

## Ontological Reality in Amir Khusro's Metaphysical Poetry: Poetic Iconicity Analysis

Iffat Nazir  
Nighat Ahmad  
Tahira Parveen

### Abstract

*The main purpose of this study is to explore Amir Khusro's Metaphysical Poetry by means of Poetic Iconicity Analysis. Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of inner-reality. Metaphysical poetry deals with ontological, cosmological and psychological aspects of reality as proposed by Taylor (1909). This study is focused particularly on exploring ontological aspect of his metaphysical poetry by analyzing metaphors of God, and brings to light how Amir Khusro's inner-feelings towards God have been put into concrete images and what meanings they convey metaphorically. In the light of theory of Poetic Iconicity proposed by Freeman (2009), iconicity in poetry is exploited to structure our thoughts, create 'images' and stir our minds and emotions to create 'semblance of felt life'. She calls Iconic structures different 'form of feelings', and according to her, iconicity is not only similarity between 'form' and 'meaning', but feelings also play a main role in creation of meaning, and have been 'invested' purposefully by the poet to make it look phenomenally real. Resemblance based metaphors proposed by Joseph Grady (1997) have been analyzed in this research and further interpreted as complete signs having iconic, indexical and symbolic layers as proposed by Haley (1988). Crotty's (1998) 'transactional mode of reading' as a hermeneutical technique has been applied to analyze, interpret and discuss the selected data. It has been found that Amir Khusro's poetry is passionate and reflects attributes of God's love. He has presented image of God as his beloved, and attained a higher status of Annihilation in God's love. God's love has been considered an essence of all contemplation and is quite imminent in his poetry.*

**Keywords:** Metaphysics, ontology, epistemology, cosmology, iconicity, resemblance metaphors, felt life, form of feelings

### 1. Introduction

Ontological stance in terms of concept of Godfound in Amir Khusro's Metaphysical Poetry has been brought to consideration in this research. The word 'metaphysics' is a Greek word which literally means "after physics". It is concerned with the reality that lies beyond physical and is of metaphysical nature. Taylor (1909) proposed three main branches of Metaphysics out of which ontology relates to nature of being, and religious truths like God's being, concept of God, attributes of God and God's oneness have been its main concern. The researchers have explored the ontological themes found in Amir Khusro's poems related to conception of God within the parameters of his spiritual and cultural orders. It enhances our knowledge of his phenomenological beliefs and his concept of God's abstract reality.

To explicate further, this research lies in domain of Cognitive poetics and draws its dimensions from Iconicity Studies and Cognitive Linguistics, and highlights role of poetic metaphors in

creation of poetic iconicity. According to Freeman (2009), a poem having iconicity of feelings 'captures our sense of being' in the poetic world and creates 'semblance of felt life' by means of the strategies of poetic iconicity. It makes all the elements of the poem, its meter and rhythms, its sound patterns and repetitions, its images and metaphors, its micro- and macrostructures work together and create iconicity of sense experience, an 'illusion' of 'felt life'. Moreover, she elaborates that for making a poem 'an icon of felt-reality', a poet creates 'images, sensations and emotions' in language of poetry and creates different 'forms of feelings'. Therefore, this study endeavors to use iconicity analysis in order to investigate the meaning constructed by the spiritual poet, Amir Khusro in his poetry.

It's mandatory to note here that this research is delimited to metaphors; it brings to light cognitive view of metaphor and considers poetic metaphors to bring likeness of feelings (icons of felt-reality). Metaphors, which are one sub-type of icons as mentioned in Pierce's Semiotic Theory of Sign (1955, 1902) and are also cognitive linguistic device to structure thought as proposed in Conceptual Metaphor theory by Lakoff and Johnsons (1980). Cognitive Linguistics presents cognitive view of metaphors and holds the claim that metaphors are not only property of language, but of thought. Conceptual Metaphors "refers to the understanding of one idea or conceptual domain in terms of another".

Our concern here is that of *resemblance metaphors* as proposed by Grady (1999). Poetic Metaphors are *resemblance metaphors* based on cultural resemblance mapped between two conceptual domains. These are 'innovation' of conceptual metaphors; instead of cultural association in 'conventional' terms -a sub-conscious manner; these rather structure a new concept by associating two concepts or domains in an unconventional manner.

So, poetic metaphors have been defined and dealt with by the researcher as icons of felt life. They have been considered as form of feelings to bring iconicity to Amir Khusro's metaphysical poems, and, carrying an emotional import, they play an important role in creating such images, sensations and feelings in poetic language to bring semblance of 'felt life'. Moreover, they are also symbolic of poet's cultural milieu other than being embodiment of his inner feelings.

### 1.1 Research Objective

- To investigate the inner feelings of Amir Khusro put into concrete images in the selected poems regarding the concept of God and the meanings they convey metaphorically.

### 1.2 Research Question

- How have the inner feelings of the selected poet been put into concrete images regarding the concept of God and what meanings do they convey metaphorically?

## 2. Review of the Related Literature

The term was defined by Aristotle with the main concern of giving explanation of the nature of being. As stated in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2012), "Aristotle himself described his subject matter in a variety of ways: as 'first philosophy', or 'the study of being qua being', or 'wisdom', or 'theology'. It studies the nature of beings as their beings." He called it a 'science of being qua being'. According to Aristotle, it's a 'first philosophy' that is concerned with defining the nature of being, while other branches of science and philosophy are concerned with defining

the classes (genera and species). Metaphysics is a kind of knowledge mainly explanatory knowledge –episteme.

To explicate the idea of metaphysics, Aristotle also said that reality is understood in terms of ‘matter’ and ‘form’, where ‘matter’ refers towards physical reality of things, and ‘form’ refers towards their essence or ‘quintessence’, which is an inner reality of an individual. It refers to the ontological nature of reality of things. Metaphysics is concerned with the inner reality: essence or quintessence of objects and human beings Politis (2004). Aristotle also explained, in his *Metaphysics*, the existence of deity within, the expression of which we also find in metaphysical poetry that is related to metaphysical experiences of direct communion with God.

Taylor (1909) discussed three main branches of *Metaphysics*: ontology, cosmology and rational psychology, out of which the focus of this research remains exclusively on ontology. Ontology relates to nature of being and religious truths like God’s being, concept of God, attributes of God and God’s oneness, whereas other branches of metaphysics are related to cosmology and rational psychology: cosmology relates to concept of universe, reality of soul, life, death, life-after-death, hell, heaven etc.; psychological beliefs are those related to man’s own psychological beliefs like his ethical values, behavior, concept of love, beauty etc.

Various studies have been conducted and numerous scholarly ideas have been presented in order to investigate the phenomenon of poetry which according to Freeman (2009) is a creation of an image of felt life. In this concern, Freeman (2009) presented idea of Iconicity of feelings as created in poetry to create an image of felt life through word order and word choice. This research is delimited to metaphors; it brings to light cognitive view of metaphor and considers poetic metaphors a cognitive strategy to bring likeness of feelings in the light of poet’s cultural milieu.

The question of felt life is of preliminary importance in this research. ‘Felt life’ is the life of feelings which Langer (1957) defined in “*Problems of Art*” as “inner life,” “subjective reality,” or “consciousness.” Hence, according to Freeman (2009), for making a piece of art symbolic of feelings, a poet puts in different ‘forms of feelings’ and present his poetic work as an ‘icon’ of ‘felt life’, which in this research are in the form of poetic metaphors.

The primary definition of metaphors as hypo-icons is dated back with Peircean Semiotic Theory. Peirce (1955, 1902) defined metaphors as one subtype of icons based on parallelism between “object” and “something else”. Hirarga (2005) explained Peircean metaphors in the following words: “A metaphorical icon (e.g., “My love is a rose”) signifies its object (e.g., ‘my love’) by pointing to a parallelism between the object (e.g., ‘my love’) and something else (e.g., ‘a rose’).”

Grady (1997, 1999) proposed the idea of ‘resemblance based metaphors’ having cultural resemblance between two domains. Grady (1997, 1999) made a distinction between Primary metaphors and resemblance metaphors in Primary metaphor theory. According to Grady’s Resemblance Hypothesis, there are two kinds of *conceptual metaphors* in Primary Metaphor Theory i.e. Correlational vs Resemblance or generic is specific metaphor. Co-relation is a primary metaphor and are based on our ‘co-relational experience’ whereas resemblance metaphor is based on resemblance cultural knowledge. Grady has talked about ‘perceived resemblance’ between two concepts or domains through resemblance metaphors. Resemblance metaphors inhibit complex

domains and are understood based on cultural knowledge; these are culturally dependent and include 'Image Metaphors' based on physical resemblance between two objects. This research is concerned with use of poetic metaphors to acquire resemblance between domains to convey an abstract thought: one domain related to inner-feelings and the other related to cultural reality.

Hirarga (2005) also discussed role of poetic metaphors along the lines of 'iconicity research' and 'linguistic poetics'. According to her, Haley (1988) dealt Peircean metaphors as complete signs that work as symbols, icons and indices. They are dependent on 'conventions' both 'linguistically and culturally'. According to him, these are 'symbols' because they symbolize a reality and are understood in association to an idea, 'indices' because they refer to and 'point to' some angle of dissimilarity, and 'icons' because they bring out a point of similarity or parallelism.

The stance taken by the researcher on poetic metaphors in the light of Freeman's theoretical perspective of Poetic iconicity and Haley's semiosis is as under:

1. Metaphors carry emotional and cognitive import and reflect 'idea' of 'felt life' in poetry.
2. They reflect poet's inner and subjective feelings.
3. They are cognitive in nature and bring 'understanding of conceptual domain in terms of another' through metaphorical mapping.
4. Metaphors are not only one sub-type of icons but are also symbolic in nature.
5. Metaphors reflect poets' linguistic orientation and are also symbolic of their culture.

So, metaphors perform more than one function. They are no wonder cognitive in nature and are used purposefully by the poet. It is through the use of creative metaphors employed by a poet that he invests 'forms of feelings' which convey not only meanings but also feelings. They not only give beauty and innovation to a poem, but clearly 'evoke a mental image' in the minds of the readers akin to the 'idea' of 'felt life' and are symbolic of the poets' culture and convey abstract theme in terms of concrete reality.

### **3. Methodology**

This qualitative research is based on analyzing role of poetic metaphors as icons of felt-reality, as one 'form of feelings' in achieving 'semblance of felt life' or 'poetic iconicity' and contribute towards the meanings. The poetry of Amir Khusro is selected due to the fact that Amir Khusro is a renowned Sufi poet of the sub-continent and his Sufi poetry is not only highly metaphorical in nature, but it also an embodiment of Amir Khusro's passionate love for God. For Khusro, God was the reason of his being: he seemed like a lover the fulfillment of whose feelings lied in suffering more for God.

It is pertinent to explicate that to cater the phenomenon of iconicity, this research falls in the category of hermeneutics. It's a hermeneutical study of Amir Khusro's metaphysical poetry in relation to act of reading including reading criticism and reading comprehension. There are different viewpoints of those who consider hermeneutics having a 'rightful place' in reading theory and literary criticism. These are understood in interpretation to author, text and reader.

Hermeneutics is the key to interpretation in qualitative studies. Unlike older and traditional mode of interpretation that revolved around the 'concepts of reality' and in turn 'reproduce or reflect

reality, it includes researchers' own stance and philosophical considerations in the study. Text's context, poet's contextual world and researcher's context and research premises also bring in considerations for this technique of interpretation. Crotty (1998) explained Hermeneutics in relation to act of reading comprehension and literary criticism. Straw (1990) defined hermeneutics in the following words: "Hermeneutics is an activity related to all criticism in its attempt to make meaning out of act of reading". It is due to constant engagement with the text in relation to its context which brings out its meaning.

The selected poetic verses have been analyzed by using Crotty's (1998) 'transactional mode of reading', which suggests a 'constant engagement' with the text to construct the meanings. This very approach claims that a researcher's self cannot be extracted from within the research process. It's not possible to comprehend and interpret a text without its historical and cultural background and getting oneself constantly engaged with the text, author and the historical background of the poet and the cultural context it was written in.

Therefore, this study attempts to investigate the inner feelings of Amir Khusro through his poetry which possesses cultural and social underpinnings embedded in the metaphorical form of language used to construct the poetic phenomenon.

Metaphors have been seen not only as one 'form of feeling' or a poetic strategy to bring out semblance but have been further interpreted as symbols (culturally symbolic). They not only help create an image of felt life, but are also symbolic of poets' linguistic and social culture. Poets convey abstract ideas in term of concrete images drawn from their social and cultural background. To explain it further, context plays a vital role in interpretation of the text via metaphors. It's not only the background of the poet but the context of the poem that determines meanings of what has been conveyed in a poem. Their interpretation relies on the contextual knowledge of the poem and the background it has been written in. Meanings can't be understood and interpreted unless in their cultural context. A poet himself takes help from the cognitive devises which are from culture embedded and understood in the context of cultural knowledge. Through this study has bought to light the meanings of the text by constant engagement with the text, yet objective understanding of the text can't be claimed totally.

This research aims at interpreting those metaphors in the context of the poem and the context of the poet's world it was written in. So, it incorporates hermeneutical stance because it is referred to and understood in the cultural context it was written in. Since 'metaphors' have been interpreted in the text world's context and the wider socio-cultural context is the focus of this research, hence transactional mode of hermeneutics goes best with this type of research. Interpretation of text in the light of knowledge of language and culture are preliminary resources of understanding Amir Khusro's metaphysical poetry, moreover through constant readings and interpreting their poetry in their respective mystical theological school of thoughts have made this task comprehensible for the researcher.

### **3.1 Selected Data**

Following poems of Amir Khusro have been selected by using Purposive Sampling Technique of data collection in order to explore the inner feelings of the poet regarding the concept of God. The poems rich in metaphors have been selected from Hazrat Amir Khusro's Divan named as *Divan-e-*

*Amir Khusro Dehlvi* in the light of Freeman's poetic iconicity framework to create 'likeness' of 'felt life'. The published translations considered for these poems are by Losenky & Sharma (2011).

#### 4. Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion

Using Crotty's (1998) transactional mode of reading for iconicity analysis, the selected poems of Amir Khusro have been analyzed, interpreted and discussed with view to probe into his inner-feelings towards God's imbued with cultural knowledge and imagery.

##### Poem 1: Dinavna Mikuni Dil-u Jan-i Kharab-ra

دیوانه می کنی دل و جان خراب را  
مشکن بناز سلسله مشک ناب را

بخرام اگرچه ریختن خون بود و بال  
تو خون من بریز ز بهر ثواب را

بوی وصال در خور این روزگار نیست  
صنایع مکن بدلق گدایان ، گلاب را

ای عشق شغل تو چو بمن ناکسی رسید  
آخر کسی نه ماند جهان خراب را

از چاشنی درد جدائی چه آگهند  
یک شب کسان که تلخ نکردند خواب را

طوفان فشان بدیده و قحط وفا بد هر  
تقویم حکم کی کند این فتح باب را

تا گفتمش بکش ز مژه تیغ رانده بود  
ما بنده ایم غمزه حاضر جواب را

گر خاطرش به کشتن بیچارگان خوش ست  
یارب، که یار تاوک او کن صواب را

آفت جمال شاهد و ساقیست بیهده  
بد نام کرده اند بمستی شراب را

خونا به می چکاندم از گریه سوز دل  
خوش گریه ایست بر سر آتش کباب را

خسرو ز سوز گریه نیارد نگاه داشت  
اری سفال گرم بجوش آرد آب را

**Translation**

1. You drive my ruined heart and soul insane.  
Don't twirl your hair in sport and broke those chains of pure musk.
2. Though it's a sin to shed innocent blood,  
Come shed my blood and earn holy blessings
3. Don't waste rose water on beggar's robes:  
This age doesn't deserve the perfume of love's union.
4. Love, how did you come to work on a nobody like me?  
Is no one left in this ruined world?
5. Not having dreamt bitter dreams a single night,  
How can they know the taste of aching absence?
6. The times suffer a drought of faithfulness and storms well up in eyes:  
When will the calendar of destiny pass a decree this chapter?
7. We are slaves to a glance always ready to parry.  
As soon as I said, Kill! he brandished his eyelash sword.
8. If he's happy killing the helpless, let straightforwardness,  
Lord, speed his arrow's flight.
9. Devastating is the beauty of a friend and Saqi is not wise  
As he falsely accuses wine for intoxicating people.
10. From heart's grief my eyes fall tears of blood  
The *kabab* sobs sweetly over the flame.
11. Khusrau does not sob out of love but has observed patience,  
Yet, the hot pot of mud brings water to boil

**4.1 Analysis Poem 1**

In this poem, Khusro has quite explicitly stated his inner-feelings of losing himself completely in God's love, and requests God not to disconnect with him. He draws a fanciful image of God as a beautiful beloved whose sight has resulted in making the poet lose his senses and wisdom. He feels devastated and ruined in love. Though he tries to bear his pain with patience, yet his constant sufferings in love and pain shows through his tears.

**4.1.1 Verse 1 GOD IS A BELOVED**

The poet's wants to see God in the form of a physical being and imagines God in the shape of a beloved who has captivated the poet by his charm and beauty. He is absorbed in His love to an extent that he can't bear even a single action of God's carelessness towards him, and articulates that God shows his carefree behavior towards him and paying less attention on him. To convey depth of his feelings, he compares Him with a beautiful beloved and depicts his image as one playing with his hair in sports to appeal the poet. He breaks chains of his hair in sports which is so ruinous for the poet as he is in love with him. Through this comparison, the poet points out God's careless and ignorant attitude and feels He acts like a beloved who knows his worth quite well in the eyes of his beloved, and plays with the chains of his hair to increase his lover's helplessness. These lines indicate poet's overwhelming attitude towards love of God.

**4.1.2 Verse 2 INFLECTING PAIN IN LOVE IS SHEDDING OF BLOOD**

He further conveys his feelings towards God that he has already lost him in His love. He feels destructed and ruined in his love. As, he sees no way back and rather wants to lose his complete



self out of his love, he beseeches God to martyr him and shed his innocent blood. He is innocent as he has not committed any crime but love is his only crime, and he is a pure and innocent soul who is constantly suffering in love and it will be a holy blessing for him if he is martyred and free from the clasp of physical self. Even if God sheds his blood and kills him, it won't be a sin and will be justified. The poet has direct communication with God; he is willing to sacrifice his self in God's love.

#### **4.1.3 Verse 3 SPIRITUALITY IS ROSE WATER**

In this verse Khusro talks about his own desire to attain oneness with God, He is keen to unite with God, but then convinces himself that there is no use of wasting his spiritual efforts on the threshold of any mystic. Image of rose water is associated with beauty and exuberant fragrance. He doesn't find any contemporary beggar (Dervish) worthy of elevating him to spiritual heights and attain oneness with God. So, it will be of no good if he wastes his time on them. He, on the one hand, criticizes the spiritual foundations of the Dervish that his 'age' saw many controversies found among different Dervishes, many among them wanted a higher status in the eye of the people, but they couldn't actually deserved. Most of them were hypocrites and wrapped them under the cover of spiritual wisdom. (*Dalq-e gadayan: beggar's robe.*). It shows that all ages have faced the same conflict between love and reason. On the other hand, he seems saddened on the fact that no matter what efforts one pays on having union with God, and whose so ever spiritual guidance ones seek, it is not possible to see the face of God in this world. The poet wishes to have union with God, which is not possible before death. Metaphor of UNION IS PERFUME has been used by the poet, and the fragrance of union is only an after-world phenomenon.

#### **4.1.4 Verse 4 LOVE'S GENTLE PORTRAYAL**

There seems no remedy to him for condition of love. He addresses love and mourns over love's rudeness and crude nature for choosing poet to ruin him. It signifies destructive power of love; poet fell in love and being victimized to love, he faced destruction of his self and arrived at the stage of self-annihilation. He expresses his state that love has destroyed him fully, and he seems to be the only person facing this dilemma in his contemporary age (*dayar*). Metaphorically speaking, it's an honor for him that God has chosen him to bestow His blessings on him.

#### **4.1.5 Verse 5 LOVE AS A SYMBOL OF DEMANDING SACRIFICE**

The poet doesn't find anyone else in this world who is enmeshed in God's love and has tasted love in its extreme form. The poet finds so-called religious people in his surroundings who claim to have found God or being in love with God, but practically they have not spent one night staying awake for the sake of God. As real contemplation and deep meditations are often offered at night, and one, who doesn't bother to sacrifice a night for God, can't know the taste of God's love.

#### **4.1.6 Verse 6 as CRYING IN LOVE IS A STORM OF TEARS**

The poet seems grieved on his constant sufferings in love and finds himself alone in his time in the sea of love. He doesn't find faithfulness in his time, and complaints against lack of sincerity. He is unable to predict when this problem will be solved and he finds sincerity in this world. He finds himself alone in world who sheds tears out of divine love in his loneliness. He finds himself alone in this world and does not find faithfulness.



**4.1.7 Verse 7 as POET IS A SLAVE&BELOVED'S EYELASH ARE SWORD**

He then compares himself with a slave and God, as done earlier, as a beautiful beloved, and asks him to kill the poet with his eye-lashes (*ma'zaa*).. He compares his eyelashes with a sword (*tegh*), and says that he is ready to be killed on a blink of his eye. The poet is slave to his sharp eyelashes, and seems to be all lost in God's beauty. It implies that he is like a slave to God, and his main task is to obey his master. He is totally enmeshed in God's love and needs no other form of beauty, but God's beautiful face.

**4.1.8 Verse 8, LOVE IS AN ARROW**

He again expresses his helplessness before his beloved and, now seems ready to be killed by the hands of God. He addressed God to kill him if He pleases to kill those who are in love them. The poet seems now defenseless as he has thrown away all his weapons and seems to surrender before his beloved God. Love has proved to be an arrow which pierced into his heart and killed him. He further says to God if it pleases Him to see him suffering in love like this, he is ready to accept his fate.

**4.1.9 Verse 9, GOD IS A CUP-BEARER (Saqi)**

The poet considers His friends' beauty devastating for him and creates an image of a 'Saqi' -a cup bearer. He says that image wine has been presented wrongly by others who consider it as the source of destruction. The real reason for destruction of a lover is not the wine of love, but the beauty of the beloved. And a man after seeing God cannot help being away from him. This is quite indicative of Muslim's faith in having all trouble and worries granted by God. Mystic attributes all these sufferings with God, and feels pleasure in those sufferings. He considers them to have been granted by God. For him, these are rather a source of inclination and establishment of his strong connection with God.

**4.1.10 Verse 10, PAINFUL TEARS ARE TEARS OF BLOOD**

He mentions his state of constant sufferings and pain in God's love. He is suffering from pangs of separation and shedding painful tears of blood. He presents an image of a 'kabab' burning on flame and giving out moist. By presenting this image, he compares his heart with a 'kabab' and its moist with his sobbing and painful tears. After burning in love's passion, his heart has acquired state of a kabab and constant burning has caused his painful tears of blood.

**4.1.11 Verse 11, PASSION OF LOVE IS A HOT POT OF MUD**

Khusro then compares his passion of love with a 'hot pot of mud' and says that his heart is like a hot pot of mud and constantly burning out of love for God. Though he has observed patience and tries to control his tears, yet that passion boils its heart and makes him shed tears.

**Poem II: Asari Namand Baqi Zaman Andar Arzuyat**

اثری نماند باقی ز من اندر آرزویت  
چه کنم که سیر دیدن نتوانم رخ نکویت

همه روز گرد کویت ، همه شب بر آسانت  
غرضی جز این ندارم که نظر کنم به رویت

پس از این بیدیده خواهم بطواف کویت آمد  
که بسود تا بزانو قدمم به جست و جویت

بویا که در پذیرای که من از پی وفایت  
دل خون گرفته کردم خورش سگان کویت

خرد و ضمیر و هوشم ، دل و دیده نیز هم شد  
ز همه خیال خالی بجز از خیال رویت

من اگر نمی توانم حق خدمت زیادت  
کم ازین که جان شیرین بدهم در آرزویت

ز نسیم جانفزایت دل مرده زنده گردد  
ز کدام باغی ای گل که چنین خوش ست بویت؟

بتن چو تار مویت نهی اردو صد جهان غم  
ندهم بهیچ حالی دو جهان بتار مویت

پس ازین چه جای آنت که ز حال خود بگویم  
که فسانه گشت خسرو بجهان ز جست و جویت

#### Translation

1. Yearning for you, no trace of me remains,  
What shall I do, for no one gets fill of gazing upon your beautiful face.
2. All day in your street, all night at your door,  
I have no goal but to look at your face.
3. I will now circumambulate your street with just my eyes,  
for my legs are worn down to the knees in searching for you.
4. By faith, will you accept that tracking down your fidelity,  
I assassinated my heart to feed the dogs on your street.
5. I'm devoid of my wisdom, my conscience, my consciousness, heart and eyes  
To fulfil the desire of seeing the image of your face.
6. No, I cannot rightly render service to you short of yielding  
My sweet life in yearning for you.
7. Breeze coming from your door brings the dead hearts to life.  
Which garden do you come from that your scent is so sweet, my Rose?
8. Though you load my body, weak as a hair, with a universe of woe,  
I'll not trade a single strand of your hair for both worlds.
9. What need to explain to you how I am,  
Now that Khusrohas become a legend in yearning and searching for you?

#### 4.2 Analysis of Poem II

Amir Khusro wrote this poem out of his extreme love of God. He has become so helpless before God, and does not see any other face but God's after seeing His face. At the same time, he is ready to sacrifice everything of his own before God and God is the only source of solace and comfort for

him. Like his many other poems he depicts image of God as an attractive beloved whose sight has maddened the poet and he has lost his senses before his beautiful sight.

#### **4.2.1 Verse 1, GOD as A BELOVED**

The poet as found in most of his metaphysical poems, presents image of God as a beautiful beloved. Gazing on his beautiful face (*rukh*) is a source of continuous pleasure for the poet and he doesn't get enough of gazing at his beautiful cheeks. It clearly reveals poet's inner felt reality of envisaging God. After envisaging God, he can focus no other beauty as God's beauty is the original and real beauty of the universe and all other forms of beauty his extensions. So, now no other form of beauty appeals the poet after having envisaged it. It implies that he lives his life according to the directions given by God.

#### **4.2.2 Verse 2, GOD'S PATH IS GOD'S STREET**

The ultimate purpose of a mystic is to put all his efforts in finding God, so is the same with Khusro. He vows in this verse that he will spend all his life in visiting God's street. This is the only mission of his life to find God, and seek an opportunity to envisage His face. To concentrate on the visage of God has become the key purpose of his life.

#### **4.2.3 Verse 3, HIS CENTER OF ATTENTION IS CIRCUMAMBULATION**

Amir Khusro says that he has been tired of searching for God, so now he will just fix his focus on God's vision and will not wander here and other. It shows his desire to meet God and enjoy His physical presence, and since all his efforts have failed him, and as a matter of fact no one in the world has seen God through physical eyes, the poet thus concluded that he will keep his eyes focused on God in his imaginations and stay fixed on it.

#### **4.2.4 Verse 4, POET'S KILLING OF DESIRES IS HEART ASSINATION ORDINARY PEOPLE ARE DOGS**

Amir Khusro, in this verse, proclaims his faith further and shows his fidelity that he has always remained true to his lord. He has spent all his life in assassinating his desires and even fed the dogs of His streets. Dogs metaphorically relate to the ordinary people who poet has met and tolerated just to please God. It reveals the fact that for knowing the truth, one faces many hurdles in life. One encounters many unreal and dualistic people who one bears just for His sake.

#### **4.2.5 Verse 5, POET IS A HOLLOW MAN**

In these lines, Amir Khusro explains his inner state by creating his image as a man who has completely lost his senses: he is devoid of his wisdom, mind, reason, consciences and heart because he is in love with God from head to toe. He can't imagine any other face but HI, he can't think of any other thing but its only God who is enthroned in his heart. His heart has become his seat and he can't take his decisions or do anything wisely.

#### **4.2.6 Verse 6, POET'S CONFESSION OF LOVE**

He then confesses his love before God and takes oath of allegiance to God and vows that he will sacrifice his sweet life (*jan-e shereen*) For Him. This will be proof of his loyalty, humility and sincerity with God.

#### 4.2.7 Verse 7, DIVINE FAVOUR IS GOD'S BREEZE

The poet compares peace and satisfaction of heart granted by God with God's breeze. He finds peace and pleasure in God's refuge, and finds the breeze coming from His door so soothing and pleasing for him. It is God's mercy that provides him with peace and rejuvenate a deadened heart, and refresh his spirit. In his praise and admiration to God, he compares God with a rose (*gul*) – a beautiful object of nature and interrogates where this very flower belongs to, which place it has come from. It reveals awesome power of God's love and beauty which has left the poet in awe and wonder. As a rose belongs to a garden, the poet wants to know the place where beautiful place God lives in.

#### 4.2.8 Verse 8, POET IS A WEAK HAIR, GOD IS A PERSON

As done earlier, he poet compares God with a beloved having charming and attractive hair, and then he calls himself weak as a hair for showing his weakness and lack of strength. Khusro admits that he has wooed in God's love, and his heart and body have become weaker than a hair, but he will never trade a single 'strand' of his beloved's 'hair' for both worlds. Hair is used first for showing his weakness, and then for showing his strength. He is contended with God's love, and suffering yet satisfied with his inner state and wants to spend his life-time living like this.

#### 4.2.9 Verse 9, KHUSRO IS A LEGEND

In the last lines, the poet elaborates that he has spent all his life in searching and yearning for God. The sole purpose of his life has become to attain oneness with God and be with him. In doing so, he doesn't stand among the category of the ordinary people, but this very love of has made him live his life like a legend, and he his life has become heroic and an epic on account of God his center of concentration.

### 5. Conclusion

After analyzing ontological issues in Amir Khusro's poems, it is found that Amir Khusro was a devoted lover who sacrificed all his pleasures for the love of God, and he found no remedy of love but more love. His state of annihilation is reminiscent from invoking God as a cup-bearer, which in Sufi's cultural order is considered the wine of love. He seems to have been inspired by God's beauty and sees none other than God. Amir Khusro 'circumambulate' God's street with his eyes and has been searching for God for ages. As God is Amir Khusro's focus and he wants to remain true to God: tears of blood signify painful and soul-tearing experience for the poet to stay away from his Beloved God. The poet has presented himself as a slave and God a beautiful beloved whose eyelashes are a sword tearing his soul apart in love and whom he loves and sighs for in his anguish and pain. These poems employed with metaphors for God exhibit his deep and passionate thinking for God. He considers God as a center of his contemplations and seems to have achieved state of annihilation in love of God. For a Sufi, God's love is inevitable. This is a stepping stone for elevating himself on the ladder of spirituality. The three stages of self-annihilation as described by Data Ganj Baksh (1959) are annihilation in Sheikh, Annihilation in Prophet, annihilation in God. Amir Khusro seems to have been deputed on the highest stage of annihilation in God. His poetry is a source of satisfaction and contentment to a Muslim heart full of devotion and love to God. He seems to have surrendered his ego completely before God and spent his life in complete harmony with the divine.

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