

Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat



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Title: Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat

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Publisher: Nahl publications

Year of Publishing: 2017

No. of Page: 100

Size: 14×21

ISBN: 9786009516711

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Omar Khayyam lived between ۱۰۸۸ and ۱۱۲۳ A.D. and his full name was Ghiyath-eddin Abulfateh Omar Ibn Ibrahim Khayyam. Omar Khayyam was an outstanding mathematician and astronomer and well known as a poet, philosopher, and physician. In the "History of Western Philosophy", Bertrand Russell says Khayyam was the only man he knew who was both a poet and a mathematician.

As a poet he became popular in the West since ۱۸th century when Edward Fitzgerald published an English translation of his 'rubaiyat quatrains'. This became a classic in the world literature and extensively read.

We must admit the fact that it is nearly impossible to exactly translate any literary work into another language especially when it involves mystical and philosophic?

The gifted poet was born in ۱۰۸۸ A.D. in Neishabur, the old provincial capital of Khorassan Province. He is generally known as a Persian. Omar Khayyam was educated in Neishabur. He visited several reputed institutions of learning, including those in Bukhara,

Balkh, Samarqand and Isfahan. He lived in Neishabur and Samarqand in Central Asia for most of his life.

The poet was a contemporary of Nezam al-Mulk Tusi, the Seljuk king's grand vizier. He died in ۱۱۲۳ AD. Khayyam extended Euclid's work by giving a new definition of ratios and included the multiplication of ratios. He contributed to the theory of parallel lines. Khayyam invented an accurate solar calendar. To accomplish this task, Omar Khayyam began his work at the new observatory in Ray in ۱۰۷۴ A.D. His Jalali Calendar is superior to the Gregorian calendar. It shows that he recognized the importance of accuracy by giving his result to eleven decimal places. Khayyam contributed also to other fields of science. He developed a method for accurate determination of the specific gravity. He wrote two books on metaphysics. As a poet he is universally known and appreciated for his 'rubaiyat'.

١ Har chand ke rang o rooy zibast mara

Though in shape and hue I look pretty;
Red as the tulip and tall like cypress tree;
I wonder why in this earthly realm of joy
The Master Painter decorated me?

٢ Avard be ezteraram aval vojood

From need the Maker made me in this sphere,
Yet he didn't increase my surprise and wonder:
Reluctant we went, yet we did not know
Why we came, why stayed and why went from here?

٣ Az amadanam nabovad gardoon ra sood

My arrival didn't benefit this revolving frame,
Neither my departure added to its glory or fame;
Meanwhile I've never heard any one tell
Why have I arrived and why must I give up this game
٤ Aey del to be edrak mo'ama naresi

٤

O heart! the secret you can't learn or disclose,
Nor with the wit of clever sages you can oppose;
Make a paradise here from wine and the cup
You may or may not reach the paradise you suppose.

◦ Ta chand zanam be rouye drayaha kesht

How long should I labor in vain?
Both idolaters and the synagogue I disdain
Who said that Khayyam will dwell in hell?
Who has gone to hell? Who from paradise did return?

∩ Asrare azal ra na to dani va na man

The secret of eternity neither you know nor I,
And this mysterious scroll neither you read nor I;
Behind the veil much I discourse with you;
When the veil is lifted neither you shall remain nor I.

◦

√ In bahr vojood amadeh biroon ze nahoft

The sea of being has emerged from hidden depth,
But none hast that a pearl of wisdom pierced
Each scholar has guessed idly on the subject
But none has described its actual gist

^ Ajram ke sakenane in aeyvanand

The planets that adorn this revolving frame
Are set to make the wise rejoice and game;
Beware lest you forget the path to wisdom,
For those who are wise are bewildered in this frame.

¶ Dar dayereye kamadan va raftane mast

This revolving sphere to which we come and go
Has neither a beginning nor end to show;
No one can rightly guess a moment
Wherefrom we came and where shall we go.

∩ • Darandeh cho tarkibe tabaye arast

∩

The Subtle Maker who different molds does cast,
Why must with fault and imperfection blast?
Why break if it was pleasant to look?
And who should we blame if not well cast.

۱۱ Anan ke mohit fazl o adab shodand

Those who with learned people frequented,
Who like candle in all sciences were oriented,
Found no way out of this gloomy night,
They told a tale into the ground descended.

۱۲ Anan ke ze pish raftehand aey saqi!

Those who have gone before us, O Saki;
Lie low in the fields of their vainglory, O Saki;
Drink wine and hear the truth from Khayyam:
Whatever they have said is nonsense, O Saki.

۱۳ Emrooz ke nobate javaniye man ast

۷

Today while I am v and young
I drink wine because I feel victorious and strong
Blame me not, though bitter, the wine tastes fine
Why bitter? It is my life juice, I must get along.

١٤ Gar amadanam be man bodi namadami

I wouldn't have come if I had my say,
Nor would have left if I'd a choice to stay;
Yet it would have been better, far better,
If I didn't come to this ruin and made to stay.

١٥ Az amadan va raftane ma soodi koo

Who gains from our arrival and departure here?
What atom has remained of our body, my dear?
Within the jaws of whirling wheels many good people
Burnt and turned into dust. Where is the smoke?
Where?

١٦ Afsoos ke bifayedeh farsoodde shodim

^

Alas we wasted our life in vain, O mate
And were hurled down headless by the psyche of fate;
O how painful and remorseful. As I opened my eye
And before I could rejoice, I was taken by death.

۱۷ Ba yar cho aramideh bashi hameye omr

Even if you have lived with the mistress all your life,
And enjoyed the delights of life all your life,
At last the time of your departure shall arrive,
It is like a dream you have dreamed all your life.

۱۸ Aknoon ke ze khoshdeli to ra namanad

Now that you're disgraced, recklessly sipping wine,
You have no bosom friend better than wine;
Leave not the joy of cups offered by the cupbearer
Now that nothing remains for you except wine.

۱۹ Aey kash ke jay-e aramidan boodi

I wish there was a place for comfort and rest,
I wish I would reach after this long path of quest;
I wish after hundred thousand years
Hope would grow like grass from my dust.

۲۰ An kas ke zemin o charkh o aflak nahad

He who the foundation of earth and heaven laid,
Many pains and torments on our sad hearts placed;
Many ruby lips and tresses he laid like the lute
In hollow earth covered by clay they are laid.

۲۱ Choon roozi va omr bish o kam natavan kard

Since you can't add to your income or age,
Better not your heart with sad thoughts engage;
We can't shape our fate the way I and you wish
We can't even fix our fate by pilgrimage.

۱۰

۲۲ Aflak ke joz gham nayafzayend degar

The firmament adds nothing but grief, my mate;
It won't give bounty unless it takes something instead.
Those who haven't yet arrived in this sad domain
Would not come if they knew how we suffer from
fate.

۲۳ Aey an ke natijeye chahar of hafti

Oh you who are the fruit of elements and temper
And have riddled your head with elements and
temper;
Drink wine for I have said you a thousand times
You won't return, when your soul leaves your
sepulcher.

۲۴ Dar Gooshe delam goft falak penhani

Secretly whispering to my ear the firmament said
Blame me not for the judgment made by fate;
Had I a hand to regulate my rotation

I would rid myself of this confusion, my mate.

۲۵ Niki va badi ke dar nahade bashar ast

Goodness and vice are inscribed in human trait,
Joy and sorrow are ordained by chance or fate.
Blame not these to the rolling spheres, for scaled by
reason
The world is a thousand times luckless than you, I bet.

۲۶ Afsoos ke nameye javani tey shod

Alas the scroll of youth was filled and spent
And the child of spring to cold winter descended;
That sprightly bird which was called youth,
Ah I do not know when it came and how it went.

۲۷ Afsoos ke sarmaye ze kaf biroon shod

۱۲

Alas our essence of life was lost, expended,
By the rude hand of death many hearts were wounded;
No one has returned from the other world to tell
The fate of those who to the next world ascended.

۷۸ Yek chand be koodaki be ostad shodim

For a while as pupil with a master I spent,
For a while I was glad being master of argument;
Hear the end of the tale and see what was my reward:
From earth I emerged and into earth I did descend.

۷۹ Yarane movafeq hame az dast shodand

Alas all intimate friends to the grave have sunk,
At the jaws of death one by one they are sunk;
From a single jar we drank all our life,
Yet some before us happened to get drunk.

۳۰ Aey charkhe falak kharabi az kinehe tost

O revolving frame! all ruin is from your baseness;
Tyranny has been your ancient business;
O earth! Should they dig your breast
Many jewels they will discover in that recess.

۳۱ Choon charkh be kam yek kherdadmand nagasht

Since a single sage can't order the firmament to roll,
Count it seven heavens or eight from pole to pole;
Since we must die and leave behind all our hopes,
What if we're devoured by wolves, worm or the mole!

۳۲ Yek qatreye aab bood va ba darya shod

It was but a drop of water that joined the ocean,
Or an little dust that joined earth in its revolution.
What is the use of your arrival in this world?
As if a fly arrived and disappeared; it is my notion.

ੳੳ Jami ast ke aql afarin mizandesh

This is a cup that reason admires with esteem;
hundred kisses from the amulet it tosses to the brim;
This potter of fate makes such a delicate cup
Only to shatter on the ground, angry and grim!

ੳੳ Ajjzaye piyallehi ke dar ham peyvast

The fine cup molded of fragments with grace,
Drunkards even think unfair to break and deface;
Many tender heads, arms and limbs have broken,
First joined with kindness then broken by malice.

ੳੳ Alam agar az bahr to mi arayand

Even if the world has been bedecked for your sake,
Fix not your hope on it as wise men will forsake.
Many such as you will come and many will depart,
Snatch your share from the bounty, for others will
take.

۳۶ Az jomleye raftegane in rahe daraz

Who among those who have walked this long dreary
road

Have returned to reveal the secrets of the other abode?
Hark! In this doubtful crossroads of want and greed,
Leave naught, for you won't return the path you
bestrode!

۳۷ Piri didam be khaneye khomari

I saw an old man drunken in the wine-bibber's
mansion.

I said, "Have you news from those who have gone?"
He said, "Drink wine for many such as you and me
Have gone away and none have returned, none!"

۳۸ Ma lo'batekan o falak lo'bat baz

We are puppets, the Heavenly Master our puppeteer,
This is sheer truth, not a lie, I can swear;
For a while we act our role on this stage
Then one by one tumble into our graves in despair

۳۹ Aey bas ke nabashim of jahan khahad bood

Many years the world might roll when we cease to be;
When no trace of us will be left for posterity.
We didn't exist before, yet it didn't disrupt the Wheel,
And the heedless world shall roll when we cease to
be.

۴۰ Bar mafrashe khak khoftegan mibinam

Many folk I see asleep beneath the ground
And many thousand still hidden under that mound;
As I look at this desert of annihilation
I see many who have come and will be around.

۴۱ In kohne rabat ra ke alam nam ast

۱۷

Now this battered caravansary sad and gray,
Is the quarter of alternate night and day;
A hundred kings like Jamshid and Bahram
Held their courts here and silently went away.

٤٧ An qasr ke jamshid dar oo jam gereft

That palace where King Jamshid drank and feasted,
The gazelle has bred and the fox has nested;
Bahram, hunted all his life the wild ass;
Did you see how death snatched him before he fled?

٤٨ Morghi didam neshaste bar barehe toos

I saw a bird sitting on the battlement of Toos,
Holding in her talons the skull of King Keykavus;
Thus speaking to the skull, "Alas, alas!
Where your bells are ringing? Where your drum
echoes?

٤٩ An qasr ke bar charkh hami zad pahloo

That palace that vied with the world in pomp and
grace;
At whose threshold for entry kings pressed their face;
We saw how the ringdove on its battered battlement
Sat and cried: "Where's your pomp? Where's your
grace?"

ξ^ο Az tan cho beraft jane pake man o to

When the soul leaves my pure body and you;
They lay two bricks on my head and you;
Then seeking clay to bury others, the digger
Molds bricks out of the dust of me and you.

ξ^٦ Har zarah ke be rooye zamini boodeh ast

All the atoms you observe and in whatever place
Was a sun-faced beauty, as fair as Venus;
Gently cast away the dust off your sleeve
For it might be the lock of a lovely mistress.

ε∨ Aey pire kheradmand pegah tar bar khiz

Rise earlier, O wise old man, rise earlier
And keenly watch the kid that sifts the musk there
Tell him gently to sift the delicate musk
It might be the brain of King Keyqobad or another
peer.

ε^ Bengar ze saba daman gol chak shode

Look! From breeze the rose has opened joyous;
The bulbul is enraptured to see the fair rose;
Sit by the rose bower in the cool shed,
For many roses have grown and in earth repose.

٤٩ Abr amad o zar bar sare sabze gerist

The cloud arrived and rained over the mead;
Better not to live without the wine, rosy-red;
This meadow today serves as our sight-seeing place;
Who will view our green turf when we are dead?

٥٠ Choon abr be norooz rokh laleh beshost

When the cloud washes the tulip's face in spring
Arise merrily and the red goblet bring;
For this meadow which you look with joy
Shall mold a rose from your dust next spring.



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