

# "A Threadbare Prayer Mat": Sufi Poetry and the Textures of Everyday Life in Kurdistan



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Abstract

This dissertation examines the ways of living available to Kurdish Muslims who disown pietistic forms of religiosity even as they read and recite the Sufi poetry that is associated with devotional practice in Islam. Based on ethnographic and archival research in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, I trace the appearance of fragments of poetry within the context of ongoing relationships between Muslims of diverging religious orientation. Three ethnographic chapters take up conversations with Muslims who defer or dismiss invitations from their family to a committed practice of Islam. Analyzing the poetry that appears in these conversations and illuminating the context of ongoing relationships with kin and intimate friends, I describe the paradoxes by which Muslims express attractions and attachments to Islam even as they spurn committed practice. I argue that everyday life is a space that receives and transforms discourses of secularization and pietism while simultaneously sustaining different orientations that are often marked by ambivalence or skepticism. Each of these three chapters examines the ways of living and ethical orientations available to Muslims who are derelict in the performance of religious duties. Chapter Four is a reading of epistolary letters of one of Kurdistan's most famous Sufi scholars: Mawlana Khalid Naqshbandi (d. 1827). With special attention to the appearance of poetic fragments, I examine the Arabic and Persian texts of letters that Mawlana Khalid sent to disciples, friends, teachers and political authorities. In light of the pains of physical separation and the threats besieging the integrity of the Muslim community, I suggest that the letters are part of an effort to sustain proper intimate relations between Muslims. I argue that insofar as poetry in the epistolary letters animates relationships under threat of separation, those letters may be part of a possible genealogy for contemporary Kurdish Muslims who sustain intimate relations with more pious kin. Throughout the dissertation, I examine the texture of difference and abiding uncertainties that accompany ongoing relationships in everyday life in Kurdistan. Within that space, fragments of poetry continue to animate relationships that are marked by different orientations to Islam.

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Your Prayers Your prayers were Light And your worship peaceful, Your sleep an enemy of prayer. Your life was a test, but you let It go by without a thought. Its ever-passing, slowly vanishes Before you know it. His poetry celebrates love and the common wisdom of Sufi saints and minstrels. -30-. My Fleeting Life My fleeting life has come and gone A wind that blows and passes by. Prayer Mats. Islamic pray mat has its importance that is required during Namaz (Salat). For people, it is one of the most important accessories to have in their home. The Islam Shop an acclaimed Islamic online store is well aware of the increasing demand of such mats. Our Islamic mats are unique and attractive; while they are hand-woven to provide you comfort too. Choose the Best Quality Islamic Prayer Mat. We have a variety of mats that you can choose according to your choice. Explore Our Range Of High Quality But Inexpensive Prayer Mats, For Adults And Children. Prayer Mats Are An Essential Part Of A Muslim Household. Almanaar's Range Of Prayer Mats Are Unique And Provide Comfort. We

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