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## INTERTEXTUAL ECHOES OF IMAM ALI’S (AS) SAYINGS: A STUDY OF *KASHF AL-ASRAR* AND *MASNAVI-YE MA’NAVI*

Ilhama Mammadova\*

**Abstract.** Hazrat ‘Alī is a remarkable figure who left a significant impact on Islamic history, culture, and intellectual thought. This can be inferred not only from the deep respect and love shown by the Prophet towards him but also from ‘Alī’s activities during the period after the Prophet’s lifetime, as well as from the subsequent revitalization of ‘Alī’s image in monumental works. It is difficult to find any hadith or exegesis book where the name of ‘Alī is not mentioned or where no hadith is narrated from him. In this article, our research object is one of the earliest mystical expositions written, the *Kashf al-Asrār wa Iddat al-Abrār* (The unveiling of the mysteries and the provision of the pious) by Rashid al-Din Meybodī. Similar to other exegeses, this work contains numerous hadiths narrated by ‘Alī and discusses various events. In this exegesis, the portrayal of ‘Alī differs from other exegeses in that, apart from his historical and religious persona, ‘Alī is viewed from a mystical perspective. A multitude of poets have written works about Hazrat ‘Alī, leaving a lasting impact in the literature. During the Islamic period, in subsequent stages, and even today, the image of Hazrat ‘Alī is presented in many poems, symbolizing various aspects of his character. In this regard, Jālāl al-Dīn Rūmī’s *Masnavī-ye Ma’navī* (*Spiritual Couplets*) is no exception. In fact, we will argue that Rūmī is the poet who most frequently depicted ‘Alī and his virtues in verse. In this *Masnavī*, although seven sections are ostensibly dedicated to introducing the personality of ‘Alī, we encounter the hadiths of ‘Alī or wisdoms from *Nahj al-Balāgha* presented in poetic form throughout the entire *Masnavī*. All of this demonstrates that Jālāl al-Dīn Rūmī held possessed high regard for the personality of ‘Alī and, at the same time, conveyed it to his readers in the most beautiful form. The fact that the same sentences from ‘Alī are presented in two monumental works- one in mystical prose and the other in mystical verse- piqued our interest. Therefore, taking into account the presentation of the same ideas of ‘Alī in both works, we decided to conduct a comparison between the two. The strong similarities between two works written in different periods and genres further prove that Hazrat ‘Alī held a very esteemed and unique position. The research carried out in this article is of great importance in recognizing ‘Alī’s position in classical Eastern literature.

**Keywords:** Hazrat ‘Alī, Meybodī, *Kashf al-Asrār*, Rūmī, *Masnavī-ye Ma’navī*, verse

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**ИНТЕРТЕКСТУАЛЬНЫЕ ОТГОЛОСКИ ИЗРЕЧЕНИЙ ИМАМА АЛИ (А.С.):  
ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ «КАШФ АЛЬ-АСРАР» И «МАСНАВИ-ЙЕ МА'НАВИ»**

**Ильхама Мамедова\***

**Абстракт.** Хазрат 'Али является выдающейся личностью, оказавшей значительное влияние на историю ислама, культуру и интеллектуальную мысль. Об этом свидетельствует не только глубокое уважение и любовь, проявленные к нему Пророком, но и деятельность самого 'Али в период после смерти Пророка, а также последующее переосмысление и возвышение образа 'Али в монументальных трудах. Трудно найти хадисный сборник или тафсир, в котором не упоминалось бы имя 'Али или не приводились бы хадисы, переданные от его имени. Объектом исследования в данной статье является один из ранних мистических тафсиров - *Kashf al-Asrār wa 'Iddat al-Abrār* («Раскрытие тайн и наставление благочестивых») Рашид ад-Дина Мейбоди. Как и в других тафсирах, в данном произведении содержится множество хадисов, переданных от 'Али, а также описываются различные события, связанные с его личностью. Отличительной особенностью этого тафсира является то, что образ 'Али представлен не только в его историко-религиозном измерении, но и в мистическом контексте. Множество поэтов посвятили свои произведения Хазрату 'Али, оставив тем самым неизгладимый след в литературе. В исламский период, на последующих этапах и вплоть до наших дней образ Хазрата 'Али находит отражение во множестве поэтических текстов, символизируя различные грани его личности. В этом отношении *Masnāvī-ye Ma'navī* («Духовная маснави») Джалал ад-Дина Руми не является исключением. Более того, в статье выдвигается положение о том, что именно Руми является поэтом, который наиболее часто и последовательно воспевал образ 'Али и его достоинства в стихотворной форме. В *Masnāvī* хотя формально семь разделов посвящены описанию личности 'Али, хадисы, переданные от него, а также изречения и мудрости из *Нахдж ал-Балага* в поэтической интерпретации встречаются на протяжении всего произведения. Всё это свидетельствует о чрезвычайно высоком почтении, которое Джалал ад-Дин Руми испытывал к личности 'Али, и о его стремлении донести этот образ до читателя в наиболее совершенной художественной форме. Наличие одних и тех же высказываний 'Али в двух монументальных произведениях - одном, написанном в форме мистической прозы, и другом, созданном в жанре мистической поэзии, - привлекло наше исследовательское внимание. В связи с этим, принимая во внимание представление одних и тех же идей 'Али в обоих произведениях, в статье предпринята попытка их сопоставительного анализа. Сильные сходства между двумя произведениями, созданными в разные исторические периоды и принадлежащими к разным жанрам, ещё раз подтверждают исключительное и высокое положение Хазрата 'Али. Проведённое исследование имеет большое значение для осмысления роли и места 'Али в классической восточной литературе.

**Ключевые слова:** Хазрат 'Али, Мейбоди, *Kashf al-Asrār*, Руми, *Masnāvī-ye Ma'navī*, поэзия

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## İMAM ƏLİNİN (Ə.S.) KƏLAMLARININ İNTERTEKSTUAL ƏKS-SƏDALARI: “KƏŞFÜL-ƏSRAR” VƏ “MƏSNƏVİ-Yİ MƏ’NƏVİ” ƏSƏRLƏRİ ƏSASINDA TƏDQIQAT

İlhamə Məmmədova\*

**Abstrakt.** Həzrət Əli (ə) İslam tarixi, mədəniyyəti və intellektual düşüncəsi üzərində dərin iz qoymuş görkəmli şəxsiyyətlərdən biridir. Bu, təkcə Peyğəmbərin (s) ona göstərdiyi dərin hörmət və məhəbbətdən deyil, həm də Həzrət Əlinin Peyğəmbərin vəfatından sonrakı dövrdəki fəaliyyəti, eləcə də sonrakı mərhələlərdə onun obrazının möhtəşəm əsərlərdə yenidən canlandırılmasından aydın şəkildə görünür. Adının çəkilmədiyi və ya ondan hədis nəql edilmədiyi hər hansı bir hədis toplusu və ya təfsir əsəri tapmaq olduqca çətindir. Bu məqalədə tədqiqat obyektinə kimi ən erkən mistik təfsir nümunələrindən biri olan Rəşidəddin Meybodinin “*Kəşfül-Əsrar və İddətül-Əbrar*” (“Sirlərin açılması və salehlərin hazırlanması”) əsəri seçilmişdir. Digər təfsirlərdə olduğu kimi, bu əsərdə də Həzrət Əlidən (ə) nəql olunan çoxsaylı hədislərə yer verilmiş, müxtəlif hadisələr şərh edilmişdir. Lakin sözügedən təfsirin əsas fərqli cəhəti ondan ibarətdir ki, burada Həzrət Əli yalnız tarixi və dini şəxsiyyət kimi deyil, eyni zamanda mistik baxımdan təqdim olunur. Bir çox şairlər Həzrət Əliyə (ə) həsr olunmuş əsərlər yazaraq ədəbiyyatda silinməz iz qoymuşlar. İslam dövründə, sonrakı mərhələlərdə və hətta müasir dövrdə də Həzrət Əlinin obrazı müxtəlif poetik mətnlərdə təqdim edilmiş, onun şəxsiyyətinin fərqli cəhətləri simvolik şəkildə əks olunmuşdur. Bu baxımdan Cəlaləddin Ruminin “*Məsnəvi-ye Mənəvi*” (“Mənəvi Məsnəvi”) əsəri də istisna təşkil etmir. Hətta bu məqalədə əsaslandırılır ki, Həzrət Əlini və onun fəzilətlərini poetik şəkildə ən çox təsvir edən şair məhz Rumi olmuşdur. “Məsnəvi”də zahirən yeddi bölmə Həzrət Əlinin şəxsiyyətinin təqdimatına həsr edilərsə də, əsərin bütövlükdə müxtəlif hissələrində ondan nəql olunan hədislərə və \**“Nəhcül-Bəlağə”*\*dən götürülmüş hikmətlərin poetik ifadəsinə tez-tez rast gəlinir. Bütün bunlar Cəlaləddin Ruminin Həzrət Əlinin şəxsiyyətinə son dərəcə yüksək ehtiram bəslədiyini və bu obrazı oxucuya ən gözəl bədii formada çatdırmağa çalışdığını göstərir. Həzrət Əliyə (ə) aid eyni fikirlərin iki möhtəşəm əsərdə - biri mistik nəsr, digəri isə mistik poeziya nümunəsi olmaqla - təqdim edilməsi tədqiqat marağımızı cəlb etmişdir. Bu səbəbdən hər iki əsərdə Həzrət Əlinin eyni ideyalarının təqdimatını nəzərə alaraq onların müqayisəli təhlilinin aparılması məqsədəuyğun hesab edilmişdir. Müxtəlif dövrlərdə və fərqli janrlarda qələmə alınmış bu iki əsər arasındakı güclü oxşarlıqlar Həzrət Əlinin klassik Şərq ədəbiyyatında son dərəcə yüksək və özünəməxsus mövqeyə malik olduğunu bir daha sübut edir. Məqalədə aparılan tədqiqat Həzrət Əlinin klassik Şərq ədəbiyyatındakı yerinin və rolunun müəyyənləşdirilməsi baxımından mühüm elmi əhəmiyyət daşıyır.

**Açar sözlər:** Həzrət Əli (ə), Meybodi, *Kəşfül-Əsrar*, Rumi, *Məsnəvi-ye Mənəvi*, poeziya

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## 1. Introduction

از علی آموز اخلاص عمل / شیر حق را دان مُطَهَّر از دغل

"Learn sincerity in action from 'Alī / Know that the sweetness of truth is far from deceit." [Nikolson, n.d. vol. 1, p.183, v. 3721].

'Alī ibn Abi Tālib has been the first personality to whom all the mystics and saints have invoked after the Prophet since the advent of Islam until today, Although prophethood ended with Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets, 'Alī's personality proves that the model of the perfect human being continues. Therefore, 'Alī's actions and words have always been at the center of attention for writers who have tried to embellish their works with stories related to him. It can be said without exaggeration that in almost all exegeses, Hadiths are narrated from the authority of Imam 'Alī. There are many reasons for this, an investigation of which is beyond the scope of this paper.

## 2. Points Related to Imam 'Alī (a) in Both Works

To identify the attention given to Imam 'Alī (a) by Meybodī and Mawlānā, we must first examine the points in the works that relate to 'Alī. Here, the names under which 'Alī is referred to in the works and the sections concerning him are discussed. In both *Kashf al-Asrār* and *Maṣnavī-ye Ma'navī*, we come across Imam 'Alī ibn Abū Tālib being mentioned by the following names. It is also important to note that, according to the table, the first six names are used in both works.

### 'Alī:

پس جبرئیل بفرمان حق او را فرمود که امشب از خوابگاه خویش برخیز، رسول خدا برخاست و علی (ع) را آن شب بخوابگاه خویش بخوابانید و گفت: تسبیح بپردی فائنه لن یخلص الیک منهم امر تکرهه.

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s008/sh8>].

Then Jibril, by the command of Allah, said to him: "Get up from your bed tonight. The Messenger of Allah rose and made 'Alī (a) lie in his bed that night, saying: "Sleep, no harm will come to you from them that you dislike.

چون بخوادم کز سرت آهی کنم / چون علی سر را فرو چاهی کنم

[Nicholson, n.d. vol. 2, p.1141, v. 2014].

When I wish to sigh from my soul, / I lower my head into a well, like 'Alī.

### Murtazā:

بویکر نقاش حکایت کرد از امام مسلمانان علی مرتضی (ع) که روزی جهودی مرا گفت "در کتاب شما آیتی است بر من مشکل شده اگر کسی آن را تفسیر کند تا اشکال من حل شود من مسلمان شوم"...

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s001/sh2>].

The Bu Bakr Naqqash speaks about the Muslim Imām 'Alī Murtazā (a), saying that one day a Jew said to him, "There is a verse in your book that is difficult for me. If someone can resolve my difficulty with their interpretation, I will become a Muslim."

راز بگشا ای علی مرتضی / ای پس سؤ القضا حسن القضا

O ‘Alī Murtaẓā, unveil the secrets for us / O one who follows the path of the best of destinies after the path of hardship [The purpose of a bad death is for a person to die in disbelief, while the purpose of a good death is for a person to be forgiven and to return to the Hanif religion.] [Nickolson, n.d. vol. 1, p.185, v. 3757].

**Heydar:**

حیدر کرار بدان قدم در رکاب کرده است تا چون تویی رکاب او گیرد، و باز گرداند، دور باش از بر من که اندیشه سینه من کم از آن اثر نکند که خورشید در فلک.

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s004/sh72>].

Heydar-i Karrār placed his foot on the stirrup so that someone like you could hold his stirrup and return it. Stay away from me, so that your thoughts, like the sun's influence on the heavens, do not affect my heart.

بعد از آن هر صورتی را بشکنی / همچو حیدر باب خیبر بر کنی

[Nickolson, n.d. vol. 3, p.411, v. 580].

After breaking every idol / You will tear down the gate of Khaybar like Heydar.

**Karrār:**

رقیب عصمت و نبوت بود، عنصر علم و حکمت بود، اخلاص و صدق و یقین و توکل و تقوی و ورع شعار و دثار وی بود، حیدر کرار بود، صاحب ذو الفقار بود، سید مهاجر و انصار بود.

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s005/sh23>].

He was the one competing with purity and prophethood, the essence of knowledge and wisdom, his banner was sincerity, loyalty, certainty, trust, piety, and godliness. He was Heydar-i-Karrār, the owner of Zulfiqār, the master of the Muhajir and Ansār.

The title Karrār can be found in Rūmī’s ghazals, but it is not used in the *Maṣnavī-ye Ma‘navī*.

[دزد غم گردن خود از حذر سیلی من / زانک من از بیشه جان حیدر کرار شدم].

**Shir-e khodā:**

حسن بصری رحمه الله هر گه که قصه اصحاب بدر خواندی گفتی: طوبی سپاهی را که امیر ایشان رسول خدا، جاسوس ایشان جبرئیل امین خدا، مبارز ایشان حمزه و علی شیر خدا، مدد ایشان فریشتگان خدا، مقصود ایشان اظهار دین خدا، حاصل ایشان رضای خدا.

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s008/sh15>].

Hassan al-Basri would say when reading the story of the companions of Badr: "Blessed are the state of that army, whose commander is the Messenger of Allah, whose bearer of news is Allah’s trusted one Jibril, whose warrior is Hamza, the lion of Allah, and whose helper is Allah’s angels. Their goal was the manifestation of Allah’s religion, and their gains were the pleasure of Allah.

چون ز رویش مرتضی شد درفشان / گشت او شیر خدا در مرج جان

[Nickolson, n.d. vol. 2, p.244, v. 925].

As Murtaza shed pearls from his face, / He became the lion of Allah in the garden of souls. [When Hazrat Ali saw that glorious light, he scattered the pearls of mystery and truth for those who wanted it. He became the lion of God in the meadow of the soul].

In Rūmī 's *Masnavī*, besides the phrase *Shir-e Khodā* (Lion of God), the expressions *Shir-e Haqq* (Lion of Truth), *Shir-e Mowlā* (Lion of the Master), and *Shir-e Rabbāni* (Lion of the Divine) are also used.

من نیم سگ شیر حقم حق پرست / شیر حق آنست کز صورت برست

[Nickolson, n.d. vol. 1, p.195, v.3964].

I am not a dog; I am the lion who worships the Truth. / The lion of the Truth is the one who has freed himself from the world of form.

This line speaks to the Sufi philosophy, where the "lion" symbolizes strength, courage, and the mastery of the self in devotion to the Truth (*Haqq*). The distinction between a dog and a lion here emphasizes a spiritual elevation, with the lion representing a being that has transcended the material world (the world of form) and is focused solely on the divine.

شیر دنیا جوید اشکاری و برگ / شیر مولی جوید آزادی و مرگ

[Nickolson, n.d. vol. 1, p.195, v.3965].

The lion of the world seeks prey and sustenance / But the lion of the Master seeks freedom and death.

This part contrasts the worldly pursuits of power and material gain ("prey and sustenance") with the spiritual pursuit of freedom and selflessness ("freedom and death") that the true seeker of the divine, represented by the lion of the Master, strives for. The "lion of the Master" symbolizes a soul that has transcended worldly desires and seeks the ultimate truth, often through the metaphor of death, which represents shedding the ego and material attachments.

در شجاعت شیر رَبَّانِیستی / در مُرُوتِ خود که داند کیستی؟

[Nickolson, n.d. vol. 1, p.184, v. 3732].

In bravery, you are a divine lion / In chivalry, no one knows who you are.

This verse highlights the distinction between two aspects of nobility. In the first part, the "divine lion" symbolizes someone who exhibits courage and strength, aligned with divine qualities. In the second part, "chivalry" refers to a more refined, honorable aspect of character- here, it suggests that even in terms of this nobility, the person's true nature might be unrecognized or mysterious to others. The line reflects the idea that a person who embodies divine strength and virtue might be misunderstood or not fully known by others in terms of their deeper qualities.

**Mowlā:**

و فی الخبر: من کنت مولاہ فعلی مولاہ

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s005/sh23>].

And the news has reached: Whoever considers me their master, 'Alī is his master.

This line refers to the famous hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, which signifies the deep spiritual and leadership bond between the Prophet and Imam 'Alī. It highlights the authority and closeness of Imam 'Alī to the Prophet, and by extension, his central role in guiding and leading the Muslim community. This phrase is often cited by Shia Muslims to emphasize Imam Ali's unique status and leadership after the Prophet's passing.

گفت هر کو را منم مولا و دوست/ ابن عم من علی مولای اوست

[Nickolson, n.d. vol. 6, p.1265, v.4539].

He said: 'Whoever is my master and friend, my cousin Ali is his master.

This verse references a famous hadith attributed to the Prophet Muhammad where he declares Imam 'Alī as the master and friend of those who consider the Prophet himself as their master. It emphasizes the close relationship between the Prophet and Imam 'Alī, and the special position Imam 'Alī holds in the eyes of the Prophet and the Muslim community, particularly in the Shia tradition.

گفت پیغامبر علی را کای علی / شیر حقی پهلوانی پردلی

[Nickolson, n.d. vol. 1, p.146, v.2959].

The Prophet said to 'Alī: 'O 'Alī/you are the lion of truth, a hero, and a brave one.

This verse refers to the well-known praise of Imam 'Alī (a) by the Prophet Muhammad.

In Islamic tradition, Imam 'Alī is often referred to as the "Lion of God" (Shir-e Khuda) due to his bravery, strength, and courage, particularly in battles such as those fought during the early years of Islam.

The other names presented in the analyzed works are presented in various forms. The names used in *Kashf al-Asrār* are as follows:

#### **Amiral-muminin:**

و از جهت سنّة امیر المؤمنین علی ع گفت مصطفی را پرسیدم از ابجد هوز حطّی، فقال یا علی ویل لعالم لا یعرف تفسیر ابی جاد: الالف من الله و الباء من الباری و الجیم من الجلیل.

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s002/sh2>].

According to the Sunnah, 'Alī (AS) said: "I asked Mustafa about Abjad, Hawwaz, and Hotti. He replied: 'Woe to the scholar who does not know the interpretation of Abjad: Alif is from Allah, Ba is from Barid, and Jim is from Jalil.'"

#### **Abal-Hasan:**

علی بازگشت تا بمسجد رسول شود و نماز کند، اعرابی را دید که شتری میفروخت، گفت یا ابا الحسن این شتر را میفروشم بخر، علی گفت نتوانم که بهای آن ندارم.

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s002/sh147>].

'Alī replied, "Go to the Prophet's mosque and pray." He saw an Arab selling a camel and said, "O Abal-Hasan, I am selling this camel, buy it." 'Alī replied, "I cannot afford it as I do not have the money."

***The son of Abū Tālib:***

امیر المؤمنین علی (ع) دیناری بر دست نهاد گفت: یا صفراء اصفری و یا بیضاء ابيضی و غری غیرى، ای دنیا و ای نعیم دنیا رو که تو عروسی آراسته‌ای و بانگشت عروسان پنجه شیران نتوان شکست، شو دیگری را فریب ده که پسر ابو طالب سر آن ندارد که در دام غرور تو آید: "وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْعُرُورِ".

[<https://ganjooor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s016/sh24>].

'Alī (a.s.) took a dinar in his hand and said: O yellow, be yellow; O white, be white; O black, be something else.' (Meaning, you will soon change your color.) O world, and O the bounty of the world, go, for you are a decorated bride, and the paw of lions cannot break with the finger of brides. Go deceive someone else, for the son of Abū Tālib has no intention of falling into your trap of pride. The worldly life is nothing but the deceiving enjoyment of wealth" ['Āli 'Imrān, 3:185].

***The paternal cousin of Mustafa:***

***The husband of Fatimah al-Zahrā, the Lady of the Day of Judgment:***

علی مرتضی ابن عم مصطفی شوهر خاتون قیامت فاطمه زهرا که خلافت را حارس بود، و اولیا را صدر و بدر بود چنان که نبوت بمصطفی ختم کردند خلافت خلفاء راشدین بوی ختم کردند. [<https://ganjooor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s005/sh23>].

The protector of the caliphate, 'Alī al-Murtazā, the cousin of Mustafa, the husband of Fatimah al-Zahra, the leader of the saints and the hero of Badr, whose caliphate was completed with the Rashidun caliphs, while prophethood was sealed with Mustafa.

***The owner of Zulfiqār:***

***Leader of the Muhājirun and Ansār:***

Imam 'Alī cannot be imagined without his sword – Zulfiqar. Therefore, together with 'Alī's personality, the poets give publicity to his Zulfiqar, too. "Gabriel came from Sadra and presented the Prophet "la fata" [Alizade, 2023, p.95].

رقیب عصمت و نبوت بود، عنصر علم و حکمت بود، اخلاص و صدق و یقین و توکل و تقوی و روح شعار و دثار وی بود، حیدر کزار بود، صاحب ذو الفقار بود، سید مهاجر و انصار بود. [<https://ganjooor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s005/sh23>].

He was a competitor of purity and prophethood, the essence of knowledge and wisdom, his motto was sincerity, loyalty, certainty, trust in God, piety, and virtue. He was the one called Haydari-Karrār, the possessor of Zulfiqār, and the leader of the Muhājirun and Ansār.

The names used in *Maṣnavī-ye Ma'navī* are as follows.

***Musā's cloud:***

در مُرُوت، اَبْر موسیّی به تیه / کآمد از وی خوان و نان بی‌شبیّه

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.1, p.184, v.3733].

In generosity, you are the cloud of Musa in the desert of Tih / From it came an unmatched table and bread.

This refers to the story in Islamic tradition where Prophet Musa (Moses) and his people were provided with manna and quails from the sky during their time in the desert. In this metaphor, the speaker compares the generosity of the person addressed to that miraculous provision.

*The gate of the city of knowledge:*

چون تو بایی آن مدینه علم را / چون شعاعی آفتاب حلم را

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.1, p.185, v.3763].

You are the gate of the city of knowledge / You are like the rays of the sun of wisdom.

*The pride of every prophet and saint:*

او خدو انداخت در روی علی / افتخار هر نبی و هر ولی

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.1, p.184, v.3723].

He spat on ‘Alī’s face / The pride of every prophet and every saint.

We want to investigate the issues related to Hazrat ‘Alī (a) in both works. Although *Masnavī-ye Ma‘navī* reflects the expressions of Hazrat ‘Alī’s (a) words throughout, only seven sections of this work are specifically related to Hazrat ‘Alī’s (a) name. These sections are as follows and it will be seen that six of these sections are in the first book of the *Masnavī*, and one is in the last book. The sections in the first book include:

1. The Prophet’s (s) advice to ‘Alī (a): Everyone approaches Allah in some way, but you should strive to be in the company of wise and special servants of Allah, so that you are ahead of all of them.

2. The enemy spitting on ‘Alī’s (a) face and Amir al-Mu‘minin ‘Alī throwing his sword away from his hand.

3. The *kafir* asking ‘Alī (a): "Why did you throw your sword away after defeating me?"

4. Amir al-Mu‘minin’s explanation of the reason for throwing away his sword.

5. The story of ‘Alī (a) returning and making concessions to his adversary.

6. Every time someone holds the stirrup, they approach Amir al-Mu‘minin and say: "O Amir al-Mu‘minin, kill me and save me from this disgrace."

7. The hadith of Mustafa (s): "Whoever I am the master of, ‘Alī is their master."

The first verse in *Masnavī* where ‘Alī’s name appears is as follows:

گفت پیغامبر علی را کای علی / شیر حقی پهلوانی پردلی

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.1, p.146, v.2959].

The Prophet said to ‘Alī, "O Ali, you are the lion of Truth, you are a hero, you are courageous.

The last verse in which the name " ‘Alī " appears is:

گفت هر کو را منم مولا و دوست / ابن عم من علی مولای اوست

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4539].

He said: "Whoever's master and friend I am, / My cousin 'Alī is their master."

The reason why the name of Hazrat 'Alī (a) is mentioned in the first and sixth books of the *Masnavī* can be answered by stating that Mawlānā, adhering to his method, created a connection between the first and sixth books. Therefore, in the first book, 'Alī, the Lion of God, is mentioned, while in the final book, the Prophet (s) advises his followers to love 'Alī, saying that whoever loves me should also love 'Alī. Why is this hadith included in the last book of the *Masnavī*? Because the event of Ghadir Khumm also took place in the final days of the Prophet's life. Before the Prophet passed away, he instructed the Muslims to love his cousin and son-in-law, 'Alī [This part is about Hazrat Ali (a.s). This verse contains a part of the Hadith of Ghadir. The Messenger of Allah (s) went on a pilgrimage towards the end of his life, which was later called the Farewell Pilgrimage. After completing the pilgrimage, he set out for Medina and reached the area of Khum on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Dhul-Hijjah. He said on a place made of camels: "Whoever I am the master of, Ali is his master. O Allah, love the friends of Ali and consider his enemies as enemies."]. In the continuation of this verse, Mawlānā clarifies who Mawlānā is.

کیست مولا آنک آزادت کند / بند رقیبت ز پایت بر کند

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4540].

Who is the Mawlā, the one who frees you / and loosens the chains of servitude from your feet?

چون به آزادی نبوت هادیست / مؤمنان را ز انبیا آزادیست

[Nickolson, vol.6, p.1265, v.4541].

The station of prophethood guides people to freedom / The believers have obtained freedom from the prophets.

ای گروه مؤمنان شادی کنید / همچو سرو و سوسن آزادی کنید

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4542].

O group of believers, rejoice / Be liberated like the rose and the lily.

لیک می گویند هر دم شکر آب / بی زبان چون گلستان خوش خضاب

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4543].

But like a mute, beautifully colored garden / Give thanks to the water every moment.

بی زبان گویند سرو و سبزه زار / شکر آب و شکر عدل نوبهار

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4544].

The cypress and the meadow are not mute / They give thanks to the water and the justice of the new spring.

حله ها پوشیده و دامن کشان / مست و رقاص و خوش و عنبرفشان

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4545].

The intoxicated, the dancer, the delightful and the amber-haired / Wearing garments and twirling their skirts.

جزو جزو آبستن از شاه بهار / جسمشان چون درج پر در ثمار

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4546].

All parts are pregnant with the spring king of nature / Their bodies are filled with fruit, like a treasure chest of pearls.

مریمان بی شوی آبست از مسیح / خامشان بی لاف و گفتاری فصیح

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4547].

Maryams are pregnant with the Messiah without a husband / The silent ones possess eloquence without speaking.

ماه ما بی نطق خوش بر تافتست / هر زبان نطق از فر ما یافتست

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4548]

Our moon shines brightly without speech / Every tongue has gained eloquence from our light.

نطق عیسی از فر مریم بود/ نطق آدم پرتو آن دم بود

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1266, v.4550].

The speech of Jesus was from the radiance of Mary / The speech of Adam was from the radiance of the Divine breath.

تا زیادت گردد از شکر ای ثقات / پس نبات دیگرست اندر نبات

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4551].

"Gratitude for the blessing leads to its increase / One plant gives rise to another plant."

عکس آن اینجاست دل من قنع / اندرین طورست عز من طمع

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4552].

"The opposite is here, the one who is not content will fall into misguidance / Here it is like this, whoever is greedy for virtue will gain honor."

در جوال نفس خود چندین مرو / از خریداران خود غافل مشو

[Nickolson, n.d. vol.6, p.1265, v.4553].

"Do not immerse yourself too much in the sack of your own ego / Do not be unaware of your buyers."

In this passage, Mawlānā has mentioned the name of Hazrat ‘Alī (a.s.) only in the first three couplets. At first glance, one might think that the remaining couplets are unrelated to the theme and seem to describe nature. However, it must be remembered that one of the key features of Sufi literature is its use of symbolic language. Based on the third and fourth couplets, it becomes clear that the prophets and the saints carry the mission of liberating people. The world, with all its adornments, has preoccupied people to the extent that they are unaware of the reason for their existence. Those who reach the level of perfection are the ones who show others the way to break free from the bonds of this world. Here, the believers are compared to the cypress tree and the lily flower. Only those who can free themselves from the world can rejoice. The believers, compared to the cypress tree, silently glorify Allah for the water, the first spring, and all that is hidden. In general, to witness Allah's justice, it is

enough to look at the water, air, seasons, the moon, and the sun. No one can say that they do not benefit from these elements. When Mawlānā refers to the "justice of the new spring," he points to the divine attribute of justice. If Allah is just in all natural occurrences, would He not act justly toward His servants? It is obligatory to thank Allah for all His blessings. When blessings are mentioned, the meadows, flowers, and trees come to mind, but both the Prophet and his cousin 'Alī (a) are also the greatest blessings sent to humanity. Therefore, Mawlānā considers it obligatory for believers to thank them as well. Those who are not content with the wealth of the world fall into humiliation, while those who desire more virtue will attain grandeur. In the final couplet, the poet compares a person's soul to a sack and advises not to immerse too much in it. Instead of being consumed by the desires of this world, a person should follow the path of the prophets and saints. The conclusions drawn from this are:

1. The Prophet and the saints have the power to liberate the believers from the material world.
2. The joy of a believer can only arise after they are freed from the attachments of this world.
3. The prophets and saints who show people the path to salvation are Allah's blessings.
4. It is necessary to give thanks for all of Allah's blessings.
5. While it is necessary to be content in the material world, one should be ambitious in striving for the higher, spiritual realm.
6. A person can find salvation not by following their own selfish desires, but by following the path of the Prophet and those beloved to him.

As we can see, Mawlānā, as a great mystic, calls people to freedom and teaches that to attain this freedom, one must take lessons from the Prophet and saints.

Meybodī's *Kashf al-Asrār* is also rich in numerous hadiths narrated by Imām 'Alī (a). Like Mawlānā, Meybodī also conveys the words of 'Alī (a) to show the bond between the two cousins. The sections related to 'Alī (a) in the tafsir can be grouped into several parts:

1. The words of 'Alī (a.) narrated from the Prophet.

و عن علي (ع) قال: قال رسول الله (ص):  
 "لا يؤمن عبد حتى يؤمن بأربع، يشهد بأن لا إله إلا الله و أنى رسول الله بعثنى بالحق، و يؤمن بالموت و بالبعث، و يؤمن بالقدر".

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s021/sh5>].

Imam 'Alī narrates that the Prophet of Islam said: "No servant can truly believe unless they have faith in four things: that there is no god but Allah, that I am the messenger of Allah who has reached prophethood with truth, that they

believe in death and the Day of Judgment, and that they have faith in predestination (Qadar).

## 2. The conversations between the Prophet and ‘Alī.

ديگر عقل مسموعی آنست: كه مصطفى صلی الله عليه و آله و سلم گفت "يا على اذا أ تقرب الناس لى الناس الى خالقهم بالصلاة و الصوم فتقرب اليه بانواع العقل، تسبقهم بالدرجات و الزلفى عند الناس فى الدنيا و عند الله فى الآخرة".

[<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s002/sh143>].

Mustafa said: "O ‘Alī, if people draw closer to their Creator through prayer and fasting, you should approach them through the types of wisdom. Then, in this world, you will surpass them in closeness to others, and in the Hereafter, you will be ahead of them in the sight of Allah".

## 3. The words narrated by ‘Alī himself.

و قال على (ع): انما مثل العلماء كمثل الاكف اذا قطعت كف لم تعد.

Imam ‘Alī (as) said: "The scholars are like hands. If one hand is cut off, the other will not be of any use" [<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s013/sh14>].

## 4. Other people's words about ‘Alī (a):

Jabir narrates that the Prophet (s) said to ‘Alī (a), "People are like different trees, and you and I are from the same tree." Then the Prophet (s) recited an ayah that speaks about the earth and the close relationship between trees, indicating that, as mentioned earlier, there are signs for the wise people. The Prophet (s) said, "The wise one is the one who understands the command of Allah." [<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s013/sh2>].

## 5. Stories about ‘Alī (as):

It is written in the *Kashf al-Asrār* that during one of the battles, an arrow struck Imām ‘Alī's (as) foot. Since the arrow was lodged into the bone, despite many efforts, it couldn't be removed. They said that unless the flesh was removed or the bone was broken, the arrow would not come out. The elders and his children said: "If that is the case, we should wait until he performs the prayer." They saw that when ‘Alī (as) began his prayer, it seemed as though he was unaffected by the pain of the arrow. They patiently waited, and once the obligatory prayers were finished, he began praying the Sunnah and performing other acts of virtue. A doctor came, removed the flesh, broke the bone, and extracted the arrow, but Imam ‘Alī (as) remained focused on his prayer. After finishing his prayer, he said: "My pain has become easier." They asked him, "How could you remain unaffected in that condition?" He replied: "When I am in communion with Allah, if the world were to turn upside down or if I were struck by arrows and spears, I would not feel the pain due to the sweetness of my communion with Allah. It is not surprising that the Qur’ān informs us that Zuleikha wanted to punish the Egyptian women who criticized her for loving Yusuf. She called them together, set up a place, and had them sit in a row. She

gave each of them a knife in their right hand and an orange in their left hand. As Allah Almighty says:

وَأَتَتْ كُلَّ وَاحِدَةٍ مِّنْهُنَّ سِكِّينًا

She gave each of them a knife (to cut and peel the fruit) [Yūsuf 12:31].

When they had calmed down, she brought Yusuf in a decorated state and said to him, Pass by them.

أَخْرَجَ عَلَيْهِنَّ

Appear before them [Yūsuf 12:31].

When the women of Egypt saw Yusuf with that beauty and perfection, their eyes widened.

فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَهُ أَكْبَرْنَهُ

When the women saw Yusuf, they praised him excessively for his beauty [Yūsuf 12:31].

Everyone cut their hands when they saw Yusuf's beauty and perfection, unaware of their actions.

Indeed, we know that the witnessing of Allah's majesty, beauty, dignity, and awe by 'Alī's heart and soul was far greater than the observation of the creature, Yusuf, by the women. If they were so overwhelmed by his beauty that they lost awareness of their own pain, then it is not surprising that 'Alī, in his state, was oblivious to the pain of his own flesh and skin being cut [<https://ganjoor.net/meybodi/kashfol-asrar/s002/sh24>].

### 3. Conclusion

While conducting this research it was clear that the phrases attributed to Imam 'Alī (a) are either presented in the name of someone else in the *Kashf al-Asrār*, or there is no mention of who they were narrated from. If all the hadiths narrated from 'Alī (a) in all religious works, tafsirs, and mystic literature were to be compiled, perhaps it would require volumes of books to cover them. The same can be said about the *Masnavī-ye Ma'navī* which contains so many verses that, according to the *Kashf al-Asrār* exegesis, are attributed to 'Alī. There are also an overwhelming number of verses in Mawlānā's works that recall 'Alī's wisdom, and revealing all of them would be the subject of a separate article.

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