

‘Light within darkness,
the infinite dimensions
of Love’



1st June 2024
Woolf Institute
Cambridge

THE MUHYIDDIN
IBN ‘ARABI SOCIETY



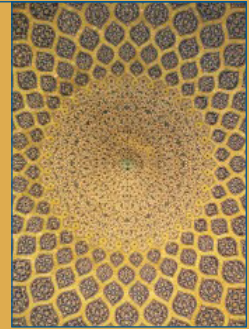
The Finite World as the Habitat of the Infinite

*Decoding the Love Languages of
Ibn 'Arabi and Rabindranath Tagore*

Hina Khalid



is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge. She has successfully defended her PhD dissertation, which offered the first comprehensive comparative study of the theology and poetry of Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) and Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). She is particularly interested in the possibilities of comparative theology across Islamic and Indic traditions, and in the ways that shared devotional idioms have formed in and across the Indian subcontinent. Her previous publications have centred on a range of topics, including issues of embodiment, gender, and spirituality across the Christian, Islamic, and Indic worldviews.



This talk will offer some comparative reflections on the metaphysical visions of the medieval Sufi theologian Ibn 'Arabi (1165-1240) and the Bengali poet-philosopher Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). Belonging to rather different times, places, and intellectual traditions, Ibn 'Arabi and Tagore may appear unlikely dialogue partners. However, I hope to show the remarkable resonances across their worldviews - most notably in their treatment of 'love' not as a fleeting fancy or subjective sentiment but as the ontological heartbeat of creation itself. Put simply, for both figures, love is the warp and weft of which the universe is woven. By analysing this logic of love in their visions, I will suggest that Hindu-Muslim comparative inquiries can yield a much richer theological harvest than may be initially expected, while ploughing through their scriptural fields.

From the depths of the Hidden Treasure

The Love-theophany of the divine Names

Paolo Urizzi



studied at Al-Azhar in Cairo (1975-1979). In 1997 he founded the journal of traditional studies *Perennia Verba*. He edits the series on sufism 'I Gioielli' (Il Leone Verde – Turin) and has collaborated with the Officina di Studi Medievali of Palermo. He currently lectures on sufism at the Faculty of Oriental and Comparative Philosophy at the 'Istituto di Scienze Umane' in Rimini. His publications include the annotated translation of Kalabadhi's *Kitab al-ta'arruf* and several essays on traditional thought, with a focus on Ibn 'Arabi.

PERENNIA VERBA

Il Deposito sacro della Tradizione

Raccolta di studi

– 14 –

Negli oceani della Gnosi




Il Leone Verde

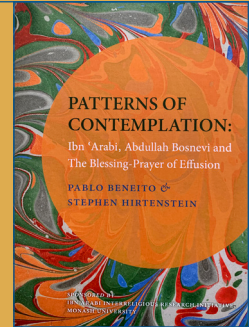
My talk will focus on the *hadith qudsi*: 'I was a hidden Treasure and I loved to be known and therefore I created the world so that they might know Me', with the reading of excerpts from Abdullah Bosnevi's Commentary on the incipit of the *Futuhat*. As an introduction, I will touch on the theme of flight from Divine Darkness starting from *Genesis* 1:1-4, and its parallels in the Ancient Near East, up to the myth of Indra and Vritra in Vedic tradition. In conclusion I will examine some mysterious aspects of the symbolism of the inaugural formula of the *Qur'an* according to the 'Science of the Letters', to finally discover the myth of Indra and Vritra hidden between the lines of a famous *Salât* on the Prophet.

A Love Supreme amidst the flames

Stephen Hirtenstein



is a MIAS Senior Research Fellow and Director of Anqa Publishing. He served as the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi Society from 1982 to 2023. Since 2001, he has been working on the MIAS archiving project for the historic manuscripts of Ibn ‘Arabi. He works as an Editor for the Encyclopaedia Islamica (Brill in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London) and runs courses on Sufism and Sufi poetry at the University of Oxford. His most recent publications include a three-part article on Ibn ‘Arabi’s Fihrist (‘Catalogue’) in the Journal, and books such as *Patterns of Contemplation* (2021) and *Ibn ‘Arabi’s Prayers for the Week* (2021). He is currently revising his first book, *The Unlimited Mercifier* (1999).



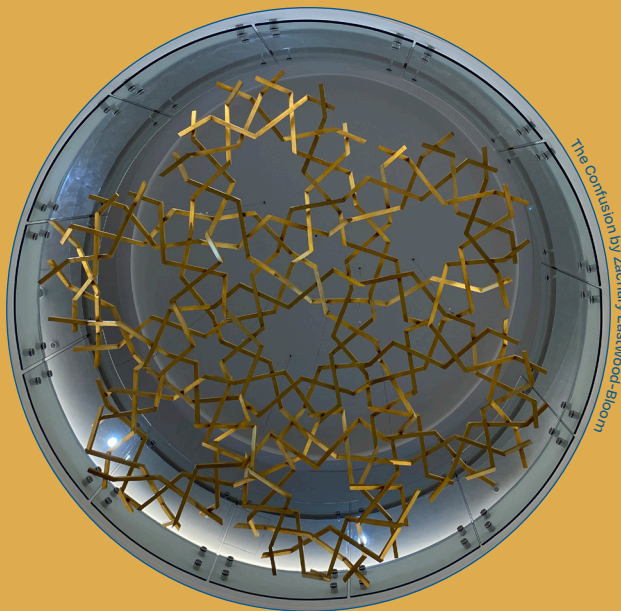
This talk on the love-relationship between the human and the divine will be in two parts, focusing on two remarkable pieces of poetry that express the grandeur of human-divine love and speak directly to the heart. The first will be a slightly different take on the imagery of the very famous lines from Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Tarjuman al-ashwaq*, that begin ‘a garden amidst the flames’. The second will introduce a relatively unknown couplet by the great 17-century Ottoman commentator on Ibn ‘Arabi, Abdullah Bosnevi, and investigate some of its hidden allusions and mysteries.

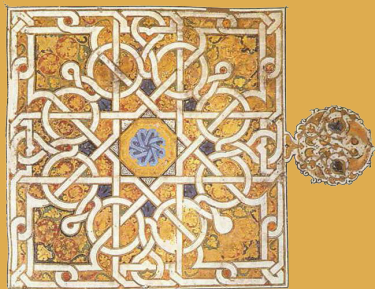
THE MUHYIDDIN IBN 'ARABI SOCIETY

37th Annual Symposium

Saturday 1st June

9.00 am	Registration
9.30 am	Welcome & Introduction – Stefan Sperl
9.45 am	Hina Khalid
10.45 am	Tea & Coffee
11.15 am	Paolo Urizzi
12.15 pm	Stephen Hirtenstein
1.15 pm	Lunch (& Library View)
2.45 pm	Seminars with Each Speaker
4.00 pm	Tea & Coffee
4.30 pm	Plenary – chair Omar Zein
5.15 pm	Symposium End
5.45 pm	Building Closes





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