

## A Comparison of Nizam and Marianne in the Poetry of Ibn‘Arabī and Goethe

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### Abstract

The romantics in the West are paying close attention to Eastern mystical literature and poets such as Hafiz, Rumi, and Sa’adi. The intellectual similarities of Goethe, the great German poet in the 19th century, with Ibn-al-‘Arabī, an Islamic mystic and philosopher, and the common characteristics of the beloved in Goethe’s *West-Eastern Divan* and Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Tarjoman Al-Ashwaq*, have made some call them “spiritual brothers”. The purpose of this study is to explain the role of earthly love in human spiritual transcendence in the lyric poems of two great Arab and German poets. This research, using content analysis method and the approach of the American school of comparative literature, examines the characteristics of the two beloveds in Ibn-al-‘Arabī’s and Goethe’s work, namely, Nizam and Marianne) Zulikha, (and how this earthly love has become the basis for transcendental love for the two poets. The results of this comparison show that although there is no mention of Goethe’s acquaintance with Ibn’ Arabi in the former’s biography, there are similarities in issues such as unity of existence, transcendental love, and the union of the lover and beloved. For the two poets, love is the ladder for their spiritual excellence. In the eyes of the two poets, love turns any plurality into unity and reveals the beloved in different shapes and forms.

**Keywords :** Ibn’Arabī, Goethe, *Tarjoman Al-Ashwaq*, *The West-Eastern Divan*, Marianne, Nizam, mystical love

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## 1. Introduction

Abu Talib Makki says love is a gift from God Almighty to His chosen servants, and love is the perfect rank among mystics. He believes that every believer is in love with God, but his love and affection is equal to faith, revelation, and the manifestation of the beloved's qualities in the lover (Makki 2011: 145) though love does not lend itself to definition, it is supposed to be a gift from God that is embodied in nature and human existence. Hāfiz says "Not that which cometh to the tongue is the talk of love!" (Hafiz 2008: 84). Rumi also states that "only love can describe love!" In addition, Ibn-al 'Arabī believes "He who defines love has not known it". (Hosseini Kazerouni 1996: 79)

Love is categorised by philosophers and mystics into virtual and spiritual loves. Indeed, both philosophers and mystics consider virtual love as a way to attain true love and do not deny its necessity for the enhancement of human spirituality. For instance, Plato says that, before entering the material world, in the world of ideals, the human soul saw the truth of absolute divine beauty in subjective experience and without any veil. Therefore, in this world, when he sees manifest, relative, and virtual beauty, he remembers the absolute beauty that impressed him and wants to fly to it like a bird (Sanaei 2002: 35). This division is also recognised by Hakim Avicenna (Avicenna 1995: 383).

## 2. Objectives and Methodology

Goethe and Ibn-al-'Arabī with mystical tendencies in the middle age or in the old age fall in love with beautiful and learned beloveds, so that this earthly love affects all the thoughts of the two poets in order to achieve the ultimate purpose and intellectual transcendence. This paper attempts to reach an understanding of the most important common aspects of the poets' love using the American school of comparative literature. In his essay that became a manifesto of that school, Rene Wellek emphasised the importance of literary theory and championed cosmopolitan humanism over cultural nationalism (Wellek 1963: 162). This school considers literature as global phenomena and does not limit comparative literature to historical relations. The following questions will be answered:

- How are the characteristics of Nizam and Marianne (Zulikha) reflected in *Tarjumān al-Ashwāq* and *The West-Eastern Divan*?
- How are the poets' monotheism and mystical views reflected in their lyric poems about Nizam and Marianne (Zulikha)?

## 3. Review of literature

There are many books, articles, and theses about the two poets. We mention here only a few cases that are most relevant to the current research. Weidner translated

*Tarjumān al-Ashwāq* to German and, in the introduction section of his translation, suffices to this sentence that “Nizām for Ibnī ‘Arabī was like Marianne, or Zuleika, for Goethe in *The West-Eastern Divan*”.

Mommsen (2014) has written a book on Goethe and Arabic literature. She divided the book into three chapters: The first chapter deals with Goethe and pre-Islamic Bedouin poetry, the second chapters with Goethe and Islam, and the third chapters with Goethe’s influence on Arabic and Islamic literature, but with no mention of Goethe’s acquaintance with Ibn-al-‘Arabī. Mehdizadeh has written his doctoral thesis at McGill University in Canada with the title *Mystical Motifs in Goethe’s West Ostelischer Diwan*.

Chittick (1995) has written a paper about Ibn ‘Arabī’s love, which is entitled “The Divine Roots of Human Love,” in which he states that Ibn-al-‘Arabī points out first that love is a divine attribute. According to Chittick, on one level, this means simply that he wants to show that what he has to say is based on the revealed texts and, on a deeper level, his reason for mentioning the divine roots has to do with his perspective on reality, a perspective that has come to be called the doctrine of unity of existence or oneness of being (*wahdat al-wujūd*).

Al-Sādiq (2000), in his paper entitled “Women’s Conception in Ibn ‘Arabī’s thought”, says woman is the image in which man can find the perfection of his essence, and is the most complete manifestation of God. Women are also symbols of divine love by which God is revealed.

Na‘ima Farrā in her paper “Love with Ibn ‘Arabī,” unlike most writers, says: “Ibn ‘Arabī’s claim, the transcendence of superficial meaning, and the attainment of the meaning he described in it are open to question”. She believes that his lyrics are sensational and do not have deep meaning.

Haddādī (2006) in “The Influence of Hāfiz and Mystical Love in the Creation of Goethe’s *West-Eastern Divan* believes that, without Goethe’s acquaintance with Marianne and without the influence of her love, the creation of such a poetic work would not have been possible, and that this love made Goethe attain the concept of mystical love.

Zohra Zoghabe (2007) in her master’s thesis, has discussed the influence of the Holy *Qur’an*, the poems of the *Jahili* period, and the stories of the *Thousand and One Nights* on all Goethe’s literary works (39). However, she has not mentioned Ibn ‘Arabī in that work.

#### 4. Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabī

Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabī (1125-1240 AD), known as "The Elder Sheikh", was born in Andalusia and composed more than 400 books. His works have been highly influential on Sufism philosophy. Some scholars have come to defend his great scientific works and ideology; some, however, regarded him as an infidel and atheist (Dirki 556-558). His most important works are *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah* (*The Meccan*

*Openings*), *Fusûs al-Hikam (The Ring Stones of Wisdom)*, and *Tarjumân al-Ashwâq (The Interpreter of Yearnings)*. Mahmoud Khozra believes that the three works are interconnected (n.d.: 36-49). He mentions that Ibn ‘Arabî is the great mystic who founded the basis of his theory, unity of existence, in his great book, *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*, expounded it in *Phosous al-Hekam*, and expanded it in poetic language in *Tarjumân al-Ashwâq*. Khozra describes and suspends his Divan, *Tarjumân al-Ashwâq*, and calls it *Fath Al-Zahkha’er Va Al-’Aghlâq Sharh Tarjumân al-Aşwâq*.

Ibn ‘Arabî, in a journey to Mecca, met Zahir Bin Rustam Esfahani, who was one of the great scholars of Hadith knowledge. Esfahani had a beautiful girl called Nizâm, who was exceedingly beautiful and renowned for her beauty and eloquence. He says, “Long have I yearned for a tender maiden, endowed with prose and verse, having a pulpit, eloquent, one of the princesses from the land of Persia, from the most glorious of cities, from Isfahan” (Nicholson 1911: 8).

Nizâm, this unique beloved, inspired Ibn ‘Arabî to compose his famous collection of poetry, *Tarjoman al- Aşwâq* (Ibn ‘Arabî: 3-4). Ibn ‘Arabî celebrated her in his poems and mentioned his love of Nizâm as a sign of divine love, and if he mentions a name in this book, he means his beloved Nizâm.

When he published his commentary, he omitted from the preface those passages relating to the beautiful and accomplished Nizâm which occurred in the first recension. “For, if Nizâm was to him (and manifestly she was nothing else) a Beatrice, a type of heavenly perfection, an embodiment of divine love and beauty, yet in the world’s eyes he ran the risk of appearing as a lover who protests his devotion to an abstract ideal while openly celebrating the charms of his mistress” (Nicholson: 8).

## 5. Goethe and Marianne

If we consider Goethe’s journey to Rome as Goethe’s change from the “Sturm und Drang” to the classical period, his journey to the suburbs of the Rhine after the Treaty of Paris in 1814 can be considered a transition from classicism to romanticism (Had-dādî, 47-60). Before and after this trip, two important events took place in Goethe’s life, which brought about great spiritual changes, a mysterious migration to east the, and familiarity with Ḥāfiẓ and Marianne von Willemer! Familiarity with Ḥāfiẓ and other Persian Sufi poets like Rumi and Sa’adi reinforced the poet’s gnostic tendencies (pantheism). What contributed to Goethe’s mystical tendencies was the familiarity with Marianne and the falling in love between them. Marianne’s love, like drinking from the spring of *Khidr*’s life, rejuvenates Goethe and brings about a divine love: “Flüchte du, im reinen Osten / Patriarchen Luft zu kosten / Unter Lieben, Trinken, Singen / Soll dich Chisers Quell verjüngen.” (Goethe 1980: 304)

Perhaps the emergence of this love made Goethe better perceive the concept of Persian mystic love and more and more dedicated to Ḥāfiẓ. Goethe loved Marianne’s simplicity, beauty, sensuality and knowledge. This love, of course, was deeper, but more relaxed and subtler than Goethe’s earlier loves and closer to Sufistic

love (Badawi 1966: 24). Goethe called this pure and spiritual love the love of Joseph and Zuleika, and from then Marianne became Goethe's Zuleika in *The West-Eastern Divan*. Goethe called himself "Hātām" and gave all his heart and soul to Marianne! "Zuleika Book" is the tipping point of Goethe's *West-Eastern Divan*, in which love means sacrifice and is mystically manifested (Haddādī: 56). Zuleika inspired Goethe in this divan and whatever he says in this book is an echo of her voice. Goethe's love for Marianne is not sensual, but Sufistic love, which unifies the lover and beloved, and the lover dies in the beloved (Badawi: 26).

## 6. The Beloved and the Idea of Unity of Existence

The most important intellectual aspect of Ibn 'Arabi's poetry is the theory of unity of existence, which can be called his intellectual manifesto. Ibn 'Arabi is the undisputed owner of the theory of unity of existence in Islamic mysticism, and *Tarjoman Al-Ashwaq* is a poetic extension of this theory. A very simple summary of the theory of unity of existence is that God created the world by his will and providence in such a way that he sees himself in it. Not because he needed it, but because the divine names needed to appear and manifest, and they found existence and meaning only with him and in him. Therefore, the existence became a manifestation of Hosni Elahi's names (Khodrah, n.d: 37). Therefore, unity of existence is the manifestation of the beloved in the universe in such a way that no place in existence is devoid of the manifestation of the beloved. In the manner of theologians and philosophers, Ibn 'Arabī employs the term "Existence" to refer to God as the "Necessary Being". Like them, he also attributes the term to everything other than God, but he insists that *wojūd* does not belong to the things found in the cosmos in any real sense. Rather, the things borrow *wojūd* from God, much as the earth borrows light from the Sun (Chittick 2018: 61-63).

Ibn 'Arabi calls his religion the religion of love, and his heart brings all diversity to unity, and in fact he emphasizes the fact that the pagan, the monk, the Muslim, and the Jew are all looking for the same beloved. "My heart has become capable of every form: it is a pasture for gazelles and a convent for Christian monks and a temple for idols and the pilgrim's Ka'ba and the tables of the *Tora* and the book of the *Qu'ran*. I follow the religion of Love: whatever way Love's camels take, that is my religion and my faith." (Nicolson: 60)

فَمَرَعَى لَغْزَلَانَ وَدَيْرٍ لِرَهْبَانِ	لَقَدْ صَارَ قَلْبِي قَابِلًا كُلِّ صُورَةٍ
وَالْوَاخِ تَوْرَاتٍ وَمَصْحَفٍ قُرْآنِ	وَبَيْتٍ لِأَوْتَانٍ وَكَعْبَةٍ طَائِفِ
رَكَائِبِهِ فَالْحَبُّ دِينِي وَإِيمَانِي	أَدِينُ بِدِينِ الْحَبِّ أَنِّي تَوَجَّهْتُ

In the introduction of the divan, he also says that each beloved mentioned is one, the unique beloved, and manifested in various names: Salmā, 'Asma, Hend, etc. He emphasises that there is only one truth in which there is a manifestation of divine names, and since the divine names are infinite, the entities that are manifestations of divine names are also unlimited. (Ibn 'Arabī 2005: 65)

Moreover, we must say that God and the world are both sides of one truth that when we are looking at the world as a unit, we are looking at God, and when we are looking at it as parts, we are looking at the world! (Dirki 2008: 559). This divine love of Ibn ‘Arabī is necessary for believing in unity of existence since he wants to emphasise that the essence of the existence is a single object that seems innumerable. (Afifi 2020: 223-224). “The distinctive sign of divine love is the love for all existent things in every (level of God’s) Presence, be it spiritual, sensible, intermediate/imaginal, or ‘imaginary’. (Morris 2011: 10)

His love for Nizām and her beauty was due to the fact that she was a sign of the emergence and manifestation of the beauty of divine love. The description of the beloved is in fact the statement of the general truth behind it (Al-Bahra 2000: 7-20). Chittick says:

Perhaps the first and most important attribute of love in Ibn al-‘Arabī’s view is that love’s object does not exist. Human beings, as images of wujūd, also possess the attribute of love. The object of their love is always nonexistent in relation to themselves. When we consider God and the universe as two different realities, the object of human love may be God or something in the universe. But when we understand that the universe is nothing but the self-disclosure of God, the object of human love can only be God. (Chittick 2005: 56-77)

On the other hand, Goethe, as mentioned before, was interested in pantheism and its founder, Spinoza. They were in harmony with the unity of God and the world, the divinity of nature, the determination of the universe and all beings by necessity, and god being the *causa immanens* of the world (Naether 1918: 32). One of the important features of Goethe’s poems in his worldview is the tendency towards divine love that has spread throughout all existence. Goethe explains how love enveloped the universe in the poem “Wiederfinden”. The universe was a formless mass creation at the hands of the Creator. God created life by his external power and commanded, “Be”. Suddenly, a cry of sorrow resonated everywhere, and the unformed mass of the universe flared up so that every part of it was as the creator wanted it... Then, the scattered parts looked at each other again and closed to the universal gravity force. Since those times, those who were created with God’s will for unity are still looking for each other romantically, and with a passionate passion, they will try to find each other to unite one day. The poet mixes the myth of creation with the theme of love in order to attribute love to the nature of mankind, which was invented by God. This love is in fact the love of the creator of the universe, and since the true beloved is not perceived and touchable by humans, they love the manifestations of that beloved. Goethe calls the beloved with a metaphor that is in harmony with the creation of the world. He calls her the “star of stars” to make the link between the myth and love more secure:

Ist es möglich, Stern der Sterne / Drück’ ich wieder dich ans  
Herz! // Ach! Was ist die Nacht der Ferne / Für ein Abgrund,

für ein Schmerz. // Ja du bist es! meiner Freuden / Süßer, lieber  
Widerpart; // Eingedenk vergangner Leiden / Schaudr' ich vor  
der Gegenwart. (Goethe 1994: 399)

My star of stars, is it possible I press thee to my breast again! That night of absence, dark it fell. Ah, what abyss! What bitter pain! Yes, it is thou, beloved one, foe to my joys, sweet foe and dear! With memory of my grief foregone I shudder now that thou art near.” (Goethe 1980: 134)

The second stanza begins like a legend and narrates the story of the creation. There is the world first, before God speaks the “It is!” Then the universe arises as it were with labour pains “a painful Oh!”, and enters reality. In the third stanza, the elements immediately develop their own dynamics, which ebbs in petrification. The fourth stanza is remarkable in the statement of God’s loneliness and it refers to the famous Hadith “hidden treasure” in Islam, in which God says, “I was a hidden treasure. I wanted to become known, and then I created the world to become known” (Feyz Kashani 1963: 33). It is striking that Goethe connects the history of creation with Greek mythology and Islamic Allah. The vast cosmogony which Hatem creates as a symbol for the eternal power of love—the story of the reunification of the elements through the mediation of “morgenrote”—is, with the “so” in the final stanza, clearly symbolic of the eternal union of Hatem and Zuleika (Peters 1974: 13-23).

So, mit morgenrothen Flügeln / Riß es mich an deinen Mund,  
/ Und die Nacht mit tausend Siegeln / Kräftigt sternenhell den  
Bund. / Beyde sind wir auf der Erde Musterhaft in Freud und  
Quaal / Und ein zweytes Wort: Es werde! / Trennt uns nicht zum  
zweytenmal.

So I, on morning’s wings in flight, To thy dear lips was swept along, And with a thousand seals the night Star-sown our covenant makes strong; Patterns in us two earth shall see, Alike in pleasure and in pain, Nor shall a second “ Let there be! “ Divide a second time us twain. (Goethe 1994: 135)

Ernst Beutler calls this poem “the crown of the whole divan”; it has also been called the “most interpreted poem in the Divan” (Mehdizadeh, 2013). When Goethe looks at the world of love, the whole world becomes beautiful for him. He sees Zuleika in everything:

Die Welt durchaus ist lieblich anzuschauen, / Vorzüglich aber  
schön die Welt der Dichter, / Auf bunten, hellen oder silber-  
grauen / Gefilden, Tag und Nacht, erglänzen Lichter. / Heut ist  
mir alles herrlich, wenn’s nur bliebe, / Ich sehe heut durchs Au-  
genglas der Liebe (Goethe 1994: 404)

Fair is the world to view, go where we may; The poet’s world fairer and lovelier seems; On the pranked fields, sun-bright or silver-grey, Morn, noon and night what lights! What wandering gleams! Now all shows glorious; if it would but stay! I look

through love's perspective-glass to-day! (Goethe 1980: 140)

Seeing the beloved in everything is the same view of monotheism to being and the world in which the beloved has overtaken all existence, and there is nothing else except the beauty of the beloved. She manifests everywhere: in the tree and the meadows, in the water and fire, in the sky and the mountains, in the light and in the divine names. And the poet's journey is from Zuleika to Zuleika: "Möge Wasser, springend, wallend, / Die Zypressen dir gestehn: / Von Suleika zu Suleika / Ist mein Kommen und mein Gehen!" (Goethe 1994: 393)

The poet is in the circle of love, and this circle contains all his being. Goethe also sees Zuleika in the hundred names of God. These poems show how the poet attains divine love through the love of Marianne (Özcan 2014: 84-85). He says that humans can see God manifested in the presence of Zuleika (Mommsen 2014: 220).

In tausend Formen magst du dich verstecken, / Doch, Allerliebste, gleich erkenn' ich dich, / Du magst mit Zauberschleyern dich bedecken, / Allgegenwärtige, gleich erkenn' ich dich.

An der Cypresse reinstem, jungen Streben, / Allschöngewaschne, gleich erkenn' ich dich, / in des Canales reinem Wellenleben, / Allschmeichelhafte, wohl erkenn' ich dich

Was ich mit äufserm Sinn, mit innerm kenne, / Du Allbelehrende, kenn' ich durch dich. / Und wenn ich Allahs Namenhundert nenne, / Mit jedem klingt ein Name nach für dich. (Goethe 1994: 404-405)

Thyself in thousand forms thou mayst conceal, yet all-beloved, straight thou art known to me; Thou mayst fling over thee some magic veil, Thou, the All-present, straight art known to me. In the young cypress's most pure aspiring, All-burgeoning-beauty, straight thou art known to me; ... And Allah's hundred names if I should name, A name for thee with each would sound to me (Goethe 1980: 142).

What does Goethe mean by "Allahs Namenhundert"? *Asma al-Hosna* or God's good names are names used in Islam for Allah. Often, they are 99 names, most of which are mentioned in Quran. For Sufis, the belief in the 100th name of God is of great value. They call the 100th name of God the Great Name. According to their beliefs, only by full knowledge of the Lord can one find that name. Goethe not only used the concept of the names of the Lord here, but, as it seems, he has been using the view of Islamic mystics as well. In addition, he has found the manifestations of God's good names in his beloved. Chittick states, "The Koran often speaks of God's "names", and it mentions a good number of them—not "ninety-nine", as is traditionally said, but anywhere between seventy and twice as many, depending on the criteria used in counting. The names, which are often called "attributes", provide the points of reference for Islamic theology. "Others", which are the signs/verses written out in the Three Books, know the Essence only inasmuch as it reveals itself to them. In other



words, although everything is a face of God, wherever you turn, there is God's face" (*Qu'ran*, 2:115) to make distinctions among the omnipresent faces we need to know their names and recognize their haqqs." (Chittick 2018)

Goethe stands around many beautiful girls, each of whom asks the poet to tell a lyric about them and describe their beauties, and he is pleased to accept their request. However, when he looks at their beauty, he only see the beauty of his beloved: "Und so könnt ich alle loben, / Und so könnt ich alle lieben: / Denn so wie ich euch erhoben, / War die Herrin mit beschrieben" (1994: 156).

We can see other natural manifestations also contribute to the creation of romantic manifestations. When Ibn 'Arabī's beloved is far, he speaks with things such as nature and garden, and views the signs of the beloved in a beautiful deer. When the pigeon sings, he remembers his beloved. The nightingale's song provokes Goethe to compose a poem, and when the beloved is away, all the world—from the sun and the moon to other phenomena—make him cry: "Eh es Allah nicht gefällt, / Uns aufs neue zu vereinen, / Gibt mir Sonne, Mond und Welt / Nur Gelegenheit zum Weinen". (1994: 156)

## 7. Shining Beloved

Light is an important element in Islamic mysticism. It is an element that also support the view of existential unity. Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. The beloved illuminates the world with his face like the sun, and, owing to his light, other lights have disappeared. Ibn Arabī says, "She rose, plain to see, like a sun, and when she vanished, she shone in the horizon of my heart". She is an enlightened one who, like the Roman bishops, spread the light of her existence. She is one of the daughters of Rome, of the essence of unification, and without any vestige of adornment from the Divine Names, yet there shines from her the radiance of Absolute Goodness. (31-55-64-66-101-127: 1911) she is a bishop, one of the daughters of Rome, unadorned: thou see in her a radiant Goodness:

(Ibn 'Arabī'2005: 32) ترى عليها من الأنوار ناموساً أسقفه من بنات الروم عاطلة

When the poet falls into the night, the light of a beloved face throws onto the darkness. The darkness is the barrier and curtain that prevents the intercourse of the beloved and lover in this world. As the veils go out and the light is revealed, the flame of love turns off "If it shall be quenched, then everlasting union occurs." In fact, he explains the genesis of love by referring to two divine names, Beautiful and Light, and associates love with both: divine beauty and divine light.

Goethe, like Ibn 'Arabī, has a luminous beloved. His beloved is the sun directed by her light. Goethe enthusiastically wants meeting the sweetheart and describes her as the Star of the Stars (Stern der Sterne). Marianne's light for Goethe includes all the heavens and the earth. He likens the beloved to a star, a candle, a sun, and a light, and asks her not to leave him:

Laß mich nicht so der Nacht, dem Schmerze, / Du Aller-

liebstes, du mein Mondgesicht! / O du mein Phosphor,  
 meine Kerze, / Du meine Sonne, du mein Licht!  
 Leave me not thus to night, to sorrow, my best-beloved,  
 my moon- face bright! O thou my lamp, my star of mor-  
 row, O thou my sun, my light (Goethe 1980: 132)

## 8. The Perfection of the Beloved and the Immortality of Love

When love enters the whole existence of the lover, there is in fact no place for the companionship of the opposites, and the beloved, in the eyes of the lover, has absolute beauty and is impeccable and flawless (Ibn ‘Arabī 2005: 195): and her beauty reached in thee her utmost limit, and a more beautiful world than this is not possible (Nicolson 1911: 125).

انتهى الحسنُ فيكِ أقصى مداها ما لوسع الإمكانِ مثلكِ أخرى (Ibn ‘Arabī 2005: 173)

Ibn ‘Arabī says about his destitution against the beloved and the beloved’s richness in beauty, “Through love of them I called out behind their riding-camels, ‘O ye who are rich in beauty, here I am, a beggar.’” (Nicholson: 63). He knows love and poverty in the neighbourhood, and love only deserves poverty, because love is dignified with dervishes, not with the master and the king. Goethe also appreciates all bliss on earth in the presence of Zuleika: “Alles Erdenglück vereinet/ Find ich in Suleika nur” (Goethe 1994: 387), and sees all beauties reflected in hers: “Und so könnt ich alle loben, / Und so könnt ich alle lieben: / Denn so wie ich euch erhoben, / War die Herrin mit beschrieben” (Goethe 1994: 389).

Finally, love makes Goethe rich, and he cannot talk about poverty with love (Goethe 1994: 378). Goethe’s Zuleika and their Love remain eternal:

Daß Suleika von Jussuf entzückt war, / Ist keine Kunst.  
 Er war jung, Jugend hat Gunst. / Er war schön; sie sagen: zum Ent-  
 zücken, / Schön war sie, konnten einander beglücken. / Aber daß  
 du, diesolangemirerhart war, / Feurige Jugendblickemirschickst,  
 Jetzt mich liebst, mich später beglückst, / Das sollen meine Lie-  
 der preisen, / Sollst mir ewig Suleika heißen.

That, charmed, Zuleika upon Jussuf hung Is no such marvellous  
 case; Young was he, youth is warranty for grace, Fair was he,  
 shaped, they say, all hearts to mad, And she was fair, each could  
 make other glad. But that thou — O thou, waited for so long,  
 On me shouldst let youth’s eyes of passion rest, Shouldst love  
 me now, hereafter make me blest, Such wonder must my songs  
 acclaim: For me Zuleika ever be thv name. (Goethe 1980: 98)

Love bestows on Goethe a new destiny and new life. After his acquaintance with Marianne, the poet drinks of her love spring to become young and their love for everlasting comes as *Khidr* after drinking from the water, was the source of immortal life (326-327).

## 9. Unity of the Lover and the Beloved

Now that the beloved has extended the whole universe, the poet in love wants to survive through perdition. Mystics believe that, in order to achieve unity, man must transcend his existence and die in the beloved. The most beautiful allegory to become mortal in nature and to achieve the survival is the allegory of butterfly and fire, which has appeared in Persian mystical literature in the poems of 'Attar and Sa'adi, and how beautifully! The two poets have used it to burn, extinguish and unite with their beloved.

حَنَّ لِمَوْتِ بِأَحْضَانِ اللَّهَيْبِ غَارِقًا فِي عَتَمَةِ اللَّيْلِ الْكَثِيبِ وَحَدَّةَ أَسْمَى وَإِنْجَابَ جَدِيدِ (Ibn 'Arabī 2005: 156)	وَأَنَا أَتْنِي عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي تَتْرَكُ الْأَسْرَ الَّذِي عَشَّتْ بِهِ يَنْشُرُ الشَّوْقَ جَنَاحِيهِ إِلَى وَسْتَأْتِي مِثْلَمَا رَفَّتْ فَرَاشَهُ
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Goethe was inspired with this story by Persian literature. In the poem "Blessed Yearning", he talks, in Sufi language, of a butterfly which loves light and the incorporeal world and burns itself to death. Goethe knows that death for immortality is a heavy word, so he wants to tell the secret only to the wise (Sufis):

Sagt es niemand, nur den Weisen, / Weil die Menge gleich  
 verhöhnet: / Das Lebendige will ich preisen, / Das nach  
 Flammentod sich sehnet

In this burning, he wants the highest degree of unity and mating; distances do not prevent this alliance:

Und so lang du das nicht hast, / Dieses: Stirb und werde! /  
 Bist du nur ein trüber Gast / Auf der dunklen Erde. (Goethe  
 1994: 316-317)

Tell it the wise alone, for when will the crowd cease from mockery! Him would I laud of living men who longs a fiery death to die. And while thou spurnest at the best, whose word is "Die and be new-born!" Thou bidest but a cloudy guest upon an earth that knows not morn. (Goethe 1980: 19)

Every sincere person who is in love calls for this unification and burns to make this union (Badawi: 15-18). Mommsen believes that this poem is a new spiritual birth to perfection (Mommsen: 210).

In one of his wonderful poems, Goethe speaks also of the beloved's alliance, which leads to annihilation and death, and nothing, even the Lord's command (Be), can separate them. These poems symbolise the end of everything in existence:

Beyde sind wir auf der Erde / Musterhaft in Freud und Quaal  
 Und ein zweytes Wort: Es werde! / Trennt uns nicht zum  
 zweytenmal. (Goethe 1994: 400)

Patterns in us two earth shall see, Alike in pleasure and in  
 pain, nor shall a second "Let there be!" Divide a second  
 time us twain. (Goethe 1980: I35)

Ibn Arabī also burns in the fire of love (Ibn ‘Arabī: 53-76) and that love is not pleasant to him if he does not die of this fire. He says, “May my love be unblessed if I do not die of grief” (91). The lover and the beloved reached such a unity that, although there were two of them in the eyes of others, in reality they are just one person:

فنحنُ وإن كُنَّا مثنًى شخوصنا      فما تنظرُ الأبصارُ إلا موحداً (201)

Ibn ‘Arabī, inspired by the *Hadith Qudsi* which says, “The heavens and the earth did not include me, and the heart of my believing servant include me”, believes that the beloved has nowhere but his heart. Because the heart is the place of divine manifestation, and the trust that God refers to in the *Qur’an* which was revealed to the heavens and the earth, and they could not accept the burden of this trusted life, and the poor man accepts this heavy responsibility—can be divine love. He likens his beloved to the full moon and says that the rise of this moon in my imaginary and its sunset in my heart. He intended by the imaginary the emergence of beloved in the world of ideals.

The raven does not tell about separation because the poet is confident of union:

They are not settled in any country. I said to the wind, where can they take refuge when the steeds of my desire are pursuing them? Far be the thought! They have no abode save my mind. Wherever I am, there is the full moon. Watch and see! Is not my imagination her place of rising and my heart her place of setting? For the ill luck of the bān and gharab trees hath ceased. The raven does not croak in our encampments or make any rift in the harmony of our union. (Nicolson 2005: 132)

لا تستقلُّ بهم أرضٌ فقلتُ لها      أين المفرُّ وخيلُ الشوقِ في الطلبِ  
هيهاتَ ليسَ لهم معنى سِوى خَلدى      فحيثُ كنتُ يكونُ البدرُ فارتقبِ  
أليسَ مطلعُها وهمى ومغربُها      قلبى فقد زال شومُ البانِ والغربِ  
ما للغرابِ نعيقٌ في منازلها      وما له في نظامِ الشبلِ من ندبِ

And when Ibn ‘Arabī asked to meet the beloved, she answered, “let him not seek me from without, and let it satisfy him that I have descended into his heart, so that he beholds me in his being and through his being at every moment”.

فقالَت أما يكفِيه أنى بقلبه      يشاهدنى فى كل وقتٍ أما أما (43)

Marianne, like Nizām, is close to the lover by her soul and heart even from afar:

Auch in der Ferne dir so nah! / Und unerwartet kommt die  
Qual. / Da hör ich wieder dich einmal; / Auf einmal bist du  
wieder da! (Goethe 1994: 391)

So far from thee, yet art thou near! Comes unforeseen the  
sudden pain. There swift I hear thy voice again, At once  
again thou art there. (Goethe 1980: I21)

## 10. Conclusion

Love is the longest and most important chapter in the divans of the two poets. It is also considered to be a basis of the poets’ thinking in creating the divans. These

“spiritual brothers” have some common points in their love experiences and their permanent poetic works. Both of them fell in love in the middle age and on a journey. Ibn ‘Arabī went to Mecca, where he saw Nizām, and Goethe went to Weimar to meet Merianne. Their beloveds are beautiful, wise, and literate and possess spiritual and intellectual perfection. Both poets have interpreted their poems and refer to their mystical sources.

Most importantly, they have common thoughts in mystical tendencies that originate in some cases from the same place. Goethe’s pantheism and Ibn ‘Arabī’s theory (unity of existence), although not of the same origin, have many commonalities in looking at nature. Furthermore, the common source of their thoughts is the Islamic notions of Oriental mysticism, which are prominent in the great German poet’s verses.

They believe in the presence of the beloved in the whole world, and in all the beauties being manifestations of the true beloved. Goethe is influenced by the Dutch philosopher, Spinoza, who saw God in the infinity and in nature; Ibn ‘Arabī was the founder of the theory of “unity of existence”, which has a monotheistic view to nature. In the Divan of two poets, the beloved is transcendental and inaccessible, and their virtual love is a bridge to achieve spiritual love. In describing their love, they use the symbols of pure love to remind of the immortality and spirituality of their love. They want to die in their beloved to achieve eternal life, and they see the perfection of love in the union with the mistress. It seems that, in these poems, Ibn ‘Arabī is more in calature than Goethe and describes the desire to reach the beloved more often than he does.

It is considered that the beautiful theme of Goethe’s love is written in the context of the Oriental and Islamic Sufism, because in this literature monotheism and monotheistic concepts are very strong. The identical view of the two poets considers the whole being as an expression and manifestation of their beloveds. Therefore, in their eyes, the beloved is devoid of imperfection and is absolute beauty. In addition to pantheism, Goethe also uses many Islamic concepts to illustrate the signs of the beloved. He, who has complete acquaintance with Islam, the Quran, and hadith, uses concepts such as God’s holy names to show his beloved’s attributes. Among the names of God, light is one of the key concepts and attributes in Islamic thought, which both poets have paid special attention to.

The words of love in their poetry are tied to all the phenomena of creation and the world, so it is arguably possible to claim that the poets think of a loved one beyond terrestrial lovers; this can be clearly understood in their metaphors and similes. The unanimous view of the two poets has made their mistresses the light of the world, with their brightness and beauty seen everywhere. In fact, the world looks beautiful in their company. The beloved, according to the same view, is manifested in everything.

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## Endnotes

1. Beatrice is the Florentine woman that Dante presents as being worthy of speaking for God, making her a holy individual.
2. Sturm und Drang is a phrase from literature that ran from 1767 to 1784, parallel to the beginning of the Enlightenment. This period began with the publication of Herder's *Fragmenten* (1767) and ends with either Schiller's work *Kabale und Liebe* (1784) or Goethe's flighty departure from Italy (1786).
3. يا من غناه الحسن ها أنا مفلسٌ
4. The Fountain of Youth is a spring that supposedly restores the youth of anyone who drinks or bathes in its waters.
5. *Khidr* was a righteous servant of God possessing great wisdom or mystic knowledge. He managed to cross the Land of Darkness to find the Water of Life, gaining eternal life.
6. Sacred tradition or report, also called Hadith Rabbani or Hadith Ilahi (divine hadith), refers to a saying (hadith) of the Prophet Muhammad in which the meaning is revealed by God and the phrasing is formulated by the Prophet. Unlike prophetic hadith (hadith nabawi), the chain of transmission is traced back directly to God instead of ending with the Prophet. In contrast to the Quran, which is considered divine revelation in both meaning and wording, the authenticity of sacred hadith varies from one narration to another, and they may not be recited in prayer. They function as extra-Qu'ranic revelation. (*The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*)
7. 7 We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof; but man undertook it—He was indeed unjust and foolish (Quran 33:72).
8. The raven is a symbol of separation among Arabs.

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