



ABSTRACTS

Qadi Baidawi and the later recensions of his “Nizam al-tawarikh”

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In an earlier study, I examined the reasons for the popularity of Baidawi's *Nizam al-tawarikh* (c. 1275) and its importance in portraying the Mongols as just the latest of a series of dynastic powers to rule Iran. The popularity of this short and accessible work is reflected in the large number of surviving manuscripts and in the various continuations that were written. Among these are a group of manuscripts that continue the narrative down to the accession of Ghazan Khan (1294), which may represent a second recension of the work undertaken by the author himself. This would be consistent with Baidawi's original aim of domesticating the Mongols, first in terms of the long continuity of Iranian imperial rule, and now crowned by their conversion to Islam.

Other manuscripts contain continuations written after Baidawi's death (c. 1316), but it is unlikely, in view of the lack of evidence of official patronage, that such works held the same significance as propaganda.

The paper will also review the often very considerable textual differences between manuscripts, itself a function of the popularity of the work. As with the earlier and even more widespread text of Bal'ami's translation of Tabari, such diversity makes it very difficult to recover exactly what Baidawi might have written, and especially to identify for certain the development of Baidawi's own continuing engagement with his subject over almost four decades.

Behind and Beyond the Veil in Sufism; Reflections in Shams Tabriz and Rumi

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Today the number of books that touch the topic of “Gender in Islam” in general and “Gender in Islamic Mysticism” in Particular, from the view point of medicine, Human Rights, culture, politics, social values, etc. increases rapidly. In this animated market and over flown by the realistic and sometimes blurred studies, *Women in Islam* by Wiebke Walther, *The Tao of Islam* by Sachiko Mmurata, *My Soul Is a Woman* by Annemarie Schimmel, *The Rights of Women in Islam* by Asghai Ali Engineer and *Women and Gender in Islam* by Leila Ahmed present always a firm base for further studies to emerge.

The tradition of *Veil* as a gender specification in Muslim societies is one based on religious doctrine, although the *Qur'an* does not mandate it. Among Iranian women, the debate about *Veil* takes many forms. Many believe that *Veil* is a way to secure male domination in a world that objectifies women and in a society which manifests the symptoms of a male chauvinism such as Iran's. Several women have debated that *Veil* allows them some social and financial security. Others have argued that *Veil* only provides the illusion of security. By absolving men of the responsibility for controlling their behavior, it rather prevents women from being autonomous subjects legitimating them for social and cultural humiliation and inferiority as well as for psychological trauma. Islam is not responsible for sexism. In fact, the *Qur'an* supports the notion of gender equality. However in most Islamic societies a growing sexism is noticeable in which the role of *Veil* seems to be crucial.

The concept of *Veil* in Persian Sufism and Sufi poetry is an understudied and poorly explained issue in the field of Islamic Studies. The often highly male chauvinist nature of modern Muslim society assumes that genders must have pre-decided specifications, bounded in specific space and restricted to a certain set of rules. This overshadowed face of society has caused modern Muslims to forget that their forbears conceived of no such restrictive limitation; that in fact, they often rejected such categories altogether.

The present paper, while taking into account many of the mentioned controversies, concentrates on the concept, value and role of *Veil* amid the hustle and bustle of the new ideologies and philosophies which fills the intellectual ambience of this age. It consists of five sections:

In the first instance, our objective is to identify the specific concept of *Veil* in Persian Sufism whilst looking through the religious faith and the historical bases and background of this convention. In the second section *Veil* in relationship between sexes is discussed. The third section concentrates on *Veil* as a bridge between Man to God and as Man's gate for God. Forth section focuses on *Veil* as the reflector of Man and Woman in unity. A brief look at the poetic techniques adopted in Sufi poetry to project the said ideas is the interest of the fifth section. The conclusion attempts to summarize the main themes discussed.