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Intertextual Influence of the Mathnavi of Rumi on the Risalo of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai

Abstract:

Intertextuality is all about the creation and interpretation of a text based on a prior text. Seen from intertextual perspective all the great poetic works of the great bards indicate certain literary influences and the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif is no exception. One of such major influences on his poetry is the Persian poet Jalaluddin Rumi's Mathnavi which was in fact one of the three constant companions of Shah Latif, other two being the Holy Qur'an and the Risalo of Shah Abdul Karim of Bulri. Though Shah Latif's verse is unique in its style and essence, yet Mathnavi has clearly left some marks on his poetic thought.

This research article highlights the intertextual aspect of Shah Abdul Latif's poetry, using Bazerman's (2004) intertextual model to present an in-depth analysis of a selected number of verses from Shah Jo Risalo which bear similarities of subject and substance to some of the poetic lines in Mathnavi of Rumi.

Key words: *intertextuality, creation, interpretation, analysis, substance.*

Introduction:

Most writers are influenced naturally by the works of other writers. From Homer to Shakespeare, from Wordsworth to T.S. Eliot and from Ghalib to Iqbal and down to the poets of present age their poetic works have indicated the literary influence of the previous works of poetry. Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, to communicate his poetic message, chose Sindhi, the language of the literate class of his times and deliberately ignored Persian that was considered the language of the elite, and Arabic, which was believed to be a scholarly language. Danish (2016) says that Bhittai was well aware of the expressive beauty of his sweet lan-

guage Sindhi and by choosing the people's language, he opened new ways for the world towards the understanding and spreading his intellectual light (p.281). Even though Shah Latif did not follow the form of Persian poetry, he was deeply influenced by its content. He was familiar with the poetry of many Persian poets particularly with Molana Jalaluddin Rumi's whose *Mathnavi* was always with him (Agha, 2016, p.9). One little example of Rumi's influence on Shah Latif's poetry is that the latter has mentioned the name of the former in six consecutive verses of his *Risalo*.

Bhittai says:

طَالِبُ ڪَثَرَ، سونهن سَرُ، اِيَ رومِيءَ جِي رُوءِ؛
جنِين ڏٺي جُوءِ، تنِي ڪُجيو ڪين ڪِيُ
(Adwani, (2014):85)

Rumi believed, whole world Beauty's origin seeks,
Those who know of it, not a word of it, they speak.
(Khamisani, (2012):56)

Shah Latif says that everything, the whole universe, is seeking Him and its original source is this beauty. That is the point of view of Rumi. Everything is searching for that real beauty. Those who have witnessed that with their own eyes never tell anything. Agha has translated the above verse as: According to Molana Rumi, and that is fundamental with him, the entire mankind seeks Him. The fountainhead of all beauty is Allah, the Unique. Those who have attained to that stage and reached the realm of the Prime keep mum. The words طَالِبُ كَثَّرَ may also be translated as: Allah sought multiplicity because He wanted the human beings to exalt and adore Him (Agha (2016): 113)

Bhittai says:

طَالِبُ ڪَثَرَ، سونهن سَرُ، اِيَ رومِيءَ جِي راءِ؛
ماڙهُو اِتِ ڪِياءِ، مَنڌُ نہ پسين مَنڌيو!
(Adwani, (2014):32)

Rumi believed whole world Beauty's origin seeks,
Whence came human beings, see you not the magic feat?
(Khamisani(2012) :56)

Shah Latif says that the entire universe is looking for Him and its wellspring is His beauty. That is the opinion of Rumi. Where has the humankind come from! Can you not see this magic everywhere! Agha has translated and explained the above verse as: Molana Rumi is of the view that Allah is the fountainhead of Beauty. All of it emanates from Him. He sought publicity for it. Accordingly, He created multiplicity as against His unity. It is worthwhile enquiring as to from where the human beings have originated. However, one can see through this magical feat set up by the Magician [i.e. Allah] (Agha (2016):113)

Similarly, Rumi says:

آمدی اندر جہان اے ممتحن

ہیچ می بینی طریقہ آمدن

O human being! You came to this world. Do you find therein any clue to the way you came here?(Agha (2016):113)

Bhittai says:

طَالِبُ ڪَثَرَ، سونهن سَرُ، رومِيءَ چيو آهي؛

تاڙِي جي لاهي، تہ مَنجِهين مُشاهدو ٿئي.

(Adwani (2014) : 86)

Rumi said all seek Beauty's source,

From your heart, veil remove and vision beautific behold.

(Khamisani, (2012) : 56)

Shah Latif says that the whole cosmos is in search of Him, who is the basis of beauty. That is what Rumi has said. If the cover from the heart is removed then it will be possible to witness that sublime beauty. Agha's (2016) interpretation is: According to Molana Rumi, the humankind seeks Allah who is fountainhead of all beauty. He sought multiplicity. If people lay aside the veil of ignorance or materialism, they would find His manifestations within themselves (p.113).

Bhittai says:

طَالِبُ ڪَثَرَ، سونهن سَرَ، اِيَ رومِيءَ جِي رِهاڙِ،

پهرين وِجائِڻُ پاڻ، پَسَڻُ پوءِ پِرِين ڪي.

(Dawoodpoto (2013) : 134)

Every seeker seeks beauty, that in Rumi's gathering,

First withdraw your vanity then behold the Beloved.

Shah Latif says that in Rumi's circle of friends and followers every seeker is looking for the source of supreme beauty of the Beloved and only those can see it who forget about their own existence. According to Agha (2016) the above verse means: It is stated by Molana Rumi that the mankind seek Allah who is the fountainhead of all beauty. He sought multiplicity as against His unity. It is necessary to annihilate the human identity completely before expecting to see Allah (p.114).

Bhittai says:

طَالِبُ ڪَثَرَ، سونهن سَرَ، اِيءَ رومِيءَ جِي راحَتَ،

جَنِين ڏِنِي سَتَ، تَنِين ڪُچِيو ڪِينَ ڪي.

(Dawoodpoto (2013) : 134

The seeker of beauty, its Rumi's rapture,

The witness of Truth always kept quiet.

Shah Latif says that the one who wanted to witness Beauty ended up experiencing ecstasy also and the moment they found the secret of reality and power behind the creation of life and death and the universe, they became tight-lipped. Agha (2016) has translated the above verse as: It is a matter of exhilaration for Rumi to say that humankind sought Allah who is the fountainhead of all beauty. Those who have witnessed the Truth/Allah, have kept mum, having been overwhelmed by it. (p.114)

Bhittai says:

طَالِبُ ڪَثَرَ، سونهن سَرَ، اِيءَ رومِيءَ جِي اوطاقَ،

جي پَيجي دَرُ فِراق، تہ مَجِهين مُشاهِدو ٿِئي.

(Dawoodpoto (2013) : 134)

The seekers seek beauty at Rumi's rest house,

They break the dividing door and see the Beloved.

Shah Latif says that the only thing the seekers of beauty at Rumi's guesthouse have to do is, to break down the locked door that distances them from their ultimate observation of the Beloved. Agha (2016) has translated the verse as: It is widely

preached by Rumi that humankind sought Allah who is the fountainhead of all beauty. If only people broke open the door of separation i.e. discarded identity and multiplicity, they would witness Allah within themselves (pp.114-5).

In all of the above six verses, Bhittai has highlighted the views of Rumi about the search for beauty and truth and it gives an idea how the poetry of this Persian master has partially influenced the thought process of this poet of Sindh.

Jami has said about the poetry of Rumi that:

مثنوی و مولوی و معنوی،

ہست قرآن در زبان ِ پہلوی۔

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi,P:21)

It's the *Qur'an* in the language of Persia.

Shah Latif says something similar about his poetry:

جي تو بيتَ پانئيا، سي آيتُون آهِينِ؛

نِيو مَنُ لائِينِ، پِريان سَندي پارَ ڏي.

(Mirza, Kalich Baig, Sur Sohni, P:148)

What you consider to be verses are sign posts,
That direct your mind to Lord's abode.

(khamisani (2012): 114)

Shah Latif says that my verses which you think are just poetic lines are in fact directions and guide lines for the misguided. These lines guide heart to the true Beloved that is Allah. Agha (2016) has translated and explained the above verse of Bhittai as: My verses are not mere poems meant for entertainment, as considered by you. They are full of mysticism and guidance. Please take them as tokens or symbols from me. If you interpret them properly, they will help you in your spiritual evolution and guide you along the straight path leading to Allah (p.1250). Shah Latif says that his poetic lines are actually the interpretation of the Qur'anic verses.

This study has focused on a selected number of such verses of Shah Latif which reflects Rumi's point of view, thus underlining the intertextual influence of *Mathnavi of Rumi* on *Shah jo Risalo*.

Literature Review

Some scholars have studied the intertextual influence of Rumi's poetry on the verse of Shah Latif. Particularly, Muhammad Yakoob Agha has analysed Bhittai's verses with reference to Rumi's *Mathnavi* in his translation of *Shah jo Risalo*. Moreover, Dr. Abul Ghaffar Soomro's PhD. dissertation is, in fact, the interpretation of the *Risalo of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai* in the light of Mathnavi Rumi. The doctoral treatise of Tanweer Abbasi, *Shah Latif ji Shaeri*, includes simultaneous references to those of Shah Latif's verses and the verses of Rumi which indicate clear similarity of thought. Similarly, Dr. Ahsan Danish in his doctoral thesis, *Shah Latif Jay Shaerica jo Samaji Karij* (Social Function of the Poetry of Shah Latif), has related the influence of Persian poets on the poetry of Shah Latif and his study includes quite a few references to the lines of Rumi. This present study is in a way further exposition of the influence of Rumi's *Mathnavi* on the *Risalo* of Shah Latif.

Research Methodology

Bazerman's (2004) model for intertextual analysis has been slightly improvised to suit this study. He has proposed four steps which have been carried out accordingly:

1. A list of verses, which reveals intertextual influence of Molana Jalaluddin Rumi's poetry on the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif.
2. It has been explained how Shah Latif has borrowed the ideas from Mathnavi of Rumi.
3. Verses, particularly of, Shah Latif have been interpreted to understand their substance in comparison to the given translations of Rumi's verses.
4. Finally, the exact similarity of ideas in the verses of both the poets has been indicated and interpreted.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Despite the unique poetic approach of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai there are quite a few verses in his *Risalo* which indicate a remarkable resemblance of ideas to the substance of *Mathnavi*

of Rumi. Abbasi says that it has to be admitted that the verse of Molana Rumi has tinged the texture of the poetry of Shah Latif (Abbasi (2016):52). This study analyses some of the verses of Bhittai to better comprehend the style and subject matter of his poetry in the light of Rumi's verses which point out to his obvious influence on *Shah jo Risalo*. This study includes the translation of Rumi's relevant verses and the interpretation and translation of Shah Latif's verses with similar ideas to that of the Persian poet.

Rumi says:

تشنگان گر آب جویند در جہان
آب جوید ہم بہ عالم تشنگان
(Rumi, vol-1, verse no :1741)

If the thirsty are looking for water in the world then the water is also searching for then thirsty. Soomro A. G. (2017) says this relationship of water and the thirsty is one of the key metaphors in Rumi's verse (p.251).

Bhittai says:

ساجَنَ کارَڙِ سُڄَ، مَرُ قَبُولي سَسُئِي؛
اَندَرُ جنِين اُڃَ، پاڻِي اُڃِيو اُنَ کي.
(Adwani, sur sussi Abri, p: 99)

For love's sake Sasui willingly accepts the wilderness,
Water is thirsty for those who thirst for it.
(Khamisani, p.124)

Shah Latif says that Sasui has done a good thing by accepting penury and wasteland. It is a natural principle that if somebody is looking for something, that thing would also look for that person. Here it means the lover looks for the Beloved and vice versa. Agha has translated and explained the above verse as: Sasui has willingly accepted and undertaken the journey in wilderness, that is, in self- renunciation, for the sake of her beloved. Or, welcome is Sasui to undertake this journey in wilderness for her beloved. Water seeks those who maintain thirst within themselves.(Agha (2016):755) The idea of 'the thirsty person looking for water and vice versa' is common in the verses of both Rumi and Bhittai particularly in the sense of the search for

truth.

Molana Rumi says:

آن ندای کہ اصل بر بانگ و نواست،
خود ندا آنست و این باقی صداست۔
(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, vol-1, verse no: 2107)

He who raises the sound is really responsible for what we heard. He is the sound and the other is a mere echo (Agha (2016):48).

Shah Latif says:

پڑاڏو سو سَڏُ، وَرُ وائِيءَ جو جي لَهين؛
هُئا اڳهين گڏ، ٻُڌڻ ۾ ٻه ٿيا.
(Advani, sur kalyan, p.15)

The Echo and the call are same,
If you sound's secret knew-
They both were one, but two became
Only when 'hearing' came.
(Kazi. E(1996): 32)

Bhittai says that those who understand the secret behind the creation and production of sound know it very well that in fact both the sound and its reverberation are the same but we just hear them twice. Agha has translated and explained this verse of Shah Latif as follows: If you can ascertain the stark truth, void of its intricacies, you will find that the sound and its echo are in reality one and the same thing. You feel as if you heard two distinct voices, but the echo has no substance, and the originator of both is the same agency. One must ask oneself the question: What is echo? Its answer in scientific terms is that it is the repetition of sound by reflection of sound waves and philosophically the sound is a reality. It has existence. However, the echo is just like a shadow of reality and it has no existence. The poet possibly means that the real agent is Allah and the man does not count.(Agha (2016): 48) Bhittai says that often we see two sides of the same thing, one real and the other unreal. The idea of 'sound and the echo' is very much the same in the verses of both the poets.

Rumi says:

صبر را با حق قرین کرد ای فلان،

آخر والعصر آگه بخوان

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, vol-3, verse no: 1853)

O fellow! The patience and truth go together,
Just carefully read the end of Surah Wal-Asr.

Shah Latif says:

پر ۾ پڇيائون، عشق جي اسباب کي،
دارون هن درد جو، ڏاڍو ڏسيائون.
آخر والعصر جو، انهين اتاؤن،
تهان پوءِ آئون، سڪان ٿي سلام کي.

(Adwani (2013), sur kalyan :19)

He secretly inquired about my love-ailment,
He then prescribed an appropriate medicine,
He advised me to have patience,
Since then I am yearning to meet.

(Saleem, V.1. p.65)

Bhittai says my Beloved maintained secrecy while asking me about my love-sickness and then He suggested a wonderful remedy, which was both instant and effective. He wanted me to be patient, but with every passing moment, my longing for meeting increases. Agha has translated and explained the above verse as: In confidence, He enquired of me about the causes and symptoms of the disease of love. Then He prescribed what was rather hard to take. Eventually He advised patience in the matter. Thereafter, after abiding by his prescription, I constantly yearn for an opportunity to make obeisance to Him (Agha (2016):64-65). Shah Latif believes that true lovers must have patience to attain their desired goal. In the above verses of both these great poets the idea of having patience in case of love is similar.

Rumi says:

در میان قعر دریا تخته بندم کرده ای،

باز می گوئی که دامن تر مکن هوشیار باش۔

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, vol-2, verse no: (ا - و)

You have tied me to a plank and then thrown me into the bottom of the river, what's more, you say that I must not wet the hem of my shirt.

Shah Latif says:

مُون کي مُون پِرِيَنِ، ٻَڌِي وِڌو ٻارِ ۾؛
اُڀا اِيئَن چَوَنِ، مَڇُڻ پاندُ پُسائِيين.

(Adwani (2013) sur Aasa : 297)

My Love bound me and threw me in water's depth,
Standing on the bank, he kept saying, don't you wet yourself.(Khamisani, p.267)

Shah Latif says that my Beloved has tied me with a rope then He has thrown me into water but He wants me not to wet myself. Allah has thrown humankind in the ocean of avarice and then He directs them not to be polluted with evil. Agha translates above verse as: My Beloved bound me hand and foot and put me in the deep sea. Then those who were standing on the shore that included the Beloved Himself, exclaimed to me to see that my clothes did not get wet (Agha (2016): 217). This life is a test for the believers and Allah Himself is the examiner in this hardest of all examinations. The idea of 'being thrown into the river and then not getting wet is similar in the verses of both these mighty masters of poetry.

Rumi says:

بشنو از نی چون حکایت می کند،

از جدائی ہا شکایت می کند۔

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, vol-1 ,verse no: 1)

Just listen to the flute's tale,
How it complains of separation!

Shah Latif says:

وَڍِيَلَ ٿي وايُون ڪَري، ڪُٺَلِ ڪُوڪاري؛
هُنَ پَنَ پنهنجا سارِيا، هِيَ هنجُون هَڏَنِ لءِ هاري.

(Adwani (2013) sur Mazuri : 133)

The flute cut from trees, wails, the wounded one cries,
This one recollects its green shades, that one's tears for her love rise. (Khamisani (2012) : 147)

Bhittai says the reed cut from the plant, that is flute, produces the music and the slaughtered Sasui keeps on crying in pain. The flute is recalling its green pastures and Sasui sheds her tears in remembrance of her beloved. Agha (2016) has translated and explained the above verse as: What has been dismembered from a tree, wails for reunion with it; and what has been afflicted or separated from the Beloved, cries for reunion with the latter. The former sorrowfully recollects its disconnected foliage, and the latter mourns his separation from the dear (p.873). The idea of 'the flute complaining of separation' is obviously similar in the lines of both these bards.

Rumi says:

سگ نہ بر استخوان چون عاشقی،

دیو چہ وار از چہ بر خون عاشقی۔

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, vol-2, verse no: 476)

If you are not a dog then why are you so fond of bones? Why, like a leech, are you fond of blood?

Bhittai says:

ڪُتو طالِبُ ڏُونيَ جو، اسين ڪُتي ڪِيڙَ؛

چُهِٽي آهي چِيڙَ، ڪارايي جي ڪَنَ ۾.

(آڏواٽي، سر معذوري، ص.124)

Dog is desirous of carrion, we are like dog's flea,
In dog's ear like the flea do cling we.

(Khamisani (2012):140)

Dog seeks carrion, we are ticks for the dog,
A tick stuck in the dog's ear.

(Saleem, (2015) V.1, p.629)

Shah Latif says that the dog looks for food in the rubbish and if we look for worldly comforts only then human beings are like a bloodsucking insect in the ear of a dog therefore even inferior to a dog. Agha (2016) has translated and explained the above verse of Bhittai as: The dog desires for carrion. On the other hand we are like a pest, a tick for him. Behold One such tick has stuck to his ear. The verse may mean that we may make the baser-self, repentant through chastisement. At that stage, it would signify as *Nafs-e- Lawwama* or the self-relenting inner be-

ing (p.842). This symbolic use of 'dog' for the greedy inner being is similar in the verses of both the poets.

Rumi says:

یک زمانہ صحبت با اولیا،

بہتر از صد سال طاعت بی ریا

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, vol-1 ,verse no. : (۱ - و)

To sit in the company of saints for a while,
Better it is than hundred years of sincere worship!

Bhittai says:

وَيٺي جِنِين وَٽ، ڏُڳندو ڏُور ٽِيي؛

تَنَ! تِنِين سين ڪَٽِ، اوڏا اَڏي پَڪَڙا.

(Gurbaxani, sur kalyan, p:123)

Sit close to those who lessen your pain,Build your hut beside them, with them your time spend.

(Khamisani, p.64)

Shah Latif advises to keep company with the persons who are wise and honest and who help you relieve your tensions. You should live near them so that you may be able to spend with them as much time as possible. Agha (2016) has translated the above verse as: If association with some persons alleviates your suffering, you, O man! Should go and live with them by putting up a cottage nearby.(p.145) The idea of keeping company with the sages and saints is common in the verses of both Rumi and Bhittai.

Rumi says:

چون زاغان خیمہ بر گلشن زوند

بلبلان پنہان شدند و تن زوند

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, vol-2, verse no:40)

As the crows have made their nests in the garden, so the nightingales are hidden and silent.

Shah Latif says:

وِيڑا مورَ مَري، هَنجهُ نہ رَهِيو هيڪڙو؛

وَطَنُ ٽِيو وَرِي، ڪُوڙَن ڪانيرَن جو.

(Baloch, sur karayal, p:157)

The lovely peacocks are all dead, not one swan remains,
Crafty snipes once again inhabit my native land.

(Khamisani, p.331)

Bhittai, using the symbols of the birds: 'peacock', 'crane' and *'Kanero'* bird, says that all honest men are dead and geniuses are no more, therefore his homeland abounds in only wily and wicked men. Agha (2016) has translated the above verse of Shah Latif as: All Peacocks and geese are dead. Not a single goose survives now, that is, all prophets have departed from the world and it is now inhabited by *Kanero* bird, that is, by the humdrum type of materialistic persons (p.326). Shah Latif says that in the absence of the men of substance, the world is in the control of the worthless men. The symbolic use of birds is something clearly common in the verses of both the poets. The above verse actually indicates that social values have drastically changed.

Rumi says:

علم را بر جاں زنی، یار بود
علم را بر تن زنی مار بود۔
(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, Verse no: (ف- ب)

Knowledge like a lover affects the heart,
The same is a snake when put on body.

Bhittai says:

پڑھيو ٿا پڑھن، ڪڙھن ڪين قلوب ۾،
پاٽان ڏوھ چڙھن، جيئن ورق ورائن وترا.
(Shahwani, Sur Yaman Kalyar, p:59)

They read again and again but their hearts remain unaffected,
The more pages they turn, the more sins they commit.
(Saleem, v.1 p.147)

Shah Latif says that the scholars keep on reading huge books but that practice does not have any impact on their hearts. In fact, the more they read books the more their sins grow, for they never do what the books say. Their meaningless study does them no good, on the contrary, it makes them evil. Agha (2016) has translated the above lines of Bhittai as: These egoists are busy in reading literature but they do not follow or think over it. The result is that with more reading they commit more sins by presumptuous and arbitrary interpretations, disbe-

lief and wrong acts (p.120). Shah Latif believes that futile reading of books is counterproductive. This idea of 'reading without pondering over it' is similar in the above verses of both the poet of Persia and the poet of Sindh.

In the following verse, Molana Rumi asks Allah to save him from defamation and notoriety.

گائی خدا این بندہ را رسوا مکن
گر بدم ھم سر من پیدا مکن
جز تو پیش کی بر آرد بندہ دست
ھم دعا و ھم اجابت از تو ہست۔
(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, Verse no: (ع- د)

O God please do not let anyone see my degradation, even though I am evil. Please keep my secret for I can entreat no one but you. I just need you to accept my supplication and give me your approval. In the same strain of thought Shah Latif has composed the following verse, only the style and language differ.

مَ ڪر ڊول ڊلو، ناتو نماڻيءَ سين،
ڪونهي ڪميٽيءَ جو، بگر توبلو،
تنهنجو نانءُ نِلو، وٽيو ويني آهيان.
(Adwani, Sur Dahar, p:367)

O loose not, Thou, the bond of her
Who humble is and lonely.
Thy Name my one sole shelter is:
Thy Name I cling to only.
(Sorely, p. 494)

Shah Latif, through his poetic character implores Allah to keep his dark side secret and help him get out of his desperate situation, for he thinks there is no one who can give him refuge except Allah. Agha has translated the above verse as: O Beloved! Pray do not lessen your interest in this wretched woman. She has no other anchorage except you. She remembers you alone. (2016, p :264) The idea of 'praying to Allah for help in despair' is common in the verses of both poets.

Rumi says:

چون بسی ابلیس آدم روی هست

نباید پس بهر دستی نشاید داد دست

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, Verse no: (ف- ب، د، ف

Many devils move in the guise of man
So don't put your hand in every hand.
Bhittai says:

منهن تہ موسي جهڙو، عادت ۾ ابليس،
اهڙو خام خبيث، کڏي کوهہ نہ ڇڏئين.

(Adwani, sur Assa, p:295)

You have the face of Prophet Musa but the habits of Satan. Why do you not throw out of your mind such a crude rogue. (Agha, p.207)

Shah Latif says that apparently, you are like the prophet Moses but your acts are Satanic. He then asks why one does not get rid of those roguish inclinations. Appearances are always deceptive, the person who looks saintly may, in fact, be an evil-hearted villain. Moreover, many such monsters do not try to reform themselves. They stay as they are and keep on ruining other's lives. The idea of 'having a face of a prophet and a devil in the heart' is similar in the verses of both poets.

Rumi says about the search for a spiritual mentor:

پیر را بگزین کہ بی پیر این سفر

هست بس پر آفت و خوف و خطر

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, Vol-1 ,verse no:139)

هر کہ او بی مرشدی در راہ شد

او ز غولان گمرہ و در چاہ شد

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, Vol-1 ,verse no:(ف، ب

Look for a spiritual leader because without a guide this journey is full of trials and tribulations and deadly dangers. Whoever set off on this road without a mentor was misguided by giants and monsters and ended up in an abyss.

Bhittai says:

اَوجهڙ اَسونهن، ڏيهہ گهٽو ئي ڏريو،

سُڃر ريءَ سُونهن، پُهتي کا نہ پنڌ ڪري.

(Adwani, Sur Sussi Abri, p: 115)

Seekers sought in vain, find themselves in wasteland,
Without a guide, His destination no one gained.

(Khamisani, p.136)

Shah Latif says that a seeker without a sage as a guide always fails to reach the ultimate destination. A true guide always ensures that a seeker never gets astray. Agha (2016: 812) has translated the above verse as: Those who have no guide may have gone a considerable distance, but they are still in the wilderness. The fact is that none without a guide will get on to the proper track to reach the Beloved (2016:p.812). The idea of 'having a spiritual guide' is common in the verses of both the poets.

Rumi says:

چون کہ عاشق اوست تو خاموش باش

او چو گوشت می کشد تو گوشی باش

(Mathnavi-e-Rumi, Vol-1 ,Verse no:1742)

Since he is the lover, you had better remain quiet. Since he draws your ear, you should lend it to him.(Agha, p. 822)

Bhittai says:

بڌ تہ ٻيائي لهي، آئون اُت نہ آهہ،
ڪچڙ ڪندي لاهہ، ڪن ٽي، ڪيچين ڪچيو.

(Adwani, Sur Sussi Abri, p: 119)

Listen so that you may be rid of duality, "I" is not there,
Forget talking, be all ears, the Kechis are to talk.

(Saleem, p.602)

Shah Latif says that listening is the key to getting rid of dualism. There must be no ego and you must pay attention to the talk of persons who matter to you. Agha (2016) translates and explains that the above verse that: Hear him patiently to unburden yourself of ego. There is nothing like "I" with him. Remove the cumbersome collar of interrogation or presumptuousness from yourself. Be all ears to him the Lord has so advised (2016:p.823) The idea of 'listening to the Beloved attentively' is obviously similar in the verses of both Rumi and Bhittai.

All the above references of verses from both *Mathnavi of Rumi* and *Shah jo Risalo* plainly indicate that Shah agrees with Rumi so much so that he has reproduced Rumi's thoughts in some of his verses but obviously in his own style. This logically points out how a literary work which Shah Latif always carried with him, i.e. The *Mathnavi*, influenced his own verse.

Conclusion:

Shah Latif not only keenly observed both the nature and society but also widely studied the literature particularly the poetry of his predecessors. He was especially impressed by the literary trends of his era in his early age. He made an in-depth study of the early poets of Sindhi language and the literary movements of the sub-continent and the important sufi poets of Hindi and Persian language. Undoubtedly, they influenced him to some extent. His poetry was a fusion of different styles and genres such as religious, local, eastern and Persian verse. This amalgamation resulted into a matchless form of poetry that suited the temperament of the people of his time. Despite all the popular forms of poetry around him he came up with his own style which has left an indelible impression on Sindhi poetry of his successors. Among Shah Latif's Persian predecessors, Rumi's thought and spiritual content seems to have impressed him the most and its evidence cannot go unnoticed as there are quite a few verses of *Shah jo Risao* which communicate and emphasize the message and philosophy of Rumi, though uniquely in Latifian style.

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