

## Khusro's *Dibache* and the Possibility of Comparison

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### **Abstract**

*Amir Khusro's (1253-1325) **Dibache Ghurrat al-Kamal** is an important writing in terms of defining a poetics in which the critical categories are regulated by a deep religious sensibility. The present study works towards the determination of a theoretical framework within which any task of comparison between Khusro's tradition of **naqd** and the western critical tradition could be undertaken.*

The discovery of Khusro's *Dibache* inaugurates a primary occasion for exploring comparative possibilities between the western and the eastern critical discourses. We are now living in a critical age where the boundaries between binary oppositions have been blurred, the categories of presence/ absence, reason/ imagination, philosophy/ poetry, masculine/ feminine, dream/ wakefulness, fiction/ fact etc., are no longer acceptable as mutually exclusive, but are considered to be constituted by a simultaneous interplay of each of these binary forces. Same should hold true for the western and the eastern critical discourses. The above concession would actually make the task of comparison more challenging, as the focus will fall upon that 'grey' area, that space of the undetermined within the twin identities of the binaries, where the *traces* of the two discourses would collide, simultaneously converge upon and diverge from each other. The departure of the two discourses would not simply come as a point in time, but as an event the determination of which would not be so much possible if one remains within the categories of the traditional western critical thought.

At the risk of being elliptical, I would like to posit here that despite apparently common concerns, a comparative study of Khusro's *Dibache* with the theoretical treatises in the West is not as simple as it might first appear to be. That is to say, I can not simply take up the issue of the comparison Khusro makes between poetry and prose and place it alongside, for instance, what Wordsworth has to say on this matter in his

*Preface to the Lyrical Ballads*. I will, in that case, be committing the error of ‘violently yoking together’ critical categories governed and regulated by two traditions existing on different epistemological plains. Something deeper than a compare and contrast situation is at stake here.

The determination of the event of departure would call for a certain discernment which would mean analysis and synthesis *at the same time*. Jalal al-din Rumi, a near-contemporary of Khusro, and sharing the *critical* tradition, recognizes this discernment necessary to locate this event of departure through a dual distinction: epistemological and linguistic:

*Badi sukhanha naqd ast wa badi naql be hamdigar mi  
manand, mumayyezi mi bayed ke naql ra az naql  
beshenasad wa tamyiz imanast wa kufr bitamizist.*<sup>1</sup>

Some words are *naqd* (cash; ready) and some are *naql* (copies; artificial), but since they resemble each other, one must be discerning in order to tell the *naqd* from the *naql*. Discernment is faith and lack thereof is infidelity.<sup>2</sup>

Epistemologically, the distinction is between *iman* (faith), and *kufr* (literally, covering up or closure, veiling, concealment, remission, falling short of, *kaffarah*: expiation. It is precisely having this polysemy in mind that in my opening sentence I have referred to the moment of the appearance of *Dibache* as a moment of ‘discovery’).

Linguistically, the distinction is between *naqd* (cash, ready. The sense of this readiness could somewhat be captured through Shakespeare’s *readiness is all*), and *naql* (copied, artificial, transferred, a *doubling*). Although I have mentioned them analytically here, the epistemological and the linguistic are necessarily inseparable. The critical enterprise both in the West and in the East is undoubtedly aimed towards the act of discernment, but the etymological comparison of the terms that designate this act in the West and in the East is epistemologically revealing. *Tanqeed* (what Khusro calls his *Dibache*), commonly equated with the concept of *criticism* in an act of sinful innocence, comes from *naqd*. The act of discernment in this case is regulated primarily by the epistemology of *iman*. *Tanqeed* in Khusro’s case does not appear as an act of *doubling*, the interpretation of an interpretation, to echo Derrida. The details of this ellipsis will follow

<sup>1</sup> Jalal al-Din Rumi, *Kitab Fihi ma Fih*, ed. Badi al-Zaman Faruqanfar (Tehran: Chapkhane Majlis, 1330 H.), p.146.

<sup>2</sup> W.M. Thackston, Jr. (trans.), *Signs of the Unseen, The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi* (London: Shambala, 1999), p. 152

after a few lines. On the other hand, *Criticism* comes from the Greek *Krinein*, an act of judgement, discernment, *primarily testing mental faculties and senses*.<sup>3</sup> [My italics]

Once this epistemological framework involving mental faculties and senses, allow me to use the word *rationality*, is established, the historical event should come as no surprise that the advent of criticism in the West accompanies the banishment of poets from the republic. Macaulay certainly is not breaking news when writing on Dryden he observes that 'the creative faculty and the critical faculty can not exist together in their highest perfection'.<sup>4</sup> The subsequent history saw essays like 'To Criticize the Critic', developing the vogue of criticism upon criticism, announcing the advent of an era where only the possibility of an interpretation of an interpretation, i.e., *naql*, was possible. Criticism thus understood as *naql*, as a continuous *transference*, as an act of doubling interpretation upon interpretation, upon the once understood 'original' act of the poetic, must become abstract. No doubt the nomenclature must change. Criticism ultimately takes the name of *theory*. Until recently when the post-structuralist critique blurred the boundaries between literature and philosophy, the language of criticism was aimed at clarity, scientific and philosophic regularity, banishing all ambiguity which should be the necessity of the poetic discourse. Being academically trained in the western critical discourse, I find myself engaged in an act of a *doubling commentary*. I would not claim an impossibility, but certainly an immense difficulty of writing a *Dibache* in this age. We should perhaps be content with writing prefaces.

For the most part, history of criticism in the West has been a history of attacks, defences, apologies and prefaces. At the most, existing on the margins of literature, criticism appears as a supplement, as an expiation, a compensation, as a *kaffarah*. With the inception of Plato's objection to poetry on the grounds of its irrationality, Aristotle, like a classical biologist, dissects literature in order to answer Plato. Boethius' suspicion of the muses is addressed by Aquinas by devising a fourfold system of interpretation, the literal, allegorical, moral and anagogical, significantly for Aquinas only applicable to Scripture. Sidney's *Apology for Poetry* answers the attack made on poetry by the puritan Stephen Gosson in his *School of Abuse*. Mazzoni in his *Defence of the Comedy of*

<sup>3</sup> See *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott (eds.), Harper, NY, 1882, and *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, Philip Babcock Gove (ed.), Merriam Webster, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1986

<sup>4</sup> Macaulay, *Essays*, Dryden, A. 1880, pg. 36

*Dante*, draws like Sidney a distinction between poetry and history, poetry and science. Wordsworth feels fits of perspirations in an attempt to supplement his Lyrical Ballads with a preface in order to make the readers realize that what he was writing was actually poetry. Shelley defends poetry against Peacock's satirical attacks making distinctions between imagination (synthesis) and reason (analysis). [Please recall my earlier remarks regarding the meaning of discernment as a simultaneous occurrence of analysis and synthesis]. Matthew Arnold in the preface to his *Poems*, reflects a particular brand of moralistic criticism, 'to see the object as in itself it really is', but for this task finds religion inadequate and later in *The Study of Poetry* conveniently lets religion and philosophy be supplanted by poetry. T.S. Eliot's attack on certain emphases in romanticism, comes again as a struggle between the 'classical' and the 'romantic'. Post-structuralism opens up in the text of this history questioning, so vocally for the first time, the very epistemological premise upon which the dialectics of this critical tradition is based.

To begin with, then, with an aim to explore the comparative possibilities, let us agree upon the contention that despite the presence of an argument, Khusro's treatise, in an 'essential' sense, is neither primarily a defence, nor an attack, neither an apology nor, like Hali's, a *muqaddameh*, a *preface*, what comes as an act of doubling, a compensation or expiation (in which Hali, to much significance in the present context of the debate, has no qualms in citing Walter Scott and Goldsmith as examples for poetic inspiration, as champions of what Hali calls, borrowing the word actually from English, 'natural' poetry).<sup>5</sup>

His act of *tanqeed* Khusro calls *Dibache*, lexicologically a *face*, not a *pre-face*, a cheek; from *diba*, a robe of silk, not something that comes as a doubling of *naqd*, but co-exists simultaneously as an act of creation, not as *naql*, a transference of the creative to the critical. Instead of a defence, or an apology or a preface, *Dibache* is an ornament, an aesthetic celebration, an acknowledgement, an act of thanks, *shukr* as opposed to *kufr*. The critical process thus understood as *tanqeed* is given in *Dibache* in terms which could be equally applicable to the creative process:

I had many strong arguments in my mind, but I have done away with them for two reasons. Firstly, because some vile-natured persons would go out of their minds in anger and prejudice and secondly, this discussion

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<sup>5</sup> See Altaf Hussein Hali, *Muqaddameh Sher-o-Shairi*, Ishrat Publishing House, Lahore, pp. 35 & 50.

would become too long. At the moment, my purpose is to write a few statements as a *dibache*, and not a whole separate book. Obviously in a *dibache* one should content oneself with a few thoughts, nevertheless, *whichever thorn pricks the bud of heart, if I do not take it out, the heart would be ravished with wounds*.<sup>6</sup> [My italics]

The contention that despite offering polemical interests, the *raison detre* of the *Dibache* is not solely polemics, should be substantiated by the very structure of the document. Unlike the majority of critical treatises in the West, which understandably focus upon the argument, scientifically doing away with *redundant* issues, Khusro's *Dibache* incorporates rhetorical *redundancies* to the argumentative 'main body' (if there is any exclusively recognizable) of the document.

The *Dibache*, somewhat to the distaste of the western reader, starts with *hamd* (praise of Allah), *naat* (praise of the Prophet), *manqabat* (eulogy of the family members and the companions of the Prophet) and *madh sheikh* (praise of the spiritual master). [One might recall here the Aristotelian categories of the beginning, the middle and the end in order to appreciate the subsequent transformation of this rationalistic principle of organisation in Khusro's *Dibache*]. Then come the arguments and 'main' [again used here ironically] issues (namely) *nutq* (speech) as man's distinguishing feature [a comparison with the western *logos* (speech) and the tradition of logo-centrism should in this regard be immensely revealing]. The comparison between *nathr* (prose) and *nazm* (poetry) [an interesting occasion for comparison might be with Wordsworth and Sidney], the relationship between poetry and music, the comparison between the prosodic issues in Arabic and Persian poetry, a mentioning of the characteristics of his own poetry, the issue of poetic wisdom, the relationship between the teacher and the student of poetry, technical issues related to Persian prosody – all pertinent, relevant and important issues from a western critical perspective and each in itself an occasion of a revealing comparison, the details of which the purview of this paper would not, unfortunately, allow me to accommodate. But, curiously, the last chapter includes Khusro's own biography, his apology [the direction of which must strictly be noticed in comparison with Sidney's *Apology*, directed towards poetry itself, and Bunyan's *Apology*

<sup>6</sup> Amir Khusro, *Dibache Ghurratul Kamal*, (trans.) Prof. Latifullah, Scheherzade, Karachi, 2005, pg. 72. All the passage from the *Dibache* appearing in this paper have been taken from Prof. Latifullah's Urdu translations. Translations from Urdu to English are mine.

before the *Pilgrim's Progress*, directed in his case towards his Puritan colleagues] to Allah and his prayer for redemption and forgiveness. What is the occasion for that?

One must resort to the reason Khusro himself gives for writing this *Dibache*. The scribe Ala al-din says to Khusro:

Copy all the manuscripts (of the poems) that I possess cleanly, then include in them all the previous compositions that you have forgot and put them into order. After that, as you braced *Tuhfat al-Sighr* and *Wast al-Hayat* with the virtues of a *dibache*, in a similar way decorate the beauty of 'the bright forehead' (*Ghurrat al-Kamal*) with a perfect *dibache*. While you are writing, make it clear and purify it with the power of the estimation of your judgement. Then put it in front of those discerning who, for prejudice are headless (of those realities). When you will fulfill all conditions in that writing every true friend will be inclined towards your true discourse, not only to enjoy your poetry.<sup>7</sup>

After a few lines Khusro writes:

After that I ordered genres of (my) poetry and when I had the opinion of perceptive friends (regarding that order) I *decorated* this *dibacheh*...although the perfect artists say that the best discourse is that which is short and argumentative and does not put the addressee into gloom. The one who talks a lot is like the one who collects wood at night. But what pricks the heart, be it date or thorn, how is it possible that I ignore the anxiety of my heart, so for this reason I brought (that thorn) out piecemeal so that I could remain engaged in the immense activity (of creation).<sup>8</sup> [My italics]

*Dibache* as *tanqeed*, as *naqd*, as criticism understood as *naqd*, participates in the immense activity of creation as decoration, comes out not merely as a pre-meditated scientific activity but as a creative urge that 'pricks the heart' [not just the mental faculty and senses]. It appears not so much as an elucidation of the 'original' creation but works as an inclination towards the true discourse'.

When I say that the *Dibache's* *raison detre* is not solely polemics, it is with the strict sense in which polemics, dialects and the art of disputation is understood in the West, as a matter of rational, logical,

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106-10.

scientific, and the analytic. To account for the presence of polemics in the *Dibache*, I would like to argue that unlike the western critical tradition, polemics in the tradition of *naqd* and *tanqeed* is not exclusively a scientific and analytic, but an aesthetic and synthetic enterprise. Jalal al-Din Rumi, for instance, calls his dialects, disputation 'mixed with beauty' (*manazirye ma ba husn amikhte ast*).<sup>9</sup>

In Khusro's *Dibache* this contention can be supported by two of its dimensions, the structural and the stylistic. The structural redundancies of *hamd*, *naat*, *manqabat* and *madh Sheikh* are inseparable from the polemical purpose of the *Dibache*. The subject of the treatise is epistemologically and linguistically embedded in these rhetorical redundancies. Unlike Sidney's *Apology* where the religious appears *inter alia*, the epistemology of Khusro's poetics is grounded in religion.

He (Allah) is the Great Benefactor that his generosity bestowed the power of speech upon the poets so that they could unhesitatingly start the high speech. 'And remember Allah remembering frequently'. Every one writes through his own natural power. He (Allah) is the one who gave human nature (the power to) decorate writing and manifested through the poet's nature such good things. 'Says he: who will give life to the bones when they are rotten? Say He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation'.<sup>10</sup> [36:78-79]

Khusro's frequent incorporation of the Quranic verses in his sentences throughout the *Dibache* is not only to *substantiate*, but to *derive* his argument from the religious epistemology. Mere substantiation would imply the externality of the argument from that epistemology and the epistemology would only come as a support, as happens in Sidney's case. The fact is an indication that the poetics in the *Dibache* does not merely make use of but is governed by religious epistemology. Khusro also reveals remarkable sensitivity to the presence of the 'poetic' in the Quran by finding prosodic vocabulary in the Quranic verses.

That person is clearly wrong who calls the Quran poetry, for poetry is a speech that remains in a '*bahr*' (meter/ measure) whereas no *bahr* can encompass this illuminated speech.<sup>11</sup>

Khusro refers here to verse 109 of chapter XVIII (*AL-Kahf*) of the Quran where the word *bahr* in its Arabic meaning of 'ocean' is used:

<sup>9</sup> Rumi, *Fihi ma Fih*, ed. Faruzanfar, p.154.

<sup>10</sup> Khusro, *Dibache*, p.37.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.39.

‘The ocean would surely be consumed before the words of my Lord are exhausted’. *Bahr* in Persian is a prosodic term denoting the meter or measurement of a line of verse. On the other occasion Khusro reverses the process and uses the prosodic term ‘*radif*’ denoting words that are repeated at the end of a verse in poetry to designate Abu Bakr in his encomium of the companions of the Prophet. Khusro goes on to ingeniously interpret *radif* through the Quranic phrase ‘*vallazina ma’ah*’ (those who are with him).<sup>12</sup> Khusro’s recognition of the prosodic in terms of the Scriptural and the Scriptural in terms of the prosodic is again a mark of the religious imagination at work in the *Dibache*. The reference to verses, the traditions of the Prophet, as Prof. Latifullah rightly points out, was on the one hand to substantiate and strengthen the discourse and on the other to keep the discourse within the boundaries of the Quranic injunctions and the Sunnah. I would like to rephrase this point by saying that it is precisely by remaining within the religious epistemology that Khusro’s gets substance and strength for his argument. Prof. Latifullah further points out that this act of substantiation comes down to Khusro from the ‘metaphysical’ tradition of Islam.<sup>13</sup> I would definitely like to qualify the term ‘metaphysical’ that I have used here for ‘*ilmi*’, for the ‘metaphysical’ tradition in which Khusro is working, if you allow me to use this word, seems to be markedly different from its western counterpart.

Before I finally take up this fundamental issue of the understanding of metaphysics in the western and the Islamic contexts, I would like to mention another linguistic phenomenon in the *Dibache* that tends to eliminate the distance between the critical and the creative. Despite the difference Khusro makes between metrical composition (*nazm*) and prose (*nathr*), Khusro’s own prose, replete with metaphors, is highly *poetic*. In order to compare the metaphysical systems I just referred to, I would take one instance from the western critical context. Wordsworth in *Preface to the Lyrical Ballads* refuses to admit any *essential* difference between the language of poetry and prose. He also in his footnotes clarifies that there has been a lot of confusion in (western) criticism because of the identification of poetry with metrical composition. Actually, according to Wordsworth, the antithesis is neither between poetry and prose, nor even between metrical composition and prose, rather it is actually between poetry and science – and science, as

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40.

<sup>13</sup> Latifullah, *Translator’s Introduction to the Dibache*, p.26.



Wordsworth defines it, is the matter of *fact*.<sup>14</sup> I would like to recall Arnold's remark regarding the demise of religion in the West, some years after Wordsworth's diagnosis of this antithesis between poetry and matter of fact. 'Our religion', Arnold says, 'has materialize itself in the fact.....it has attached its emotion to the fact and ... the fact is failing it'.<sup>15</sup> Does Arnold mean by the *fact* the same what Wordsworth means it to be? Then the antithesis would actually be between poetry and religion. I will take this issue up in a moment.

For Khusro 'poetry is a discourse / speech that always remains within a metre (*bahr* = ocean)',<sup>16</sup> As Dr. Shams al-Rahman Farooqui's comments imply, from Khusro's estimation of prose, it does not come out that [unlike Wordsworth] he is unaware of the presence of some kind of metrical rhythm even in prose. Though every metrical composition for Khusro could not be called poetry.<sup>17</sup> For Khusro, as pointed out earlier, the only discourse that can incorporate meter and yet transcend it is the Scriptural. So when Khusro is comparing metrical composition with prose he is, unlike Wordsworth, actually comparing poetry with prose. Prose is for Khusro a 'non-scientific' discourse, uncontrollable, which 'attaches itself from one branch to another through its own will... a book whose binding is scattered, an ungirdled speedy horse, an unleashed she-camel, ... despite all rules and regulations its composition remains disconnected and disordered. Among the system of all the meters its sentences remain unmeasured. It cannot create poetry until it lends itself to the support of the metrical subtlety of verse'.<sup>18</sup>

Prose for Khusro is the way commonly 'men speak to men', 'the known medium of mutual conversation and is prevelant every where',<sup>19</sup> the same medium Wordsworth would like to use for poetry. Is Khusro unaware of the possibility of the so-called prose-poetry because there was no such model available to him, but same would be true for Wordsworth as well. In paving way for prose-poetry Wordsworth is acting upon the romantic ideal of infinititude of poetic imagination, the romantic quest of becoming like gods, of reaching form in formlessness,

<sup>14</sup> William Wordsworth, Preface to the Lyrical Ballads, in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, ed. Hazard Adams, Harcourt Brace, NY, 1999, p.440.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew Arnold, The Study of Poetry, in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, p.603.

<sup>16</sup> Khusro, *Dibache*, p.39.

<sup>17</sup> Shams al-Rahman Faruqui, *Preface* to the Urdu translation of the *Dibache*, p.10.

<sup>18</sup> Khusro, *Dibache*, p.60. The phrase 'man speaking to men' is actually Wordsworth's and with these words he characterises his poet.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.60.

of attaining a poetic content that does not need the ornament, the 'superaddition' of meter. On the other hand in distinguishing prose from poetry Khusro while confining and distinguishing it from the prophetic is at the same time making the form participate in the creative act as a necessity. The ornament is a necessary part of the creative. It is a *dibache*

Unlike Wordsworth there is for Khusro no *essential* (semantic) difference between poetry and science (*ilm*).<sup>20</sup> And there lies the difficulty of the translatability of the *Dibache* into English or any other European language. I have for the convenience of etymology used the word *science* for *ilm* but in an extended sense 'metaphysics' or 'philosophy' would also do. None of these words actually capture the meaning of *ilm* because of the loading they have received from their western context. This *science* of Khusro is not *a matter of fact*. It is the science of 'Islamic Jurisprudence (*ilm shariah*)'. It is a wine with which has satiated those who drink from the river of reality. (This wine) is not poured into cups of the imagination of the tasteless'.<sup>21</sup> What more is included in this science can be had from Khusro's enumeration of the features of those who 'are unknown to its intoxication'. 'They are unaware of the law of jurisprudence. They have not had the knowledge of the kinds of theology, have not taken pains to know physics and mathematics, *have not been cured of (the disease of) cause and effect*, have not solved the problems of the scholars of law through interpretation, have not clarified even a single intellectual issue of the philosophers'.<sup>22</sup> [My italics]

Instead of subscribing to the chain of cause and effect, Khusro's *science* transcends it. Those who were 'brimming with arts of this science', as Khusro puts it, had 'poetry as their lowest rank'.<sup>23</sup> Khusro is aware of a poetics, a kind of poetry which he calls *muharriq* (that which burns). It seldom follows the conventional modes of poetic techniques. In such a discourse the poet 'non-volitionally, with the effect of a burnt heart in a particular state and time is burnt up and absorbs the hearts and ignites them'. Such poetry Khusro calls 'the wine of the spirituals which can not be accommodated in the head of every poet'.<sup>24</sup> At this moment, much alive to the risks of such hurried cross-referring, I could not resist the temptation to think of another near-contemporary of Khusro, sitting far away in Konya, working, I believe, in the same metaphysical

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p.64.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.62.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p.63.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p.88.

tradition, Jalal al-Din Rumi, who talked about a '*fanne-e-digar*' (another art), which was acquired after his transformation from being 'raw' to being 'cooked' and finally being 'burnt up', for whom poetry was of his lowest rank:

*Sher che bashad bare man take azan laf zanam  
Hast mara fann-e-digar ghaire funune shu'ara*<sup>25</sup>

One of the ranks that Khusro assigns to his own poetry is the 'wine of love...which is not given to more than a single poet in an age. If people kept trying for their whole life, turn their hearts into blood and their liver to burnt meat, they could not find this wine in the cups of their hearts, until the Cup-bearer of times, filling the cup of meaning does not pour that wine into the cup of heart from the sealed heavenly bottles. Once it is done, then the recipient will never have to exert for when the waves will rise from the ocean of the unseen, he will get the essence of hundreds of thousands of pearls of meaning without drowning himself into any labour'.<sup>26</sup>

When Wordsworth asserts that poetry is the highest of all philosophical disciplines, he derives his argument from Aristotle<sup>27</sup>. When Khusro talks about the essential identity between poetry and *ilm* (science/philosophy/ metaphysics) he derives his argument from two sources: the Quran and the hadith. Let me forward this differentiating content: Khusro's poetics is strictly working within the metaphysics of theology, whereas Arnold and Wordsworth are working within the metaphysics of onto-theology: the mideval merger of Christian theology with Greek ontology. Working within a single theological tradition the 'merger of the two worlds' that Dr. Farooqui rightly refers to,<sup>28</sup> is not the merger of two mutually contesting epistemologies, the rational and the revelational, the aesthetic and the ethical, as happens in the merger of the Hellenic and the Hebraic in the western critical tradition.

It is a matter of such a detailed analysis that it certainly deserves at least a full length paper, but here I would like to hint upon the comparative possibilities of the western logo-centrism and the centrality of *nutq* in Khusro's discourse. Why is there a question of a quarrel between literature and metaphysics in the West? Why did Arnold announce that religion and philosophy (onto-theology/metaphysics) in the West will be replaced by poetry? Why is the claim to 'presence' not

<sup>25</sup> Rumi, *Kulliat-e-Shams Tabrizi*, Intisharat-e-Amir Kabir, Tehran, 1336 H., 163, p.75.

<sup>26</sup> Khusro, *Dibache*, p.87.

<sup>27</sup> Wordsworth, Preface, in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, p.441.

<sup>28</sup> Shams al-Rahman Faruqui, *Preface to the Dibache*, p.13.

tenable in the western metaphysics? Why in the metaphysics of Khusro's poetics the designation of both speech and writing is by a single word, *kalam*? Why does not writing appear in Khusro's poetics as the bastard son of *nutq* (logos?), as happens in Plato's case.<sup>29</sup> As I have suggested in one of my previous writings on Rumi, in Khusro's case as well the term logo-centrism needs to be radically reappraised. Such are some of the issues that should regulate the determination of the theoretical framework within which any task of comparison should operate. In an age where the western critical categories have pervaded the estimation of any poetics, the *Dibache* could serve as a landmark in introducing a poetics of religious experience and the categories regulated by the tradition of *naqd*.

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<sup>29</sup> See Plato, *Phaedrus*, (trans.) W.C. Helmbold and W.G. Rabinowitz, Macmillan, 1956.