

The Teachings of an *Extraordinary Human Being*

by Henry Bayman

‘Do you want to **talk** about Sufism, or to **be** a Sufi?’ he asked.

‘Being seems of greater value than talking,’ I replied.

The year was 1975, the place Ankara, Turkey. I was talking to one of the Sufi masters of Central Anatolia. This was my first contact with what would turn out to be a discovery of the first order. The Central Anatolian Sufis were, in turn, the spiritual descendants of the ‘Masters of Wisdom’: the legendary Sufis of Central Asia. In fact, this was the ‘course of the Saintlight’: the divine spiritual white light that shines on the forehead of each illustrious saint, in a chain tracing its lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad. If you follow a river upstream, sooner or later, you’re bound to come to the Source.

After a prep period of three years, my Sufi master took me to visit Mr. Ahmet Kayhan. He was tall, lean, of arresting appearance, and had had jet-black hair in his youth, which never turned entirely white even in advanced old age. Accomplished Sufi masters have nonverbal ways of communicating their stations to those who visit them, and in a few minutes I became aware that I was in the presence of an extraordinary human being. Little did I realize at the time that this encounter would lead to a lifelong immersion in the Master’s teachings.

To be in the Master’s presence was to be in an enchanted realm: to be simultaneously in

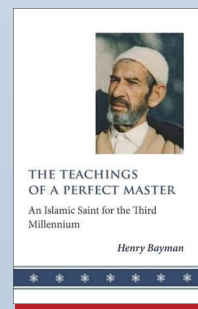
this world and out of it. I shall not attempt the impossible here by trying to describe the indescribable, which is what Master Kayhan was. Suffice it to say that if he was human, we are all subhuman; and if we are human, then he was superhuman. Since the overwhelming majority determines the name of the species, we must call him by the latter term. I have to add that this was not immediately perceptible to many: they thought at first that they were in the presence of a very kind, gentle, yet ordinary human being. It was only as they became more familiar with the Master that he would reveal himself, unfolding like the petals of a rose.

First they would be dazzled. Then, fascinated. That is when they began to fall in love with spiritual perfection personified: the end result of all possible human evolution. And believe me, having seen my share of gurus and New Age personalities, I do not say this lightly.

We have, it seems, sorely misjudged human potentials. We know they’re there, but we don’t know where to look for them. Nor do we know how to develop them. Moreover, you understand immediately that what is handed down in this tradition is true. For the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and you have seen the proof of it.

For years, I waited for the opportunity to tape his words. In 1987 I finally got it. Over the years, though I took scanty

HENRY BAYMAN is a student of Sufism and an independent scholar who has lived in Turkey for many years. He is the author of three previous books on Sufism and Islam: *The Station of No Station* (2001), *The Secret of Islam* (2003) and *The Black Pearl* (2005).



THE TEACHINGS OF A PERFECT MASTER: An Islamic Saint for the Third Millennium by Henry Bayman, published by Anqa Publishing, paperback (485 pages).

notes, I had come to the realization that here was this veritable Amazon River flowing out to sea with no chance of retrieval. Something had to be done to capture every drop of wisdom issuing from his mouth. His words had wings – they had the power to elevate you, whether you realized it or not. The Master encouraged the taking of notes, saying that memory is prone to forgetfulness and that his words should be recorded: ‘The mind forgets, but writing does not forget’.

I now have been able to (finally!) publish much of my recording transcripts and notes from him. These are arranged topically, giving easy access to what he thought and taught.

The Master’s discourse redefines Islam for the twenty-first century. In a conversational tone (because taken from his actual conversations), he expounds the purest, highest form of Islam/Sufism, in a way that transcends all Orders and Schools. Before there were any sects, schisms, denominations and the like, there was the reality and the pure teaching of the Prophet. And this is what Master Kayhan endeavoured to teach. A guidance that will assure us of happiness and success in this dangerous game called life, not to say the after-life—is this not a boon for all humanity? ☺