



Maulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi (1207-1273)

13th-century Persian poet, faqih, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic

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Early Life and Migration

- Rumi's father was Bahā ud-Dīn Walad, a theologian, jurist and a mystic from Balkh, who was also known by the followers of Rumi as Sultan al-Ulama or "Sultan of the Scholars".
- When the Mongols invaded Central Asia sometime between 1215 and 1220, Baha ud-Din Walad, with his whole family and a group of disciples, set out westwards.
- finally settled in Konya in Anatolia



Education



- No authentic account of his early education.
- Mostly supervised by his father.
- Baha' ud-Din became the head of a madrassa and when he died, Rumi, aged twenty-five, inherited his position
- One of Baha' ud-Din's students, Sayyed Burhan ud-Din Muhaqqiq Termazi, continued to train Rumi in the Shariah as well as the Tariqa, especially that of Rumi's father.
- For nine years, Rumi practised Sufism as a disciple of Burhan ud-Din until the latter died in 1240 or 1241. Rumi's public life then began: he became an Islamic Jurist, issuing fatwas and giving sermons in the mosques of Konya.



Influences

- ▶ Baha ud Din Walad (Rumi's Father)
- ▶ Poets: Attar and Sanai

Rumi encountered one of the most famous mystic Persian poets, Attar, in the Iranian city of Nishapur, Khorasan. Attar immediately recognized Rumi's spiritual eminence. He saw the father walking ahead of the son and said, "Here comes a sea followed by an ocean. Attar gave the boy his Asrarnama, a book about the entanglement of the soul in the material world. This meeting had a deep impact on the eighteen-year-old Rumi and later on became the inspiration for his works.

- ▶ Shams e Tabriz: The spiritual teacher of Rumi transforming him from a scholar to a sufi (from religion to theosophism)

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Major works

- ▶ Rumi's poetry is often divided into various categories: the quatrains (rubayāt) and odes (ghazal) of the Divan, the six books of the Masnavi.
- ▶ The prose works are divided into The Discourses, The Letters, and the Seven Sermons.

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Rumi's Poetry

- ▶ Rumi's best-known work: ***Masnavi***: Six-volume poem: holds a distinguished place within the rich tradition of Persian Sufi literature, and has been commonly called "the Quran in Persian"
- ▶ Many commentators have regarded it as the greatest mystical poem in world literature. It contains approximately 27,000 lines: Spiritual couplets
- ▶ Called as 'the roots of the root of the root of faith'
- ▶ It is not a detached loose of stories, but every character in Masnavi is 'you'

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Rumi's poetry

Rumi's other major work is the *Dīwān-e Kabīr* or *Dīwān-e Shams-e Tabrīzī* named in honour of Rumi's master Shams. Besides approximately 35000 Persian couplets and 2000 Persian quatrains, the *Divan* contains 90 Ghazals and 19 quatrains in Arabic, a couple of dozen or so couplets in Turkish and 14 couplets in Greek.

Prose works

- ▶ **Fihi Ma Fihi:** seventy-one talks and lectures given by Rumi on various occasions to his disciples. An English translation from the Persian was first published by A.J. Arberry as *Discourses of Rumi*.
- ▶ **Majāles-e Sab'a:** seven Persian sermons or lectures given in seven different assemblies. The sermons themselves give a commentary on the deeper meaning of Qur'an and Hadith.
- ▶ **Makatib:** Rumi's letters in Persian to his disciples, family members, and men of state and of influence. Unlike the Persian style of the previous two mentioned works (which are lectures and sermons), the letters are consciously sophisticated and epistolary in style, which is in conformity with the expectations of correspondence directed to nobles, statesmen and kings.