

ABDURAHMAN GUZAL'S VIEWS ON CLASSICAL LITERATURE

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Annotation: Abdurahman Guzal is one of the scholars with a unique approach to analyzing and interpreting Turkic literature. The article discusses his mystical analyses. Furthermore, it demonstrates the role of Ahmad Yasawi's wisdom in Sufi poetry through the scholar's interpretations.

Keywords: wisdom, religion, Islam, Sufism, tariqa, gnosis, sharia, analysis, interpretation. Literary scholar Ibrohim Haqqul, speaking about Sufism, noted:

"Sufism primarily expresses man's difficult and painful endeavors to comprehend and recognize his own essence. The outward disputes and arguments of human beings, the struggles for material gain, in fact, originate from their inner selves. ... Sufism and tariqas, and the spiritual life formed on the basis of the Sufi path, have held an important place in our cultural history. We cannot imagine our science, literature, art, music, and even the development of our language completely separated from Sufism. To reach the roots of our traditions, national values, and communication patterns, one inevitably has to turn to Sufism."

Indeed, the ideas and aesthetics of classical literature cannot be explained without Sufi knowledge. Sufi sources are considered the main references in interpreting mystical terms, images, and symbols. Abdurahman Guzal deeply understood this requirement in literary studies, and the foundation of his literary views is built upon religious knowledge and Sufi gnosis.

Recognized as both a Sufi scholar and a literary critic, Abdurahman Guzal did not limit himself to analyzing samples of Sufi literature but also developed its theoretical foundations. He authored textbooks and manuals explaining the content, essence, factors of formation, stages of development, and the meaning of images, symbols, and mystical terms in this literature. For instance, Riza Taufiq Bülükbashı referred to this body of works as *"Tekke literature"* and emphasized its distinction from folk literature. Guzal, however, evaluated Sufi literature as a bridge between folk and classical literature—an original literary form that prevented these two traditions from drifting apart. He classified Sufi literature into three stages:

1. The era of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)
2. The era of the Tabi'un (Followers)
3. The era of the early Sufis

This classification reflects the scholar's unique perspective, and historical facts confirm its accuracy. Sufism, as a way of life, existed during the Prophet's time. The Followers, as worthy successors of the Companions, adopted the lifestyle of the *Ahl al-Suffa* as a model. Later, Sufis emerged, following the Salaf and prioritizing an Islamic way of life. Guzal was able to discern this subtle continuity within Sufism and classified it with scholarly precision.

He also recognized the 13th century as the "era of Sufism," when Islam spread widely, and cities like Bukhara, Samarkand, and Fergana produced prominent representatives of Sufi literature, becoming esteemed Sufi centers. In his research, he mentioned great scholars who flourished in this region, such as al-Razi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, al-Qushayri, and al-Ghazali. Particularly, he

acknowledged Ahmad Yasawi as a figure of great significance in the world of Sufism, who opened new horizons:

“Ahmad Yasawi trained caliphs such as Mansur Ata, Sayyid Ata of Khwarezm, Suleyman Hakim Ata, Luqman Paranda, and Mawlana Haji Bektash Wali, along with thousands of disciples, sending them to Anatolia and the Balkans. The Yasawi tariqa, which first spread in Turkestan, quickly extended to other regions. It was Khoja Ahmad Yasawi who contributed to the widespread diffusion of Sufism among Turkic peoples in Central Asia, Azerbaijan, Anatolia, and the Volga region.”

Guzal recognized Yasawi as the first Sufi poet among the Turkic peoples. His ability to carefully select creative figures and sources deserves special praise. He examined the personalities and works of tariqa leaders who laid the foundations of new directions in Sufi literature. For example, he paid special attention to two great figures of Sufi literature: Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi and Jalaluddin Rumi. His main research subjects also included Yunus Emre, Sultan Walad, Ashiq Pasha, Qayghusuz Abdal, and Said Emre.

According to Guzal, the primary purpose of mystical poets in composing wisdoms (*hikmats*) was to convey Islamic beliefs through the captivating power of poetry. At the same time, he emphasized each poet's personal path (*maslak*) and the uniqueness of its expression. From his thorough studies of Yasawi's life, tariqa, and works, Guzal concluded that unlike other Sufis who often expressed complaints about worldly life, Yasawi did not adopt such a tone. Rather, Yasawi's verses highlight humanity's duty to serve God faithfully and attain divine vision.

He emphasized Yasawi's teaching that the greatest obstacle diverting man from God is the *nafs* (ego). To reach God, one must overcome the mountain of the *nafs* and escape its traps. He pointed out the unity of *sharia* and *tariqa* in Yasawi's poetry, while some verses leaned more strongly toward mystical perspectives:

“True love and its ultimate goal is to behold the Divine Vision.

The lover of God, unlike ascetics and the pious, does not live in hope of Paradise.

*A true lover, not for a single moment, becomes heedless of God,
for heedlessness and love are incompatible.*

Indeed, without attaining the perfection of love, it is impossible to behold the Divine Vision.

On the path of love, one must be as faithful as Layli and Majnun, Farhad and Shirin, Wamiq and Uzra.”

Guzal recognized Yasawi as a scholar of *sharia*. He stressed Yasawi's absolute adherence to the essence and form of *sharia* as well as the Prophet's Sunnah. Discussing *sharia* and *tariqa*, he drew attention to Yasawi's two key principles:

1. A tariqa without reliance on *sharia* is invalid.
2. If *sharia* is the outer shell of faith, *tariqa* is its inner core.

Guzal always studied scholarly and artistic works in harmony. For instance, he examined Yasawi's *Hikmats* alongside his work *Faqrnama*. The mystical expressions in the *Hikmats* were supported by the theoretical framework found in the *Faqrnama*. In this treatise, the concept of the “four gates and forty stations” is likened to four structures:

- The first stage: *Sharia*
- The second stage: *Tariqa*
- The third stage: *Ma'rifa* (gnosis)
- The fourth stage: *Haqiqa* (ultimate truth)

Each stage contains ten chambers: ten stations, ten lights, ten paths, and ten abodes.

His research reveals the depth and comprehensiveness of each concept. He carefully analyzed the meaning of every mystical term and its usage across different literary works, always approaching them as a literary scholar. For example, he explained the linguistic meaning of sharia as “apparent rulings, rules of fiqh, legal systems, human body and soul, divine laws sent by God through the Prophet.” He also defined its terminological meaning as “the teaching of the general rulings of the Qur’an and hadith in educational institutions, aimed at raising an educated and thoughtful society through instruction in social, historical, economic, medical, religious, and legal sciences.”

Discussing tariqa, he described it as the practical implementation of sharia laws, firmly rooted in the Qur’an and Sunnah. He also analyzed practices such as *rabita* (spiritual connection), *dhikr* (remembrance), and *muraqaba* (contemplation), emphasizing their significance in the Sufi path. According to him, performing these acts with devotion comes from love and gnosis. For Guzal, true Sufi life meant a wholehearted bond with God and His Messenger, with sincere loyalty to their commands.

Thus, Abdurahman Guzal’s dual role as theologian and literary scholar is evident in each of his analyses and interpretations. He studied texts meticulously, grounding his research in scholarly principles before moving on to interpretation. His profound mystical analyses are invaluable in understanding the mysteries of classical literature. Such interpretations should be considered an achievement for Uzbek literary studies, and his scholarly experiences deserve further study.

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