

Sufism and Mevlevi Tradition with Hadiths  
40 Hadith Sherifs with Mesnevi Couplets  
Ismail Ankaravi  
Simplified to Modern Turkish by Semih Ceyhan

**Summary about the purpose of the book:**

One of the most criticized aspects of Sufi culture is the sema, dance and vocal dhikr gatherings. Whether these are religiously legitimate or not has been constantly debated.

The work in your hand by Ismail Ankaravi (d. 1631) clarifies some Sufi terms in forty hadiths, and he sheds light on the most debated issues of the 17th century, such as sema, dance, and vocal dhikr. Ankaravi, also uses the discussions of many Sufi figures such as Gazzali, Mevlana, Sultan Veled. He tries to refute opposing ideas and focuses on religion, aesthetic life and symbolism.

Ankaravi, who received the title of "Hz. Şerih" due to his commentary on Mevlana's Mesnevi, is a prolific man of heart who is fluent in the three languages of Islamic civilization and who served for many years as a sheikh at the Galata Mevlevi Lodge in Istanbul, thus serving the recognition and spread of this culture.

**Explained Hadiths in the Book:**

1. LANGUAGE OF MESNEVI: PERSIAN RELIGIOUS LEGITIMITY

"The first person to use Arabic was Hz. Ismail (pbuh) when he was only ten years old."

2. THE FORM OF MESNEVI: POETRY AND ITS RELIGIOUS BASIS

"There is undoubtedly wisdom in poetry."

3. MEVLEVILIK: TARIKAT-I MUHAMMEDIYYE

"Anyone who turns away from my Sunnah is not one of me."

4. SUFI RITUALS AND INNOVATION (BIDAT)

"The best of words is the book of Allah, the best course is the course of Muhammad (pbuh). The worst is that which is revealed later. What is revealed later is innovation. Innovation is misguidance."

5. THE PLACE OF MUSIC AND DEF PLAYING IN THE SUNNA FROM THE MEVLEVI TRADITION

"According to the narration of Rubeyyi' binti Mu'avviz bin Afra, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "Do not say this word! Say what you said before." Rubeyyi' explains the reason for the

hadith as follows: When I was going to have a wedding with the Prophet (pbuh), the Prophet (pbuh) came and sat on my bed. At that time, our concubines were playing the tambourine and reciting elegies remembering the killing of their father on the day of Badr. One of them said, "There is a Prophet among us who knows what will happen tomorrow." Upon these words, the Prophet (pbuh) said, "Do not say such words. Say what you said before."

#### 6. BASIS OF RAKS (DANCE) AND SEMA IN THE SUNNA

"On the day of the festival of Sudan, the sons of Arfida were playing with swords and shields. The Prophet (pbuh) said to them: "Come on, start and continue!"

#### 7.SUPPOSITION AND TRUTH IN APPROACHING SUFISM

"Beware of supposition (zan). Because supposition is the falsest of words."

#### 8. THOSE WHO LOVE THE SUFIS: MUHIBBAN

"Whoever tries to imitate a community is from that community."

#### 9. SPIRITUAL VALUE OF SUFI CLOTHING

"Out of humility whoever abandons wearing fancy for the sake of Allah, even though he is able to wear fancy, Allah Almighty will call her/him to the forefront of creation on the Day of Judgement and will choose her/him. S/He will be free to wear any garment of faith he wishes. Another narration is as follows: whoever abandons wearing fancy, even though s/he is able to do so, Allah will dress her/him in the garment of honor." This is also recorded in the hadith Masabih.

#### 10. THE PLACE OF THE MEVLEVI ATTIRE IN THE SUNNAH

"Wrapping a turban over a cap separates us from the polytheists. On the Day of Judgement a light for each turban he wraps around his head will be given to the person who wraps a turban." In another narration, it is stated that "the turban on cap is the difference between us and the polytheists."

#### 11. FIVE FITRAT/NATURE: ANCIENT SUNNAS

"Fitrat is five. To be circumcised, to shave the pubic hair, to trim the moustache and grow the beard, to cut the nails and to pluck the armpit hair."

#### 12. FORM AND MEANING

"Allah does not look at your forms and words, but at your hearts and actions."

### 13. MEVLEVILIK AND MELAMILIK

Hasan Basri said: "I asked Dayr b. Huzeife-i Yemani, 'What is Ihlas/sincerity?' Dayr b. Huzeife-i Yemani said: I asked the Messenger of Allah, "What is ihlas/sincerity?" The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "I asked Gabriel about sincerity. Gabriel said: I asked Allah, 'What is ihlas sincerity?'" Allah, the Almighty, said: "Sincerity is one of My secrets and I have placed it in the heart of My beloved servant as a trust."

### 14. SUFIS: THE MOVEMENT OF IHYA/REVIVING THE SUNNA

"Enes (ra) said: One day the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said to me: 'O my son! If you are able to stay up until morning and then stay up until night without having any deception in your heart for anyone, do so!' Then the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) continued, "Because this is my Sunnah. Whoever revives my Sunnah has loved me. Whoever loves me will be with me in Paradise."

### 15. OBSTACLES OF RELATIVE KNOWLEDGE

"Angels do not enter a house with pictures." In the narration of Abu Talha, "Angels do not enter a house with dogs and drawn pictures."

### 16. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASCETISM AND IRFAN/WISDOM KNOWLEDGE

"Allah grants knowledge to the one who ascetics in the world without making any effort to learn it. And He makes her/him insightful and removes blindness from her/him."

### 17. FIKH-i ZAHİR-FIKH-i BATIN (JURSPIDENCE OF EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL)

"Whoever Allah wants good for someone, He makes her/him a faqih/increased understanding in religion."

### 18. THE EMERGENCE OF THE MAHDI

"If there is only one day left for the end of the world, Allah will extend that day and send a man from my Ahl al-Bayt. This man's name will match my name, and his father's name will match my father's name. The man will fill the world filled with oppression and cruelty with justice and equality."

### 19. IGNORANT ALIMIS (SCHOLARS) AND THE ISSUE OF TAKHFIR (BLAMING WITH KUFR/DISBELIEF)

"Allah does not take away knowledge from His servants by force, but He takes away knowledge by taking away scholars. So much so that there will be no scholars left and people will follow the ignorant people and ask them for fatwas. They will give fatwas without knowing and they will both go astray and mislead others"

## 20. THE COMMUNITY OF LOVE AND THE CHARACTER OF THE MEVLEVI GREETING

According to what Muaz b. Jabal (r.a.), in a kudsî hadith, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) has narrated from Allah Almighty as follows: "I heard from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) that Allah Almighty said: "My love has been necessary for those who love each other for My sake, those who come together and sit together, those who visit each other and those who spend for each other." In the narration of Tirmidhi, the hadith is as follows: "Those who love each other because of My majesty and celal, for them there will be pulpits of light on the Day of Judgment. The prophets and the martyrs will envy them."

## 21. THE WRONGNESS OF JUDGING PEOPLE

"One of you sees the speck of sawdust in the eye of her/his sibling and forgets the beam in her/his own eye."

## 22. MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL POVERTY IN SUFISM

"Poverty might be a fault for people, but on the Day of Judgement, it is an ornament for Allah."

## 24. RICALU'L-GHAIB AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

"In every century, the best of the ummah are five hundred people. The number of Abdals is forty. The number of Ahyar/ benevolent and Abdals/ Dervish never decreases. When one of them passes away, Allah brings one from five hundred people in her/his place and places her/him among the people. These people forgive those who wrong them, do good to those who wrong them, and share in the blessings that Allah has given them."

## 25. RELATIONSHIP OF THE RIJAL AL-GHAIB WITH THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE PROPHETS AND ANGELS

"Allah has three hundred people on earth whose hearts are like the hearts of Hz. Adam (pbuh). Allah has forty more people whose hearts are like the heart of Moses (pbuh). Allah has seven people whose hearts are like the heart of Abraham (pbuh). Allah has five people whose hearts are like the heart of Gabriel. Allah has three people whose hearts are like the heart of Mika'il. Allah has one person whose heart is like the heart of Israfil. When someone dies, Allah brings in three in his place. When one of the three dies, Allah brings in five, when one of the five dies, He brings in seven, when one of the seven dies, He brings in forty, when one of the forty dies, He brings in three hundred, when one of the three hundred dies, He brings in one of the chosen ones of the Ummah in his place. And He does this by removing calamity from the Ummah." Shaykh and Imam Abdullah b. As'ad al-Yafii says: "A Qutb mentioned in this hadith is the gavs/aid. The place of the aid among the saints is like the point in the middle of the circle. The order of the universe is maintained through the qutb."

## 26. LEVEL OF VELAYET AND WAYS TO ACHIEVE VELAYET

"I declare war against the one who is hostile to My vali. My servant approaches Me with something of what I have made obligatory most pleasing to him. When My servant approaches Me with an optional prayers, I love her/him. When I love her/him, I become her/his hearing ear, seeing eye, holding hand, and walking foot. When s/he asks Me for something, I give it to her/him. When s/he asks Me for forgiveness, I forgive her/him. I do not hesitate to do anything as much as I hesitate to take the soul of a believer who does not want death. I do not wish to take his soul. However, death is a necessary thing."

## 27. REMEMBERING DEATH AND WORLD LIFE

"Remember death often. Because it wipes out sins and makes you zahid/ascetic in the world. If you remember death in wealth, it destroys it. If you remember it in poverty, it makes you pleased with your life."

## 28. THE NATURE OF DEATH

"Sleep is the sibling of death. The people of heaven do not die."

## 29. MORTAL WORLD-ETERNAL AFTERLIFE

"Jabir b. Abdillah Hazretleri (r.a.) narrates: 'One day, I was with the Messenger of Allah. At that time, a person with a white face and beautiful hair, wearing a white robe, came and said, 'Peace be upon you, Messenger of Allah.' After the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) returned his greeting, his man asked the Prophet, 'O Messenger of Allah! What is this world?' The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) replied, 'It is like the sleep of the sleeper.' Thereupon, that person said to the Prophet, 'O Messenger of Allah! How long is the distance between this world and the hereafter?' The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) replied, 'It is as the blink of an eye.' After this answer, that man left the presence of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). The Holy Prophet (pbuh) then turned to his Companions and said, 'This person is Gabriel. He has come to make you Zahid/ascetic in this world and to make you desire the Hereafter.'"

## 30. PEOPLE OF THE WORLD-PEOPLE OF THE HEREAFTER-PEOPLE OF ALLAH

"The world is haram/forbidden to the people of the hereafter, the hereafter is forbidden to the people of the world, and both the world and the hereafter are forbidden to the people of Allah."

## 32. THE SUPREMECY OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE EVIL OF IMITATION

"O Abu'd-Darda! On the Day of Judgement, when it is asked to you, 'Were you a scholar or an ignorant person?', what will you say? If you say you were a scholar, it will be asked to you, 'Did

you do any good in the matters of which you were a scholar?’ If you say you were ignorant, it will be asked, ‘Is there any excuse for you not to learn and to be ignorant?’

### 33. CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF WEAKNESS OF YAKINI FAITH

“The following matters stem from the weakness of yakin/certainty: You convince people in a matter, that Allah does not like; you praise people for Allah's sustenance, and if Allah does not give what you ask, you belittle people. Allah's sustenance does not reach you because of the ambitions of a greedy person. When Allah wills it, you the disliking of a person who dislikes His sustenance cannot prevent the sustenance from reaching you. Allah, through His wisdom and majesty, has created comfort and ease in contentment in yakin/certainty, and distress and sorrow in doubt and anger.”

### 34. ISTIGHFAR/ FORGIVENESS ON THE PATH OF UNITY

“If a person constantly seeks forgiveness, Allah will give her/him a way out of every difficulty and will remove all her/his troubles. He will provide her/him with sustenance from a place s/he does not expect.”

### 35. THE SUFI WAY TO ACHIEVE ONE HUNDRED STATIONS: JIHAD

“There are one hundred degrees in Paradise that Allah has prepared for those who strive in His path. The distance between each degree is as much as the distance between the earth and the sky.”

### 36. ABOUT İHSAN

“İhsan is to worship Allah as if you see Him. Even if you do not see Allah, Allah sees you.”

### 37. ALLAH'S TOGETHERNESS WITH CREATURES AND THE ISSUE OF TAKHFIR/ BLAMING WITH KUFR

“The most virtuous faith is to know that Allah is with you wherever you are.”

### 38. THE EMERGENCE OF EXISTENCE

“Allah existed and there was nothing with Him. His Throne was above the water and He had recorded everything in the Preserved Tablet/ Levhi Mahfuz. Then He created the heavens and the earth.”

### 39. SELEF SCHOLARS AND THE IGNORANT OF THE CENTURY

“The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "A guest from the Children of Israel became a guest to a man. And he came to his house. The owner of the house had a pregnant female dog. The dog

said: 'By Allah, I do not bark at my master's guest.' However, at that moment, the puppies in the pregnant dog's womb began to bark. The people present there were amazed at this and asked: 'What is this!' After Allah Almighty revealed it to one of them, he said: "This strange situation is like the situation of a nation that will come after you. The dissolute of that nation will oppress the gentle ones."

#### 40. THE LAST PRAYER ON THE PURIFICATION OF THE SELF

"O Allah! Grant my soul its takva/piety and purify it. For You are the best of those who purify. You are the friend and protector."

### **Translation of Hadith about Poetry**

#### THE FORM OF MESNEVI: POETRY AND ITS RELIGIOUS BASIS

"There is undoubtedly wisdom in poetry."

In İbn Mac~. il, 1235; Ebu Nu'aym, Hilyetü'l-evliya', VII, 269; Münavi, Feyzü'l- kadir, il, 524; . Azimabadi, 'Avnü'l-ma'bud, XIII, 240.

#### **Commentary:**

Poetry means knowing in the dictionary. As a concept, poetry is a word that is adapted to meter and rhymed and should only be recited for a purpose. Allah Almighty's words in the verse "Did we not take the burden that weighed you down from you? Did we not exalt your fame and glory?" is outside of the definition above. These words are metered and rhymed, but it is not poetry. Because this verse is not deliberately adapted to meter and rhymed. Poetry, as a concept of philosophers, is a word consisting of sentences that are the product of imagination. This word either glorifies something or alienates it and makes it hateful. It does not matter whether the word itself is true or not. For example, as they say "Honey is bitter, alcohol is a flowing ruby."

Some people define wisdom (hikma) as knowing the realities of things according to their nature and acting accordingly. Others say wisdom is being accurate in words and actions. Many people define wisdom differently.

The meaning of the hadith: In reality, some poems are useful words that contain wisdom in their content, so that people benefit from them. This kind of poetry prevents people from ignorance and lowly behavior. Therefore, the word adapted to the meter, that is, the poem, should consist of the most correct words and should relate to the praise and glory of God Almighty and His sublime attributes. Such a poem is a praiseworthy and valid poem from the perspective of the Sharia. Indeed, in a hadith narrated in Sahih, Allah Rasul's The most accurate statement a poet has made is Lebid's, "Everything other than Allah is false" According to another narration, he used the expression "The most truthful word spoken by the poet or the

most truthful couplet spoken by the poets..." The meaning of both narrations is the same. In other words, know that everything outside of Allah is temporary. The beings outside of Allah are possible beings. The possible is that which is condemned to non-existence and becomes temporary when it is isolated from its connection with Allah. This statement is close in meaning to the verse, "Everything except His/Her Essence is perishable." The commentary on this verse and its real meaning are mentioned in the commentary on the couplet "Everything except Allah is invalid" at the end of the chapter "Adam's astonishment" in the last part of the Book VI volume of the Mesnevi. See there.

The fact that the Prophet (pbuh) listened to poetry and found it beautiful, that he ordered Hasan to criticize the polytheists with poetry, that the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) recited poetry in the presence of the Prophet (pbuh) both while they visited him in his home and while they were on the way to war, has been proven by authentic hadiths and is a common practice among scholars. Indeed, according to what Sammak b. Cerb narrated from Jabir b. Samura, he said: "The companions of the Prophet (pbuh) recited poetry and the Prophet (pbuh) would smile at this situation from where he was sitting." It was said to Abu'd-Darda: All the Ansar, except you, used to recite poetry?! Thereupon Abu'd-Darda said, I also recite poetry and recited the following verse:

A person wants her/his desire to be fulfilled,  
And Allah gives it to whom He wills,  
A person cries out, "O Allah, enrich me and my wealth!"  
But the fear of Allah is the highest of supports.

According to what Amr b. ash-Sharid narrated, one day, while his father was riding on the back of the Messenger of Allah's mount, he asked him, "Do you know any poem of Umayya b. Salt?" He replied, "Yes." Thereupon, our Master, peace be upon him, said, "Let's see, tell me about it." Then he recited another couplet. Our Master, peace be upon him, said again, go ahead; he recited and it continued until he recited 100 couplets.

[Arabic word] means the expression of the Prophet. With the rhyme of "hamza" in the expression "kashre", "hamza" has become the letter "ya". It is a verbal noun meaning command. It means "speak and say!".

Umayya b. es-Salt was a poet of the Age of Ignorance, *meaning* diver a scarily amazing person. This poet confirmed the coming of the Prophet and asked his people to follow him. He was extremely loyal to his people. However, when the news that the Prophet had left the Quraysh reached him, his hopes were dashed and jealousy prevented him from coming to faith. For this reason, the Prophet (pbuh) said about him: "His poetry was Muslim but his heart became an infidel."

This hadith shows that the Prophet (pbuh) listened to poetry and enjoyed it. In fact, sometimes unintentionally, hadiths with rhyme and meter flowed from the honorable tongue of the Prophet. Most of these hadiths are in the recez-i menhuk meter. One of them is the hadith: 'I



am a prophet, there is no lie in me. I am the son of Abdulmuttalib.' This hadith, narrated by Bara b. A.zib, is reported in Sahfhayn.

This hadith was said during the defeat of the Companions in the Hunayn war. The Prophet turned to the unbelievers while riding a white mule and said the hadith: "As the Prophet of Truth, I do not lie. I am the son of Abdulmuttalib." Another hadith told in the Rajaz meter is as follows: "Oh you wounded finger! That stone that wounded you came while you were on the path of Allah." Cundeb narrated this hadith. Muslim, Bukhari, Nasa'i and Tirmidhi agreed on this narration. [Arabic letter] refers to addressing to one's own finger with the kasra of the letter ta. It means you are wounded.

This hadith was said when a stone touched his blessed fingers and made them bleed while he was walking on a battle. The hadith is expressed in the Rajaz-i Mastur meter.

The hadith means, "O injured finger! Your collision with this object was in the path of Allah. It is not in the path of anyone else. Because a lover does not complain if he suffers a calamity in the path of his beloved."

Another hadith in the Rajaz meter is said while the Muslims were carrying soil in the Battle of Hendek: According to what Bara b. Azib narrated, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was saying the following while carrying soil on the day of Hendek and when his blessed body was covered in dust:

If Allah had not guided us, we could not have been guided, nor could we have given alms,  
Nor could we have prayed. O Allah! Send down tranquility upon us.  
If we encounter the enemy, make our feet firm,  
For they have transgressed and wronged us,  
When they wanted to cause discord, we stood back,  
The Prophet raised his voice, saying, We stood back, we stood back.

The Arab tribes came together to fight the Prophet and settled in the vicinity of Medina. The Prophet ordered a trench to be dug around Medina. The Noble Companions were busy digging the trench. The Noble Prophet was carrying soil from the trench with them. Even his blessed stomach ached, and the color of his face changed. At that moment he said: "By Allah, if it were not for the grace and generosity of Allah, we would not have been guided." The verse "If Allah had not guided us to the right path, we would not have found the right path on our own" is evidence supporting this hadith. "And we would not give alms and we would not pray. O Allah! Send down upon us calmness, dignity and security from the enemy. If we encounter the enemy, make our feet firm in their fight. That is, when they want to drag us into disbelief, sedition and misguidance, we will refrain from accepting it." Prophet (pbuh) would raise his voice, saying, "We are careful, we are careful." While the Muhajir and Ansar were digging the trench and carrying the soil, they would recite the following couplets:

We who have acted in Jihad have sworn allegiance to Muhammad

Forever and ever, as long as we remain in this world

According to the narration from Ka'b b. Malik, when it was said to the Prophet, "Allah Almighty has said in the Surah Shu'ara what He will say about the poets," the Prophet aleyhiselam said, "A believer strives with his sword and tongue. By My soul, in Whose hand is power, your satire of the unbelievers is like shooting arrows.

"O Messenger of Allah! Allah the Almighty sent down the verse in the Surah 'Shu'ara' regarding the poets" Ka'b b. Malik means the verse, "As for the poets, the deviants follow them". In other words, "Allah the Almighty sent down the verse to criticize the poets.

So, is it permissible for us to write poetry and satirize the unbelievers?"

Thereupon, the Prophet said: "Indeed, the believer strives with his sword and tongue. By Allah, my soul is in His power. Your satirizing the unbelievers is like shooting arrows at them." In other words, just as shooting arrows at them hurts them, your satirizing them hurts them in the same way." The word [Arabic] means shooting arrows.

The poets who are believers and do righteous deeds are exempted from the group of poets who follow the path of the deviants. However, those who believe and do righteous deeds are exempted with the verse, "Except those who believe and do righteous deeds." Indeed, people like Abdullah b. Rawaha and Hasan b. Sabit were among the poets of the companions. The Prophet prayed for Hasan, "O Allah, support him with the Holy Spirit," and commanded him, "O Hasan, satirize the polytheists. Surely, Gabriel is with you."

If an objection is raised in the form of "Hazrat-i Huda, and he is not the word of a poet" with the verse, "We did not teach poetry to the Prophet. It was not befitting of him anyway", he exempted the Prophet from writing poetry and did not consider poetry worthy of him. So, do these verses not show that poetry is a defect and deficiency?", the following answer is given: The purpose of these verses is to keep the Quran away from being accused of poetry. It is to avoid including the Prophet in the group of poets. It is not to criticize or denigrate poetry, On the contrary, it is to praise poetry and poets from a certain perspective. As a matter of fact, one of the saints says:

However, they used the essence of poetry as a sin not to praise prophethood.  
In every correction made to the Quran, they put poetry under suspicion.

If there is a criticism about poetry citing the hadith "It is better for one of you to have his stomach filled up to his throat with vomit than to have his stomach filled up to his throat with poetry" the following answer is given: What is criticized here is a poetry that prevents the poet from reading the Quran and remembering Allah and occupies herself/himself only with poetry. Because the beauty of poetry is beautiful. Indeed, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "Poetry is speech. Beautiful poetry is like beautiful speech, bad poetry is like bad speech. Therefore, poetry should be poetry that is wise and gives advice. A person should teach it to her/his children. Because this kind of poetry causes the language to become clear and fluent. Indeed,

the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "Teach poetry to your children. Because poetry opens the tongue."

However, reading poetry, which is the word of saints and is transformed into verse by divine inspiration, revives the heart and soul and elevates those who read it to the level of knowledge (marifat) and truth (hakikat). In fact, those who hear this poem will have their hearts enlightened by the meanings of the poem and will understand what is meant as it should be understood in this way. Indeed, the Mesnevi is such a source of spiritual life that whoever drinks a sip from it never dies and her/his tongue and palate do not dry up forever. As our Sultan, our Master and the Master of the Wise said, may there be good news for those who desire and drink from that source of life. The Mesnevi:

(2595) You have heard this; let every hair of your ear be attentive. This is the water of life that you have heard, may you enjoy it!

(2596) Do not call this word words, call it the water of life. See this word as a brand-new soul in the body of old letters.