of the wild ass, is dead,

the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head.[49]

Similarly, when he casts his eyes about him, he sees that the "Rose" acquires its deep hue from the blood of "some buried Caesar,"[50] and the "Hyacinth" its beauty from the dust of "some once lovely Head."

Certainly there is a note of dramatic irony in all this: those who sought to conquer lands and capture beauty are stricken low

indeed. But the poet's censure of these vain attempts is mingled with a sense of compassion for the human "Lot" (he saves his reproaches for the latter part of the "poem," when he attacks the moralists and dogmatists of his "age"). When he turns to

> this reviving Herb whose tender Green
> Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean--

he cautions himself to

> lean upon it lightly! for who knows
> From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

(Note that the image of the "Head" is carried from quatrain 18 [Bahrām's "Head"] through 19 [the "some once lovely Head"] to the "River-Lip" and "once lovely Lip" in 20. And with the image of the "Lip," the poet is reminded of Wine; he turns to his "Beloved" in 21 and asks that the "Cup" be filled again.)

The "who knows" in quatrain 20 does not pose a question; it expresses a statement of fact: "no one knows" what is at the other side of the "Door" to which there is "no key" (quatrain 32). All that Man is able to fathom is that "we" ourselves

> 23
>
> beneath the Couch of Earth
> Descend--ourselves to make a Couch--for whom?

Humanity, in this respect, is no different from anything else that exists in this world:

> we too into the Dust descend;
> Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
> Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer [hence
> the reason for including "A Book of
> Verses in quatrain 12], and--sans End!

The poet's lament, then, arises not simply from the fact that Man is doomed to a mortal existence, but that Man, contrary to all desires and aspirations, is not "divine" as well. He is merely a creature of Creation.

Jessie E. Cadell points out in her article, "The True Omar Khayam," that

> Khayyam's view of death is coloured by a strong dash of materialism; whatever he may think, he talks of nothing but the death of the body--a kind of materialism common enough in Eastern thought and which even its mystics never escape. . . . He refers again and again to burial, the washing of the body, the making of the bier, the loosening of joints, the separation of the members, the mixing with earth, and the return to the elements--being used in the course of time by the builder and the potter to build walls, porticos, and palaces, to make jars, jugs, and pots.[51]

The same comments could apply to FitzGerald's translation. The "view of death," however, entails more than just "a strong dash of materialism."

Throughout the "poem" the point is repeatedly made that Life is a passing thing; and by "passing" the poet means specifically moving. Thus when he sees the "Leaves of Life . . . falling one by one," or looks "to the blowing Rose," or casts his eye on the "flowing" Water, or speaks of the "blowing" Wind, he is reminded essentially of one idea: that "to exist" and "to pass" are one. All that exists must be "flowing" or "blowing" or "growing" or "rising" or "falling" or "dying"--moving, in other words, towards a determined end which is not just "material" (the "view of Life," for that matter, is "coloured with a strong dash of materialism" as well), but also "static."

Death, then, is conceived of, within the symbolic "scheme" of the "poem," as being that which marks the end of the "linear" progression of Life: just as the Winds and Waters blow and flow in one direction, the Roses and Leaves fall to "Earth." Likewise Man is bound towards a Death which, as Cadell points out, reduces him "to the elements," whereby he can be fashioned into a "pot" or a "jug," but no longer return to the (higher) status of Man.

The contrast between Life and Death--between the "blowing Rose" and the motionless "Earth"--then, is essentially one between the "dynamic" and the "static"; and since Death is that which marks the end of the "linear" progression (of Life), the symbols of Death are extended beyond the actual decaying of the body (the Nature imagery, in other words) to the setting at large. Thus the poet does not have to look at the "Earth" to be made aware of the "end" in store for him; the cry of the "Muezzin" from the top of "the Tower of Darkness" (the minaret) in quatrain 25, with the words, "Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There," is just as effective a reminder--as is the "dark Ferrāsh" in quatrain 45, who "strikes" the "Sultān" as he "rises."

Juxtaposed against this "linear" movement, however, is the "cyclical" movement of the Universe, the Spheres, the Wheel of Heaven, the Potter's Wheel, and all those circular images of the "Cup" and "that inverted Bowl they call the Sky," signifying the Eternal as opposed to the Temporal condition. Just as Man is helplessly "fixed" to the "linear" flow of Life, likewise the Universe moves according to its own "fixed" laws. This is the sorry situation the poet comes to bewail at the end of his oration in the "Wilderness": that the two movements of Life (the Eternal and the Temporal) are geometrically opposed to one another. And with this

observation, he embarks upon his philosophical utterances, based upon the "shikāyat i rozgār" (complaints of the Wheel of Heaven or Fate), the "hajw" (satires on hypocrisy), the "kufrīya" (irreligious and antinomian utterances), and the "munājāt" (addresses to the Deity), all of which combined form the "argument" of the "poem."

In conclusion, the "argument" of the "poem" can be summed up as follows: Since Man is doomed to have but "a momentary taste / Of BEING," and then to disappear into "NOTHING" without knowing "Why . . . Whence . . . Whither" he comes and goes, what is he, the poet asks, but "the Pastime of Eternity?" What good is his intelligence or his religion?

26

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
Of the Two Worlds so wisely--they are thrust
  Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words
    to Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt
      with Dust.

In his youth the poet

27

did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
  About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

The only "Harvest" that he reaped from all this sophistry was that (28): "I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

He casts aside, therefore, all religious speculation about the other world as mere "threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!" His experience tells him that

63

One thing at least is certain--This Life
flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is
Lies--
The Flower that once has blown forever
dies.

But if neither the poet nor other men can unravel the "Master-know of Human Fate," this does not mean that a Superior Being ceases to exist; for it is the "Potter" that molds the "Pot," and not the other way round. Some Power invariably set the "Knot" there, even though that Power is "Invisible." And here lies the crux of the poet's dilemma: why is it that Man is separated from his Maker (symbolically, why are the two "movements" of Life geometrically opposed to one another)? The one has the power to create, and the other is created by "His" power; yet both exist apart.

The poet refuses to believe that the separation has anything to do with "Sin":

78

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

Nor will this mysterious Power be bought off with prayer or "Gold":

71

The Moving Finger writes, and having writ,
Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

The Supreme Being, in fact, is conceived of as having no anthropomorphic qualities at all. "HE" comprehends everything;

and yet the distance between Him and Man is measured in terms of the Ptolemaic (quatrain 31) and Platonic (quatrain 68) universe. Man resides at "the Earth's Center" and his Maker at the farthest circle or "Gate" from him. At the same time, Man is also made of "Baser Earth," and he remains as such until the "Divine" hand shapes his "Soul": the "Baser Earth" being analogous to a state of subexistence and illusion--

68

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
  Round with the Sun-illumin'd Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show.

If such is the condition of Man, then, to be molded from "Baser Earth" only to be turned back into "Dust," to be separated from his Maker, and to know nothing about the nature of his existence or have any control over it, then he is nothing but a helpless "Piece" in a

69

  Game He [the Master of the Show] plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days:
  Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

He is trapped by "Fate," as everything in his environment is:

72

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
  Lift not your hands to <u>It</u> for help--for it
As impotently moves as <u>you</u> or I.

Under these circumstances, the best he can do is to put aside all thoughts of salvation and to make the most of his "momentary taste / of BEING": to seek pleasure and love and drink "Wine"--

21

Ah, my Belovēd, fill the Cup that clears
TO-DAY of past Regret and future Fears:
  To-morrow!--Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

Accordingly, the "poem" alternates between expressions of Doubt and Despair and calls for "Wine," and the climax is reached when the poet, in a show of defiance, reveals a "Desire" which is tantamount to asking for an entirely new set of circumstances centered around Man:

99

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
  Would not we shatter it to bits--and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's desire!

Summarizing the points made about the structural and symbolic scheme of the Rubaiyat, it was mentioned that FitzGerald's major innovation was to create out of the poems in Persian a single "poem" in English. First, he remolded the "rubāi," a two-line poem with four divisions, into the stanzaic quatrain. Second, setting aside the "dīvān" arrangement of the original, whereby the Persian poems succeed each other according to alphabetic rhyme ("a strange succession of Grave and Gay"), he strung the English verses together "into something of an Eclogue." Third, he conceived of a thematic

development for his "poem," whereby the narrator, an old man, tries in vain "to unshackle his Steps from Destiny, and to catch some authentic Glimpse of To-morrow," only to fall back on "To-day" as the "only Ground he got to stand upon, however momentarily slipping from under his Feet." This progression, in turn (as pointed out), is reflected in the passage of Time, which functions in the "poem" not only as a motif, but as an integral part of the framework as well: the period covered corresponding simultaneously to the passing of a day, beginning with Dawn and ending with Night, and to the cycle of a year, beginning with Now Ruz, the Persian New Year, and closing with Ramadan, the month of fasting. Fourth, not only did he set aside the mystical utterances which appear in the original, but he conceived of the "poem" (especially in the later editions, which appeared after the publication of Nicolas' versions) as an attack on the Sufi point of view.

FitzGerald's conception of a "scheme" for his "poem," however, extended beyond these structural considerations. Examining the opening section of the Rubaiyat, it was seen that he had in mind a symbolic framework as well, whereby he could retain, omit, or elaborate on the imagery in the original: his aim being, again, to synthesize a series of disconnected poetic statements. Accordingly, he dispensed with the love imagery in the "day poem," fashioned the "spring song" into an expression of lament, and created out of the satirical, blasphemous, and devotional utterances of Khayyam an argument exposing the dilemma of man, who is pitted against the forces of nature and fate, who acknowledges his own weakness and fallibility, but who cannot bring himself to acknowledge another set of circumstances.

Notes to Chapter V

[1]Arberry, Romance, pp. 192, 137.

[2]E. H. Whinfield, The Quatrains of Omar Khayyam (London: Trübner & Co., 1883), pp. 22-23. Also quoted in Dole, II, 424-25.

[3]George Roe lists some other "tajnīs" used by Khayyam in his translation of The Rubā'iyāt of Omar Khayyam (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1906), p. 16. Here he writes: "To this . . . form of word-play the Arabic alphabet readily lends itself; hence, in Persian, by merely altering the position of a dot, the meaning of many words may be changed. So it happens that a trifling change of position will convert a neighbor جار (jar) into a thorn خار (khar) and cause crime جرم (jurm) to become delightful خرم (khurram), while the addition of a dot will convert the seas بحار (bihar) into vapor بخار (bukhar), or transform the solution of a problem حل (hall) into the sail of a ship (jall) جل ; if the position of the dot be changed, however, so that جل (jall) reads خل (khall), the ship's sail will be converted into vinegar."

[4]Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[5]Dole, p. 3.

[6]Whinfield, p. 24.

[7]FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 104.

[8]Compare C. 137, for example, with some lines by Ibn al-Arabī: "Oh, her beauty--the tender maid! Its brilliance gives light like lamps to one travelling in the dark.
She is a pearl hidden in a shell of hair as black as jet,
A pearl for which Thought dives and remains unceasingly in the deeps of that ocean.
He who looks upon her deems her to be a gazelle of the sand-hills, because of her shapely neck and the loveliness of her gestures."
Quote taken from R. A. Nicholson, The Mystics of Islam (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 102-3.

[9]A. J. Arberry, Sufism (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1963), p. 115. See also the introduction to Hafiz of Shiraz by Peter Avery and John Heath-Stubbs (London: John Murray, 1952).

[10]Similar images are found in FitzGerald's translation of Salaman; consider, for example, the following passage taken from Arberry's edition of Salaman, 69:

> "Sun and Moon are but my Lady's
> Self, as any Lover knows;
> Hyacinth I said, and meant her
> Hair--her Cheek was in the Rose--
> And I myself the wretched Weed
> That in her Cypress Shadow grows."

Arberry gives a concise account of these and other mystical love images in his Sufism, pp. 113-15.

[11]As R. A. Nicholson points out in The Mystics of Islam, p. 105: "Love is the essence of all creeds: the true mystic welcomes it whatever guise it may assume." And he illustrates this notion with a quote from Ibn al-Arabī:

> "My heart has become capable of every form:
> it is a pasture for gazelles and a convent
> for Christian monks,
> And a temple for idols, and the pilgrim's Ka'ba,
> and the tables of the Tora and the book of
> the Koran.
> I follow the religion of Love, whichever way
> his camels take. My religion and my faith
> is the true religion.
> We have a pattern in Bishra, the lover of
> Hind and her sister, and in Qays and Lubnā,
> and in Mayya and Ghaylān."

Thus, the "phenomenal" world, through every act and gesture of love, becomes "a bridge for the Real" (109); as Rūmī writes:

> "Whether it be of this world or of that,
> Thy love will lead thee yonder at the last."

[12]Nicholson describes the "symbolic style" of the Sufis as follows: "It has been said that the Sūfīs invented this figurative style as a mask for the mysteries which they desired to keep secret. That desire was natural in those who proudly claimed to possess an esoteric doctrine known only to themselves; moreover, a plain statement of what they believed might have endangered their

liberties, if not their lives. But, apart from any such motives, the Sūfīs adopt the symbolic style because there is no other possible way of interpreting mystical experience. So little does knowledge of the infinite revealed in ecstatic vision need an artificial disguise that it cannot be communicated at all except through types and emblems drawn from the sensible world, which, imperfect as they are, may suggest and shadow forth a deeper meaning than appears on the surface" (Mystics, p. 103). For further discussions on this subject see chapters 1-4 in Nicholson's Mystics of Islam; chapters 5-10 in Arberry's Sufism; chapter 8 in Arberry's Aspects of Islamic Civilization (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967); and most important of all, chapter 5, "The 'Tarīqah,' the Spiritual Path and Its Quranic Roots," in Seyyed Hossein Nasr's Ideals and Realities of Islam (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966). At the end of the chapter Nasr provides an excellent bibliography on Islamic mysticism.

[13]FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 40.

[14]Arberry, Romance, pp. 70-71. The "Johnson" referred to is Francis Johnson's Dictionary of Persian, Arabic and English (London, 1852); the "Muezzin" is the Mohammedan crier of the hour of prayer; "Munshi" is a scribe; and "the last Quatrain but 3," according to Arberry (Romance, 138) is C. 524--which is odd, since the C. MS. in FitzGerald's possession contained only 516 tetrastichs.

[15]Arberry, Salaman, p. 82. First (1856) edition.

[16]"Ferrash" means servant.

[17]FitzGerald explains the meaning of this in his notes: "The 'False Dawn'; Subhi Kāzib, a transient Light on the Horizon about an hour before the Subhi sādik or True Dawn; a well-known Phenomenon in the East." FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 104.

[18]G. Wilson Knight discusses this notion in relation to the romantic poets in The Starlit Dome (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1960).

[19]For further explanation see Nasr, pp. 137-38.

[20]Arberry, Romance, pp. 193-94. Arberry cites the originals as well.

[21]Arberry, Sufism, p. 114.

[22]Arberry, Romance, p. 194.

[23]J. H. Buckley, The Triumph of Time (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 2.

[24]Hereafter all quotes, unless specified otherwise, will be taken from the fourth edition.

[25]FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 105. C. J. Pickering gives a more detailed explanation of the "poetic figure" in his article, "'Umar of Nīshāpūr," which appeared in the National Review, XVI (December, 1890): "The quickening breath of Jesus is frequently made a poetic figure by the Persians, and sometimes, as in the Masībat-nāmeh of 'Attār, the effect of its miraculous exertion is described; but nowhere, so far as we are aware, is the spiritual significance so beautifully brought out as in the above [Nicolas, p. 39]. We must, however, bear in mind that, by the Persian, Jesus was regarded less as the penultimate prophet of Islām than as the supreme Sūfī, the master-mystic who has attained absolute identity with Deity, and who was, to all who followed in the same path of contemplation and purity, at once a Teacher and a Type." Quote taken from Dole, p. cxxii.

[26]Arberry, Romance, pp. 194-95.

[27]Ibid., pp. 109-10.

[28]Edward Heron-Allen, Edward FitzGerald's Rubā'iyat of Omar Khayyām (London: Quartich, 1899), p. 13. Quoted by Arberry, Romance, p. 195.

[29]FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 105.

[30]Ibid., p. 104.

[31]Wright, III, 459.

[32]Arberry, Romance, p. 196.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid., p. 197.

[35]FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 105.

[36]Mircea Eliade, Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1959), p. 20.

[37]Ibid., p. 54.

[38]Quote taken from quatrain 52:

> "A moment guess'd--then black behind the Fold
> Immerst of Darkness round the Drama roll'd
> Which, for the pastime of Eternity,
> He [THE MASTER, quatrain 50] doth Himself
> contrive, enact, behold."

[39]Eliade, pp. 54, 62.

[40]Arberry's translation in Romance, p. 195.

[41]Eliade, p. 69.

[42]Arberry, Romance, p. 197.

[43]"Rustum," FitzGerald explains in his notes, was "the 'Hercules' of Persia, and Zāl his Father, whose exploits are among the most celebrated in the Shāhnāma. Hātim Tai [was the model] of Oriental Generosity." Rubaiyat, p. 105. The story of Hātim is recounted briefly in Sir Richard Burton's Arabian Nights.

[44]Ibid., pp. 33-37.

[45]A. J. Arberry, Classical Persian Literature (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967), p. 43.

[46]Arberry, Romance, p. 195.

[47]A. C. Swinburne, Selected Poems (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 257.

[48]In the original, C. 98, the "Caravanserai" is an "Inn" ("ribāt"). See Arberry, Romance, p. 203. FitzGerald changed the location from the city to the wilds.

[49]"Bahrām Gūr--Bahram of the Wild Ass--" FitzGerald says in his notes, was "a Sassanian Sovereign [who] had also his Seven Castles (like the King of Bohemia!) each of a different Colour: each with a Royal Mistress within; each of whom tells him a Story, as told in one of the most famous Poems of Persia, written by Amīr Khusraw [FitzGerald must have been thinking of the Haft Paikar or Seven Castles of Nizāmī, emulated by a number of poets, including the Indian poet Amīr Khusraw, also referred to as "the Parrot of India." See Arberry, Classical Persian Literature, pp. 274-78.]: all these Sevens also figuring (according to Eastern Mysticism) the Seven Heavens; and perhaps the Book itself that Eighth, into which the mystical Seven transcend and within which they revolve. The Ruins of Three of those Towers are yet shown by the Peasantry; as also the Swamp in which Bahrām sunk, like the Master of Ravenswood, while pursuing his Gūr." FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, p. 106. "Gūr" also means "grave" as well as "wild ass": a "tajnīs" used by Khayyam in the original, C. 102. See Arberry, Romance, p. 203.

[50]In the source for quatrain 19, O. 43 = C. 49, the "flowers" (both the rose and the tulip--tulip rather than "Hyacinth") obtain their color from the "blood of a prince" ("khūne shahryārī") rather than that of a "Caesar." See Arberry, Romance, p. 204. FitzGerald's note on the quatrain reads: "Apropos of Omar's Red Roses in Stanza xix, I am reminded of an old English Superstition, that our Anemone Pulsatilla, or purple 'Pasque Flower,' (which grows plentifully about the Fleam Dyke, near Cambridge,) grows only where Danish Blood has been spilt." FitzGerald, Rubaiyat, pp. 106-7.

[51]Cadell, p. 654.

GLOSSARY OF PERSIAN POETIC TERMS

Arkān: metrical divisions of a hemistich, literally supports. See Note 4, Chapter IV.

Ārūz: rules of prosody.

Bāhārīya: poems in praise of spring, gardens, and flowers.

Bayt: a line of poetry, consisting of two "masrāyeh" or hemistichs; plural "abyāt."

Dīvān: literally poetical or collected works; the last letter of a rhyme word signifying the position of a poem within the collection.

Firākīya: love poems on the joys of reunion with the Beloved, earthly or spiritual.

Hajw: poems satirizing hypocrisy and the impiety of the pious.

Kufrīya: irreligious and antinomian poems, charging the sins of creatures to the account of the Creator, and praising wine and pleasure.

Misrā: a half-line of poetry or hemistich; plural "masrāyeh."

Munājāt: poems addressed to the Deity, bewailing sins and imploring pardon, and craving union with the truth ("al hakk") or Beloved One.

Qāfiyeh rhyme: end or internal rhyme involving use of different words. See Note 7, Chapter IV.

Radīf rhyme: end or internal rhyme involving the repetition of the same word.

Rubāi: a poem consisting of two lines or "abyāt" (plural of "bayt") with either the first, second, and fourth "masrāyeh" (plural of "misrā") or alternately all four "masrāyeh" ending in either the "qāfiyeh" or "radīf" rhymes, or both; plural "rubāiyāt."

Shikāyat i rozgār: poems involving complaints about the wheel of fortune, or Fate, the loss of friends, and man's limitations.

Taghtī: scansion.

Tajnīs: a pun or play on words. See Note 3, Chapter V.

Wisālīya: love poems on the sorrows of separation.

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