



Are fotowwat and tasawwof from the same origin?

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The literal translation of the Arabic word *fotowwat* (which is derived from the root *FaTiYa* “to be young”, “to be a young man”,) is “young” and in generally it characterizes men between 16 and 30 years of age. Since it is told about the prophet, that he should have said, “there is no *fatan* but Ali”, when the latter was already much older than thirty years, we may conclude that the words *fatan* and *fotowwat* have some additional meaning besides “young”. It seems, that the words served as technical terms among certain mystical currents and in this regard characterized someone, who had sought truth and found it. This is also indicated by the symbolism of light and darkness.

The paper will try to investigate, if *fotowwat* and some mystical currents may be attributed to a common origin. It will also show, that the clothing of the members of the *fotowwat* and some of their ceremonies point to an Iranian background.

Nasir al-din Tusi and the poetic discourse :

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Classical Persian literary theory reached its full development in the thirteenth century (seventh century h.q.) treatises on metrics and poetics, and above all with Shams-e Qeys-e Râzi’s *Al-mo’jam fi ma’âyir ash’âr al-’ajam*, written around the year 1232. Though undoubtedly the most comprehensive – and best known – composition on poetry-writing within the Iranian tradition, its underlying logical and linguistic issues cannot be fully acknowledged unless compared to the twofold work independently dedicated by his contemporary Nasir al-din Tusi to the art of poetry. However undermined by modern scholars, Tusi’s treatise on metrics, *Me’yâr al-ash’âr dar ’elm-e ’aruz va qavâfi* (1251), together with his avicenian sum on logics, *Ketâb asâs al-eqtebâs* (1242), bear witness to an unprecedented attempt to correlate two traditionally irreducible perspectives on poetry among islamic sciences : that of the prosodist who unfolds the technical devices of metre and rhyme-making, and that of the logician concerned with the status of poetry amid the kinds of human discourse. As a result, Tusi’s texts allow for a comprehensive analysis of the poetic discourse as a whole, which includes the problematic consideration of the grammatical validity of a language of which no Sibawayh had dreamed of giving a full and systematic description. By analyzing Tusi’s representation of the poetic discourse in this paper, I wish to show how early Persian treatises on poetics indeed embody the nascent awareness of vernacular *dari*. Not only do the metre and rhyme sections of the *Me’yâr al-ash’âr* enclose scattered grammatical considerations, they partake in a complete theory of versified speech concerned with phonological elements as well as morphologic and syntactic rules which must be acknowledged by the prosodist as a necessary counterpart to its metrical laws. The understanding of Tusi’s outlook on poetic discourse as a specific logical production as well as subject to grammar proper, may then help further consider Shams-e Qeys’s own larger elaboration on the linguistic aspects of literary Persian. What is at stake in early Persian poetics is no less than the promotion of the poets’ *fârsi* to a status long restricted to Arabic alone, that is, to the status of language as such.