

Baba Tahir

For sufis a 'baba' is a spiritual guide and many of these spiritual figures were also great poets. Baba Tahir is no exception. There is very little known of Baba Tahir's life, except that he originated from Hamedan in Iran and lived in the 11th century.

He was also known as Baba Tahir Oryan - which literally translated means Baba Tahir the naked one. This has led researchers to believe that he was very likely to have been a wandering dervish, throwing off his expensive outer garments.

These verses are written in an a very old format used in Persian poetry, known as *do-bayti*, which literally translates "two-couplets". It is very similar to a *ruba'i*, a Persian quatrain, but differs in metre.

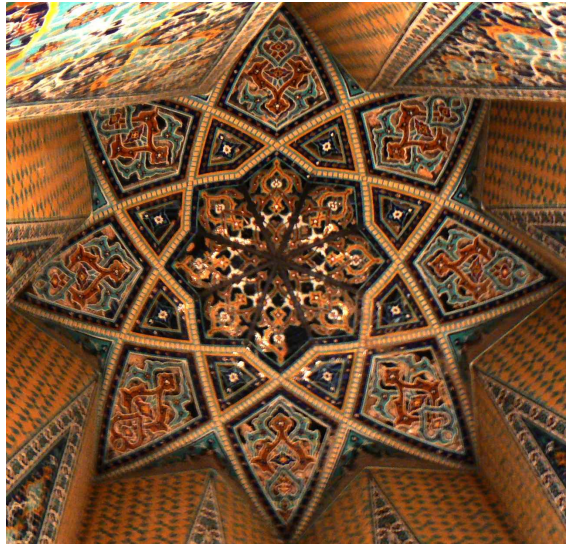
This week and the next three weeks, will each focus on a different *do-bayati* of Baba Tahir.



هر آنکس عاشق است از جان نترسد یقین از بند و از زندان نترسد
دل عاشق بود گرگ گرسنه که گرگ از هی هی چوپان نترسد

A lover has no fear of life,
Nor fears not prison bars or chains,
A lover's heart is like a hungry wolf,
For the wolf fears not a shepherd's cry.

[Note: In the Farsi version, the first, second and last lines all end with the same word نترسد (fears not).]



درازی دو زلفانت مرا کشت
خم ابرو و مژگانت مرا کشت

سیاهی دو چشمانت مرا کشت
به قلم حاجت تیر و کمان نیست

The blackness of your eyes has killed me
The length of your locks has killed me

You need no bow and arrow to end my life
The curve of your eyebrows and lashes suffice

[Note: Just as in the poem we looked at in the previous week, in the Farsi version, the first, second and last lines all end with the same word - this time مرا کشت (killed me).]