

LALA I TUR – A FRESH ENGLISH TRANSLATION

(Persian Couplets from *Payam i Mashriq*)

Ismat Javid

There is no gainsaying the fact that Dr. Iqbal's Urdu poems, taken together represent only the tip of the ice berg when compared to his poetic outpourings in Persian, hidden from the eyes of a majority of his Urdu speaking admirers, Gone are the good old days when Persian ruled the roost, among the educated classes of undivided India, it being the official language in Indian Darbars fully patronized by the Muslim rulers and the nobles. All the well known Indian languages like Bengali, Punjabi, Rajasthani, Gurjarati and Marathi were greatly influenced by Persian. Urdu is rightly believed to be born out of the wedlock of Persian with Khari boli, Punjabi and Haryanvi. Even long after the advent of Urdu on the linguistic horizon in India, Persian continued to enjoy its popularity as a vehicle of expression both in prose and poetry. Even during the first half of the twentieth Century when Persian was no more the official language in India, there was a sizeable bulk of the Urdu speaking population which had a nodding acquaintance with the literary Persian. Dr. Iqbal had gained a leading command over Persian during the early days of his literary career by imbibing almost all the subtleties and niceties of Persian literature both in prose and poetry.

Iqbal's literary output in Persian is excellent in quality and excels Urdu in quantity. This of course does not mean that his Urdu poems and ghazals are in any way inferior to his Persian poetry. What, on my part, I want to emphasize is the fact that since Iqbal's Persian poetry carries his message more comprehensively and cogently than his Urdu poems, it becomes a must for his Urdu readers in order to fully appreciate the value and the depth of his philosophy.

Dr. Ismat Javid's versified version of Iqbal's two celebrated Persian Masnavies *Asrar-e-Khudi* and *Rumuz-e-Bekhudi* have earned him a wide spread fame in India and Pakistan. His versified translations are nearer the original in style, thought content and literary values.

Dr. Ismat Javid (b. 1923) was a well known figure among the literary circles as a critic, research scholar, linguist, translator and a poet. He was an ardent lover of Iqbal in India and contributed several articles on Iqbal's message and poetic style like "The Role of Nature in Iqbal's poetry," "The Relevance of Iqbal's message in the latest context of scientific technology," "The philosophy of Action in Iqbal's poetry", "The role of Mard-e-Momin" etc.

He also translated Dr. Iqbal's Persian quatrains as contained in *Payam-e-Mashriq* under the caption "Lala-e-Tur". His command over the English language and its rich vocabulary, his selective ability to choose the most appropriate English equivalents, coupled with his sympathy and deep understanding of Iqbal's philosophy and an insight into the poet's stylistic mannerism, has stood him in good stead in his successful attempt as a translator.

Since Dr. Ismat Javid's basic intention behind this venture was to introduce Iqbal to the non-Muslim English knowing communities in India who are neither exposed to the Urdu and Persian literary patterns of expression peculiar to these languages nor acquainted with the universal appeal of Islamic tenets on which is based Iqbal's philosophy, the translator has made a special effort to make his rendering as intelligible as possible to the non-Persian knowing English readers without committing a serious departure from the original text. In order to facilitate the understanding of Iqbal's philosophy, the translator has given captions to each and every quatrain, not found in the original. The literary merit of the English version in question can be well judged only after they are actually read. Seeing is after all, believing. This translation is being published here for the first time.

DR. AKBAR RAHMANI, India.

1. DEVOTIONAL HYMN

All that exists, is enamoured of His charms,

His supreme authority is challenged by none

Have you not seen the mark of prostration

On the forehead of the morn, mistaken for the sun?

2. **DIVINE LOVE**

It's Love which illumines my heart with sadness

My bleeding eyes can see the entire world,

Let that wise man be blind to mysteries!

Who holds that Love is nothing but madness.

It's Love which gives gardens a shower-bath

It's Love which makes the deserts blossom

It's Love which splits the surging ocean.

It's Love which makes the fish seek its path.

Love releases partridges to hawks for fight

And puts the latter to disgraceful flight.

Though for self-lying wait, springs in a surprise attack

Love, lying in wait, springs in a surprise attack.

It's Love which makes the tulips bleed,

Its Love which causes commotion to breed.

If you split the earth and view its crust,

You'll find it bleeding with Love's dagger-thrust.

Love doesn't fall to every body's lot.

Nor does Love befit all and sundry

The red-hot tulip shines with its burnt spot,

While cold and sparkless is blood-red ruby.

3. **INSATIATION**

Albeit roaming like the vagabond smell

What I am seeking, I can not tell.

Irrespective of the fulfilment of desire.

I'm dwelling in its constantly blazing fire

4. **WORLD-A PART OF HEART**

It's heart that count, not the world of mud,

Though the heart is but a drop of blood.

Though the eyes are accustomed to see things apart,

Every one's world is carried in one's heart.

5. **THORN vs. FLOWER**

The nightingale, once, complained to the Morn:

“The heart grows naught but the Tree of Gloom

Blest with long life is the unworthy thorn,

While the flower dies in the prime of its bloom!”

6. **THE FELLOW CREATOR**

Adam, the divine lover, carries to perfection

The Universe which was initiated by the Maker;

Explorer of mysteries, though a mystery himself,

Ought not be called, “The Fellow Creator?”

7. ETERNAL EXPLORER

Thought myself a mystery, I am eternal explorer,

Even in case, Reality lifts Its curtain

I shall still hesitate to call It certain,

It's 'Ifs and Buts' that I shall reseed further.

8. SELF-DEPENDENCE

How long, moth-like, will you dive

Into the fire and commit the unmanly suicide?

How long this dance around the flame outside?

Have a plunge into your inner fire and thrive!

9. STRONG HEART IN A STRONG BODY

Build a body out of a handful of dust

Harder than the stone-walled citadel

Develop therein a Heart, malleable yet robust

As a meandering stream through a rugged vale.

10. THE INNER AND THE OUTER SELF

My body was made a beauty by God

More beautiful than the garden of Heaven

But the cup-bearer, with the help of his liquid fire,

Kneaded my clay into a world of desire.

11. ADAM vs. IDOL

The Brahmin, on the Last Day, addressed God,

“The life-spark Thou created was of short duration.

Excuse me if I claim that the idol I made
Was more stable than Man, 'Thou had created'".

12. MORNING STAR

Oh you, the quick-paced Morning star on high,
You kept, vigil at night, while we men slept.
Our sleep displeased you, perhaps, that's why
Vigilant you came and vigilant you left.

13. WORLD SANS LOVE

Had the heart been as wise as the head,
The taverns would have been devoid of commotion
Man would have been without emotion,
The world would have been the abode of the dead.

14. THE YOUNG BIRD

Oh thou, the young bird! How ambitious thou art!
With the desire to scale the higher skies
Lust prevents us from flying as far,
But a vast firmament before thee lies.

15. LIFE INSTINCT

The taste for life is a delicacy to relish,
All creation is anxious to flourish,
When the sprouting rose-bud splits the bough,

With a playful smile it shoots above.

16. NIGHT-LONG BURNING

Before birth, the moth requested the Creator:

“Give me a breath-full of restless strife

Scatter my ashes in the morn if thou likest

But give me a night-long burning life”.

17. A WORD TO MUSLIMS

Oh Muslims, I have a word to confide to you

More enlightening, than the Word of the Holy Ghost.

I have withheld it from the idol-minded ones,

It is the secret of Abraham, the iconoclast.

18. THE DESIRE PRODUCING HEART

Oh heart! My heart! Don't make me go in search

Of my Lady-Love and leave me in the lurch.

It appears thou hast no other job on hand

Except to create a heap of desires (like the desert sand).

19. GROW LIKE A TREE

You do have an access to stardom free

But still you are stranger to your inner self,

Germinate like a seed lying underground,

That you may grow into a giant huge tree.

20. ABOUT DOING SOMETHING

A singing bird while perching on a tree

Was telling in the garden to every body'
"Bring out whatever's in your heart-a joy,
A melody; a plaint or a deeply heaved sigh".

21. FLAME-GULPING MOTH

Avoid telling me the ear-rending story
Of the moth, lying dead at the foot of the candle,
As for me, that moth is worth its name
Which, sustaining agony, gulps alive the flame.

22. SPRING-OUTSIDE AND INSIDE

If you have no zeal for seeking the Truth,
My visit to the garden will bring you no gains
To me, the spring is not the talisman of colours,
I enjoy what's within the flowers' veins.

23. INNER SELF

Come out of the whirl-pool of entity-non-entity,
Rise above the world of quality and quantity
And build the inner self in your body confine,
Like Abraham who raised the Holy shrine.

24. SOLITARY SONGSTER

Unlike my friends; the other garden birds,
I sing lonely on the branch of my nest
Leave me alone, if thou hast a delicate heart,
My songs ooze blood, (thy heart with smart).

25. THE WORLD OF CONCORD AND DISCORD

Thy world, oh God, is full of pleasing uproar

Though Thou hast made all, of the common core,

Yet the stranger is the heart to heart and the soul to soul,

But, the eyes do greet, whenever they meet.

26. STRUGGLE, THE ESSENCE OF LIFE

Alexander, told Khizer, "Why dost thou flee?"

Share the joys and pains of the land and sea

Thou art a distant onlooker only, not a fighter,

Join the struggle; die and thus live forever".

27. SEEING BEYOND THE SKIES

The throne of Kaikoba'd and Jamshid's cup,

The churches, the shrines, all've reduced to dust

Dust I am too, yet I look beyond the skies,

I don't know with what quintessence I'm made-up.

28. A LESSON FROM THE VERNAL CLOUD

If you clay body happens to shroud

A broken heart, ready to sprinkle blood-showers,

Learn how to shed tears from the Vernal Cloud

That, your tears may bring forth flowers.

29. MONOTONOUS LIFE-NOT WORTH LIVING

Like a painter, the ever-changing Life paints fast

Fresh pictures of the incoming and outgoing moments

One lacks indeed the spark of life

If one's present is the replica of its past.

30. IN CONGREGATION AND SOLITUDE

When my desire to sing brings me before a congregation,

The listeners applaud me in a big ovation.

But when to a secluded place I depart,

No trace of the outer world is found in my heart.

31. INTELLECTUAL FIRE

Your query; "What's the heart?" I admire!

The heart is the creation of my intellectual Fire.

It's this fire which brings my heart into play,

The moment it's off, the heart's a lump of clay.

32. DIVINE VISION—A POSSIBILITY

Reason claims: "You can never see Him,"

Yet, the hope to see God shall never be dim:

The "Episode of Sinai," shall never grow old

Every one has Moses in his heart's mould.

33. HEART IS BETTER THAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

By building mosques, temples, churches, I say

You have produced nothing but a lump of clay.

You haven't produced a heart instead, oh sage,

That frees one from others' bondage.

34. SOJOURN

I didn't attach my heart to a rosy

Garden nor have I found it cosy.

In the garden, like a morning breeze I crept,

Imparted lustre to the flowers and left.

35. DIVINE LOVE

Love made my clay into a wine-cup in motion,

I was but a drop, Love made me an ocean.

Reason had made my head a temple-so fine

Like Abraham Love converted it into a Holy Shrine.

36. GOD, IN SEARCH OF MAN

You went to the Mount Sinai for divine clue

Without knowing what's within you.

Find that lurking man within you, if you can,

God Himself is in search of such a man.

37. ADAM vs. ANGELS

When man is made of dust and angels; of Light,

Is it not, oh Gabriel a strange sight?

To see the Dust restless for Divine union

And the Light, unknown to the pangs of separation?

38. LEARNING V/S FAITH

If you want to ensnare the Phoenix of Learning,

Reduce your certainties; increase your doubts

But if interested in getting things done,

Believe in One, seek One and identify with One.

39. STRENGTHEN YOUR SELFHOOD

Don't fear death, my dear, any longer,

Don't go pale but strengthen your faith.

Realise your Self-Hood and make it stronger,

You shall then never die even after death.

40. BODY-SOUL RELATION

Don't ask me about the body-soul relation,

I don't fall a prey to such an enquiry indeed.

Like the restless breath, I wriggle in pain,

I am a plaintive note, escaping from the reed.

41. BEWARE OF BEAUTIES

A sage once told me, "Your heart laud.

Guard it against the Beauties Prime,

Because to surrender it except to God

Is unlawful and a heinous crime".

42. HEART IS ABRAHAM LIKE

Don't ask Razi, the meaning of the Qur'an

Which should be clear to your conscience, (the measuring rod).

The heart burns in the fire kindled by the Intellect,

The heart is like Abraham and the Intellect like Nimrod.

43. I AM

I hold my silence, about my existence or otherwise,

Because to say "I exist" is egoistic and sham
But some one within my bosom, whispers in a plain voice,
"I am; I am; I am; I am."

44. A WORD TO THE ROMANTIC POET

Tell the Romantic poet, whose poems may be blameless,
Why do you fake burning like a flameless tulip?
When you have no fire within you to mellow,
Nor can you brighten the eve of a grief-stricken fellow.

45. REAL IDENTIFICATION

A drop of water turns itself into a matchless pearl
When it extracts and acquires the lustre of its own.
Live among the like-minded, in a similar way
They, in their company, you look and feel alone.

46. HEART-A PLAY GROUND OF IDEAS

Oh you intellectuals and the sages smart,
To me, this query is an unsolved puzzle.
How can a clay body withhold a heart
Wherein ideas play like a leaping gazelle?

47. LIFE IS A STRUGGLE

Why do you spend your days in ease

By the seashore wherein blows the cool breeze,
If you want to live eternally, adopt this norm:
Jump into the sea and brave the storm

48. LIVING EARTH

I've a fathomless self with its widest range,
Whether I've Free Will or predestined, none can guess,
Nor the word-coining thinkers can trace,
I'm the living earth in a flux of change.

49. HALTING STAGE-STUMBLING BLOCK

Of the real aim of life, better not talk
When you are unaware of its multifarious side.
To keep abreast of life, I walk, with vigorous strides.
And treat my halting stage as a stumbling block

50. DIAMOND A STONE, GOLD A METAL

Become of your rating that you are prone
To see a brilliant diamond in a piece of stone.
A metal's value shoots hundred-fold
Because, oh miser, you see in it gold.

51. BETTER PARTNER

Unfaithful to me and given to discord,
My heart was looking out for a better partner,

It deserted me, as soon as it saw the Lord,
Like a tamed bird flying to its master.

52. DIVINE LOVE

Love, like a magician, assumes many a form,
(sometimes a cool breeze, sometimes a raging storm)
Lying in my bosom, it's a tiny dot,
When on my lips, it encompasses what not?

53. A NEWLY BORN BUD'S EXPECTATION

Don't be sad, oh newly-born bud;
What else do you expect from this garden?
Here are, the rivers; the trees; the flowers;
The breeze; the dew and the singing bird's jargon.

54. MASTERPIECE –A LABOUR LOST

With all its glory, attraction and glamour,
Beauty departs the rose, leaving it worth a dime,
I pity the Painter for his lost labour
Since his masterpiece vanishes away in time.

55. WORLD vs. HEART

Our boundless world, which is unique in its kind
Is like a fish submerged in the Ocean of Time,
This Ocean of Time you are sure to find
Plunged in my tiny heart, worth a dime.

56. GARDEN LOVER

Knower of the tongue of the tongue-less birds,
To the fold of the garden birds, I surely belong,
Mix my remains with the breeze when I die,
Since I have been around flowers life long.

57. WHAT IS SPRING IN REALITY?

The garden appears to be under colourful showers
But what's the inner side of the flaming flowers
And what's the reality? None can tell!
Does it look the same to the nightingale?

58. THOU AND I

Thou art the sun and I am a star,
I am brightened by thy shiny look,
I'm incomplete when thou art afar,
I am only a chapter of thy Holy Book

59. UN-ENDING GRIEF FOR GOD

It's better to nurture God's grief and pain
Than to unite with Him, since, as pointed out by a sage
"Better to take to the route serpentine
Than to rest and enjoy at the last halting stage.

60. SINCERITY OF FAITH PREFERRED TO RELIGION

Ignore my infidel head, which sketches; adores and discards features
And praise my heart that pines for God and His creatures

If thou findest me sincere in my word and deed,
What hast thou to do with my religion and creed?

61. MAN'S HEART –AN UNOPENED DOOR.

The Cypress is a freed slave of God's binding love,
His divine wine makes the flower shine to its deep core
The sun, the moon and the stars constitute His shrine
To which Man's heart stands as an unopened door.

62. BOUNDLESS BOUND

From stars to stars, celestial bodies roll,
The skies cry halt to the Wisdom's flight
But when I peep into my inner soul
Is not a 'boundless bound' within my sight?

63. LET'S HAVE A TRY

Don't say thy fate is sealed; it's not fair,
Under the revolving sky, there's always a way out,
Let's have a try in case thou entertains any doubt,
Step forward! Have a leap and lo! The success is there!

64. LOOK BACKWARD IN ORDER TO GO FORWARD!

Confined as I'm within my fantasy flights,
Which brightens my envisaged world, tiny yet vast,
Don't refer the calendar to determine my age,
Since I go backward in the direction of Golden past.

65. A QUESTION POSED TO THE CREATOR

How dost thou inspire my soul to sing; please tell?

How within me and outside me Thou simultaneously dwell?

Lamp-like, I burn with Thee and die without

How do thou fare, without me, O Matchless? Pray!

66. TO GOD—AN ENCOMPASSING POWER

My distracted breath is the wave of His Ocean,

Through His reed, my melody issues,

Like green grass, grown beside the lake of Eternity

His vital sap runs into my veins and tissues.

67. DON'T COMPLAIN OF MY LOVE

When the creative drive awakened within thee,

Thou created the world of multifarious dye,

Why then complain about my maddening Love?

It's thou who hast raised this hue and cry!

68. WHO SEEKING WHOM?

Whom do thou seekest? Him! Who is crystal clear!

Thou art thyself an enigma; why then trouble thy mind?

In searching Him, thou wilt find thy own image;

In searching thy own Self it's He whom thou wilt find!

69. DISOWN AN ARAB

If Islam is ingrained in a Muslim's nature,

He shall never boast of his pedigree and stature,

Disown an Arab for his grave deflection;

If he prides in his blue blood and fair complexion.

70. BIRDS OF THE SAME FEATHER

We are neither he Afghans nor he Turks,
Because we are the birds of the same feather,
None is superior on the basis of caste and colour,
We all belong to the New Spring, (brought up in common weather).

71. CUSTODIANS OF RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Our bosoms envisage a world (so beautiful and fine)
Our bodies bear hearts throbbing with an acute pain
Because our flasks contain the dregs of that wine
Which once brightened our souls (and enlivened our brain).

72. HEART—A DEWDROP OR A BUD?

Oh my heart! My heart! My heart!!
My sea, my ferry, my shore, my inn,
Hast thou alighted like a dewdrop from above?
Or hast sprouted like a bud from me within?

73. BEAUTY—AN ILLUSION OR REALITY?

To call a thing beautiful or clumsy, I always refrain,
Since their meaning are too intricate to explain,
We behold the flowers and thorns as on the bough,
But with in the bough, are they what they look above?

74. SOULLESS BODY

He who suffers no inward pain
Possesses a body with out a soul,

Soul, if thou really wantest to possess,
An endless suffering should be thy goal.

75. SECRET OF EXISTENCE

May I tell thee the secret of my existence?
I constantly struggle, therefore I exist,
Like a restless wave on the surface of an ocean,
I have no identity unless I turn and twist.

76. GOD'S RELATION TO MAN

With so much outer manifestations, yet behind the veil,
Thou art beyond my eager sight,
Running in my veins, like intoxicating wine,
Thou art difficult to hold and prone to flight.

77. THE LOVE-BORN PAIN

If thou, perchance, experience the love-born pain,
Discard the ideal of reaching thy goal,
Nurture this pain and retain it in thy soul,
Even at the sacrifice of thy cult and qualities of brain.

78. BIRTH OF A NEW ADAM

Oh Love; the deep secret of our heart,
Our field; our harvest; our basis; our trust.
Since these hollow-headed fellows have grown out-dated,
Come on and raise a new Adam from our dust.

79. MY SWEET SONGS

My poetry causes grief; let it cause,

I revel in my bemoaning without a pause,
How Alexander would know; knowing as he does to fleece.
That my sweet songs excel the land of Greece.

80. A RICH PAUPER

I am not a courtier, nor a Cavalier royal
I am far, far away from regal pomp and glory,
Yet this much fortune is enough to satisfy me;
Whenever I dig up my heart, I bring out a ruby.

81. PERFECTION OF LIFE

In order to achieve perfection in life,
Open thy inward eye, to the exclusion of those who surround;
Gulp down the world like a draught of water,
And exorcise the talisman of the Cosmos around.

82. THE INTRINSIC POWER OF MAN

Thou thinkest that Man is as helpless as clay,
Limited in the cosmos is his sway;
If so, then why has the miraculous Nature laid
The foundation of an ocean on his fountain-head?

83. THE FEARLESS V/S THE FEARFUL

A lion is a lamb to the fearless shepherd,
To a coward, the deer is a formidable leopard,
The ocean looks desert like if thou doesn't recoil,
If fearful, each wave looks like a crocodile.

84. SOUL-BODY'S WHETTING STONE

Thou thinkest that the soul is incapable of flights

When it is encaged in flesh and bone

In my view, the embodied soul attains greater heights,

It's like a dagger whose sheath serves as its whetting stone.

85. HOW CAN HEART BE PHYSICAL?

How does at all my heart create a desire?

Who sees through my eyes? And what? And how my heart

Happens to be my material body's part?

86. PARADISE AND THIS WORLD

In paradise, I was surprised to find

The same horizon which I had left behind,

A doubt then crossed my dazed mind;

“Is this the world of a similar kind?”

87. WORLD-THE MODEL OF CLAY IN THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

The world which is like a sketch today,

Is the product of the changing Time-space range,

The Providence's Hand shall smoothen it one day

This model of clay is in the process of change.

88. THE SUN

How dost thou, oh travelling in the sky,

Descend to my eyes from a distance so long?

Attached to this world, and living so high

Oh “eye-lash breaker”, to what place dost thou belong?

89. THE BASIS OF VIRTUE AND SIN

Crave out thy own path, if thou want to win,
It's torture to follow the footsteps of others,
If thou performest a novel act with thy own hands,
Call it a virtue, may it be sin.

90. HEART-ILL AT EASE IN THE BODY

Out of humour, with the organic elements,
Our heart is deeply hurt to the core,
It's ill at ease in the confines of the body;
This ocean is always at loggerheads with its shore.

91. PURE SIGHT FROM PURE LIGHT

Be in communion with the Nature's beauty,
Don't flee from Her out of fright,
When God has given thee the purifying eyes
Develop a pure insight out of this pure light.

92. SELF-CONFIDENCE

I prefer to plough my lonely furrow,
To borrow other's sight I never thought right,
Remaining aloof from Plato and Averros,
I scanned the world with my own insight.

93. THE ORIGIN OF SELFHOOD

None knows when did the self-hood originate,
It's not a Spatial Time bound slave
Khizer once suggested a brilliant point;

“The ‘Ocean’ never pre-existed its ‘Wave’!

94. COMING FROM DOWNWARD AND LOOKING UPWARDS

Learn the secret of life from a bud,

To whom life is real and not a mere fun.

Growing out of the dark recesses of the earth,

It looks upwards to the rays of the sun.

95. GOD’S ALL-EMBRACING BENEVOLENCE

Every flora and fauna bears His hallmark,

Every flower-cup glows with his sparking wine,

His branded mark burns like a lamp in every heart,

Thus He hasn’t left a single soul in the dark.

96. THE BIRTH OF SELFHOOD

When a narcissus bud sprouted at long last,

And the (morning) dew washed away the sleeping it bore

The Selfhood raised its head out of Selflessness,

The world found at last what it has been looking for.

97. MICROCOSM A REFUGE FO MACROCOSM

A macrocosm, in order to express itself

Developed a desire to escape-then ran

Away from the bosom of non-entity

And found its refuge in the microcosm called, (man).

98. HUNDREDS OF WORLDS AFTER DEATH

I know the secrets of the body and soul

That the idea of death will aggrieve me, is wrong.

What! If I lose this world? It's not my goal,
Within my heart, hundreds of words throng

99. CONNOISSEUR OF SONGS

My knowledge of the self grown tulip is sound,
I can smell the flowers still underground,
To the friend circle of the singing thrush I belong,
Because I am the connoisseur of its melodious song.

100. DESIRE IS THE BASIS OF EVERYTHING

The Desire is like a beautiful lyre
Whose strings modulate the fortunes, misfortunes
Of the world which dances to its tunes
All that Was; Is and to Be is a glimpse of Desire.

101. SELF QUEST

Why do you expect me to compose a ditty
When my heart is full of turmoil and pity?
I am unable to compose a poem full of zest
Because I am fully engaged in my own quest.

102. PERPETUAL SUFFERING

I own my permanence to perpetual suffering,
Fish-like, rest is forbidden in my faith.
I never seek the shore because on the shore,
There's a momentary stir, followed by non-ending death.

103. OBEISANCE-A FORM OF RESPECT

Oh the urban preacher! Why do you fume and fret

When the Brahmin calls you to make an obeisance to the idol?

After completing the image did not the Creator call

The Angels of the Heaven to lie before Adam prostrate?

104. THINKERS' FAILURE TO DISCOVER MAN

Oh you thinkers, you are unable to cross

The limited bounds of the material cosmos.

How can you catch hold of God with His Angelic clan

When you have failed even to ensnare man?

105. BE LOST IN THE DESERT IN ORDER TO FIND HIM

Don't choose the wrong path leading to a dead end;

Reap my rich harvest, before you decide to embark,

If you earnestly want to meet our Common Friend,

For a moment, be lost in the desert of my heart.

106. NATURE IN RELATION TO MAN

For centuries, I sat in thoughtful communion

With Nature, to the point of self-abnegation.

To compress my long episode in a tabloid

I fashioned; I adored; I destroyed.

107. SALE VALUE OF MAN

Free from the bondage of material existence,

In the expanse of eternity I flapped my wings.

It was Thou, who prized me high in Thy esteem,
And brought me into the mundane market (with trappings)

108. BODY INERT AND SOUL DYNAMIC

Whence these flush of ideas within my inner self?

Why am I surrounded with the mysteries chaotic?

Tell me, oh philosopher, the knower of subtleties,

Why is the body inert and the soul dynamic?

109. TRANSMUTATION OF HEART INTO MIRROR

Even though a beggar, I am proud of my worth,

I wriggle, I twine, I sing and suffer,

I warm you from within; with my fiery songs,

Alexander like, I transmute your heart into a mirror.

110. INNER LIGHT

Realizing your worth, your intrinsic strength

Make an ocean of a dew drop, oh Nature's boon!

For your inner light, don't depend on the moon,

Brighten your nights with your fiery breath.

111. HEART SURVIVES RESPIRATION

Your heart is independent of your breath,

The Day-Night sequence will never drive

Your heart to death; so fear not death!

The breath goes out, leaving your heart alive!

112. WILL HEART SURVIVE AFTER DEATH?

As long as thou remainest to me royal

I prefer my rags to robes of honour; thought royal,

Oh heart! May I ask thee with bated breath?

“Shalt thou continue to accompany me after my death?”

113. SELFHOOD BETTER THAN SELFLESSNESS

The Sufis claim to see God in self-renunciation.

I submit to them with all humiliation

That I consider that self-worshipper brilliant and bright

Who, while retaining his Self, sees God through its light.

114. HEART SLEEPING WHILE INTELLECT WIDE-AWAKE

Don't pass away, with blind folded eyes

Form this mysterious world-for God's sake.

With your God-given insight, don't go away

While your heart's sleeping and intellect wide-awake.

115. ANTHROPOMORPHIC LIMITATION

I worshipped the idol, I worshipped the elf;

That I did make God in my own image, I admit.

Verily, in various forms, I worshipped The Self

Would that I could out step the anthropomorphic limit!

116. THE LAW OF HIGH AND LOW

A newly born bud once told a dew drop:

“We, the garden-born one have no source

To know if in a galaxy with hundreds of suns,
The 'law of high and low' is likewise in force".

117. LAND-POINTER TO CELESTIAL SECRETS

The secrets of the skies lie buried in the land,
It is the space that explains what's the Spaceless;
Since every particle flies towards the 'Traceless,
Trace your pathway within the flying sand.

118. THE EARTH IS MINE

You are the marrow of the creation alone,
A matchless index to the Signless Sign.
Since no other creature shares these qualities with you,
Proceed with the slogan: "the earth is mine".

119. WORLD-A PREFACE TO MAN'S ADVENTUROUS TALE

Even the earth and the sun can't race
With rising crescendo of my speed in the space.
To put the story of my struggle in a nut-shell
The world is a preface to my adventurous tale.

120. NATIONS SURVIVE THEIR KINGS

Alexander, the Great, vanished with his trappings,
Nothing remains of his conquered domains
Note that the nations survive their kings,
Jamshid has perished but Iran remains

121. DESIRES AND GRIEF ARE A PRECIOUS TREASURE

Thou whisked off my heart from my cleft bosom

And carried away every thing; my precious treasure in chief.

To whom hast thou given away the wealth of my desire?

And to whom hast thou handed over my age-old grief?

122. WHO LEFT WHOM?

There's no more trace of the world of mirth and joys

No earth; no sky; no all-round noise!

Oh heart! Didst thou forsake the world willingly with gratitude?

Or the world, of itself, withdrew from thy city of solitude!

123. WHO IS THIS MAESTRO?

Without knowing the subtleties of musical note,

I sing the psalm of life with an easy flow,
I sing so masterly that the flower asks

Its garden colleagues: "Who is this maestro"?

124. THE CO-OPERATION OF HEAD AND HEART

I sing with gay abandon the life-song in gatherings,

Firing their imagination and splitting their hearts apart,

I trained my heart, in the light of my reason,

And assayed my reason on the touchstone of the heart.

125. A CROWD FILING INTO A CARAVAN

Helter-skelter, the Easter's ran

But when my poetry gave them as inkling,

And my bell started thinking,

They filed themselves into an orderly caravan.

126. URFI'S SONG

The East is enthused with my clarion call,
My voice serves them as a caravan toll,
I chant in a higher pitch, the burden of Urfi's song,
Since "the litter is heavy and the pathway weary" and long.

127. MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE ORIENT LAND

Infusing her with my restless soul,
I deposited a heart into the Orient land,
And struck at her like a swift lighting
My wailing ignited her like a firebrand.

128. HUMAN NATURE'S PARADOX

Why am I made to loiter like the zephyr,
And my heart is torn like the floral petals' finery,
Albeit my eyes miss even the obvious!
Why am I destined to perish for the unseen scenery?

129. HARBINGER OF THE SPRING

I enjoy the fruits of my fervent aspirations,
I've solved the mysteries of life, of which I sing,
Oh archer, be cautious of the gardener's evil designs,
I warn thee as the harbinger of the coming Spring.

130. CREATIVE EXPERIENCE

How enchanting is the Muse's call!
When in response my mind spins a fantasy,

My heart begins to tremble in ecstasy,
Like a leaf, after the dew drop fall.

131. WHY I AVOID THE EAST

I know that the east is a limitless ocean,
Full of pearls with a diamond tings,
But I don't ferry my boat in calm waters
With no crocodiles in the waves in motion.

132. CATCH HOLD OF TODAY

Don't call the laws of Nature der vagaries;
Every moment of ours is covered by Eternity,
Catch hold of Today and let it not slip,
Since the Morrow is unborn and beyond your grip.

133. SLAVISH MENTALITY

Though free from the Western masters, you flock
The mausoleums and graves and lie before them flat,
So accustomed to slavish mentality you have become
That you carve out a god of this stone or that.

134. BE LIKE FALCON

Don't batten on things ill gotten,
Don't live on rubbish, like ants or flies,
How long will you walk like a tramp in rags?
Be like a falcon and fly in the skies!

135. BORROW A BIT OF YOUTH

Nestle among the tulips and flowers in bloom,

Learn from the humming bird the songs of yearning,
If thru' lack of enthusiasm you have grown old,
Borrow a bit of youth from the world so charming.

136. THE SOUL PRODUCES BODY

It's the soul that has given my body a form,
The desire to flaunt has made the flower multi coloured,
The restless soul possesses a myriad of charms,
The body is produced when the soul adopts one norm.

137. A SOUL-LESS BODY

The graveyard has given me a clue to the riddle;
That a (noble) man can live even after his death
But the man who plays to others a second fiddle,
Is soulless, though he inhales and exhales the breath.

138. EVOLUTION OF MAN

Don't despair, if man, who is a handful of dust
Is weak enough to require a pair of crutches
Whenever the Nature sketches out some figure
It's the Time, which gives it the finishing touches.

139. SOMETHING COMPLEMENTING

Though the world is beautiful; its flowers charming,
Yet something therein is still wanting,
If you keep your 'inward eye' open,
You will find within you something complementing.

140. A SHORT SIGHTED MATERIALIST vs. A CAUTIOUS SCEPTIC

You opine that it's you who exists and not the Creator;

That the matter is eternal and shall always endure

As for me, whatever I see around as real

Does really exist? I'm not sure!

141. FEEDING ON GRASS AND PRODUCING MUSK!

There is no roasted chicken on my tablecloth,

No sparking liquor in a fine wine glass,

Still the "gazelle of my poesy", while feeding on-grass,

142. THE POET'S ANGLE OF VISION

The Muslims feel the throbs of my heart

And share my tears and admire my mission;

Yet they are unaware of the storm within me,

They fail to view the world with my angle of vision!

143. THE MYSTERIOUS SOUL

The Spaceless defies description

Look into the soul for untying this knot

The soul dwells in the body in such a fashion

None can point out, "It's there and here it's not".

144. FIRST I AM ADAM

You are still under the spell of your homeland,

Why do you call yourselves a Turk, an Afghani?

Say, "First, I'm Man with no cast or creed,
Only after that I'm an Indian; an Arab; an Irani".

145. SPEECH, A HINDRANCE TO EXPRESSION

None can describe what one inwardly feels,
My craze for expression, has let me down,
The moment I explain what's Love, the mystery deepens,
Verily, speech conceals more that what it reveals!

146. THE PHILOSOPHER POET TURNS POET PHILOSOPHER

Saying adieu to the crafty Reason,
Aggrieved with enjoyment and enjoying sadness,
This intelligent philosopher, known as "Iqbal"
Has diverted his course from method to madness.