

## Why Molana Rumi and His Works Cannot Be Divorced From Islamic Heritage



TEHRAN - For the last three years, Iraj, Sara, Shabnum, and Yasaman have found a new passion – attending lectures on Molana Rumi's Masnavi at a private center in the Iranian capital Tehran.

Thousands of miles away in New York, Mehdi is studying the Masnavi in Persian. He got the book from the Iranian holy city of Mashhad during his recent trip to Iran.

"This gives me insight into the subtle realities of life. During my PhD journey, Rumi has been a great help. I think I was in an abyss of darkness before knowing him," Mehdi tells his teacher.

In the summer capital of Indian-administered Kashmir, Sabeeha, Irfan, Ali, Rahil, and Imran meet every Sunday at a book café in Srinagar to discuss Rumi's poetry.

In London, Aarifa recently discovered an online English course on the Masnavi. A professor from Iran is teaching the course to her and many others.

"This is exactly what I need, you came as an answer to my prayers," Aarifa tells her friend Shireen, who introduced her to the course.

Millions of copies of Molana Rumi's poetry have been sold in recent years, making him the most celebrated non-Western poet in the West.

Quotes attributed to Molana Rumi have been circulated widely on social media platforms, with netizens affirming that the words provide motivation and hope amid gloom and doom all around.

### Who is Molana Rumi?

Jalaluddin Mohammad Rumi came from a prominent family of Islamic scholars. He was born in 1207 A.D. in Balkh, a city in modern-day Afghanistan situated on the plain between the Hindu Kush Mountains and Amu Darya with around 2,500 years long history.

At the time of Molana Rumi's birth, the Persian Empire spanned from Pakistan in the east to Greece in the west.

At the age of 33, Molana gained prominence as an Islamic scholar. He had some 10,000 followers at the peak of his teaching career, says his son, Sultan Walad, in his Diwan.

The transformative moment in Molana Rumi's life came at the age of 37 when he met a wandering Persian mystic and poet, Shams Tabrizi.

"After years of unsuccessfully seeking a congenial soul, he at last met Rumi, whom he found to be his own potential soul," Islamic scholar and psychologist Reza Arsteh wrote about Shams in his famous book, Rumi, the Persian, the Sufi.

After three years, Shams suddenly disappeared from Molana Rumi's life. Experts on the Persian mystic say that Molana Rumi dealt with the pain of separation from him by writing poetry.

The West recognizes Molana Rumi as a mystic, spiritual master, and Sufi but rarely mentions the legendary mystic-poet's Islamic background.

Rumi experts say that he practiced Sufism to draw closer to God. His 50,000-line magnum opus, the Masnavi, illustrates his deep yearning for nearness to the Divine.

"The Masnavi is a commentary upon these mystical states and stations. It places them within the overall context of Islamic and Sufi teachings and practices," writes Islamic scholar and translator William Chittick in his book, The Sufi Path of Love.

"And it corrects the mistaken impression that one might receive by studying different poems in the Diwan in isolation and separating them from the wider context of Sufism and Islam."

### Rumi and Quran

Molana Rumi's works are filled with citations from the Holy Quran. He uses Quranic stories and characters in his Masnavi that reflect his deep interest in Islam as a religion and a way of life.

"The story of Prophet Moses is mentioned in the Qur'an. Rumi uses Prophet Moses not once or twice but several times in the entire Masnavi. The story of Hazrat Adam in the Masnavi is copied from the Quran," Ghodrattollah Taheri, professor of Persian language and literature at Shaheed Beheshti University, told the Press TV website.

According to Rumi experts, the love motif that appears in Molana Rumi's poetry is also inspired by the Holy Quran.

"In the Quran, God talks about love, the love for His creation. Contrary to what people think, the Quranic relation between God and His creation is based on love and not fear. Mawlana is well aware of God's love and communicates it through his works," Taheri adds.

Dr. Sayed Amir Akrami, assistant professor at the Iranian Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, told the Press TV website that the Masnavi cannot be separated from the Quran.

"According to the interpretation attributed to Sheikh Baha'i, a great Islamic scholar, poet, and philosopher, the Masnavi is the Qur'an in the Persian language."

Dr. Akrami said that the analogy used by Sheikh Baha'i reaffirms the close link between the Quran and the Masnavi.

"Molana even goes to the extent of saying that he is just acting as the narrator of the Masnavi and is not its creator. This great Persian mystic believes that the verses are just like the Quran if the mediator is removed. Revealed to the mind, heart, or soul of the narrator," he said.

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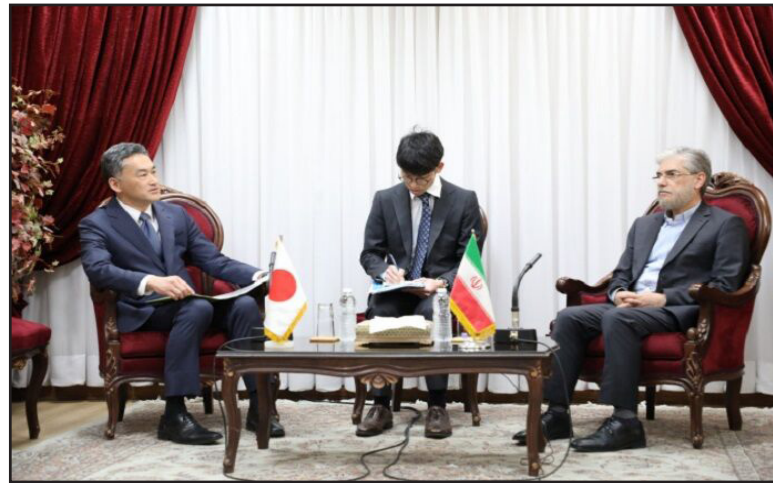
# Iran, Japan Stress Need to Boost Scientific, Technological Ties

TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Science, Research and Technology Hussein Simaei Sarraf has emphasized the need to develop and deepen the scientific and technological ties between Iran and Japan.

Simaei Sarraf was speaking during a meeting with Japanese Ambassador to Iran Tamaki Tsukada on Tuesday.

Scientific cooperation between Iran and Japan, like other ties, has been established since the past, and a number of Iranian officials and academics are Japanese graduates, and Iran is interested in continuing these ties in the future, he added.

He further said that Tehran is ready to exchange experiences with Tokyo in



the fields of humanities such as Islamic studies, Persian language and other subjects that are of interest to Japanese students.

The Japanese ambassador, for his part, said his country had some ties with Iran in the field of environment, and these ties can be developed.

Iran ranks fifth and Japan rank fourth in the world in nanotechnology research, and the two countries can expand bilateral ties in this field, Tamaki Tsukada said.

Simaei Sarraf is scheduled to partake the 21st Annual Meeting of Science and Technology in Society forum that will be held in Kyoto on October 6-8, 2024.

## Exhibition 'Gaza in Blood' Opens at Imam Reza (AS) Shrine

TEHRAN – An exhibition titled "Gaza in Blood", featuring calligraphy paintings by the renowned artist Mohsen Tavassoli, has opened at the Museum of Imam Reza (AS) shrine in Mashhad.

The exhibition's opening ceremony took place on Monday, September 30, 2024, in Mashhad, to commemorate the Day of Solidarity with Palestinian Children.

Regarding the exhibition, Mohsen Tavassoli stated that since the start of Operation Al-Aqsa Flood and the continued Israeli attacks on Gaza, he felt a responsibility as an artist to create works related to Gaza using calligraphy and painting.

This year, he created 35 pieces, with 20 selected works of various sizes displayed in the gallery.

Tavassoli highlighted that the techniques used in this exhibition are

more diverse compared to his previous ones, incorporating methods such as oil paint, acrylic, and embossing.

Additionally, 30 images of martyrs and the people of Gaza are displayed alongside the calligraphy paintings, chosen to match the color and form of each artwork.

The Israeli attacks on the besieged Gaza Strip since October last year have killed more than 41,600 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

During the ceremony, Hojat-ol-Islam Seyed Jalal Hussein, head of the Libraries, Museums, and Documentation Center of Astan Quds Razavi, said that the flag of resistance against oppression and support for justice has been raised since the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) and will never be extinguished.

He praised the organizers of the exhibition, emphasizing that such initia-



tives bring hope, especially when the enemy tries to spread despair among the people, particularly the youth.

The "Gaza in Blood" calligraphy painting exhibition will be open to

visitors until Saturday, October 5, 2024, from 9 am to 5 pm, at the Razavi Museum Gallery located in the Kowsar Courtyard of the Holy Shrine of Imam Reza (AS).

## German Scholar Underlines Two Important Points in Qur'an Translation

TEHRAN – A translator should pay close attention to two main points when rendering the Holy Qur'an from Arabic into another language, a German scholar said.

Stefan Friedrich Schaefer, a scholar, researcher and translator from Germany and a graduate of Al-Mustafa International University, made the remark in an interview with IQNA on the occasion of the International Translation Day, marked every year on September 30.

He said one of the two points is clarifying the goal of translation based on which the meaning should be conveyed correctly and the second is who the readers of the translation are going to be.

He said translating and interpreting the Qur'an is primarily aimed at promoting the understanding of Islam and the Qur'an and in doing this, the translator's understanding of the text is influential.

Schaefer further said that in translating Islam's Holy Book, one needs to refer to Arabic lexicons and find the exact meaning of many words that are in the Qur'an but not in use in today's Arabic.

He referred to the problems in German translations of the Qur'an and said he finds them especially when teaching the Qur'an in the German language.

Asked about his Qur'anic activities, especially in the field of translation, he said that his main aim at the moment was to translate Shia works and articles to make them available to German readers.

These translated articles are available on the website Wikishia, he said, stressing that in the age of information technology, it is necessary that more and more Islamic contents are produced and be provided to readers.

He added that he plans to embark on the translation of the Qur'an into German in the future.

Schaefer, 63, was born in Germany's Offenbach and lived in his hometown until the age of 45.

## International Publishers Call on Frankfurt to Cut Ties With Israel

TEHRAN - Publishers for Palestine, an international coalition of more than 500 publishers, issued an open letter on Tuesday demanding that the organizers of the Frankfurt Book Fair (FBF) cut ties with Israel.

In the letter, the coalition, which formed last November, called for Frankfurt to "publicly denounce Israel's regime of genocide and settler-colonial apartheid against the Palestinian people," among other demands.

The members press in Publishers for Palestine hail from 50 countries, including Brazil, Canada, Colombia, France, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Nigeria, the Philippines, Spain, Tanzania, Turkey, Wales,



and others, Publishers Weekly reported.

The U.S.-based member presses, which include several regular exhibitors at Frankfurt, are Haymarket Books, Interlink Publishing, Microcosm Publishing, OR Books, Other Press, Seven Stories Press, Sublunary Editions, and Verso Books.

The open letter comes shortly before this year's Frankfurt Book Fair, which is slated for October

16-20. Ahead of last year's fair, held just weeks after the October 7 attack on Israel, Frankfurt director Juergen Boos expressed support for Israel with a statement saying that the fair "stands with complete solidarity on the side of Israel" and intended to highlight Israeli voices at that year's show.

"Every year, people from more than 100 countries attend Frankfurt Buchmesse," a Frankfurt Book Fair representative said in a statement to PW. "The book fair is a platform for democratic discourse and peaceful encounters between publishers, authors, translators, illustrators, and readers from all over the world. Our program reflects this, featuring voices from every corner of the globe."

## Picture of the Day



Iranian women gathered in solidarity with Lebanese people in Melat Park, Tehran on Oct. 1, 2024.