KHAMRIYYAH (THE WINE SONG) OF SHAYKH ‘UMAR IBN AL-FARID (577-682 A.H.)

With translation by A. SEFI

[For text, see p. 247.]

(1) To the Beloved we drank a wine,
With which we were intoxicated,
Ere the vineyard was created.

The Beloved is the Prophet, or the Creator Himself, source of love.
The wine is the knowledge and love of the Divinity and the intoxication
is ecstasy.

(2) The full moon is for It a cup,
And Itself is a sun,
A crescent hands It round,
And oh! how many stars appear,
When It is diluted.

The description is a contrast with the material crystal cup and red
wine usually handed round by a young attendant, and the wine
being then diluted with water. The full moon represents the Prophet. The sun represents the divine wine.
The crescent represents the learned. The dilution means the various
religions. The stars represent the bubbles that rise in dilution and
mean the teachers of the various religions.
(3) Were it not for Its fragrance, 
I should not have found my way to Its Tavern, 
And were it not for Its radiance, 
Imagination could not have pictured It.

The Tavern is God’s creation, the rest is His manifestation therein.

(4) Age has reduced It to an essence, 
As if It were a secret to be kept 
In the heart of the wise.

Old wine being best; this wine older than any is consequently best of all.

But Shaykh Ḥasan Būrīnī sets against this interpretation the saying of Al-Shāhāb al-Suhrawardī:
i.e. "Oh! Light of the light, O! Thou hidden to the sense, by thy overwhelming presence."

(5) Were It mentioned in the tribe,
   Its members would become intoxicated,
   But without incurring shame or sin.
   Wine-drinking is sinful in Islam, besides it being shameful to get drunk.

(6) Should It ever come to the mind
    Of anyone,
    Joy would abide with him, and sorrow depart.

(7) And were they to lay in the shade of Its vineyard,
    A sick one despaired of,
    Sickness would leave him.

(8) And were a paralytic brought near
    To Its abode,
    He would start walking.
    And mutes would talk at the thought
    Of Its flavour.
Were they to sprinkle with It,
A grave,
Its dead would rise, with his body revived.

Sayyid Nabulusi says this is a reference to Christ’s raising of Lazarus.

Were Its perfume to spread East,
And one deprived of smell were West,
The power of smell would come back to him.

By West is meant Morocco and its divines.

And were the revellers to gaze at Its seal,
This sight alone would intoxicate them.

The seal is a guarantee of quality in wine, and as such an important factor.
And were a person’s hand to be stained,
Through touching Its cup,
He would not lose his way at night,
Since a star would be in his hand.

And were It secretly put before a blind man,
He would see,
And the sound of pouring It out,
Would make the deaf hear.

Were travellers to pass through Its land,
And one of them be bitten by a snake,
The poison would not hurt him.
(15) And were a wizard to inscribe the letters
Of Its name on the forehead of a madman,
The inscription would restore his reason.

The wizard is the teacher.

(16) And were Its name to be written on the banner of an
army
The writing would intoxicate those who are under it.

The Sufi leaders themselves have various banners, for instance, the
followers of the sheikh عبد القادر الكيلاني
الذلٌ جُنُّب عقله فهو مجنون وجنُّل الليل أظلم
الانكسار معي الدين بن عربي
while the followers of the sheikh أبي علم النافع والعمل الرافع
السEncryptores، حسن الشاذلي
write on theirs ترَك التدبير، meaning respectively "Humility and Contrition", "Useful learning and Ennobling action,” and “Abandonment of Artifices.”

(17) It exalts the sentiments of Its votaries,
And by It the cowardly would find strength.

(18) And he whose hand knows not generosity,
Generous would he become,
And he who has no clemency,
Would under provocation be clement.

i.e. contrary to the effect of ordinary wine!
And were an idiot to be allowed,
To kiss Its stopper,
The kissing would make him wise.

They say to me: Describe It, for thou art in that an expert;
Yes I have knowledge of Its qualities.

The knowledge claimed here is experience.
(21) (These are:) Limpidity, but not of water; 
    Softness, but not of air; 
    Luminosity, but not of fire; 
    Spirit, but without body.

(22) It was, before all existing things, 
    In the long past, when there was no shape or form.

(23) Then, by It all things had their being, 
    And for some wise purpose, It veiled Itself therein, 
    To those who have no understanding.

    Some see in this a pantheistic idea, but pantheism is "the Universe 
    is God", whereas here the idea is that God is immanent in all things, 
    like the tree in the seed.

(24) And my soul loved It, to the extent of being 
    One with It, but there was no mixing as that of one 
    substance with another.

    Being one with It, is interpreted by some as "Hulûl", but I take 
    it to mean simply agreement.
Before It there was no before,
And there is no after, after its after,
And the precedence of all afters is absolutely its own.

Time being a created thing, is finite, whereas the Absolute Spirit is not.
They said: Thou hast drunk the sin!
I replied: Never, but rather that which,
It would be a sin, not to drink.
Wine being forbidden by the Qur'an, it is sinful to drink it.

Happy are the Convent's dwellers,
How often they are intoxicated by It,
And they drank It not, but they aspired!

He means that Christian mystics and monks, have tried to taste of this divine wine, but were not thorough in their endeavour.

I felt Its exhilaration when yet a child,
And It will ever remain with me,
Though my bones decay.

The Prophet's mouth.
Take It in the tavern,
And pass It round there,
To the sound of music,
Which adds to its charm.

The tavern here stands for the place of meeting for Dhikr.

For where It is, worry cannot be,
As sadness can never be,
Where there is music.
(34) Were you to be for one hour only, 
Drunk with It, 
You would fancy the world your slave, 
To rule and command.

(35) There is no happiness in this world, 
To him who lives sober, 
And one who does not die drunk with It, 
Will miss the benefit of resolution.

(36) Let him bewail his fate, 
Whose life has been spent, 
And has not in It, 
A lot or share.
ابن الفريض

الخريفه

أزهري عن الحادي

1. شربنا على ذكر الموتيب بمدامة
2. لها أبدداً كأن من شيء بنيها
3. ولولا ذاك ما أهديت لناها
4. ولم يبق منها النعمة خالصة
5. فإن ذكرت في النبي أصله
6. وإن خلقت بنياً على خاطر أمر
7. ولكتشف في في حائط كرها
8. ولقومها هناء مفعمة مسأ
9. ولنفعها منها ثرى غير ملبت
10. وللوعفت في الشرف أنها ألمبها
11. وللنظر الندبان حب إناها
12. ولم خصبت من جلها الله لام
13. ولوحيدات سرا على كفه عن
14. ولركزناها تبر أرضها
15. ولورشيبها في خوفها سهها
16. وفرق لواء البيض لرغم آسها
17. تخذب اخلاق النار في حنطها
18. وكرى عن تم يعرف الجود كله
لا كبي معي شمايلا
الله
خشى أجل عدني بأوضافه
علم
ونور ولا ناري وروح ولا جسم
قدما ولا نكن هناك ولا رسم
نها أهتجت عن كل من لائمه ثم
هم
وهادت ترا وشيكت نابها ابها
لا جادا ولا جرم خليه
 الخير
البنية الإباد لي لها ختم
فيمين فيها مزم النبر والاسم
كمثث في نفر كلا ذكرت لهم
شربت أن في تركي عدني الإيم
واشاركوا وكتموا دجرا
مكي أبدا نفي وان في المظلم
فمدة لفظ على ذيل الظلم
على ظلم الإدوان في بيا عنم
كذبر لم يبكن مع المسمى
ترى الدهم يا وادعا وأركا
ونه لم يبكي بها فالت أرم
ولبس له فيها نصيب ولا حكم
ولبالم فدم العقيم لم نرياها
بتلوون لي صرفا فانت بوصفها
صناعه ولامها ولفظ ولا هوا
لمست كل الكائنات حد فيها
واتم بها الاختلاق ثم كلمة
وهمت بها وتخيت ما حا
لا جادا ولا جرم خليه
ولا قبلها قبل وارد ندمها
ماست حدي أبدا وحين لوضهها
ليبر من لم يدره عن دكرها
و قالوا شربت ان كلا واما
هُنَّاء لأهل الدين لم يكرها جا
وعمدي منها نتونة قبل نت
عيد لمحاصرها وإن تسنت مرجا
فرهوكا في المدان وأحسها به
فاست وامل نبره موضع
وفي سرة منها ولوه جمع
فنا عنيف في الدنيا ابن عارضه
على نقيبه فلبي بك من ضاع غمره

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