



Death before Dying: The Sufi Poems of Sultan Bahu

By *Sultan Bahu*

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Death before Dying: The Sufi Poems of Sultan Bahu By Sultan Bahu

These 115 poems introduce readers in English to Sultan Bahu (d. 1691), a Sufi mystical poet who continues to be one of the most beloved writers in Punjabi. Bahu, whose name translates as "With God," remains highly popular in Pakistan and India today—even illiterate Punjabis can recite his poetry by heart.

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Editorial Review

Review

The Apperance Of The Inciting Soul Is Like Some Black Cur
Arabian Stallions Cannot Be Hidden Beneath Threadbare Saddl
Arise And Shine Bright, Moon! The Stars Are Engaged In Your
Arise And Shine Bright, Moon! The Stars Re Engaged In Divin
Ascetics Practice Asceticism, Exhausted By Fasts And Excess
At Night Eyes Cry Tears Of Blood And By Day Shed Glances
Be Steel, Be Beaten, Only Then Will You Be Called A Sword
Being A Faqir Is Not Dancing And Whirling, Waking Up Sleep
A Blackened Face Is Better Than A Blackened Heart
The Creed Has Saved Millions From Drowning And Turned
The Creed Resounds Within Me, The Creed That Love Taught Me
Dirt, Darkness And Dust -- The Paths Are Filled With Dread
Everyone Asks For Firmness In Faith, But Few For Firmness
Everyone Churns Milk And Yogurt, Lovers Churn Fire
Everyone Recites The Creed Of The Tongue, Few Say The Creed
Eyes Red, Faces Pale, Rending Sighs From Every Heart
Faith Left For The Sake Of Love: Let's Live As Disbelievers
The Fire Of Love, Fueled By Bones: Lovers Sit And Stoke It
A Friend For One Breath And An Enemy For A Hundred Thousand
From The Sighs Of The Painstricken, Stone Mouintains Fall
A Garden Has Bloomed, Bahu, Shaming The Narcissus And Rue
The Gates Of The Law Are High, The Mystic Path A Tiny Door
The Guide Is Mecca, The Seeker The Pilgrim, And Love Has
The Guide Planted God's Jasmine Plant Within Me
Half The Curses On The World, And All Of Them On The World
Having Learned The Lessons Of Eternity, We Saw Spectacles
Having Learned Wisdom From A Thousand Books, They Become
The Heart A Bazaar And The Mouth A Gateway, The Breast
The Heart Is Deeper Than Rivers And Oceans, Who Knows What
The Heart Is Register Of Unity, So Study It Always
The Heart's Desire Is Unfulfilled And Distant
Heart, Cry Out! Maybe The Lord Will Har The Sighs Of The
Her My Request, Master Of Masters! Who Else Can I Address
The Hidden Shadows Of The Lord Master, Nothing Is Known Of
I Abandoned This World When I Found True Needlessness
I Am A Falcon, I Fly In The Sea Of Divine Nobility
I Am Ugly And My Beloved Beautiful -- How Can I Be Agreeabl
I Grasped The Meaning Of The Creed When The Creed Grabbed
I Have No Souvenirs Of Baghdad Except Wounds, Long And Deep
I Knew God Well When Love Flashed Before Me
I See My Lover On The Outside, And He Is Also Visible In My
I Was Shackled And Marched To The Earth -- From The Heavens
If Religion Lay In Learning, Why Would They Stick Their
If The Lord Were Found By Bathing And Washing, He Would Be

If You Want To Be A Lover And Earn Love, Then Make Your Hea
Living In Swamps And Wandering In Jungles
The Lord Was Neither Found On The Exalted Throne, Nor Is
Love Saw Me Weak And It Came, Taking Over My Home
Love Saw Me Weak And It Launched A Raid
The Love Which Drinks The Blood Of The Painstricken Is A
A Lover's Heart Is Like Melted Wax, Rushing Toward Its Bel
Lovers Always Wander Drunken From Their Love Of The Beloved
Lovers Are Never Free From The Mysteries Of The Beloved
Lovers Purify Themselves But Once Until Resurrection Day
May Mercy Rain On The Wretched Town Where Bahu Lives
May We Never Keep Company With An Unfaithful Friend
Mercy Only Resides In A House With A Burning Lamp
My Guide Is The Divine Falcon Who Has Gone And Joined Up
My Inner Pain Burns Me Inside, And If I Bring It Out
My Whole Body Is Burned By Words, Pain Has Taken Me Over
Neither Am I A Sage, Nor Am I A Scholar, Nor A Cleric
Neither Am I A Yogi Nor Am I A Dervish Bard, Nor Have I
Neither Am I Sunni Nor Am I Sh'a -- My Heart Is Bitter
Not A Bit Of Sleep Comes At Night And Amazement Lasts All
On A Dark, Black Night, Love Lights A Lamp
On Going To Baghda I Struck A Deal
Only Such A Soul As My Companion That Is With Me All The Wa
Pain Does Not Blossom In A Heart That Has No Love
The Path Of Poverty Is Very Long, With No End In Sight
People Will Select A Grave-site And Make A Home For You
The Perfect Guide Thrashes One Like A Laundryman Beats
The Pure Will Never Be Impure, Even If They Live In Filth
Qur'an Scholars Read And Aggrandize Themselves, Priests Act
Religion And This World Are Blood Sisters -- Intellect Did
Repeating Allah! You've Memorized Him, But The Veils Have
The Rosary Spun But The Heart Did Not Spin, What's The Poin
The Sea Of Love Hs Risen To The Heavens, Where Will The Shi
The Sea Of Unity Is Divine Where Lovers Take A Swim
The Seas Of Unity Rose High, But Not A Heart Was Set Right
Seekers Of This World Are Like Dogs, Wandering From Door To
Smoke Rises From The Painstricken, But No One Warms Themsel
So What If Love's Idol Is Hidden? One's Heart Will Never
There Are Those Who Are Awake, Those Who Don't Know How To
There Is No Room For Rationality Where There Is The Gloriou
They Are Neither Hindus Nor Muslims, Nor Do They Bow Down
They Live Near But Appear Far, Never Entering My Courtyard
They Played The Game Of Love Everywhere, Kings, Beggars
They Re Neither Seekers Nor Guides; They Will All Cause Har
They Study Nothing Themselves But Make Students Of Others
They, In Whose Bones Love Finds A Home, Remain Completely
This Body Is A Dwelling Of The True Lord, And My Heart
This Body Of Yours Is The True Lord's Dwelling, So Mystic
Those Who Destroy Their Own Treasures Are The Ones Who Find

Those Who Find The Beloved In The Letter Alif Need Not Open
Those Who Live In Patched Robes Stay Awake Half The Night
Through Study And Learning They Earn The Pleasure Of Prince
The Tiger Kills In The Jungle, But The Falcon Even Strikes
A True Lover Is One Who Accepts Death For The Beloved
Wake Up Or Don't, Mystic, You'll Be Awakened By Need In The
The Ways Of Love Are Backward, Turning You Far From Path
Wearing The Dress Of Hu They Earn The Name 'of The Essence'
Were My Body To Become One Large Eye, I Would Not See
What Do The Living Know Of The Dead? Only They Know Who Die
What Do The Unfit Know, Those Who Do Not Share The Heart's
When You Made A Show Of Unity, I Was Lost To Myself
Where One Gram Of Love Is Sold, There One Should Give Tons
Whoever Experiences I Shall Not Want Has Complete Poverty
Whoever Is Heedless For An Instant Is A Disbeliever In An
Whoever Strives For Poverty Without Knowledge Dies A Hereti
Whose Place Is In The Breast? The Guide Made Us Understand
Wild Marshes And Shifting Sands Are Where This Life Finds
Wild Marshes And Shifting Sands Are Where This Life Finds
With The Creed I Bathed And Washed, With The Creed I Was
The Wretched Lover Lost His Heart And With It Also Lost
You Learned Writing But You Never Understood The Meaning
You Will Find The Singular Beloved If You Gamble Your Head
-- *Table of Poems from Poem Finder®*

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

From the Inside Flap

"The heart's desire is unfulfilled and distant. My Lover won't give it medicine, and it won't mend its ways. Hotter fires burn in love's battlefield And, Bahu, I'm in awe of those who charge in. With their earthy charm and engaging simplicity, these Punjabi verses convey the immediacy of the spiritual quest as expressed in the popular idiom and imagery of the countryside. A fine choice for courses in Islamic religious studies and spirituality."—John Renard, author of *Seven Doors to Islam*

"The great Punjabi Sufi poet Sultan Bahu comes alive for English readers in this lucid and accessible translation. Transmitted orally by generations of singers, these powerful verses show how Sufism has actually been communicated."—Carl W. Ernst, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Users Review

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Ronald Adams:

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Veda Howard:

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Allison Morales:

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