

THE LIVING WORLD OF HAFIZ

PROF. USLOOB A. ANSARI

غزل گفتمی و در سفتی، بیا و خوش بخوان حافظ
که بر نظم تو افشاند فلک عقد ثریا را

Hafiz's claims to greatness based on his lyrical exquisiteness and intensity are indisputable: he stands undoubtedly at the apex of Persian lyrical poetry for a variety of reasons. In spite of expressing his genius in a form that had been hallowed or, perhaps, become state by the practice of acknowledged masters over the ages he is yet able to say something which strikes a responsive chord in the average reader's heart and has also an esoteric aspect to it, and this is paradoxical, indeed. The common man finds, a sympathetic interlocutor in him and the mystically-inclined regards him as 'the interpreter of mysteries'. What is most distinctive of Hafiz is not his luminous diction alone or the multiple levels of meaning he offers, but his total integrity. Emphasis has too frequently been laid and wrongly, I should think, on the hedonistic element in his poetry as if he were really asking us to abandon all serious concerns of life before the allurements of the senses and the bouts of drinking and revelry. The bacchanalian quality of it, in other words, has been unduly stressed and insisted on unjustifiably. This has been countered by the claim that the glorification of the senses is only a camouflage for making us look to a higher order of reality: it is only a ladder for reaching up the heights of Divine Beauty and Love. A preoccupation with mere epicureanism cannot guarantee the kind of greatness that Hafiz indubitably possesses and there are clear indications in his poetry that he wishes, every now and then, to outgrow the merely erotic experience which

might have been his starting-point, something that initiated him into and irradiated his vivid and expansive world. He is capable, simultaneously, of playing variations on the conventional themes of love for poetry and looking through the sensuous experience to realities that lie behind and beyond it. His ambivalence is, therefore, traceable to the erotio-mystic character of his poetry.

It would be futile to deny that Hafiz's poetry of the ghazal offers fine discriminations on the theme of love and in a tone of voice which is intimate, vibrant and exalting and hardly ever melancholy and depressing. The dialectic of love as conceived and presented by him seems to rest on a tripartite basis: the dispenser of the treasure of love, the fact of love itself and the heart that is ravaged and vulnerable. To confine oneself to the finesse with which the fact of love has been visualized and communicated one may keep spotlight in mind the following instances:

صبا بلطف بگواں غزالِ رعنا را
که سر بکوه و بیابانِ تو داده ما را
اے صبا گر بجوانانِ چمن باز رسی!
خدمتِ ما برساں سرود گل و ریحان را
چو کحلِ بینشِ ما خاکِ آستانِ شماست
کجا رویم بفر ما ازیں جناب کجا
بیادِ چشم تو خود را خرابِ خواب ساخت
بنائے عہدِ قدیم استوارِ خوابم کرد
مژدہ اے دل کہ مسیحا نفسے می آید
کہ ز انفاسِ خوشش بوے کسے می آید
مستم کن آنچناک، ندانم ز بیخودی
در عرصہ خیال کہ آمد کدام رفت

اشکِ من رنگِ شفق یافت ز بے مهری یار
طالع بے شفقت بین کہ دریں کارچہ کرد
زور د دوست نگویم حدیث جز باد دست
کہ آشنا سخن آشنا نگہ دارد
از صبا پرس کہ مارا ہمہ شب تا دم صبح
بوئے زلف تو ہماں مونسِ جانست کہ بود
کشتہ غمزہ خود را بزیارت می آئی
ز آنک بیچارہ ہماں دل نگر انست کہ بود
گداے میکده ام لیک وقت مستی بین
کہ ناز بر فلک و حکم بر ستارہ کنم
نقشِ خیالِ روے تو تا وقتِ صبحدم
برکار گاہ دیدہ بے خواب می زخم
ندانم ازچہ سبب رنگِ آشنائی نیست
سہی قدانِ سیہ چشمِ ماہ سیمارا
ہر دم از روئے تو نقشے زندم راہ خیال
باکہ گویم کہ دریں پردہ چہامی بینم
ہوئے مژدہ وصلِ تو تا سحر شبِ دوش
براہ باد نہادم چراغِ روشنِ چشم
بربوے عیدِ وصلِ چو نظارگانِ ماہ
چشمِ امل بر آن خمِ ابرو نہادہ ایم
نظیرِ دوست نہ دیدم اگرچہ از مہ و مہر
نہادم آئینہ ہا در مقابلِ رُخِ دوست
من گدا تمنائے وصلِ او میہات
مگر بخواب ببینم خیالِ منظرِ دوست

بنود نقشِ دو عالمِ که رنگِ اَلفِ بود
 زمانه طرحِ محبتِ نه این زمانِ انداخت
 صبا تونکھتِ آن زلفِ مشکبو داریق
 بیادگارِ بمانی کہ بوی او داری
 بلطفِ خال و خط از عارفاں ربودی دل
 لطیفہائے عجب زیرِ دامِ ودانہ تست
 جاں میدہم از حسرتِ دیدارِ تو چون صبح
 باشد کہ چو خورشیدِ درخشاں بدر آئی

This poetry reflects a sort of exuberance and ecstasy that is not met with in other poets and to the same degree. This is brought out in three whole ghaals, sharing a unity of impression all along, and whose opening couplets are as follows:

کرشمہ و بازارِ ساحری بشکن
 بغمزه رونق و ناموسِ سامری بشکن
 اے کہ با سلسلہ زلفِ دراز آمدہ
 فرصتِ باد کہ دیوانہ نواز آمدہ
 اے دل گراز از آن چاہ زرخداں بدر آئی
 ہر جا کہ روی زودِ پشیمان بدر آئی
 رسید مژدہ کہ ایامِ گمِ نخواہد ماند
 چنان نماںد و چنیں نیز ہمِ نخواہد ماند
 سرودِ مجلسِ جمشید، گفتہ اند، این بود
 کہ جامِ بادہ بیادر کہ جمِ نخواہد ماند
 بیخود را شعثہ پر تو ذاتم کردند
 بادہ از جامِ تجلائے صفاتم دانند

آن دوچه فرخنده شبی چه مبارک سحرے بو
 شب قدر که این تازه برائے دادند
 خیز و در کاشه زر آب طربناک انداز
 پیشترز آن که شود کاسه سر خاک انداز
 چشم آلوده نظر از رخ جانان دور ست
 بر رخ او نظر از آنه، پاک انداز
 خرم آن روز کزین منزل ویراں بردم
 راحت جاں طلبم و ز پیے جانان بروم
 چون صبا با تن بیما و دل بی طاقت
 بهوا داری آن سرو خرامان بردم
 بهوا داری او ذره صفت رقص کتاں
 تالب چشمه خورشید درخشاں بردم
 دوش دیدم که ملایک در میخانه زدند
 گل آدم بسر شتند و به پیمانہ زوند
 فاش میگویم و از گفته خود دلشادم
 بنده عشقم و از هر دو جہاں آزادم
 طاہر گلشن قدسم چه ہم شرح فراق
 کہ درین وامگہ حادثہ چون افتادم

But it is worth noticing that this exuberance is not just frothy and ephemeral but is the product of experience that has been assimilated and become mellow and poised. Symbols like ;b,d.4dG,.L..”j).’]though conventionalized to satiety, have been invested ‘by Hafiz with a new and creative potential. To focus attention on just three of these: or tavern is the symbol of conviviality, of the bracing atmosphere of out-of-doors life and of togetherness, it is a place which is barred against inhibition-mongers, and

گل، بلبل، صبا، ساقی، می خانه are symbolic of accusers, inquisitors, traffickers in religion and those who are possessed of a selfhood vision and are promoters of a reductionist ethics. And, v) or J4) is a word of polyvalent connotations; Z) is not only the non-conformist, reviler of the established cannons, an idol-breaker but also one who is capable of exercising a certain degree of lively lucidity and brings into play a self-conscious disengagement with the superficialities of life. His behaviour is sometimes undoubtedly shocking and scandalous and this is the means of disorienting the most composed and solidly self-complacent spirits. He also scoffs at the expense of those who pride themselves on their narrowly-conceived idealisms and their habit of exclusivizing of things. His inspired libentirism is aimed at the rejection of all those social taboos that are restrictive and life-denying and he recommends by his own precept and example a kind of abandonment and suppleness that the convention-bound members of society are timid to approve. He is also starkly opposed to all forms of hypocrisy and cannot put up with any facade of religiosity and priggishness. With it, perhaps, also goes freedom from dogma, sectarianism and those hide-bound prejudices which prevent us from encountering Reality courageously. And he is one who is intoxicated with the passion to catch a glimpse of the Divine and to him falsity in behaviour is a cardinal-isin.

Apart from the ecstatic tone and the outward-looking atmosphere of the ghazals, Hafiz is also a master craftsman, capable of matching image with rhythm, handling pairs of opposites and tonalities of modulation with deftness, making striking concision of paradoxes, displaying an iridescence of colours and in a way exploiting all the subtleties and virtuosities of the Persian language to the farthest extent. His power of organization is brought out in the chiselled clarity of phrase, a marmoreal smoothness and a sense of perfect adequacy in the modalities of expression, extracting from words all their potential suggestibility. He is fascinated by the task of presenting the beloved and the experience of love in terms that are evocative of an aesthetic delight. The whole of the variegated physical world around him, the whole

panorama exposed to the senses, and the sentient life in all its fecundity to which he is keenly sensitive are all drawn on and have their impact on his power of visualization:

بلبلے برگِ گلے خوش رنگ در منقار داشت
اندر آن برگ و نوا خوش نالهائی زادداشت
گفتمش در عین وصل این ناله و فریاد چیست
گفت مارا جلوہٴ معشوق در این کار داشت
خیز تا بر کلکِ آن نقاش جاں افشان کنیم
کاین ہمہ نقشِ عجب در گردشِ پرکار داشت
جمالت آفتابِ ہر نظر باد
ز خوبیِ روئے خوبت خو بتر باد
ہمارے زلفِ شاہین شہپرت را
دلِ شاہانِ عالم زیرِ پر باد
دلے کو عاشقِ رویت نباشد
ہمیشہ غرقہ در خونِ جگر باد
نفسِ بادِ صبا مشکِ فشانِ خوابد شد
عالمِ پیرِ دگر بارہ جوانِ خوابد شد
ارغوانِ جامِ عقیقی بسمنِ خوابد داد
چشمِ نرگسِ بشقایقِ نگرانِ خوابد شد
رسید مژدہ کہ آمد بہار و سبزہ دمید
وظیفہ گر برسد مصرفش گلست و نبید
صفیرِ مرغِ برآمد بسطِ شرابِ کجاست
فغانِ فتاد بہ بلبلِ نقابِ گل کہ کشید
زروے ساقیِ مہوشِ گلی بچیں امروز

که گردِ عارضِ بستانِ خطِ بنفشه دمید
در حلقهٔ گلِ وه مل خوش خواند دوش بلبل
هات الصّبو ببوا یا ایّها السّکارا
نشانِ عهدو وفا نیست در تبسمِ گل
بنال بلبلِ عاشق که جائے فریا دست
بنفشه طرهٔ مقتول را گره میزد
صبا حکایتِ زلفِ تو درمیان انداخت
در گلستانِ ارم دوش چو از لطفِ هوا
زلفِ سنبل به نسیمِ سحری می آشفست
شبِ تاریک و بیمِ موج و گردابی چنین حائل
کجا دانند حالِ ما سبکبارانِ ساحلها
میذمد صبح و کله بست سحاب
القبوح القبوح یا اصحاب
میچد ژاله بر رُخ لاله
المدام المدام یا احباب
شگفته شد گل حمرا اوگشت بلبل مست
صلائے سرخوشی اے صوفیانِ باده پرست
نثارِ روے تو هر برگِ گل که در رچمنست
فدایِ قدِ تو هر سرو بن که بر لب جوست
سحر بلبل حکایت با صبا کرد
که عشقِ روے گل با ما چها کرد
خوشش باد آن نسیمِ صبحگاهی
که دردِ شب نشینان را دوا کرد
نقابِ گل کشیده زلفِ سنبل

گرہ بندِ قبا چوں غنچہ وا کرد

One cannot help feeling that the elemental images, of گل، بلبلی are not used by Hafiz for purposes of embellishment but because of his intimate and close contact with palpable reality and for distancing his own emotional predicament. Of very frequent occurrence in his poetry is the image of صبا which, in particular, serves a dual purpose: it is the symbol of spirit and inspiration and it also is the medium of communication between the lover and the beloved, acquainting the latter with the anguish and desolation of the former. And similarly, symbolic of grace and stateliness, with the addition of the suffix خوامان is evocative of the dynamic personality of the beloved. صبا also performs the function of the insinuator or غماز and carries with it the subtle suggestion of the intermediary; it scatters, moreover, the aroma of the beloved in far-flung corners of the earth. In order to emphasize the livingness of the present Hafiz is sometimes given to linking it with the past and revivifying it through the act of reminiscing thus:

یاد باد آنکہ نہایت نظرے با ما بود
رقمِ مہرِ تو بر چہرہ ما پیدا بود
یاد باد آنکہ رخت شمعِ طرب می افروخت
دیں دلِ سوختہ پروانہ نا پروا بود
یاد باد آنکہ چو یاقوتِ قدحِ خندہ زد
درمیان من و لعلِ تو حکایتہا بود
یاد باد آنکہ در آن بزمگہ خلق و ادب
آنکہ او خندہ مستانہ زدے صہبا بود
یاد باد آنکہ سرکوی تو ام منزل بود

دیده را روشنی از خاکِ درت حاصل بود
راست چون سوسن و گل از اثرِ صحبتِ پاک
بر زباں بود مرا آنچه ترا در دل بود
آه از آن جو رو نطاول که درین دا مگه است
آه از آن سوز و نیازے که در آن محفل بود

It is evident that Hafiz is deeply intrigued by man's existence in this world of space and time, his participation in the glories and triumphs of his earthly sojourn, his involvement in its vicissitudes at every point and his savouring of sensual delights, in all their keenness and intensity, so long as he can afford them in accordance with the emotional temperature of his life. It may, however, be added that this harking back to the past may also amount to a sort of nostalgia for the primordial mode of existence from which there has been a descent into this world.

Though equable, suave and mild-toned on the whole Hafiz is also given to challenging the status quo, his ebullient and combative spirit will not let him take things on their face value. Being a poet of massive energy and infinite resilience he proposes the restructuring of the universe around him and will have no commerce with either facile rationalism or illusionism created by our own fancies. His passionate protest against decadence and the struggle to emerge out of it is brought out even by the ringing tones of his voice. Come, he seems to be saying, let us split open the domed ceiling of the firmament, think of laying out a new world, pour heady wine into the goblet, scatter rose-petals and sweets into the incense-bearer, cross hands and feet in a sort of jazz movement, put the record of our doings straightaway before the Creator in the hope of getting a fair deal and engage صبا as a mediator: all these are, perhaps, gestures and strategies proposed for unfolding a new scheme of things as against the monotonous, soulless and mechanized routine of daily life. Mounting a powerful assault on things as they are Hafiz

wishes to insinuate artfully his own vision of things. The juxtaposition of distinct and sometimes discordant images, hammering his view-point with insistent concern and denunciation of those who merely indulge in day-dreaming or pettifogging and have not enough courage to face the stark realities of life leave their imprint on Hafiz's readers. He would like to create his own universe whose outline, however, nebulous at the moment, is likely to ensure the maximum freedom from the tyranny of the dogma. In an excellent, oft-quoted ghazal which is marked by the swirl of passion, the resonance of the soul and the energy of its kinetic images all the notions dwelt on just now have been fervently communicated and the reader cannot help falling under the spell of their creative verve and excitement;

بیاتا گل بیفشا نیم و مے در ساغر اندازیم
فلک را سقف بشگافیم و طرح نو در اندازیم
اگر غم لشکر انگیزد که خونِ عاشقان ریزد
من و ساقی بهم تازیم و بینا دش بر اندازیم
شرابِ ارغوانی را گلب اندر قح ریزیم
نسیم عطر گردانرا شکر در مجسمه اندازیم
چو در دستت روودی خوش بزن مطرب مرودی خوش
که دست افشان غزل خوانیم و پاکوبان سر اندازیم
صبا خاکِ وجودِ مابدان عالی جناب انداز
بود کان شاهِ خوبان را نظر بر منظر اندازیم
یکی از عقل می لافد یکی طامات می بافد
بیا کاین داور بهارا به پیش دوار اندازیم
بهشتِ عدن اگر خواهی بیابا ما به مے خانه
که از یائے خمت روزے بحوضِ کوثر اندازیم
سخن دانی و خوش خوانی نمی ور زنددر شیراز

بیا حافظ کہ تا کود را بملکہ دیگر اندازیم

What is particularly noticeable here is the emotional pressure, built up little by little, and the superabundant energy at his disposal and its exploitation both for purposes of struggle and resistance and the eloquence of his utterance is climaxed h) saying:

بیا حافظ کہ تا کود را بملکہ دیگر اندازیم

The polarization of the world of the senses and of the spirit is something which is distinctive of Hafiz: his mind travels freely, and untrammelled, from one to the other; in other words, there is always the possibility that while his gaze is fixed on the mundane world he is really looking beyond its opaqueness to the transparency of the cosmic domain. Despite his firm grounding in the academic disciplines of the day, especially the Islamic sciences, Hafiz shows some awareness of the Kantian limits to human cognition, and human existence is therefore for him a riddle that defies comprehension. Following the lead of the merciless and exclusivizing logic, based on verifiable propositions, all our intellectual explorations are bound to land us ultimately in a blind alley whereas the grasp of the unfathomable Mystery depends upon some sort of inner impulse or supra-sensuous approach to things. While contemplating the paradoxes and ambivalence of life - the mingled yarn of good and evil - Hafiz has grown convinced that 'the circle of our human understanding is a very restricted area' and we are wrapped in a 'cloud of unknowing'. Despite straining our capacities to the utmost we are still unable to make any sense of the great enigma and hence the vien of scepticism in Hafiz that is often revealed thus:

کس ندانست کہ منزل گہ مقصود کجاست
این قدر ہست کہ بانگِ جر سے می آید
آن کہ پر نقش زد این دائرہ مینائی

کس ندانست که در گردش پر کارچه کرد
نه شوی واقفِ یک نکته ز اسرارِ وجود
گر تو سرگشته شوی دائره دوران را

جنگ هفتاد و دو ملت همه را عذر بنه
چون ندیدند حقیقت ره افسانه زدند
هر دم در انتظار و درین پرده راه نیست
یا هست و پرده درآ نشانم نمی دهد
دید مش خرم و خندان قدح باده بدست
و اندر آن آنه صد گونه تماشا می کرد
گفتم این جامِ جهان بین بتو که داد حکیم
گفت آن روز که این گنبدِ مینای کرد

The second half of the first couplet underscores the strictly limited scope of the categories of knowledge: in the second O half of the fourth one, a distinction has been set up between Appearance and reality and in the fifth one the fact that man has been deliberately kept under delusion is no less apparent. Along-side these, may also be put the following couplets:

مادر پیاله عکسِ رخ یار دید ایم
اے بیخرز لذتِ شرکِ مدام ما
حدیث از مطرب دی گوو رازِ دهر کمتر جو
که کس نکشود و نکشاید بحکمت این معمارا
چیست این سقفِ بلندِ ساده و بسیار نقشق
زین معما هیچ دانا در جهان آگاه نیست
رازے که بر غیر نگفیم و نگوئیم
با دوست بگوئیم که او محرمِ راز ست

بروای زاید خود بین کہ ز چشم من و تو
رازِ این پرده نہان است و نہاں خواہد بود
خیز تا بر کلکِ آن نقاش جان افشاں کنیم
کایں ہمہ نقشِ عجب در گردشِ پرکار داشت

Here it is worth pointing out that are by an inversion of the accepted connotations, esoteric symbols of the intuitive processes of immediately apprehending Reality and جام جہاں بین, in particular, is the means through which the inner secrets of the cosmos are laid bare to whoever is capable of handling it. Similarly may رندان مست بادہ فروش far from being the seller of wine and the intoxicants, are mystic appellations for those who have mastered these intuitive processes. This lends credence to the contention made earlier that the use of poetic symbols makes possible ambiguity in expressiveness and the couplets of Hafiz may not be tied to any literalist interpretation. And with this lack of definite commitment go also his tolerance of schism, his idealization of love as a creative impulse, and a cementing and cohesive force, his power of empathy and his imaginative openness, and all these seem to inhere into a broad and universal outlook on life. It may be added that the term 'humanism' as I applied to Hafiz does not imply just a substitute for religion as morality, art and mysticism are substitutes for many other thinkers and creative artists. In his case this concept rests on two premises: lack of intellectual acceptance of the dogma of institutionalized religion and faith in the goodness of human nature, and a corollary to it is adherence to the notion of individual freedom. Hafiz does scoff at the dogmatists but at bottom his sensibility is activated by a deeply religious consciousness which is reflected in his poetry in subtle and devious ways.

With the buoyancy of spirit that is pervasive in the ghazal of Hafiz and that contributes to the livingness of his world also goes his sparkling wit and

the arched flight of his imagination in ridiculing the **واعظ** and the **محتسب**.

He is all the time engaged in deflating the self-appointed custodians of religious and moral ordinances whose malfunctioning is attended upon by bigotry and purblindness. Far from being indignant and vociferous Hafiz indulges in ironic effects with a view to exposing those who put on the cloak of hypocrisy or **خرقة سالوس** alas he suggestively designates it: (hypocrisy should in all fairness be included among the seven Deadly Sins as visualized by the European Medievalists) with a certain sting of wry and lethal humour. What provokes his contempt and hatred of them is the wide and unbridgeable chasm which seems to yawn between their pretensions and actual practices in daily life. They are, moreover, formalists and accusers (and that way Satan's accomplices and allies) as also unashamed apologists for the Church and the State, supporting their policy of repression and allowing hardly any latitude to the legitimate urges and cravings of the natural man. The pose of the non-conformist is struck by Hafiz for purposes of denouncing those who have turned religion into a commodity, thus denuding it of all its inner content - its moral and metaphysical postulates and imperatives. Those who impede or frustrate the life of love, whether Divine, that is, of man to God or profane, that is, of man to man, offer themselves as vulnerable to his scathing sarcasm, By temperament Hafiz is not inclined to express savage indignation against this class of sanctimonious divines: on the contrary, not unlike Ghalib, his withering scorn which results in bringing about their utter humiliation, is very often, though not always, expressed tangentially; they come to look, through Hafiz's demolition of them, as stuffed men, incapable of genuine religious faith. Putting it differently, one might uphold that in Hafiz's poetry, the coalescence of the witty and the shocking effects is achieved at the expense of those who suffer from sterility of faith and who do not hesitate to exploit the common believer with all the trickery and adroitness at their command:

واعظان کیں جلوہ بر محراب و منبری کند
 چون بہ خلوت میر دندان کارِ دیگری کند
 این خرقہ کہ من درام در رہن شراب اولی
 وین دفتر بے معنی غرقِ مے ناب اولی
 بیابہ میکده و چہرہ ارغوانی کن
 مرو بہ صومعہ کانجا سیاہ کار اند
 اے دل طریق رندی از محتسب بیا موز
 ہست است و در حق اوکس این گمان ندارد
 بادہ با محتسبِ شہر نہ نوشی ز نہار
 بخورد بادہ ات و سنگ بجام انداز
 برد اے زاہدِ خودبیں کہ ز چشم من و تو
 رازِ این پردہ نہان است و نہاں خواہد بود
 بمستوران مگو اسرارِ مستی
 حدیثِ جان مپرس از نقشِ دیوار
 یا رب آن زاہدِ خود بیں کہ بجز عیب ندید
 دودِ آبیش ور آئینہ ادراک انداز

The world of Hafiz's poetry is radiant, alive and tingling with energy and movement, and he tends to accept life without any mental or moral inhibitions. He recognizes the sanctity and divinity of the life affirming impulses of man and does not reject anything which is likely to contribute to his happiness through self-realization. His poetry abounds in images of light and colour and the beauty of the phenomenal world feeds and nourishes these images. Of frequent occurrences are images of smell the acutest of man's physical senses and these are the source of the peculiar fragrance in his poetry. All the luxuriant growth of a Persian garden: the roses, the jasmine, the tulips, the cypresses and the early morning breeze rustling through them

and scattering their smells and odours far and wide - all these which are evocative of a powerful response seem to be reflected in the ghazals of Hafiz. In him however, there is hardly any concern with the interplay of light and shade and this may be accounted for, as in the case of Iqbal, too, by the Islamic emphasis on light alone as the fountain-head of all creative energy which propels the universe. As all fictional works are human artifacts so is the poetry of Hafiz and its architectonics has been designed with a degree of finesse and sophistication not witnessed in any other major Persian poet of repute. This poetry has a taste of earthiness about it and it is penetrated by flashes of light and a kind of sinuous movement. It is not inward looking but smacks of the out-of-door life and is presented in the form of incandescent images and the lilt of harmony:

ندانم از چه سبب رنگِ آشنائی نیست
سہی قدانِ سیہ چشمِ ماہ سیمارا
باز پر سید ز گیسوئے شکن در شکنش
کایں دلِ غمزده سرگشته گرفتار کجاست
شربتے از لبِ لعلش پخشیدیم و برفت
روے مہ پیکرِ او سیر ندیم و برفت
شد چماں در چمنِ حسن و لطافت لیکن
در گلستانِ و صالحش نچمیدیم و برفت
خون شد دلم بیادِ تو ہرگہ کہ در چمن
بندِ قبائے غنچہ گل میکشاد باد
ہر سرو کہ در چمن در آید
در خدمتِ قامتت نگوں باد
چشمے کہ نہ فتنہ تو باشد
چوں گوہرِ اشک غرقِ خون باد

شبِ ظلمت و بیابان بکجا توان رسیدن
مگر آنکه شمع رویت به دہم چراغ دارد
چو شمع صبحد مم شد ز مہر او روشن
کہ عمر در سر این کاروبار خواہم کرد
گل بے رُخ یار خوش نباشد
بے بادہ بہار خوش نباشد
طرفِ چمن و طوافِ بستان
بے لالہ غدار خوش نباشد
نفسِ بادِ صبا مشک فشان خواہد شد
عالمِ پیرِ دگر بارہ جواں خواہد شد
خوشش بادِ آن نسیم صبح گاہی
کہ دردِ شب نشینان را دوا کرد
نقابِ گل کشیدہ زلفِ سنبل
گرہ بندِ قباچوں غنچہ وا کرد
بہار و گل طرب انگیز گشت و توبہ شکن
بشادی رُخ گل بیخِ غم زدل برکن
رسید بادِ صبا غنچہ در ہوا داری
زخود برون شد و برخود درید پیراہن
بدورِ لالہ قدح گیرد بے ریای باش!
ببوئے گل نفسے ہمد صبا می باش!
زرؤے دوست دلِ و دشمنان چہ دریا بد
چراغِ مردہ کجا، شمعِ آفتاب کجا
در آن زمین کہ نسیمی و ز دز طرۂ دوست
چہ جائے دم زدن نافہائے تا تاریست

باز آی کہ بے روئے تو اے شمعِ دل افروز
 ور بزمِ حریراں اثرِ نورو صفا نیست
 زین آتشی نہفتہ کہ در سینہٗ من ست
 خورشیدِ شعلہ ایست کہ در آسماں گرفت
 می خواست گل کہ دم زنداز رنگ و بوئے دوست
 از غیرتِ صبا نفسش در وہاں گرفت
 اشکِ من رنگِ شفق یافت ز بے مہری یار
 طالع بے شفقت بیی کہ دریں کارچہ کرد
 در ازل پر تو حسنت ز تجلی دم زد
 عشق پیدا شد و آتشیں بہمہ عالم زد
 عقل می خواست کزان شعلہ چراغ افروزد
 برقِ غیرت بدرخشید و جہاں برہم زد
 تنورِ لالہ چناں بر فروخت بادِ بہار
 کہ غنچہ عرقِ عرق گشت و گل بجوش آمد
 آتشی رخسارِ گل خرمنِ بلبل بسوخت
 چہرہٗ خندانِ شمعِ آفتِ پروانہ شد
 بہواداری او ذرہٗ صفتِ رقصِ کناں
 تالیخِ چشمہٗ خورشیدِ درخشاں بروم
 گرچنین چہرہٗ کشاید خطِ زنگاری دوست
 من رُخِ زردِ بخونابہٗ منقشِ دارم
 اے گل تو دوشِ داغِ صبحی کشیدہٗ
 ما آن شقایقیم کہ باداغِ زادہٗ ایم
 یا رب آن شاہِ وش، ماہِ رخ، زہرہٗ جبین
 دُرِّ یکتای کہ و گوہرِ یک دانہٗ کیست

آن روز شوقِ ساغرِ مے خرمم بسوخت
 کآتش ز عکسِ عارضِ ساقی در آن گرفت
 بر برگِ گلِ بخونِ شقایقِ نوشته اند
 کآنکس که پخته شد مئے چون ارغوان گرفت
 جان می دهم از حسرتِ دیدارِ تو چون صبح
 باشد که چو خورشیدِ درخشان بدر آئی

In the universe of Hafiz we do get the self-image of the lover as much as the portrayal of the beloved and in it the dominant images are those of dignity and power, or of self-awareness, in other words. He is given neither to self-abnegation nor self-prostration before the beloved: his bearing towards him bespeaks self-containedness and he goes to meet him on a footing of equality. Unlike the Petrarcian lover as also unlike the self-capitulating and dismal, conventional lover of Urdu poetry Hafiz is all the time conscious of his strength and dignity in the bargain of love. He is, however, not unmindful of his ravaged heart and sometimes feels nostalgic about the past. It is also worth pointing out that in Hafiz's poetry the love of sentient as well as amorous life, with all the sensuousness clinging to it, co-exists with the lure of some sort of transcendence. References to life in pre-²eternity or J;³ (anteriority without beginning) and in post-eternity or, AI (posteriority without end) are of frequent occurrence and so are those to some kind of hypothetical, primordial alliance or pact designated by him as پیمانہ الست Man seems to have a foothold both in this and the other world.

He nostalgically recalls the life of love lived by the translucent soul in that other region and that seems to serve as a paradigm for the impetuous, physical love experienced here and now in this mundane context. It is not for nothing that the epithet (as in the famous couplet:

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

is reiterated so often and with such haunting cadence and it seems to imply not simply a backward-looking glance at the recent past but connotes, I should think, some sort of primordial existence at a not viable point of duration. One might as well uphold that through it the series of mere events is turned into the unity of vision. Life in its temporal focus or in the immediate mundane context is referred to as one which had started in the deserted cloister or منزل ویران. The keen and intense desire to renounce it and undertake the backward journey to Jif provides a creative stimulus to the mind of the poet and keeps him in a state of flurry. He seems to be constantly oscillating between the temporal and the transcendental worlds, occupying a permanent station in neither. Similarly words like حضوری (Presence) and the, point of time called (retreat) and phrases like

روز وصال (Day of Union) and شب هجران (Night of separation) are also repeated very often, and significantly, and these connote separation from and union with the Divine, respectively. These two poles of Attraction and Repulsion, Contiguity and Distance form part of the cycle of being just as drunkenness and its accessories and Nothingness and its coordinates are portion of the theophany of the Divine effusion: Further, solitude and nostalgia are the two perennial motifs in Hafiz's poetry, and Hafiz did have an experience of the intoxication with and exaltation of the Infinite, and gazing at the face of the beloved reflects the unappeasable longing to catch a glimpse of the Divine effulgence:

از کران تا به کران لشکرِ ظلمتِ ولے
از ازل تا به ابد فرصتِ درویشانِ ست
نه این زمانِ دلِ حافظ بر آتشِ هوس است
که داغِ دارِ ازل همچو لالهٔ خود روست
سر ز مستی برنگیرد تا بصبحِ روزِ حشر

هر که چون من در ازل یک جرعه خورد از جام
 دوست
 نا امیدم مکن از سابقهٔ لطفِ ازل
 تو پس پرده چه دانی که خوبست و که زشت
 ره رو منزل عشقیم و ز سرحدِّ عدم
 تا به اقلهم وجود این همه راه آمده ایم
 گفتی ز سرِّ عهدِ ازل نکتهٔ بگومی
 آنکه بگویمت که دو پیمانہ در کشم
 سلطانِ ازل گنج غم خویش بما داد
 تاروی درین منزلِ ویرانه نهادیم
 روزی که سر زلفِ تو دیدم، گفتم
 که پریشانیِ این سلسله را آخر نیست
 به بیچ روی نخواهند یافت بشیارش
 چنین که حافظِ ما مستِ بادهٔ ازل است
 جلوهٔ کر دُرخت روزِ ازل زیر نقاب
 این همه نقش در آئینهٔ اوہام افتاد
 در خراباتِ طریقت ما بهم منزل شویم
 کاین چنین رفت ست در عهدِ ازل تقدیر ما
 در ازل پر تو حسنت ز تجلی دم زد
 عشق پیدا شد و آتشد بهمہ عالم زد

To conclude one may maintain that Hafiz's poetry, in spite of being tethered to the earth and reflecting as it does, the beauty and heterogeneity of the temporal setting and its concerns seems, nevertheless, to celebrate the effort and the triumph attendant upon it to transcend its limitations and priorities whenever possible.