

AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI TƏHSİL NAZİRLİYİ

**BAKİ DÖVLƏT UNİVERSİTETİ**



BAKİ DÖVLƏT UNİVERSİTETİNİN

**ŞƏRQŞÜNASLIQ**

JURNALI

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JOURNAL OF  
**ORIENTAL STUDIES**  
OF BAKU STATE UNIVERSITY

**2/2026**

ISSN 3134-7231

**Bakı - 2026**

**Azərbaycan Respublikası Ədliyyə Nazirliyində  
21 oktyabr 2021-ci il tarixində qeydiyyatdan keçmişdir  
(Mətbu nəşrlərin reyestrinə daxil edilmə nömrəsi 4361)**

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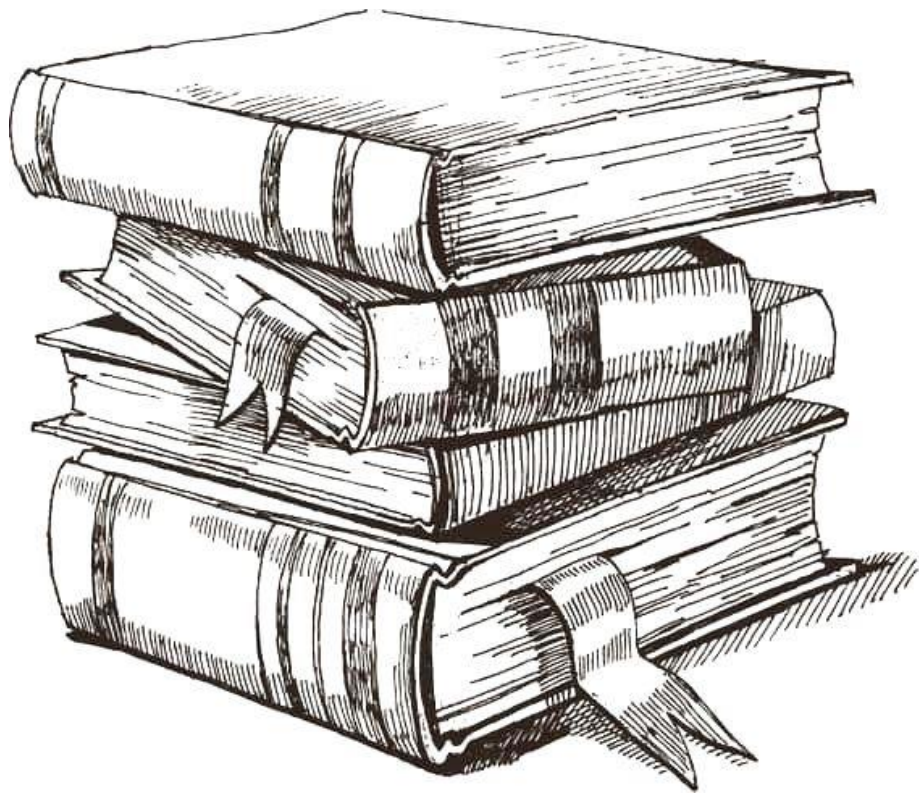
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Bakı Dövlət Universitetinin **ŞƏRQŞÜNASLIQ** jurnalı/Journal of **ORIENTAL STUDIES** of Baku State University, № 2, 2026. – 168 səh. Bakı, BDU, 2026.

# OXUYACAQLARINIZ



## ƏDƏBİYYATŞÜNASLIQ

**ABDULLAYEVA Gülnarə**

**YƏHUDİ PİYUT ƏDƏBİYYATININ MƏRHƏLƏLƏRİ VƏ ƏNDƏLUSDA  
İBRİ DİLİNİN DÜNYƏVİ POEZİYA DİLİNƏ ÇEVRİLMƏSİ**

Stages of Jewish Ewish Piyuth Literature and the Transformation of  
Hebrew into a Secular Poetry Language in Andalus

**11**

**ARASLI Nüşabə**

**ARİF VƏ NƏVAİ**

Arif and Navai

**19**

**ƏLİYEVƏ Nərmin**

**HƏBİB SAHİRİN POEZİYASINDA MİLLİ AZADLIQ HƏRƏKATININ  
BƏDİİ-İDEOLOJİ TƏCƏSSÜMÜ**

The Artistic-Ideological Embodiment of the National Movement in Habib  
Sahir's poetry

**30**

**HÜSEYNOV Rafael**

**BABA TAHİR IN HIS POETRY: DIVINE LOVE, WORDLY LOVE, AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS**

Baba Tahir poeziyasında ilahi məhəbbət, dünyəvi sevgi və insan haqları

**37**

**XƏNDAN Aydan**

**TÜRK POEZİYASINDA PARNASÇI ŞAİRLƏR**

Parnassian Poets in Turkish Poetry

**73**

**SADIQOVA Rəhilə**

**ƏMƏVİLƏR DÖVRÜ ƏDƏBİ-MƏDƏNİ MÜHİTİNDƏ QADINLARIN  
MÖVQEYİ**

The Status of Women in the Literary and Cultural Milieu of the Umayyad  
Period

**79**

## DİLÇİLİK

**ƏHMƏDOVA Nailə**

**YAPON DİLİNDƏ FEİL VƏ FELİ SİFƏTİN QURULUŞUNUN,  
AZƏRBAYCAN DİLİ İLƏ MÜQAYİSƏLİ TƏHLİLİ**

Comparative Analysis of the Structure of Verbs and Verbal Adjectives in  
Japanese and Azerbaijan

**93**

**MƏMMƏDOVA Əsmət xanım**

**FARS DİLİNİN FONOTAKTİK SİSTEMİ VƏ FONETİK PROSESLƏRİN  
MORFOLOJİ FUNKSİONALLIĞI**

The Phonotactic System of the Persian Language and the  
Morphophonological Functionality of Phonetic Prozesse

**100**

## **TƏRCÜMƏ NƏZƏRİYYƏSİ VƏ ÇEVİRMƏLƏR**

***HÜSEYNOV Rafael***

**ÖMƏR XƏYYAMIN NOVRUZ NAMƏSİ**

Omar Khayyam's Letter on Nowruz

**115**

***NƏSİBOVA Aytən***

**ROBERT HİLLENBRAND. ŞAHNAMƏ VƏ PERSİYANIN İLLÜSTRASIYALI KİTABI**

Robert Hillenbrand. The Shahnama and the Persian Illustrated Book

**129**

## **TƏQDİMATLAR, RƏYLƏR, DƏYƏRLƏNDİRMƏLƏR**

***ƏQİQ CƏFƏRZADƏ Gülnar***

**“QƏSİDE-Yİ ŞİNİYYƏ” VƏ YA “MERAT ÜS-SƏFA” (“Xaqani Şirvaninin ərəbcə qəsidələrinin izi ilə” monoqrafiyası əsasında)**

*Qaside-yi Shiniyya or Mir'at al-Safa* (Based on the Monograph “In the Footsteps of Khaqani Shirvani’s Arabic Qasidas”)

**145**

***HÜSEYNOV Rafael***

**DİSSERTASIYALARA RƏYLƏR VERİLMƏSİ VƏ MÜZAKİRƏLƏRİN APARILMASI PRAKTİKASININ YÜKSƏK ELMİ TƏLƏBLƏRƏ UYĞUNLAŞDIRILMASI ZƏRURƏTİ**

The Need to Adapt the Practice of Reviewing and Discussing Dissertations to High Scientific Requirements

**153**

**APA7 qaynaq göstərmə təlimatı**

**164**

**Nəşrə dair tələblər**

**166**

**Publication requirements**

**167**

# ƏDƏBİYYATŞÜNASLIQ

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UOT 821.222.1

DOI <https://doi.org/10.30546/209805.2026.110.2.018>

**BABA TAHIR IN HIS POETRY:  
DIVINE LOVE, WORDLY LOVE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**RAFAEL HUSEYNOV\***

**Summary**

*In addition to his poetic legacy, Baba Tahir's philosophical treatise, "Brief Aphorisms", has survived to this day. Numerous commentaries have been written on this 23-chapter treatise, containing 368 aphorisms on science, good manners, inspiration and skill, intelligence and morals, the real and otherworldly worlds, and so on.*

*Undoubtedly, the author of such a work could have been someone knowledgeable and deeply versed in the theoretical foundations of Sufism. Baba Tahir lived and wrote during an era when mystical ideology had become firmly ingrained in Persian poetry. The influence of Sufism on the work of a poet who exuded the poetic atmosphere of his time was inevitable.*

*Sufi poets, who extolled the mystical love of Allah – "the one and eternal" – widely turned to the genres of dubeiti and rubai to disseminate their ideas, which were well received by the people. Sufism, which increasingly permeated lyric poetry, possessed a system of specific images, expressions, and epithets. Therefore, both aspiring poets and even masters wishing to create works in a secular spirit were forced to utilize certain elements of these elements. While it is difficult to find motifs far removed from Sufism in the works of Baba Kuhi, Khajeh Abdullah Ansari, and others, it is not difficult to discern in Baba Tahir's poetry an attachment to the world, motifs of a love of life, and sentiments far removed from mysticism. The dubaits present two poets, as it were. One is a young poet deeply attached to life, his heart overflowing with passionate desires; the other is a sage who has already seen all the twists and turns of life, sometimes resentful and pessimistic. Two conclusions can be drawn here: the first is that mysticism entered Baba Tahir's poetry only in his mature years. The second approach and assessment is that the people, in accordance with traditions close to their spirit and style, made the poet's sublime dubeiti more understandable, bringing divinity closer to the mundane. One of the interesting features of Baba Tahir's philosophy is the social issues raised in his poems, the motifs of complaint against social inequality and the spirit of rebellion.*

**Keywords:** *dubeiti, dialect poet, Ahl-e Haqq order, Saranjan Manuscript, Sufism, human love, divine love, protest motifs.*

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## Introduction

One of the most outstanding figures of classical Persian-language poetry and of the history of medieval Muslim Eastern philosophical thought, Baba Tahir Uryan Hamedani, was first mentioned in scholarly literature in 1859 in *“Three Days in Asia”* by Arthur de Gobineau (1859: 344). However, the first article that turned the poet’s personality and poetic legacy into an object of academic discussion and debate was *“The Quatrains of Baba Tahir in the Muslim Pahlavi Language”* published in 1885 in *“Journal Asiatique”* by the French scholar Clement Huart (1885: 502-545).

Thus, about one and a half centuries separate the time when Baba Tahir and his legacy entered the field of scholarship from the present day. To fully study the literary and philosophical heritage of this great man of words and thought who lived a thousand years ago, and to clearly explain the full extent of his influence, this roughly century-and-a-half-long period might have been enough.

Yet, unfortunately, studies of Baba Tahir have not been consistent or systematic, and the scattered research that exists has not been able to present the subject in a thorough and satisfactory way.

For this reason, there is still a need today to return to Baba Tahir again and again, and to make new efforts to better see, understand, and appreciate this rare literary and philosophical phenomenon.

### **1. The historical conditions and the literary-philosophical environment that shaped the Baba Tahir phenomenon**

How did Baba Tahir phenomenon emerge? What historical environment and what literary and philosophical context produced Baba Tahir?

The period in which he lived was marked by several important events in the social and political life of Iran. Throughout the 9<sup>th</sup> century, much of Iran, and by the 930s in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, even the western part of the country, had already seen the end of the Caliphate’s rule.

In western Iran, in the struggle against the Caliphate, the Mardavich commanders – the Buwayhid brothers from the Daylamite dynasty, Ali, Hasan, and Ahmad – stood out (Petrushevsky, 1958: 129).

After Mardavich ibn Ziyar was killed in 935, the Buwayhid brothers took control of all western Iran. This marked the foundation of the Buwayhid state (935-1055). Gradually, the territories of the Buwayhid state expanded. It came to include southern Iran, most of Fars Iraq (Hamedan, Isfahan, Ray, Khuzestan, Fars, Kerman), and the regions of Arab Iraq around Baghdad and Basra. To the east of Dasht-i Kabir, Khorasan and other lands, as well as Transoxiana and other provinces of Central Asia, were concentrated under the Samanid state (Petrushevsky, 1958: 130).

During the rule of Hasan’s son, Azud al-Dawla Fanna Khosrow (949-983), the Buwayhid state both expanded its borders and increased its power. Although for a short time, Azud-al-Dawla was able to unite the Buwayhids under a single political authority. Though, this unity began to dissolve after his death. Conflicts among Azud al Dawla’s three sons led to their uncle, Fakhr al-Dawla, restoring his rule over Isfahan, Ray, and Hamedan.

Internal conflicts and weak political and economic connections led to the decline of the Buwayhid state.

At the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, we see two states ruling different parts of Iran. The first was the *Karakhanid state*, which overthrew the Samanids (who ruled Khorasan and other eastern Iranian provinces from 900-999) and combined their lands. The second was the *Ghaznavid state*, whose authority extended south and southwest from the Amu Darya River.

In order to bring western Iran under his control, the ruler of the Ghaznavid state, Mahmud Gaznavi, intensified his campaigns against the weakened Buwayhids. Spending much of his 30-year reign on military expeditions, Mahmud Gaznavi captured Ray, Hamedan, and Isfahan in 1029 (Petrushevsky, 1958: 144).

During the rule of both Mahmud Gaznavi and his son Masud Gaznavi (1030-1041), the situation of the masses living within the Ghaznavid state was very difficult.

In the 1030s, the Ghaznavid state forced a great danger. The *Seljuks*, led by Tughril Bey Muhammad and Chaghri Bey Dawud, demanded new territories from the Ghaznavids, and each demand led to armed conflict.

It is true that the Seljuks had already begun moving into western and central Iran earlier. However, from the 1030s, this movement intensified, and in 1040, after the Seljuks defeated Masud's troops, Khorasan completely slipped from the Ghaznavids' control. Tughril Bey established his rule in Nishapur, while Chaghri Bey took power in Merv.

Between 1040 and 1055, the Seljuks captured Ray, Isfahan, Hamedan, and several other regions of Iran. Tughril Bey made Ray his capital for a period of time (Petrushevsky, 1958: 148).

In 1055, Tughril Bey also captured Baghdad and forced the Caliph to grant him the title of Sultan. After the death of his brother Chaghri Bey in 1059, Tughril Bey became the sole leader of the Seljuk state until the end of his life in 1063.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, fully developed forms of feudal relations emerged in Iran. In the Samanid and Buwayhid states, the amount of iqta and waqf lands increased significantly compared to the period of Caliphate rule.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> century, in several provinces of Iran, there were still free peasants who were not exploited by any feudal lord. From the perspective of developed feudalism, the existence of such free peasants and their landholdings was considered backward. By the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, these lands were taken over by feudal lords. During this period, the process of slowly turning free peasants into dependent peasants was completed. This occurred through the peasants' submission to large and powerful feudal lords – voluntarily, but in reality, forcibly, since they lost the means to live after their lands were taken.

The defeat of larger peasant populations to feudal dependence had already become one of the main features of a developed feudal society.

The emergence of a developed feudal society positively impacted Iran's economic development. During this period, the quantity of productive forces increased enormously. Various branches of agriculture, craftsmanship, and trade began to advance.

The main caravan routes passed through Rey, Nishapur, Herat, Isfahan, Ahvaz, Balkh, Kabul, and also Hamedan, where Baba Tahir lived. During this period, Hamedan was also one of Iran's major centers of craftsmanship and trade.

So, in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, which skilled masters of literary art had emerged in Iran? In other words, who were the predecessors and contemporaries of Baba Tahir in poetry?

During this period, which can be considered the beginning of the golden age of Persian-language poetry, hundreds of talented poets were emerging, not just a few. However, among these hundreds and thousands, there were some whose artistic mastery was greater, and it is likely that it was their work that became a true school for Baba Tahir.

First of all, it is necessary to remember *Rudaki*. Leaving behind a very rich literary legacy, Rudaki created works such as the poem “Kalila and Dimma” and wrote some of the finest examples of ghazals, qasidas and rubaiyat. His work had a strong influence on the later development of Persian-language literature.

The profound simplicity of Rudaki’s poetry, the harmony of his verses with the rhythms of folk songs, and his extensive use of everyday language, proverbs, and sayings drew many other artists into his sphere of influence, including Baba Tahir.

Although only a few examples of the works of Abul-Hassan Shahid ibn Hussein Balkhi, who was highly respected by his contemporaries alongside Rudaki, have survived to the present day, we can still find in this poetic shape Baba Tahir and develop his poetic imagination.

Shahid Balkhi created exquisite examples of small poetic forms, such as rubai and duebiti.

اگر غمرا چو آتش دود بودی  
جهان تاریک بودی جاویدانه  
در این گیتی سراسر گر بگردی  
خردمندی نیابی شانمانه (Bertels, 1960: 148-149).

*If sorrow had a smoke like fire,  
The world would be plunged into eternal darkness.  
Even if you travel the entire world,  
You will not find a truly happy and wise person.*

The important social issue he raised in his dubeytis – the conflict between a talented person and the world – was later depicted repeatedly in the series of poems by Baba Tahir.

At that time, the dubeyti still existed as a form of oral folk poetry. Shahid Balkhi was among the first to attempt to bring this genre into written language. These early efforts served, in a way, as preparation for Baba Tahir’s later decisive step.

Among the lyrical masters of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, we should also recall two others: *Abu Shukur Balkhi* (915/16-?) and *Abu Tahir Khosrovani* (10<sup>th</sup>-century). Little is known about their lives and their poetic legacies. Though, in the small poetic fragments that have survived, the clarity of expression, completeness, and flowing language in the lyrics of both Abu Shukur and Khosrovani are striking.

Another notable feature of Khosrovani’s poetry is his tendency to address social problems, which is also prominent.

During this period, the fame and artistic mastery of Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi were undoubtedly even greater, overshadowing nearly all of his contemporaries.

We have no doubt that Baba Tahir was familiar with the *Shahnameh*. First of all, no poet of that time could remain indifferent to this important poetic monument, and secondly, in Baba Tahir's *dubeyti*, we encounter the names of several *Shahnameh* heroes.

Among the powerful poets who emerged in the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, it is worth recalling *Unsurī*, *Farrukhī*, and *Manuchehri*. Each of them was distinguished by their poetic talent, but the limited thematic framework of the court poetry they represented did not allow them to write to their full potential or gain the true fame they deserved.

Let's pay attention to the examples:

حقیقت بشنو از پور فریدون (Baba Tahir, 1333: 53).

*Listen to this truth from Firidun's son.*

It seems that Baba Tahir's father's name was Firidun.

بوره کز دیده جیهونی بسازیم  
بوره لیلی و مجنونی بسازم  
فریدون عزیز از دست مو رفت  
بوره از نو فریدون بسازیم (Baba Tahir, 1333: 26).

*Come, let us turn our eyes into Ceyhun,  
Come, let us experience the love of Leyli and Majnun.  
My dear Firidun has slipped from my hands,  
Come, let us create a new Firidun.*

From this *dubeyti*, one could logically conclude that Baba Tahir may have had a son named Firidun, who died young. In the East, it was common for a grandfather's name to be given to a grandson. It is quite possible that Baba Tahir named his son after his own father.

Although this reasoning seems convincing from a logical point of view, it remains only a hypothesis. Since there are no historical sources, it is difficult to make a definitive statement.

Over time, Sufism gradually occupies a greater place in poetry. The works of mystic poets such as Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri (986-1074), Abu al-Hassan al-Kharaqani (died 1033), and Shaykh Abu Said (967/1049) are noteworthy in this regard.

In the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the divergence in form and content between folk poetry and courtly poetry began to be felt more strongly. Most of the prominent philosophers of that period were also poets, and this factor provided a solid foundation for the development of philosophical poetry.

From the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards, science, particularly mathematics, astronomy, and medicine, began to advance in the Near and Middle East. The contributions of thinkers trained in Central Asia were especially significant in these fields.

Abu Nasr al-Farabi, who earned the title Al-Muallim al-Thani, and Abu Ali

Ibn Sina, known as Al-Shaykh al-Rais, was the true encyclopedic minds of this period.

Both scholars, alongside a range of other sciences, were also engaged in philosophy, writing verses.

Abu Rayhan al-Biruni (973-1048), whose fame spread from Central Asia to India, produced dozens of valuable works in the exact sciences of his time. Certain ideas from these works have retained their significance to the present day.

It is difficult to imagine Eastern poetry and music separately. The beginning of the flourishing period of Persian-language poetry also gave a motivation to the development of music.

Beginning from the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the East entered its own distinctive Renaissance period, in which art played the leading role.

In brief, the rich events of this period, its various historical figures, its progress and decline, all influenced more or less Baba Tahir's life and works.

In other words, if we examine Baba Tahir apart from this environment and context, many aspects of his personality and creativity would remain unknown to the people of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **2. Converging and contradictory information in the sources that introduce Baba Tahir**

The available information about Baba Tahir's life is sparse. Moreover, it is often far from historical accuracy and carries a legendary character. The romantic spirit of Baba Tahir's poetry has also overshadowed the accounts about the poet himself, and over the course of many centuries, countless legends and narratives have hidden the true contours of his life story.

Aside from Baba Tahir's *dubeytis* and a few *ghazals*, there are no substantial poetic works in which we could seek information about the poet's life. Therefore, it is impossible to compile an accurate scholarly biography of this 11<sup>th</sup>-century thinker-poet today.

The bibliographer Reza Quli Khan Hedayat, in *Majma al-Fusaha* (Collection of Eloquent ones), states that Baba Tahir lived during the time of the Daylamites and died in the 410<sup>th</sup> year of Hijri calendar (1019 CE) (Hedayat, 1295: 326). Reza Quli Khan also gives this date in *Riyaz al-Arifin* (Garden of Mystics) and refutes the claims that Baba Tahir was a contemporary of the famous scholar Khwaja Nasir al-Din Tusi (1201-1274) (Hedayat, 1305: 102).

Based on Reza Quli Khan's notes, it can be concluded that our poet was a contemporary of Ferdowsi (942-1021) and a predecessor of Omar Khayyam (1048-1231).

مو آن بحرم که در ظرف آمدستم  
چو نقطه بر سر حرف آمدستم  
بهرالفی الف قدی بر آیه  
الف قدم که در الف آمدستم (Baba Tahir, 1333: 18).

*That within the time I arrived,  
A point came upon the letter I had reached;  
In short, the thousand letters of old came upon  
The letter I had reached.*

Mirza Mehdi Khan Kovkab, who analyzed this dubeyti of Baba Tahir using the abjad system, arrived at a result that seems quite interesting at first glance. Each of the words *Alefqadd* (الف قد), *Taher* (طاهر) and *Darya* (دریا) equals 215 according to the abjad calculation.

In *Alefqadd* and *Alef* (الف – 111) are added together; the total is 326.

If the word *Hezar* (هزار) is written and calculated in the form ها + ز + ا + الف + را, it also equals 326.

After this calculation Mirza Mehdi Khan Kovkab reads the symbolic unveiled dubeyti as follows: Once every thousand years, a great personality appears. I am that great *personality*.

(الف قد) – that is Tahir (طاهر), who was born in Alef (الف). This corresponds to the year 326 (Dehxoda, 1337: 73).

When converted to the Gregorian calendar, the 326th year of the Hijri calendar corresponds to 937/938 CE. Assuming this analysis is correct, Reza Quli Khan Hedayat's note that the poet lived until the 401st Hijri year (1019 CE) would also be confirmed.

Still, the only historical source concerning Baba Tahir – the information we obtain from Najm al-Din Abu Bakr Ravandi's work *Rahat al-sudur wa ayat al-surur* ("The Comfort of Hearts and the Sign of Joys", 1202) – reveals that both Reza Quli Khan Hedayat's note and Mirza Mehdi Khan Kovkab's analysis are incorrect. Ravandi writes:

شنیده ام که چون سلطان طغرل بک بهمدان آمد از اولیا سه پیر بودند : بابا طاهر و بابا جعفر و شیخ حمشا. کوهی است بر در همدان آنرا خضر خوانند بر آنجا ایستاده بودند. نظر سلطان بر ایشان آمد کو کبۀ لشکر بداشت و پیاده شد و با وزیر ابو نصر الکندری پیش ایشان آمد و دستایشان ببوسید. بابا طاهر پاره شیفته گونه بودی او را گفت:

– ای ترک با خلق خدا چه خواهی کرد؟  
سلطان گفت:

– آنچه تو فرمایی.

بابا گفت:

– آن کس که خدای می فرماید. آیه : ان الله یأمر بالعدل و الاحسان.  
سلطان میگرسست و گفت:

– چنین کنم؟

بابا دستش بستد و گفت:

– از من پذیرفتی؟

سلطان گفت:

– آری.

بابا سرابریقی شکسته که سالها از آن وضوکرده بود در انگشت داشت بیرون کرد و در انگشت سلطان کرد و گفت:

– مملکت جهان چنین در دست تو کردم بر عدل باش (Ravandi, 1921: 98-99).

*I have heard that when Sultan Tughril Beg came to Hamadan, three holy men – Baba Tahir, Baba Jafar and Sheikh Hamsha were standing near a mountain in Hamadan called Khidr. Sultan saw them, stopped his army and got down from his horse. He came up to them together with his vizier, Abu Nasr al-Kunduri, and kissed their hands.*

*Baba Tahir was astonished and said to him:*

*– O Turk, what do you intend to do with the people of God?*

*The Sultan replied:*

– *What do you command?*

*Baba Tahir said:*

– *Do as God Commands!*

*Verse:*

– *Indeed, God Commands justice and goodness (Quran, 16<sup>th</sup> surah, 93<sup>rd</sup> verse – R.H.).*

*The Sultan wept and said:*

– *What should I do?*

*Baba stretched out his hand and said:*

– *Have you accepted it from me?*

*The Sultan replied:*

– *Yes.*

*The spout of Baba's broken ewer, which he had used for ablution for many years, was on his own finger. He took it off, placed it on the Sultan's finger, and said:*

– *In this way I entrust the kingdom to you. Be just.*

This meeting could not have taken place before 1055, because Tughril Bek entered Hamadan precisely in that year. Thus, the date given by Reza Quli Khan Hedayat – without citing any source is not correct.

As for Mirza Mehdi Khan Kawkab's analysis, we must say that it is merely sophistry, because he attempted to resolve the issue through an electric approach.

The coincidental numerical match, according to the abjad system, of the words "Tahir" and "alafqad" led Mirza Mehdi Khan Kawkab to replace, in his calculation, the unsuitable word "bahr" with "darya" and "alaf" with "hezar", and then to calculate "hezar" in a rather unclear manner.

When the result obtained from his complex calculation is compared with Najm al-Din Abu Bakr Ravandi's account, it turns out that Baba Tahir would supposedly have been 122 years old when he met the Turkic sultan. This, of course, is not reasonable.

The Iranian scholar Rashid Yasemi, who quite rightly does not consider Mirza Mehdi Khan Kawkab's calculation to be correct, nevertheless puts forward a claim of his own that is also incorrect.

After making a number of historical and literary comparisons, Rashid Yasemi refers to the above-mentioned dubeyti and writes:

هزار میلادی مقصود است اول دسامبر سال هزار مسیحی با آغاز ۳۹۱ محرم مصادف بوده از اینقرار تولد بابا مقارن سالها ی ۳۹۰ و ۳۹۱ هجری میگردد که هزار میلادی است و از این تاریخ تا عبور سلطان طغرل از همدان و ملاقات بابا قریب ۵۶ سال میشود . (Yasami: 8)

*The year 1000 CE is meant. The beginning of December in the year 1000 AD corresponds to the beginning of the month of Muharram in the year 391 AH. Thus, Baba Tahir's birth falls in the years 390-391 AH, which corresponds to the year 1000 CE. From this date until Sultan Tughril's passing through Hamadan and his meeting with Baba, there are 56 years.*

It is not reasonable to give Baba Tahir's date of birth in the Gregorian calendar for the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Seemingly, taking all this into account, Rashid Yasemi noted at the end of his article presenting these calculations that his views might be incorrect and was merely of a hypothetical nature (Yasami: 8).

From the story related in “Rahat al-sudur”, it is understood that when Baba Tahir encountered Tughril Bek, he was already middle-aged, perhaps even somewhat elderly. Around that time, the poet would have been approximately 50-60 years old.

Based on the only historical source available to us, one may conclude that Baba Tahir was born toward the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century and died after 1055, in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in his work *Suhuf-i Ibrahim* (صحف ابراهيم), written by Ali Ibrahim, a meeting between Baba Tahir and Ibn Sina (980-1037) is described (Zhukovsky, 1901: 108).

According to the account, Abu Ali ibn Sina, while supposedly compiling astronomical tables, encounters difficulty in showing Utarid. He turns to Baba Tahir for help. Baba Tahir then draws on the ground with the tip of his foot exactly the form of Utarid that Abu Ali required (Zhukovsky, 1901: 108-109).

Although this account has something of a fairy-tale quality, it attracts attention because from a historical position it parallels with the notes of Ravandi.

The poet’s full name is Baba Tahir Uryan of Hamadan. His given name was Tahir (meaning pure, clean.). Uryan is his pen name. There are various ways to explain why the poet adopted exactly this nickname. First, this word, which means “naked” or “bare” may allude to the poet’s poverty and his life of hardship and deficiency.

Second, this term can be applied to the poet’s *dubeytis* and more generally, to his entire body of work, which is free from all exaggeration and seemingly complex symbolism. Finally, the fact that Baba Tahir often refers to himself in his *dubeytis* as a *qalandar* together with reports that many *qalandars* went about half-naked and dressed in rags, allows this pen name to be interpreted on the basis of the poet’s association with the *Qalandari* order.

As for the word “Baba” symbolically this epithet was given on well-known and respected individuals. Among various Sufi poets and thinkers, as well as among prominent members of different mystical orders, there were many who bore the title “Baba”.

The fact that our poet was given the epithet “Baba” shows that he was one of the beloved and respected figures of his time. Baba Tahir was born and died in Hamadan. It appears that the poet’s life was spent mainly in this very city, since his *dubeytis* we often meeting references to Hamadan and to Mound Alvand.

The tomb of Baba Tahir is also located in Hamadan. This tomb was described in the past in **Nuzhat al-Qulub** by Hamdullah Qazvini (1336: 80) and in **Bustan al-Siyaha** by Zayn al-Abidin Shirvani (1315: 613).

Until 1953, the tomb of Baba Tahir had remained as described in those old historical books. In 1953, however, a handsome mausoleum was erected on the site of the tomb, which had originally been built in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The inscribed stone slab discovered when the old tomb was dismantled is now preserved in the National Museum of Iran. Selected *dubeytis* of Baba Tahir have been engraved on the walls of the new mausoleum. (Hegmataneh, 1332: 194-200).

According to the accounts, Baba Tahir withdrew from people and lived in loneliness on the snowy peaks of Mount Alvand.

According to another story, Tahir, an illiterate woodcutter, once came to a madrasa and asked the students how they were able to remember what they had learned. To make fun of him, they pointed to a shallow, frozen-over pool and said: We

plunge our heads in this water every day, and that is why all knowledge is imprinted in our minds.

Tahir believed what he was told. One night, he came to the madrasa courtyard, broke the ice covering the pool, and began dipping his head into the water. It is said that at that moment, a spark of light descending from the sky entered his mouth.

The next day, when Tahir came to the madrasa, he amazed everyone with his knowledge and learning. When asked how the woodcutter, who had been illiterate just the day before, had attained such a high level of mastery in a single day, Tahir replied:

امسیت کردیان و اصیحت عربیا (Baba Tahir, 1306: 14).

*I went to sleep Kurdish, woke up Arabian.*

However, V.F.Minorsky points these words to Abdullah Babuniy (Bertels, 1960: 524). Y.E.Bertels, who rejects the idea that Baba Tahir was formerly an illiterate woodcutter and a wandering dervish, writes that it appears Baba Tahir in his youth was still distant from Sufism and engaged in scholarly activity. He only began his life as a wandering dervish at a later state (Bertels, 1960: 524).

This pattern is also characteristic of the lives and works of many poets who were predecessors, contemporaries or successors of Baba Tahir. For example, Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali (1058-1142), the famous Sufi poet Ahmadi Jamil (1049-1142), Abdullah Unsuri and several others were first recognized in various fields of knowledge, and only later turned to dervish life and the propagation of Sufism.

The legend of a person attaining divine inspiration in a single moment, or reaching poetic mastery in the course of one night, is also widespread in the East.

For example, there is a similar legend about Hafiz Shirazi, according to which he was constantly mocked for composing poems that were shallow in content and lacking meter and rhyme. One day, the future great Hafiz went to the tomb of Baba Kuhi, where he had to spend the night, and suddenly Ali ibn Abi Talib appeared before him and said:

برو که دروازه علوم با تو باز شد

*Go for the gate of knowledge has been opened for you.*

As soon as he awoke, Hafez recited the opening couplet of a ghazal that would later become very famous:

دوش وقت سحر از غصه نجاتم دادند و اندر آن ظلمت شب آب حیاتم دادند.

(Braginsky, 1972: 363-365).

*Last night at the hour of dawn, they delivered grief  
And in the darkness of night, they granted me the water life.*

In Iran legends among the people about Baba Tahir's illiteracy are still alive today. A kinship can be sensed between the legends about Homer and Rudaki being blind and illiterate, the accounts of Ashiq Alasgar's unfamiliarity with reading and writing, and similar sayings associated with Baba Tahir.

Of course, the emergence of such legends is not accidental: the people have always regarded poetic talent as a God-given gift. Yet it is clear that without a certain level of theoretical preparation, it is impossible to be recognized as a master of the word. In addition to Baba Tahir's poems, a philosophical work entitled "کلمات قصار" (*Kalamat-i Qisar*) has also survived down to our own day.

This risale collected of 23 chapters – such as knowledge, gnosis, inspiration and insight, reason and the ego, this world and the hereafter and others and containing 368 aphorisms, has also been the subject of a number of commentaries (Baba Tahir, 1336: 21).

Undoubtedly, the author of such a wisdom-filled and deeply philosophical work could only have been someone who had deeply mastered the theoretical foundations of Sufism. Some sources regard Ayn al-Quzzat Hamdani as a follower of Baba Tahir.

This is not correct. Ayn al-Quzzat Hamadani was born in 492 AH in the city of Mianedh was executed in 525 AH. As can be seen, Ayn Al-Quzzat lived after Baba Tahir.

By the way, it should be noted that Ayn al-Quzzat Hamadani was among the earliest authors to write a commentary on *Kalamat-i Qisar* (Qazvini, 1336: 16).

In the national library of Paris, a manuscript entitled *Saranjam* is preserved. This work, which reflects certain views of the *Ahl-i Haqq* order and includes various traditions, was once translated into Russian by Vladimir Minorsky. (1911)

Several pages of *Saranjam* are dedicated to Baba Tahir. This section, which is only lightly connected in content to the other chapters, describes Baba Tahir's audience with the king of the world. The dialogue between the king and Baba Tahir is built upon poetry. Admittedly, certain metrical irregularities are noticeable in these verses, and they are closer in style to prose, but in the text, we still encounter poetic passages rendered in Baba Tahir's own language, the correct versions of which can be found in the copies of the poet's *Divan of Baba Tahir*.

For example:

یا شاه هر کس شاهش توئی حالش همینه  
سرینش خشت و بالینش زمینه  
جرم اینه که ترا دوست دارم  
یا شاه هر که ترا دوست دارد حالش همینه (Minorsky: 13(a)).

*O king, whoever loves you, his state is the same,  
His head is on the roof, and his wings are on ground,  
My sin is that I love you  
O king, whoever loves you, his state is just like this.*

The following *dubeyti* from *Divan of Baba Tahir* is the authentic version of that quatrain, with its meter fully preserved and intact:

دلم از درد ته دایم غمینه  
ببالین خشم و بستر زمینه  
همین جرمم که مو ته دوست دیرم  
نه هر کت دوست دیره حالش اینه (Baba Tahir, 1333: 35).

*My constant pain is sorrow;  
My anger is the roof, and the ground is my bed.*

*This is my fault for I love the one I should not;  
His state is just like this.*

The account of Baba Tahir's audience with the king of the world recalls the story by Rawandi about the poet's encounter with Sultan Tughril.

It is possible that the account in *Saranjam* represents a somewhat mythicized version of a real event, shaped by the Ahl Haqq.

To what we have said about Baba Tahir we can also add the legends claim he had a beloved named Gullu.

Some sources, including the writings of *Sarancam*, also report that Baba Tahir had a sister named Bibi Fatimah (Minorsky: 14(b)).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Reza Quli Khan Hedayat, in compiling his famous biographical collections, undoubtedly drew on certain known sources. At the same time, it should not be discounted that, from the 11<sup>th</sup> century during the poets lifetime up to present, there may still be information about the poets life and personality in certain documents, chronicles, and biographical collections that has not yet been uncovered.

Thus, research showed in the collections of documents around the world may, in the future, make it possible to uncover new and more accurate information about Baba Tahir's life, personality social circle and literacy-scientific legacy.

### **3. The main thematic directions of Baba Tahir's poetry**

Baba Tahir has entered the history of Persian-language literature a lyrical-romantic poet. He turned to the *dubeit*, one of the most delicate genres of lyric poetry, and created beautiful examples both of this poetic form and of lyrical poetry in general.

At the center of Baba Tahirs poetry stands a human being – a person who loves and is loved, who grieves who rebels against their era, and who reflects. This person is connected to real life and the earth through countless threads. Alongside this, there is also a layer of mysticism in Baba Tahir lyrics.

In other words, he is a poet whose one hand reaches toward the earth and the other toward the heavens. In fact, his poetry the veil between the realistic expression and the mystical Sufi style expression is very transparent and sometimes it is difficult to determine where one begins and the other ends. This of course, arouse not by chance but from the poetic traditions of the era, and it sometimes happened even involuntarily under the influence of the environment and the poetic atmosphere of the time in which poet lived.

Naturally, the lyrics of Baba Tahir had foundations rooted in tradition. Drawing on the progressive ideas and expressive forms of the lyrical poetry that came before him, the poet did not fall into the captivity of tradition; instead, he enriched and developed this branch of Persian-language poetry with his innate talent and innovative thinking.

But loyal and obedient he may have been to the lessons of the literary heritage left by his predecessors Baba Tahir lyrics are in any case, new form and content within 11<sup>th</sup>-century Persian-language poetry a step forward, a progress that was recognized both in his time and long afterward.

In the introduction to one of the Tehran editions of Baba Tahir "Divan", it is noted that although there are many poets among Iran's great literary masters who have found their way into the hearts of connoisseurs, the people read Baba Tahir's *dubeytis* far

more. This may be because perhaps some do not love Khayam as much as out of prejudice, or because the majority of ordinary people are unable to fully appreciate the beauty in Saadi's and Hafez poetry.

However, it is difficult to find a person who has read Baba Tahir's heartfelt simple poems and has not been touched by them, who does not feel the inner passion of this great mystic. Besides, there are many who are illiterate and unfamiliar with writing who still know half of Baba Tahir *dubeytis* by heart. (Baba Tahir, 1333: 2-3).

These reflections aptly characterize the widespread love for Baba Tahir and the popularity of his poetic legacy. At the core of this fame, however, lie the unique delicacies of the poet's lyrics.

It would not be wrong to call Baba Tahir's lyrics an event, a new and interesting stage in the history of Persian-language poetry. One of the distinguishing features of his poetry is the effort to simplify lyric poetry as much as possible, expressing various ideas not through symbols, complex metaphors or convoluted phrases but in a style very close to everyday spoken language in essence, his greatest achievement in the history of Persian-language poetry is precisely his ability to carry Sufi thought at level that even ordinary people could feel and understand. This is a quality that is necessary for the poetry of all eras and all peoples.

The ability to penetrate the hidden, intimate layers of the human heart and to transform feelings that are easy to sense but difficult to express into stirring fiery verses is one of the qualities that elevates and makes Baba Tahir's lyrics unique.

One of the main virtues of Baba Tahir's legacy is his mastery in awarding the small genre of lyric poetry the *dubeyt*, consisting of only 4 lines – with vast inner depth; the ability to make few words take much, to load words with the heaviest meanings they can bear without wounding their spirit, and while remaining faithful to poetic conciseness, to create poems distinguished by both high literary beauty and simplicity.

Within the framework of lyric poetry, one of the perhaps most notable qualities of Baba Tahir's lyrics is his ability to address the people's sorrows, desire, hopes and needs, not with the typical majesty or pomp of classical Persian poetry, nor by shouting them out, but quietly feeling these pains, and revealing them in a way that vibrates with the reader's heart.

Azad Hamadani, an Iranian literary scholar discussing Baba Tahir's lyrics, called "a singer of love whose *dubeytis* resonate with the hearts of lovers" (Baba Tahir, 1333: 9).

This view reflects only one aspect, one characteristic of Baba Tahir's lyrics. He is also a poet who keeps his finger on the pulse of society, a friend of the people, an expression of social tendencies and a patriotic lyricist.

Baba Tahir's simplicity is a model of genuine simplicity, his poems which are seemingly plain and simple, there is also an inner complexity and philosophy Baba Tahir is, at the same time, a reflective lyricist.

The main theme of Baba Tahir's poetry is love. Reflecting the excitement of a heart that loves with endless passion, the joy of union, and the pain of separation, Baba Tahir's *dubeytis* evoke a rich symphony of love.

In every chord of this symphony, in every *dubeyt*, one hears the beats of a Majnun wise passionate heart and we witness a sublime love. It is such a great love that it fills the lover's heart with pure emotions, inspiring loyalty, courage and humanity.

The poet has tailored clothing for his heart whose warp is suffering and whose weft is love (Baba Tahir, 1333: 5). When this suffering surges, the lovers sign turns into

an arrow and his lament into a bow (Baba Tahir, 1333: 24). At the mere command of his beloved's single word "go", he is ready to set out even farther than China and Machin (Baba Tahir, 1333: 19). When the love in his heat overflows, he shrinks from no torment any bodily pain, not even from a dark dungeon (Baba Tahir, 1333: 4; 32). Even if not the beloved herself but only her image embraces him in a dream by morning the pillow will exhale the scent of roses. Even if not the beloved herself but only her image embraces him in a dream by morning the pillow will exhale the scent of roses (Baba Tahir, 1333: 32).

According to Baba Tahir, true love is such that one places the beloved above everything that is visible and perceptible, even above one's own self. On this path, one must steadfastly endure all suffering and anguish (Baba Tahir, 1333: 6). A lover filled with such self-sacrificing love cannot be turned away from his chosen path by reproaches, rebukes or blames (Baba Tahir, 1333: 12).

The principle of loving to the point of self-forgetfulness in a Majnun-like anger was a virtue that emerged in the Middle Ages – an era through which Baba Tahir himself lived. At the same time, branding those who love with such fiery passion as "madmen" is criticism that has likewise survived from those very ages.

In the memory of the age there existed a warning for everyone: never forget that love is a trial before it is a blessing for had humanity's primal parents, Adam and Eve, not fallen in love, they would have driven out of paradise.

The poet decisively rejects this anti-love stance, which he considers groundless: if disgrace is inevitable for the sake of love, then it is not worth fleeing from it. Love also means struggle.

In one of his dubeytis, Baba Tahir says with irony to those who regard drinking wine and yielding to love as sins that, precisely because he traces his roots back to Adam and Eve, he will not reject these acts.

مو آن رندم که عصیان پیشه دیرم  
بدستی جام و دستنی شیشه دیرم  
اگر تو بیگناهی رو ملک شو  
مو از حوا و آدم ریشه دیرم (Baba Tahir, 1333: 73).

*I am rind, a man whose way of life is sin;  
In one hand I hold a cup, in the other a glass.  
If you are without sin, then go and become an angel –  
My roots are from Adam and Eve, steeped in sin.*

What makes life beautiful? Baba Tahir's poetry answers this question with a single word: "love". Love made the poets lyrical hero so sorrowful that the smoke of his sighs rises to the heavens, his "tears" form seas and his heart is soaked in red blood.

Yet, he curses a heart without sorrow and a soul without love, wishing that a heart empty of love would rather not exist at all.

هر که دردی نداره مرده اولی  
دلی بی درد عشق افسرده اولی  
سحر بلبل زنه آوا بگلین  
که هر که عشق نداره مرده اولی (Baba Tahir, 1333: 58).

*It is better for one without sorrow to die,  
It is better for a heart without the pain of love to freeze.  
In the morning, the nightingale sang atop the rose bush:  
Whoever does not love, it is better for them to die.*

Baba Tahir celebrates a lover so consumed by passion that his beloved has merged with his feelings, his emotions and his heart. In this union, the lover cannot separate his soul from his beloveds. He is faced with a strange paradox: if the soul is the beloved, then where is the beloved? And if the beloved is the soul, then where is the soul?

اگر دل دلبر و دلبر کدامت  
وگر دلبر دل و دلرا چه نامست  
دل و دلبر بهم آمیخته وینم  
ندونم دل که و دلبر کدامت  
(Baba Tahir, 1333: 3)

*If the heart is the beloved, then which one is the beloved?  
If the beloved is the heart, then which one is the heart?  
I see the heart and the beloved mingled together,  
I do not know which is the the heart, and which is the beloved.*

The golden rule that baba Tahir established for love later vibrates closely with the definition of love given by the great German philosopher Hegel. Hegel wrote: to renounce self-knowledge, to forget oneself in another "I", yet in this very disappearance and forgetting to find oneself for the first time, to master oneself this is the true essence of love (Hegel, 1940: 107).

Human beings always desire for beauty; anyone can love and be loved. It is quite normal for a beautiful beloved with enchanting eyes to have dozens or even hundreds of admirers. But does every lover reach the summit of perfect love?

Baba Tahir compares lovers to his own poems. He says, "Just as my poems have good and bad ones, the admirers of that moon-faced beloved also include the worthy and the unworthy".

هر آن دلبر که چشم مست داره  
هزاران چون منی پا بست داره  
میان عاشقان آن ماه سیما  
چو شعر من بلند و پست داره  
(Baba Tahir, 1333: 38)

*Every dark-eyed beloved  
Has thousands of captives like me.  
Among the lovers of that moon-faced beauty,  
There are good and bad ones, just like in my poetry.*

Baba Tahir is charmed of a unique beauty. The poet elevates the beloved, idealizing his love for her. For this reason, the dubeytis sometimes give the impression that platonic love is being celebrated. In fact, the poet is praising a real person – a folk beauty who walks upon this land, eats of its bounty and is warmed by the sun. We understand the poet as someone who, in hope of union, waits for the beloved until past

midnight, counts the stars one by one in longing for her arrival, and sheds involuntarily tears from his eyes (Baba Tahir, 1333: 24).

It would be hard for anyone who reads this dubeyti to say it is dedicated to the Divine Being, to God:

شو تاريک و گرگان ميزنن ميش  
دو زلفونت حمایل کن بوره پیش  
از آن کنج لب ت بوسی بموده  
بگو راه خدا دادم بدرويش (Baba Tahir, 1333: 12).

*It is dark, pitch-black night.  
Make a necklace from your braids and come to me.  
Give me a kiss from the tip of your lips,  
And say that you have given it to dervish as charity in the way of God.*

The clarity of the ideas in this dubeyti and their distance from mysticism are obvious.

In this quatrain, it is absolutely impossible to deny that real, earthly love is being celebrated and that sincere pure affection is being praised.

However, in a literary situation where Sufi thought in medieval Muslim Eastern poetry filled almost every word, where the braid, the eyebrow, they eye, the eyelash even the kiss could all be interpreted as pure Sufi symbols – a mystical Sufi interpretation of this dubeyti cannot be ruled out. Even today, there may still be those who read and interpret poems of this kind in that way.

Such differences of opinion should be sought, first of all, in ideological distinctions and in opposing methods of interpretation. If today we read Baba Tahir's dubeytis with pleasure and perceive in them pure love, unbreakable friendship, a warm family spirit, fidelity to promises between people and exemplary models of trust and if we surrender our hearts to their attraction – then, in my view, we are far more justified than those who impose fanciful, imagined interpretations on the heartfelt poems of the master from Hamadan.

For nearly ten centuries, ordinary people across the world, speaking different languages, have remembered Baba Tahir with admiration because they found in his poetry the echoes of precisely those delicate, beautiful human experiences that we have highlighted.

There is much beauty in the world. Nature possesses an immeasurable, soul-soothing grace. Baba Tahir likens the beloved he loves to a delicate violet that has grown by the edge of an irrigation ditch, and also to a bright red tulip that blossom in the mountains.

Yet he places her above them all. For these beauties, which give a person only fleeting pleasure, are temporary. The beloved companion, however, is for the poet a lamp of hope throughout an entire lifetime, a shoulder to lean on and a kindred soul with whom to share both joys and sorrows along life's path. Here we encounter the noble moral qualities instilled by Baba Tahir's concept of love: the human being is the most beautiful of the beautiful, the highest of all created things.

الاله کوهسارانم ته یی یار  
بنفشه جو کنارانم ته یی یار

الإله كوهساران هفتة بی  
امید روزگارتم ته بی یار (Baba Tahir, 1333: 9).

*You are the tulip on the mountain peak, my beloved,  
You are the violet by the riverbank, my beloved.  
The tulip stays on the mountain for a week,  
You are the eternal hope of my life, my beloved.*

The poet is ready to make any sacrifice for such a companion and calls his reader to selflessness as well. If the poet says, “Even if they tear my eyes with daggers, burn my bones in fire, or pierce my nails with needles, I will not turn away from my beloved”, we believe in his sincerity (Baba Tahir, 1333: 72).

For a Muslim, there are certain traditional oaths. However, poets – including Baba Tahir – add new vows to the line of these oaths.

For Baba Tahir, nothing in the world is more sacred than his beloved. That is why he swears by her face, which resembles the moon in its fourteen-night fullness, and by the arch of her eyebrows. He considers her beautiful visage even holier than Mecca. “For me, true pilgrimage is to gaze upon my beloved’s face” he says (Jukovsky: 29).

Love does not exist without sorrow. The poet considers both tears and the pains of love to be natural. He advises not to expose the hardships and cruelties coming from the beloved, but rather to endure them quietly, in the heart, in secret.

در اشکم بدامان ریته اولی  
خون دلم ز چشمان ریته اولی  
بکس حرفی ز جور و نواجم  
که حرف جور پنهان ریته اولی (Baba Tahir, 1333: 54).

*It would be better if my tears fell upon my hem,  
It would be better if the blood of my heart spilled from my eyes.  
I will not tell anyone the words and deeds of cruelty,  
The words of cruelty must remain secret.*

Baba Tahir’s love is free from all pride and every form of selfishness. He is ready to endure a thousand hardships for the sake of his beloved. Yet he does not want even the slightest sorrow to touch her. From the eyes of the lover burning with desire for union flow fiery tears. These moist eyes could sadden the beloved and weigh upon her heart. That is why he is even willing to die. So that his beloved does not see older eyes and become sorrowful.

بمیرم تا ته چشم تر نوینی  
شرار آه آذر تا نوینی (Baba Tahir, 1333: 59).

*I would die so that you would see no tearful eyes anymore,  
So that you would not see the sparks of a burning sigh.*

Caring for the beloved, showing affection, even casting a charm over her imagination – this is a quality that flows in waves throughout Baba Tahir’s dubeytis.

He does not resent his beloved walking on bare ground; he wishes that her path would pass over his eyes. Yet, he remains cautious – after all, her eyelashes, like thorns, could prick her feet. In these lines, the tender compassion and the sincere expression of that feeling in the style of folk speech cannot be found in Persian-language poetry prior to Baba Tahir.

عزیزا کاسه چشم سرایت  
میان هردو چشم خاک پایت  
از آن ترسم که غافل پا نهی باز  
نشیند خار مژگانم بیپایت (Baba Tahir, 1333: 3).

*My dear, the socket of my eyes is your palace,  
The space between my eyes is the soil beneath your feet.  
I fear that if you suddenly step forward,  
My eyelashes will pierce your feet like thorns.*

The passionate poet resents and feels hurt by the indifferent beloved who avoids him during the day but enters his dreams at night. He reproaches her for stirring his love even more in his sleep (Baba Tahir, 1333: 16), expressing the pain and sorrow of his days of separation in this way:

دمی بوره بوین حالم ته دلبر  
دلتم تنگه شبی با مو بسر بر  
ته گل بر سر زنی ای نو گل مو  
بجای گل زرم مو دست بر سر (Baba Tahir, 1333: 10).

*Beloved, come for a moment and see my condition,  
My heart is heavy; end it with just one night.  
You place a rose in your hair, my fresh rose,  
While I strike my head instead of holding a rose.*

The lyrical hero of one of the dubeytis addresses the unfaithful beloved as follows:

شنیدم رفتی و یاری گرفتی  
اگر گوشم شنو چشم نویناد (Baba Tahir, 1333: 70).

*I heard that you've gone and found a new lover.  
Let my ears hear it, but let my eyes never see it.*

All these lines are filled with the purity of the village fields scented with sweet basil, the natural innocence of the people living there, their simplicity, and their selfless love; if we put it in words familiar to all of us; it carries the very spirit of the bayati.

Baba Tahir praises mutual love. In his view, one-sided love is nothing but sorrow, grief, and crying. After all, it was the mutual love between Leyli and Majnun that made them famous in the world.

چه خوش بی مهربانی هر دو سر بی  
که یکسر مهربانی درد سربی

اگر مجنون دل شوریده داشت  
دل لیلی از آن شوریده تر بی (Baba Tahir, 1333: 78).

*If kindness comes from both sides, how wonderful it would be;  
One-sided kindness is a headache.  
If Majnun's heart was overflowing with passion,  
Then Leyla's heart was even more fervent than his.*

Baba Tahir's love does not end with a single beloved or with love for a beautiful woman. This love grows, expands, and reaches a lofty level as love for humanity.

Just as he endures the pains of his beloved and his love with commitment, he is equally ready to endure the hardships inflicted by a friend or companion with the same selflessness.

جفای دوسترا خواها نترستم (Baba Tahir, 1333: 65)  
*I seek the hardships of a friend.*

The poet, who says this, rises in our eyes in terms of spiritual richness. The humanist poet looks for his pain and his remedy, his joy and his sorrow, in his friends. No power can separate his loyal heart from his friends:

بود درد مو و درمونم از دوست  
بود وصل مو و هجروم از دوست  
اگر قصابم از تن واکره پوست  
جدا هرگز نکرده جونم از دوست (Baba Tahir, 1333: 5).

*My sorrow and my remedy come from my friend.  
My union and my separation also come from my friend.  
Even if a butcher strips the skin from my body,  
He cannot take my soul away from my friend.*

The scenes of love that Baba Tahir depicts with unparalleled delight bestow yet another positive quality upon his lyric poetry – a love of life. After all, a person who sees the meaning and purpose of life in love cannot help but be charmed of this world, of living and of creating.

When we seek the secret of how Baba Tahir's dubeytis have lived on in popular memory from the eleventh century to the present day – passed from lip to lip, from mouth to mouth and why they have always remained on the people's tongues, when we marvel at the enduring modernity of these dubeytis, we must not forget that the trail leads to love, which forms the very foundation of Baba Tahir's poetry.

For as long as humanity endures, this theme will never lose its relevance, and the poet's love-filled dubeytis, announcers of beautiful feelings, will preserve their freshness and necessity for all times.

#### **4. Protest notes in Baba Tahir's dubeytis and the Poet's social-political views**

Which tendencies in Baba Tahir's poetry, whose dubeytis are structured around a leitmotif and central thread that is the praise and celebration of two aesthetic concepts,

beauty and love, the eternal subject of poetic thought and the ever-youthful theme of poetry – lead us to think on a broader scale, direct our gaze back across years and centuries, and inevitably prompt us to recall the social scene of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the various social divisions of people in the poet's time, and the world of relationships.

Which issues raised by the poet, and which ideas and objectives he seeks to convey, require us to return to these lines again and again and to analyze them once more?

And finally, beyond the love lyricism in his work that is united with an active sense of modernity which other aspects and convictions appear today to be closer, more significant, and more valuable to us from the perspective of building a new world and a new society?

In the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century Persian poetry, the works of Rudaki, Kisai Marvi, Abu Abbas Abbasi and others reflected the sharp social contrasts of their time. These poets spoke of “mediocre” people and the poor, writing with heartfelt pain about how one lived in wealth while another survived in hunger and destitution, and they filled their poetry with powerful civic and social motifs.

In the immortal epic “Shahnameh” by Abu al-Qasim Ferdowsi, there are also many verses that speak of the harsh conditions and troubled lives of peasants and craftsmen. Baba Tahir, deeply connected to the people with his entire being, could not remain indifferent to these progressive tendencies that his contemporaries and predecessors brought to poetry. When the occasion arose, he too raised social issues in his verses and voiced his protest against the injustices of his time.

As the prominent Iranian scholar Saeed Nafisi notes in his work “The history of Persian poetry and prose”, unlike many of his contemporaries, Baba Tahir did not seek refuge in royal courts or palaces, but favored the people and turned toward them (Nafisi, 1344: 24).

The poet takes pride in his freedom. Unlike court poets, he writes what he truly feels and thinks, drawing his imagery from the life of the people, from the “everyday life of the common peasant” (Nafisi, 1344: 112).

The poet takes pride that his messy hair is more precious than the king's golden crown:

نهی ارافسر شاهیم فخری  
که این ژولیده مو به از افسرستم (Baba Tahir, 1333: 62)

*Even if I have no royal crown, I am proud  
For these tangled locks of mine are better than a crown.*

But a sorrowful fate was prepared for such people. Those who opposed the desires of the ruling class, the wealthy and the powerful – or who thought differently – were destined for endless hardships. Baba Tahir's younger contemporary, Omar Khayyam (1048-1131) wrote in the preface to one of his mathematical essays: “We have witnessed the destruction of the true bearers of wisdom. Now their numbers are few, yet their hardships are endless. The indecisiveness of fate prevents them in this era from dedicating themselves to the perfection and deepening of their knowledge. Today, many who ostensibly appear as scholars cloak falsehood in the guise of truth, never stepping beyond the framework of hypocrisy in their learning. They present themselves as if they truly know. They use the knowledge they possess for base purposes. When they encounter a

*dignified person who seeks truth, loves honesty, rejects injustice and flattery, and rejects arrogance and deceit, they greet him with hostility and mockery” (Khayyam, 1961: 70).*

Baba Tahir, being one of those who wanted the truth, was met with mockery. He surveys his era, seeking the worthy recipients of the creations as precious as jewels, wishing to see them and engage with them, yet he encounters only the ignorant.

قضا پیوسته در گوشم بواج  
که این درد دل تو بی علاج  
اگر گوهر ببی خواهون نداری  
همین این جون تو که بی رواج (Baba Tahir, 1333: 5).

*Fate keeps whispering in my ear:  
The sorrow of your heart has no cure.  
Even if you were a jewel, no one would desire you,  
For your soul is held to be without worth.*

The thoughtful poet understands how far above many he stands, realizing that most of the officeholders are far below him in moral dignity and intellect. This contrast is also evident in their positions in society. For the capable and the misfortune, while those low in dignity attain high offices. Despite all his talents, the poet laments that he still lags behind:

بدین مردانگی هستم چنان خوار  
ته پنداری که بر سر معجزستم (Baba Tahir, 1333: 66)

*With all this bravery, I am still disgraced –  
As though a veil has been cast over my head.*

For this reason, Baba Tahir regarded himself as a stranger in his time, a captive, a prisoner. In this prison-like era, his destiny was work and sorrow:

جهان بی وفا زندان ما بی  
خار غم قسمت دامن ما بی (Baba Tahir, 1333: 64)

*The faithless world has become a prison to us;  
To our fate have fallen only the thorns of sorrow.*

Baba Tahir considered him a fledging chosen and wounded by the era:

مو آن نخجیر وحشم تیر خورده  
که در دام زمانه مضطربستم (Baba Tahir, 1333: 47)

*I am like a wild goat struck by an arrow,  
Caught captive in the net of time.*

According to Baba Tahir’s belief, all people are equal – whether wealthy or poor.

However, the convictions of the feudal world are completely opposed to this view. The poet understands this well and knows that, as a member of the lower strata of society, he too is subject to hardships. Yet he believes that wealth and worldly possessions are fleeting. What truly matters is the human being and their pure spirit for neither wealth nor rank can be a permanent companion to a person.

According to Baba Tahir, a dervish who owns nothing and a wealthy, powerful man are essentially the same in their true nature:

بگورستان گذر کردم کم و بیش  
بدیدم حال دولتمند و درویش  
نه درویشی بخاکی بی کفن ماند  
نه دولتمند برد از یک کفن بیش  
(Baba Tahir, 1333: 71)

*Many times my path has led me to the graveyard  
There I saw the fate of both the rich man and the dervish.  
The dervish was not left beneath the earth without a shroud,  
Nor had the wealthy taken anything more than a shroud with him.*

Beginning in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Persian-language poetry frequently likens the human being to a polo ball and life to the field where the game of polo is played. This metaphor, which symbolizes human helplessness in the face of fate and destiny and the inevitability of what the heavens inscribe for our lives, also appears in the legacy of Baba Tahir. However, the poet uses this comparison to express a crucial social problem – not helplessness before fate, but powerlessness in the face of the strong and influential, those who wield authority and command obedience.

سرم چون گوی در میدان بگرده  
دلم نز عهد ونز پیمان بگرده  
اگر دوران بنامردان بمونه  
نشینم تا نگر دوران بگرده  
(Baba Tahir, 1333: 39)

*My head wandered like a cannonball,  
Yet my heart did not turn away from its vow and covenant.  
If the age is to remain in the hands of the dishonorable,  
Then let me sit and wait until another age arrives.*

The poet, weary of his helplessness in a world entrusted to the deceitful, longs to live once more and awaits the turning of time. He yearns for a society in which justice will prevail and sits, hoping for the happy day of its arrival.

One should not naively assume that in Baba Tahir's time, when poems praising freedom, brotherhood, solidarity and the equality of all people before the law were written, and verses overflowing with protests against the flaws of society were composed, it all passed without difficulty, as if there were no restrictions on expression similar to the censorship we experience throughout our own lives. Every era has its own prohibitions and its own forms of censorship. Perhaps those times were even harsher than our own. If it were that simple, others would have written as well! There were so many poets who were contemporaries of Baba Tahir!

All of this is a matter of honor and conscience, qualities governed by the sense of justice within a person. Heroism, courage, and determination are feelings that erupt from within; they cannot be instilled in the mind through teaching, instruction, or practice!

In Baba Tahir's view, the world he lived in is an endless desert, and the oppression, tyranny, and injustice within it are like a dark night enveloping that terrifying void. In Baba Tahir's terms, the era itself is likened to a desert. In this desert – that is, in this age – those who are lightly burdened, who see the times only at the level of the age, the self-centered, the indifferent, the shameless, and the spiritually lazy are, in a certain sense, fortunate.

شو تا رو بیا بان پرورک بی  
همه صحرا پر از خار و خک بی  
نبا شد اندرین ره روشنا ئی  
خوشا آنکس که بارش کمترک بی (Baba Tahir, 1333: 44)

*A dark night, an endless wilderness –  
The desert filled with stones and thorns.  
On this path, the eye cannot see even itself;  
Blessed are those whose burden is light.*

Whenever the occasion arises, Baba Tahir gives a social dimension to love, the central theme of his poetry. If the lover is humiliated solely for loving, if he faces a thousand insults, criticisms and sorrows in trying to be with the beloved, the poet sees the cause of all this in society itself (Baba Tahir, 1333: 12).

Speaking through the language of the lover becomes a means for the poet to express ideas charged with social tendencies. In many of Baba Tahir's poems, which outwardly appear as love verses, the various injustices and ugliness's of the era are exposed. Even in Baba Tahir ghazal that reads like the monologue of a lyrical hero living in hope of union with the beloved, we encounter such reflections:

نمیگیرد کسم هر گز بچیزی  
در این کشور ز هر کم کمترستم  
ز دوران یکسر مو بهره ام نیست  
که روز از روز دیگر بندترستم (Baba Tahir, 1333: 63)

*No one takes my hand;  
In this land, I have fallen behind everyone.  
From this age I gain no benefit at all;  
Each of my day is worse than the one before*

In medieval Arabic, Persian and Turkic poetry, complaints about fate are a frequently encountered motif. When "fate" is mentioned, it often actually refers to the upper echelons of society – the ones who subject the working masses to unbearable hardships. The spirit of protest against the ruling classes is expressed.

If Baba Tahir writes:

الهی ای فلک چون مو زبون شی  
دلتم همچون دل مو غرق خون شی (Baba Tahir, 1333: 56).

*O fate, when you speak, my heart drowns  
Just as my heart itself is drowned.*

It is clear that he condemns the oppressors and the tyrants, and to truly feel the plight of the oppressed, he wishes that they too would experience such a day.

When we examine Baba Tahir's poetic legacy, we encounter dozens of *dubeytis* that seemingly appear as complaints about fate but, at their core, constitute passionate calls against social inequality.

The times trample on human dignity, reducing a person to a mere plaything. Baba Tahir, to illustrate the contradictions between human and fate and, by extension, between citizen and the world – uses a metaphor new to 11<sup>th</sup>-century poetry: the human as a pawn, fate as one who throws the pawns and the backgammon board as the world:

فلک زار و نزارم کردی آخر  
جدا از گلغذارم کردی آخر  
میان تختۀ نردم نشاندی  
شش و پنجی بکارم کردی آخر (Baba Tahir, 1333: 9).

*Fate in the end, you have left me to weep,  
You have torn me away from my beloved with the smiling face.  
You made me sit at the backgammon board,  
And with a six-and-five, you brought me to my ruin.*

Fate – the upper class of society oppresses without regard for anyone's opinion, sheds blood, lays waste to the homes of the poor, and extinguishes their hearts. The poet records this bitter truth revealed by his era with a heart bleeding from sorrow, and he does not fail to express his stance toward these injustices. Oppression cannot endure; blood is not left unavenged and revenge will not wait until the Day of Judgment.

فلک نه همسری دارد نه همکف  
بخونریزی کسی اصلاً نگفت اف  
همیشه شیوه کارش همیشه  
چراغ دودمانی را کند پف (Baba Tahir, 1333: 72).

*Fate has no partner;  
No one forgives the shedding of blood.  
Its work is always this:  
To extinguish the lamps of homelands.*

Baba Tahir divides people into two kinds: "karim" and "laim". By "karim" – generous he means those whose hearts are broad and content, even if they are not wealthy like himself. By "laim" – miserly – he refers to those who never tire of exploiting others, who drive the poor into poverty. The poet advises staying away from the laims

and taking no favor from them. The thinker, well aware of the value of words, knows to the very end that it is precisely such people who cause all social ills.

بوره منت بریم ما از کریمان  
بکشیم دست از خوان لئیمان  
کریمان دست در خوان کریمان  
که بر خوانش نظر دارند لئیمان  
(Baba Tahir, 1333: 31)

*Let us accept favors from the generous,  
And turn away from the table of the miserly.  
The generous keep their table open,  
While the eyes of the stingy are fixed upon their own table.*

Baba Tahir considers human beings the noblest of all creations. He wishes to see them spiritually complete. The lover praised by Baba Tahir is committed, faithful and firm. The beloved he describes is so faultless that even God stops to behold her.

The ability to ennoble humanity and to depict beauty so extraordinary that even God would marvel is the mark of a peak like Baba Tahir:

بلا رمزی ز بالای ته باشه  
جنون قسمی ز سودای ته باشه  
بصورت آفرینم این گمانه  
که پنهان در تماشای ته باشه  
(Baba Tahir, 1333: 41)

*Calamity is a symbol of your stature,  
Madness arises from your love.  
I suppose that even the Creator  
Secretly watches your performance.*

In Baba Tahir, though somewhat mystically, the belief in the equality of all people and nations is expressed.

If a person drinks wine and becomes intoxicated, why is this considered a sin? If all human actions are subject to God's will, then it is he himself who is the cause of that sin. Whether Zoroastrian, Christian or Muslim, if all peoples are created by God, why shall one be considered superior to another? (Baba Tahir, 1333: 28).

When Baba Tahir says, "I am a fiery bird – if I beat my wings, I will set the world ablaze. If a painter were to draw my image on a wall, even the power of my likeness would set the world on fire (Baba Tahir, 1333: 15), we already see him as a rebellious poet.

In another dubeyti, we also find the cause that gives rise to this defiance:

مو که چون اشترم قانه بخارم  
خوراکم خار و خرواری بیارم  
از این خرج قلیل و بار سنگین  
هنوز از روی مالک شرمسارم  
(Baba Tahir, 1333: 8)

*I am like a camel content with thorns;  
My food is thorns, and my burden is a bundle of straw.  
Even with this small expense, and with heavy loads,*

*I still go embarrassed before the master.*

Analyzing the condition of agriculture and rural laborers in Iran in the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries on the basis of historical sources, the prominent historian I.P. Petrushevsky noted that barley and wheat agriculture was widespread across much of the Iranian plateau. At that time, together with rye – whose cultivation culture was expanding – Persian classical authors often referred to barley as the bread of the poor (Petrushevsky, 1958: 131).

To support his argument, I.P. Petrushevsky, citing the following *dubeyti* by Baba Tahir, rightly maintained that the central idea of this quatrain is the question: “Why do such sharp inequalities prevail among people?”

اگر دستم رسد بر چرخ گردون  
از او پرسم که این چیست و آن چون  
یکی را داده ای صد گونه و نعمت  
یکی را قرض جو آلوده در خون  
(Baba Tahir, 1333: 30)

*If my hand could reach the Wheel of fate,  
I would ask it: what is this, and what is that?  
To one, you have given a hundred kinds of blessings,  
To another, bread soaked in blood and barley.*

In the opposing environment of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, at a time when feudal-patriarchal norms played a dominant role, expressing such progressive ideas required great courage from a poet. In the poetry of Baba Tahir, however, we frequently encounter such ideological rebellions and powerful appeals directed against upper divisions of society. It was precisely with these tendencies in Baba Tahir’s poetry in mind that the academician A.Y. Yakubovsky described him as “the spokesman of the people’s anti-feudal tendencies” (Petrushevsky, 1958: 163).

When the greatest scholars I.P. Petrushevsky recorded these conclusions about Baba Tahir in their academic works, it was during the Soviet period, when – given the ideological requirements of the time – such writing was even encouraged, including demonstrating that voices of dissent against the ruling classes had existed as far back as the Middle Ages.

We now live in a completely different time, in another century, even in a different millennium, under an entirely different system. Yet human nature remains the same. Justice and injustice, the rich and the poor, oppressors and the oppressed all still exist. A poet’s words are his face; in his words it is clear whose side he is on. Words are like a mirror: even centuries later, they reveal plainly which nest you belong to and what convictions you hold.

When Baba Tahir wrote those lines, the second millennium was just beginning. Now, the new, third millennium is slowly advancing. And it is still worth being grateful to Baba Tahir for his committed, almost elder-like stance beside us, for standing with justice, and for not remaining silent in the face of injustice.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both in our country and in several foreign countries, writers were officially awarded titles like “Peoples Writer” or “Peoples Poet”. Even if not on the same scale as before, this practice continues to some extent today. Baba Tahir, however,

was given the title of “People’s Poet” by the people and by history itself, precisely because of such a stance. Evaluations like these, stamped with the mark of time, are the most authoritative guarantee of a poet’s immortality.

Professor Bekir Chobanzada, explaining the essence of an Eastern poet’s sincerity of expression, wrote: *“To say that one loves or does not love things by their proper names, to mention them directly, is as in the philosophers of the world it is rarely seen, a great innovation and high form of heroism. All Eastern languages, all Eastern life, have traditionally been veiled; directness and the sincerity that results from it are considered rare traits in the East. That is why to call an Eastern poet “sincere” to be able to say it – is not a minor compliment, but perhaps to call them a genius, a revolutionary.*

*For courage, creativity, rebellion, foresight... all these great and noble feelings and ideas are hidden with this word itself”* (Fuzuli, 1958: 869).

From this perspective, isn’t Baba Tahir – who speaks openly and bravely about his sorrows and environment, his faith and beliefs, what he loves and what he does not – a truly sincere poet and a genuinely sincere artist in the full sense of the world?

Isn’t it a brilliant manifestation of that sincerity that our poet, when he met the Seljuk Sultan Tughril in Hamadan in 1055, called on him to end oppression and to uphold justice?

Baba Tahir’s socio-political views played an important role in the development of free-thinking in Persian-language poetry. His poems, which reflect the contradictions of his era and sound like a rebellion against them, can be called sparks. For if we trace the works of many Persian classical poets after Baba Tahir, as well as the seven-to-eight-century development of Iranian popular dubeytis, we can see in hundreds of examples how those poems – those fiery particles – turned into a blazing flame, manifesting in different creative works with varying nuances according to the period, interpreted in multiple ways, and carried forward.

## **5. Between divine love and human love**

Baba Tahir lived and created during a period when Sufi ideology had deeply permeated Persian-language poetry. The influence of Sufism on the poet, who breathed the spiritual air of his time, was inevitable. Sufi poets, who praised the “eternal and everlasting” – God, often turned to the quatrain and dubeyti forms, which were easily understood by the people, to spread their ideas widely; in Turkic-language poetry, they also eagerly employed the “tuyugh” form.

Famous Sufi sheikhs such as Baba Kuhi Bakuvi-Shirazi, Abu Said Abu-l-Khayr Meykhani (967-1049), and many others composed dozens of such quatrains.

The poetry of Baba Tahir, who was a contemporary of such Sufi poets, also bears a Sufi guise. For this reason, chroniclers and biographers such as Reza Quli Khan Hedayat (1305: 102; 1295: 326), Najmaddin Abu Bakr Ravandi (1921: 11), Shamsaddin Sami Bey (1311: 3144), as well as English Orientalists Edward Brown (1920: 259), E. Heron-Allen (1902: 7), the French scholar Clement Huart (1885: 502), and Tajik specialists like R. Hodizadeh (1965: 22), among others, have evaluated Baba Tahir purely as a Sufi mystic.

While it may be difficult to find non-Sufi motifs in the poetry of Baba Kuhi, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari (1006-1088), and others, it is not hard to see in Baba Tahir’s poetry lines of worldly attachment, tendencies toward love of life, and non-Sufi elements. And once again, the most important point: the simplicity of expression. When one compares

the quatrains of those Sufis with Baba Tahir's dubeytis, even a non-specialist eye – untrained in medieval literature or Sufi studies can immediately distinguish who is who.

Commenting on the subjects and motifs of the 59 dubeytis published by K. Huart in his early attempt to introduce Baba Tahir to European readers, V. Minorsky wrote: "*Baba Tahir is devoted to true Sufi philosophy. He confesses his sins and prays for forgiveness. He is in love with annihilation. He seeks the sole remedy for his sufferings in fana (spiritual extinction)*" (Minorsky, 1961: 168).

This tendency, arising from the difficulty of drawing a clear boundary between worldly and mystical love, seems to have been accepted clearly and Baba Tahir's poetry has been approached entirely from an anthropocentric perspective.

A striking example of such a biased approach is seen in the work of the Iranian scholar Dr. Lutfali Suratgar, who, by completely disregarding the motifs of worldly attachment, humanism, loves of life, optimism, and complaints about social inequalities in Baba Tahir's poetry, presents him to the reader solely as a Sufi ideologue alienated from the world.

بابا مانند لسان الغیب حافظ شیرازی از جنگ هفتاد و دو ملت که آمدی را از وصول بحقیقت و راه یابی بدرگاه  
نقشبند ازلی جلوگیری است بیزار است و در نظر او فکر عرفانی که از سر چشمه گوارای عشق پاک جرعه نوش  
کرده باشد بایمان قطعی و حقیقی خواهد رسید و خدانشناسی ویژه دسته یا فرقه ای مخصوص نیست.  
(Suratgar, 1345: 91).

*Like "Lisan al-Ghayb" Hafiz Shirazi, Baba Manand is weary of the wars (means God – R.H.) of 72 peoples that divert a person from reaching truth and the path of guidance. In his view, mystical thought that drinks from the source of pure love with certainly and truth will reach God, and divine knowledge is not the privilege of any particular sect or group.*

However, scholars who have penetrated more deeply into Baba Tahir's world of thought and feeling – I.P. Petrushevsky (1958: 131), G.Aliyev (Baba Tahir, 1971: 8), Z.Vorozheykina (1964: 149), N.Karamatullayeva (1972: 15), and others – have confirmed the presence of the progressive elements we have highlighted in the poet's work.

In Soviet Oriental studies, under the diktat of official ideology, it was common to label Sufism with a mark of obscurantism in scholarly research. Naturally, even at the time, this false view provoked ridicule from genuine scholarship and is rejected today. However, it is by no means acceptable to measure works that are clearly worldly by the measure of Sufism, and in such sensitive matters, a careful sense of proportion must be observed with precision.

According to Sufism, life is temporary, a single moment. Existence is a whirlpool of suffering, a stage of trials. Those who believe this, in the Sufi view, see this life as false and seek to escape as quickly as possible from the grip of the material world, remaining indifferent to the pleasures and delights of the mortal realm, and eagerly longing to united with the "eternal truth" and the "universal Being".

Let us support our point with a delicate dubeyti of Baba Tahir:

عزیزون موسم جوش بهاره  
چمن پر سبزه صحرا لاله زاره  
در این موسم نمی فرصت غنیمت  
که دنیای دنی بی اعتباره  
(Baba Tahir, 1333: 76).

*O beloved, it is the reason of spring's bloom-  
The meadows are green, the plains are a field of tulips.  
In this season, seize the opportunity,  
For the worldly world is worthless.*

Here there is an apparent alignment with the Sufi concept. Baba Tahir also considers life “temporary”, “a moment”, and “fickle”. However, unlike the renouncing Sufis, he calls for valuing every minute of this life and advises spending each moment in joy and pleasure.

The eminent French orientalist C.Darmesteter wrote that, in Eastern literature, wine... represents a rebellion against the “Quran” against the sacred, and against the suppression of human reason by religious rules. For the poet, it symbolizes a liberated person who drinks (Darmesteter, 1925: 59).

Although this idea is generally correct, it does not fully explain the symbolic role of wine in classical Persian poetry. In Sufi literature, we also frequently encounter words like mey (wine), sharab (wine) and mastlike (intoxication). Here, wine serves as a means to united with God, the Absolute Being, helping one reach Him more quickly, distancing from the world, and delving into the secrets of the soul.

باده برگیرم و سیر گلان شم  
کنار سبزه و آب روان شم  
دوسه جامی خورم با شادکامی  
وابم مست و بسیر لالیان شم

(Baba Tahir, 1333: 22)

*Let me take the wine and wander  
along the green banks and flowing waters.  
With my beloved's cup in hand, I will drink in joy,  
intoxicated and be surrounded by fields of tulips.*

Here, the lyrical hero, intoxicated and enjoying the beauties of nature, expresses sincere feelings that are far from the Sufi hymns of mystical love and free from allegorical, Sufi-inspired emotions.

Supporting this view, another important piece of evidence is that, according to the Ahl-i Haqq sect to which Baba Tahir belonged, unlike official Islam and Sufism, drinking wine, listening to music, and eating certain animals considered haram in Islam were regarded as ordinary practices (Zhukovsky, 1887: 1-24; Minorsky, 1911:10-17).

These facts indicate that Baba Tahir was not indifferent to wine, that he did not use it merely as a metaphor, but in fact consumed it directly.

At times, pressed by the hardships of his era, Baba Tahir grows pessimistic. Even if you possessed Solomon's kingdom, the world – which ends in death – appears just to him as it truly is.

بگورستان گذر کردم صباحی  
شنیدم ناله و افغان و آهی  
شنیدم کله با خاک میگفت  
که این دنیا نمیا رزد بکاهی

(Baba Tahir, 1333: 79)

*I wandered through the garden at dawn  
And heard moans, sighs and lamentations,  
And the earth seemed to say to me:  
This world does not keep anyone's secrets.*

However, the poet's pessimism finds expression only in a very limited number of *dubeytis*. In Baba Tahir's poetry, an optimistic spirit is more prominently manifested. His hero, with a cheerful and hopeful disposition, may suffer from the pains of love and the hardships imposed by the beloved, yet he feels happy and joyful. In Eastern poetry, melancholy and pessimism should not always be interpreted in a strictly literal sense.

If Baba Tahir says in the above *dubeyti* that the world is not worth even a straw, one needs to think more deeply about this idea. The world is not devalued merely because life ends in death. The point is subtler. Even when the world becomes a whirlpool of injustice, a nest of hardships and shocks, it is still assigned such a value, and pessimism emerges. It is important to see the inseparable connection between the forms of Eastern oppression, which trample human dignity and Eastern pessimism.

The deep-rooted connection of Eastern poetry with visions of a beautiful society and a just order inevitably calls hundreds of thoughtful poets to reflect on Sufism from this very perspective.

God is the Whole, and humans are the parts. The Whole symbolizes purity, righteousness and justice. The parts burn with the desire to united with that Whole. Thus, God is a symbol of the Whole – embodiment of the goodness that is sought.

Like thousands of the mystics, Baba Tahir sees God wherever he looks, perceiving His Radiant Beauty everywhere. It is more logical to understand this, first and foremost, as the pursuit of integrity, justice and truth by a thinker.

The philosophical lyricism of Baba Tahir also draws attention to the way he frames the problem of humanity. It is thought interpreting this problem that we can uncover a number of the poet's interesting ethical views.

Baba Tahir wants to see humans as spiritually pure, ready for any struggle in pursuit of their desires, and living by noble ideas. The poet, called "Baba" with affection by the people for the respect he has earned, sees the reason for this honor in moral purity. The people have deemed him worthy of their respect because of the purity of his intentions and actions.

In the praise of one of his *ghazals*, the poet says:

مو از روز ازل طاهر بزادم  
از آن رو نام بابا طاهر ستم (Baba Tahir, 1333: 66)

*Since the earliest days, I have been known by the name Baba Tahir;  
I am free from oppression.*

Baba Tahir calls on people to avoid evil deeds and wrong actions, because such acts bring shame and humility before society.

He says:

مکن کاری که بر پا سنگت آید  
جهان باین فراخی تنگت آید

چو فردا نامه خواهون نامه خواهند  
ترا از نامه خواندن ننگت آید (Baba Tahir, 1333: 61)

*Whatever work you do that weighs heavily on your feet,  
The world will seem narrow and confining;  
For tomorrow, those who read your name will judge you,  
And from their judgement, disgrace will follow.*

First and foremost, a person must be the guardian of their own feelings and actions.

To earn the good opinion of others, one must strengthen inner control and keep self away from evil impulses. The poet writes in one of his dubeytis:

دلا غافل ز صبحانی چه حاصل  
مطیع نفس و شیطانی چه حاصل  
بود قدر تو افزون از ملائک  
تو قدر خود نمیدانی چه حاصل (Baba Tahir, 1333: 14)

*O heedless heart, what is the result of being obedient  
To your own ego and Satan?  
Your power is greater than the angels,  
Yet you do not realize your own strength – what is the result of that?*

To briefly conclude what we have said about the poet's worldview, it must be affirmed that two images of Baba Tahir emerge from the lines of his dubeytis: one is the young poet, completely attached to life, with a heart full of fiery passions; the other is the weary poet, who has traversed life's hardships, wise, sometimes embittered and prone to pessimism.

Here, two conclusions can also be drawn. The first is that the mystical spirit began to influence Baba Tahir's poetry only after the mature period of his life. The Iranian literary scholar Salim Neysari correctly noted that Baba Tahir's poems are sometimes adorned with mystical ornamentation. However, his aim is not to provide an exposition of Sufism. On the contrary, these poems are a reflection of his simple feelings and thoughts. They are stories that speak of his inner longing and burning passion (Neysari, 1328: 112).

The second approach and evaluation are that, in accordance with the tradition of adapting Baba Tahir's poetry to their own style and spirit, the people also brought down his divinely themed dubeytis to their level. By infusing these lines with the color, aroma, and taste of their daily lives, they humanized the divine layer.

One of the interesting aspects of Baba Tahir's philosophy is the motifs of complaint in his poems about social problems and societal inequalities. From this perspective, Baba Tahir occupies a distinguished place among the most defiant protest poets of the Middle Ages.

Qamari Qurani, Deylami Qazvini, Mansur Manteqi, Abu Abdullah al-Junaidi... These masters of words lived in the same century as Baba Tahir and were representatives of literature that emerged in the courts.

However, over time, their names began to fade from memory and the poems they created ceased to be read and circulated. The fate of Baba Tahir and his poems, a contemporary of those court poets, was the opposite. The reason is clear – what Baba Tahir created was the voice of the people, the echo of their thoughts.

### Conclusion

Even before delving deeply into Baba Tahir's poetry, 2 facts indicate the poet's deep popular character – his writing in the language of the people – dialect – and his chosen genre, the *dubeyti*.

Though, as we study his *dubeytis*, the full picture of Baba Tahir's popular character emerges in our view, and we become more convinced that the source of inspiration, power and strength in his poetry was precisely the people.

At one time, the British orientalist Edward Brown, who called Baba Tahir the "Robert Burns of the Persians", was pointing to the Iranian poet's popular character. The point is that the famous 19<sup>th</sup> century Scottish poet R. Burns also wrote poems full of popular spirit, in dialect, and in the spirit of folk songs.

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## **Baba Tahir poeziyasında ilahi məhəbbət, dünyəvi sevgi və insan haqları**

**RAFAEL HÜSEYNOV\*\***

### **Xülasə**

*Baba Tahir farsdilli ədəbiyyat tarixinə lirik-romantik şair kimi daxil olmuşsa da, o, həm də filosof idi, zəmanəmizə onun çoxlu şərhlər yazılmış fəlsəfi risaləsi də gəlib çatmışdır. Baba Tahir lirik şeirin ən zərif janrlarından biri olan dübeytiyə müraciət etmiş, həm bu şeir şəklinin, həm də ümumiyyətlə, lirik poeziyanın gözəl nümunələrini yaratmışsa da, onun poeziyasının ən vacib istiqamətlərindən biri fəlsəfi xəttidir. Təsəvvüfün poeziyaya dərin sirayət etdiyi orta əsrlərdə bir çox şairlər yaşayıb-yaratmışlar ki, onların şeirləri mahiyyəti etibarlı ilə sufi risalələrindən fərqlənməmiş, belə əsərlərin geniş kütlələr tərəfindən oxunub dərk edilməsi çətin olmuşdur. Təbiidir ki, XI əsrin filosof şairi Baba Tahir Üryanın da poeziyasında təsəvvüf motivləri yer almaqdadır. Lakin Baba Tahirin farsdilli ədəbiyyat tarixindəki əsas xidmətlərindən biri onun sufi poeziyasını xalqın anlayıb dərk edəcəyi ifadə etmə səviyyəsinə çatdırması olmuşdur.*

*Digər tərəfdən, Baba Tahirin bu qəbil şeirlərində həmişə 2 mənə qatı müşahidə edilir. O şeirlərin həm dünyəvi eşq anlamında, həm ilahi sevgi yozumunda oxunuşu və qavranılışı mümkündür.*

*Keçmişlərdə bəzən rəsmi ideologiyaların diktəsi ilə sufizmə mürtəcelik damğası vurulması cəhdləri olmuşdur. Belə münasibət qəbul edilməz olduğu kimi, sırf dünyəvi olduğu anlaşılan əsərləri də ortaq üslubi xüsusiyyətlərə görə ucdantutma təsəvvüf arşını ilə ölçmək də qətiyyənlə məqbul deyil və bu həssas məsələlərdə ölçü hissi dəqiqliklə gözlənilməlidir. Eyni zamanda, məqalədə bu məqama da diqqət yönəldilir ki, Baba Tahir poeziyasında qabarıq şəkildə təzahür edən vətəndaş mövqeyi var. O, şeirlərində ardıcıl olaraq ictimai problemlər qaldırır, zəmana, onun nahamvarlıqları əleyhinə etiraz səsinə ucaldır.*

*Mütəfəkkir şair neçələrindən yüksəkdə olduğunu anlayır, mənəb sahiblərinin çoxunun mənəvi ləyaqətə görə, zəkaca ondan neçə baş aşağıda durduğunu dərk edir. Bu təzad onların cəmiyyətdəki mövqelərində də müşahidə edilməkdədir. Qabillərin, zəka sahiblərinin nəsibi sona çatmayan fəlakətdir, ləyaqətcə alçaqda qərar tutanların qazancı isə uca mənəblər. Bütün hünərlərinə baxmayaraq, yenə geridən-geriyə qaldığına mütəəssir olan şair şikayətlənir.*

**Açar sözlər:** *dübeyti, dialekt şairi, əhl-i haqq təriqəti, Sərəncan əlyazması, təsəvvüf, insani sevgi, ilahi məhəbbət, etirazçı motivlər*

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## Любовь к Аллаху и человеку в литературном и философском наследии Баба Тахира

РАФАЭЛЬ ГУСЕЙНОВ\*\*\*

### Резюме

Помимо поэтического наследия, до наших дней дошел философский трактат Баба Тахира «Краткие афоризмы». К трактату, состоящему из 23 глав, 368 афоризмов о науке, благовоспитанности, вдохновении и мастерстве, уме и нравах, о реальном и потустороннем мире и т.д. было написано множество комментариев.

Несомненно, автор такого произведения мог быть личностью, осведомленной и глубоко познавшей теоретические основы суфизма. Баба Тахир жил и творил в эпоху, когда мистическая идеология плотно вошла в персоязычную поэзию. Неизбежным было влияние суфизма на творчество поэта, который дышал поэтической атмосферой своего времени.

Поэты-суфии, которые воспевали мистическую любовь к Аллаху – «единому и вечному», для распространения своих идей широко обращались к жанру дубейти и рубаи, которые хорошо воспринимались народом. Суфизм, который всё больше проникал в лирическую поэзию, обладал системой определенных образов, высказываний и эпитетов. По-этому, и начинающие поэты и даже мастера, желающие создать произведения в светском духе, были вынуждены использовать определенную часть этих элементов. Если в творчестве Баба Кухи, Хадже Абдулла Ансари и других трудно найти мотивы далекие от суфизма, то не трудно увидеть в поэзии Баба Тахира привязанность к миру, мотивы жизнелюбия и далекие от мистики настроения. В дубейтах представлены как бы два поэта. Один из них, всем существом привязанный к жизни молодой поэт, сердце которого переполнено страстными желаниями, а другой уже повидавший все перипетии жизни, иногда обиженный и пессимистически настроенный мудрец. Здесь уместно сделать два вывода: первый, то что мистика вошла в поэзию Баба Тахира уже в зрелом возрасте. Второй подход и оценка заключается в том, что народ в соответствии традициям близким, к его духу и стилю, сделал более понятными возвышенные дубейти поэта, божественность приблизили к земному. Одним из интересных особенностей философии Баба Тахира являются социальные проблемы, поднятые в его стихах, мотивы жалобы на общественное неравенство, бунтарский дух.

**Ключевые слова:** суфизм, дубейти, философский трактат, мистическая любовь, социальные проблемы, божественность, бунтарский дух.

**Redaksiyaya daxil olma tarixi:** 02.02.2026

**Çара qəbul tarixi:** 25.02.2026

**Çap olunma tarixi:** 10.03.2026

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