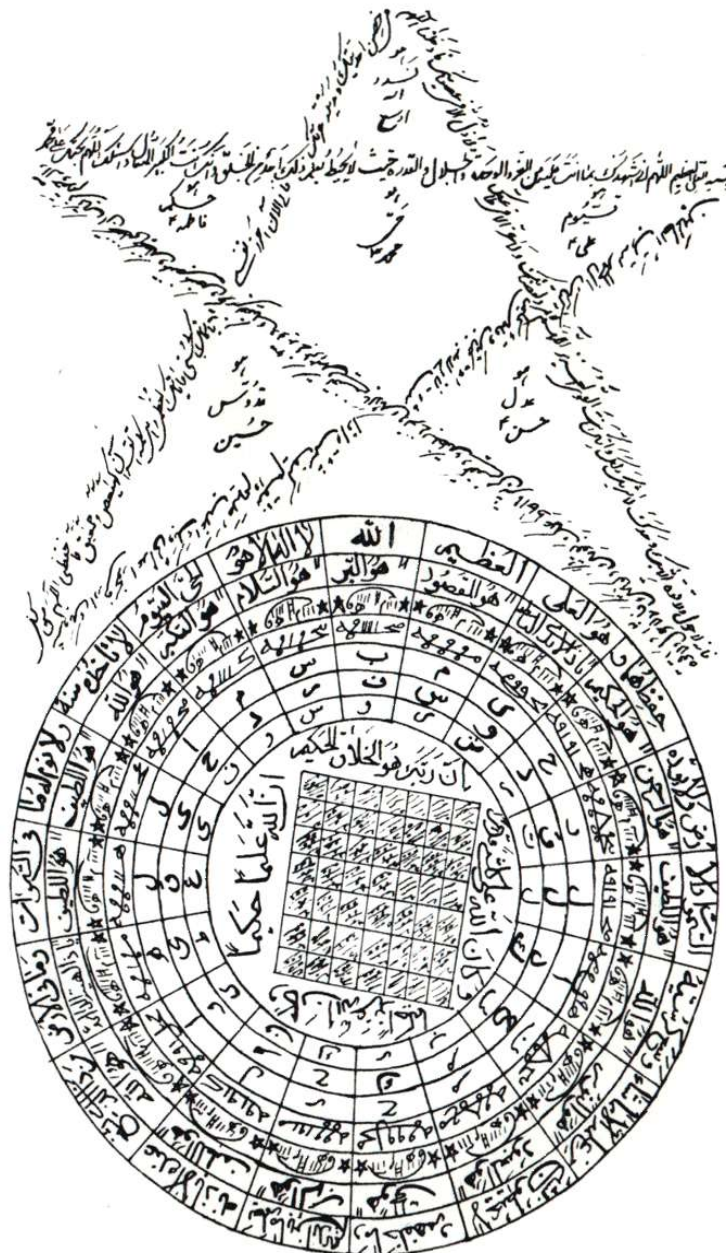


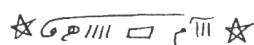
Azaliyyah

"The Eternal"

*A Poem by Her Holiness the Seventeenth Letter of the Living, Tahirih Qurratu'l-'Ayn
(may the everlasting peace of the All-High be upon Her), lauding His Holiness the Eternal Fruit,
Mirza Yahya Nuri Subh-i Azal (magnified be His eternality)*

Translated by Nima S. Hazini
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¹*In Name of God the Sublime, the Most Holy!*

Introduction and bio-biographical information

Umm Salmih Zarrin Taj Fatimih Begum Baraghani Qazvini (b.1814-d.1852), known to posterity as *Tahirih* (the pure) *Qurrat'ul-'Ayn* (solace of the eyes), is rightly regarded as the second most important figure in shaping Babi doctrine, and specifically its post-Islamic self-understanding, after the Primal Point, Siyyid Ali Muhammad Shirazi, the Bab (d.1850). Born to a distinguished clerical family of Qazvin, in a male-dominated patriarchal Shi'ite society of nineteenth century Iran, at a young age she gained a reputation for her prodigious learning and scholastic achievements. In the late 1820s her scholastic pursuits, and particularly her Shi'ite mystical and esoteric leanings, drew her along with her husband to Iraq and to the Shaykhi circle of Siyyid Kazim Rashti (d.1843/4?) in the Shi'ite shrine cities of the *Atabat*². There she quickly established herself among the inner circle of Rashti, who bestowed on her the title *Qurrat'ul-'Ayn* (the solace of the eyes). Never actually meeting the Bab in person, after the death of Rashti in late 1843/early 1844, she became one of the first eighteen individuals who accepted Siyyid Ali Muhammad Shirazi's initial claims to *babiyya*³ and hence was included in the initial Babi hierarchy of the Letters of the Living (*huruf al-hayy*). Soon *Tahirih* became notorious as its most radical exponent and firebrand activist in Karbala. In 1847 her unrelenting Babi activism in the Shrine cities earned her and her disciples deportation from Iraq and back to her hometown of Qazvin. Unilaterally divorcing her husband, there she soon became embroiled in the controversy surrounding her conversion and activism, and finally, to top it off, the assassination of her uncle by a Shaykhi zealot which was immediately blamed on the Babis. She narrowly escaped with her life from house captivity, and in the summer of 1848, became the central mover and shaker of the Badasht conference in northern Iran where eighty odd Babi leaders and activists assembled and made their public, official break with Islam⁴. Although accounts vary and are somewhat sketchy, in one climactic moment during the gathering at Badasht, *Tahirih* is said to have appeared unveiled, proclaiming the age of inner truth and herself as the

¹ *Bismillahi al-Amna' al-Aqdas*

² Karbala, Najaf, Kazimayn-Baghdad, etc.

³ Gatehood to the Shi'ite Hidden Twelfth Imam, or of the divine itself, see Lawson "The Terms 'Remembrance' (*dhikr*) and 'Gate' (*bab*) in the Bab's commentary on the Surah of Joseph," in (ed.) Momen *Studies in Babi and Baha'i Religions* vol. 5 Kalimat Press (Los Angeles: 1988).

⁴ According to most accounts, but especially *Nuqtatu'l-Kaf*, *Tanbih'ul-Na'imin* and *Hasht Bihisht*, it is at this conference whereby *Qurrat'ul-'Ayn* took the title *Tahirah* (the pure) and bestowed one of her own titles, *Baha'* (splendor), on Mirza Husayn Ali Nuri (d.1892), the future Baha'u'llah and older half-brother and rival of Mirza Yahya Nuri Subh-i-Azal (d.1912). For largely sectarian reasons surrounding the distortion or bowdlerization of early histories, Baha'i accounts have carefully omitted the latter fact that it was *Tahirih* who gave their future leader his initial title.

word which the Qa'im⁵ had uttered putting the kings and rulers of the earth to flight⁶! This act ostensibly scandalized the more conservative elements of the assembly, but it succeeded in further radicalizing the movement, while alienating others. After Badasht Tahirih wandered around Mazandaran province for some twelve months preaching the Babi message from hamlet to village, never making it to the shrine fortress of Shaykh Tabarsi due to the long siege between government troops and the Babis holed up in the shrine fighting them, until she was arrested by secret Qajar government agents in late 1849 on charges of being a Babi “rebel” and conspiring in the murder of her uncle. She was brought to Tehran and placed under house arrest in the residence of the city chief of police where she spent the rest of her days. In 1852 after the unsuccessful attempt by the Babis on the life of Nasiruddin Shah (d.1896), her fate was sealed together with that of a handful of other notable Babis in Tehran. She suffered a martyrs end and was apparently strangled to death by a bodyguard who then dumped her body in a shallow well at the back of the *Bagh Ilkhani*. She was thirty-eight years old.

Tahirih is rightfully regarded as the *Rabi'a*⁷ of her age, and, above all, the founding patron saint of modern Iranian feminism⁸. Here we will witness her ecstatic poetic outpouring like never before; outpourings very reminiscent to Rumi's volcanic eruptions of mystical verse *vis-à-vis* Shams of Tabriz as recorded in the *Diwan-i-Kabir*. In this poem Tahirih is the God-intoxicated poet and Subh-i-Azal (d.1812), like Shams to Rumi, her muse, divine preceptor and perfect mirror to her higher self and beyond. E.G. Browne provides the following information regarding this poem in Materials for the Study of the Babi Religion, 1961 (Cambridge: 1961), pg.343: “The following Persian poem was given to me in manuscript by the late Shaykh Ahmad *Ruhi* of Kirman, the ill-fated son-in-law and follower of Subh-i-Azal, who told me that the poem (of which, so far as I know, no other copy exists) was composed by Qurratu'l-'Ayn, and that the manuscript which I now publish is in her own handwriting⁹. Without being able to guarantee either of these assertions, I am inclined to credit them, for the poem is evidently by a Babi, and the handwriting appears to be a woman's, closely resembling that of a

⁵ I.e. ‘the Ariser’ or the Twelfth Imam and Mahdi, namely Siyyid Ali Muhammad Shirazi, the Bab

⁶ Amanat Resurrection and Renewal: The Making of the Babi Movement in Iran, 1844-1850 (Cornell: 1989), p.326. Pending a translation of the entry on her in the recently published Shi'ite Encyclopedia in Iran, which contains new information, currently this study in Chapter 7 includes the most complete and reliable biography of Tahirih in English.

⁷ The 8th century CE/2nd century AH woman mystic and Sufi saint of Basra who extolled the way of divine love and intimacy. See Smith Rabi'a and Other Women Mystics of Islam (Cambridge: 1928) which contains a moderately sized discussion of Tahirih Qurrat'ul-'Ayn in its discussion of the legacy of Rabi'a.

⁸ Modern Iranian feminists have by and large universally (mis)appropriated Tahirih. But, disappointingly (excluding the recent example of Farzaneh Milani), they have usually remained silent on her Babism and Shi'ite esotericism and mysticism. During the summer of 1994, at the carefully stage-managed and choreographed *Hambastegi* concert of the Islamist-Marxist Peoples Mojahedin Organization (MKO) in Paris, France, Iranian pop-artist, Aref, in a fit of emotion on stage, interjected by comparing the formerly Saddam Hussein funded, political cult leader and self-styled provisional president of the “Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran,” Maryam ‘Abrishamchi’ Rajavi, with Tahirih Qurratu'l-'Ayn. From a historical as well as a cultural, literary and religious point of view, the comparison is surface, at best, and remains totally ignorant. See the video *Koncert-e Hambastegi* produced by the *Daftar-e Intisharat-e Showra-ye Melli-e Moqavamat-e Iran* (the Office for the Publications of the Iranian National Council of Resistance: 1994).

⁹ Browne's note 1 states, “It was enclosed in a letter written from Constantinople on Sept. 19. 1892, and received by me five days later. The writer says that in response to his request his friends in Persia had sent one leaf in “the blessed writing of Jenab-i-Tahira, who herself transcribed some of her works.”

letter from Qurrat'ul-'Ayn to Mulla Shaykh 'Ali (called *Janab-i-Azim*) given to me by Subh-i-Azal, and reproduced in fac-simile, with printed text and translation, in my translation of the *New History* (pp. 434-441)... This [poem]... is a *mathnawi* of the kind known as *Saqi-nama*, or invocations to the Cup-bearer, such as Hafiz, and other lyrical poets have written."

In Sources for Early Babi Doctrine and History: A Survey (Leiden: 1992) Denis MacEoin contradicts Browne, and without much evidence and, disappointingly, without even touching on the point raised by Browne regarding its similarity to the Azim letter, states: "Comparison of the handwriting of this item with that in several other pieces known to be in Qurrat'ul-'Ayn's hand shows clearly that it is not an autograph. Although I would be reluctant to make a firm statement at this juncture, my feeling is that the poem itself may be a forgery, since it is in a style rather different to that of other poems known to be the work of Qurrat'ul-'Ayn," p. 114. MacEoin is certainly entitled to his opinion, but his rather atypical scholarly sloppiness in this case, flippantly dismissing its credibility, begs some serious questions. First, poets (particularly Persian and Arab ones with a prodigious output of religious and mystical verse as Tahirih is credited with) rarely engage in a single consistent stylistic form -- and I am not talking about metrical structures. Second, MacEoin does not address Browne's comparison of this poem with the Azim letter nor does he address how and why specifically his conclusion differs from Browne's. Granted he states his hesitation, but the question should be asked what extensive tests of handwriting analysis did MacEoin engage when comparing the various handwriting samples of Tahirih and why he obtained diametrically opposite results to Browne? The present translator, in consultation with a handwriting expert, took it upon himself to make preliminary digitally enhanced computer tests of copies of the samples of Tahirih's handwriting at the university labs of the Queensland University of Technology, Department of Criminology (Division of Forensics) in early February 2004 comparing the autograph poem in question to the Azim letter, and copies of facsimiles of other known autographs in the handwriting of Tahirih, and the tentative conclusion is the same as Browne's: that the poem is indeed in a handwriting very closely similar to that of Tahirih Qurrat'ul-'Ayn's, and arguably therefore quite possibly authentic¹⁰. As such the present translator will go on record stating his personal conviction that at this time he leans on the side of authenticity and believes this poem to be by none other than Tahirih Qurrat'ul-'Ayn herself.

Working with the premise of its authenticity, this poem can be regarded as Tahirih's longest among the several dozen poems that have survived. It can also perhaps be regarded as one of the most important, central poems of hers for several reasons. First, as above, it is one of few that can be authenticated to some level of certainty as having been penned by her. Second, it offers a valuable historical and doctrinal insight into the central issue of the post-Bab leadership of the nascent Babi community by one of its

¹⁰ During the trial test conducted, each of the facsimiles were enhanced by a 1200.5x factor and then converted into several three-dimensional holographic displays on two separate computers and compared. The handwriting analysis looked at the manner of the composition of strokes, the pauses, the consistencies in the shaping of the letters, etc. An 87% rate of accuracy was obtained in this preliminary trial between the Browne facsimile and the copies of other autograph samples of the writings of Tahirih. Given this result, the present translator would be more than willing to conduct further conclusive tests, and if possible on originals, and would recommend Dr MacEoin and anyone else so inclined do the same.

preeminent surviving leaders and Letters of the Living. The question that needs be answered is the date of its composition and there is little by way of overt internal evidence in the poem showing this. However from the elevated laudatory language she uses to describe Azal, it is probably fair to speculate *a priori* that it was written either shortly prior or shortly after May 1850 and possibly during the period of her Tehran confinement (1849/50-1852). My reasoning for this is based on some of the interpretations circulating regarding the *Hadith Kumayl*¹¹ current amongst loyalist Babis at the time that seem to be echoed in this poem, and which we see discussed in *Nuqtat'ul-Kaf*. It also proves that the surviving Babi top-rank leaders of the period (i.e. the *sabiqun*) where fully appraised of the leadership and succession issue: a question that would very shortly befuddle the Middle Babi period (1850-68) with factionalism and numerous theophanic contenders in Iran, Baghdad and Edirne staking a claim against Azal. Such being the case, the high laudatory language used by Tahirih to describe Azal would implicitly seem to bolster the case further for the authenticity of the Will and Testament of the Bab¹² nominating Azal as his vicar, vicegerent and successor, which the followers of Mirza Husayn Ali Nuri Baha'u'llah have without much evidence or argumentative depth -- yet with much sectarian fire and malice -- flatly denied authenticity to and have *post facto* accused their Azali-Bayani rivals of fabricating or interpolations, *ad nauseum*. This poem unequivocally demonstrates what a foremost surviving leader of the Babis actually thought of Azal and the kind of esteem he was held not long either before or after the Bab's execution in Tabriz when the movement lost its chief founding head and prophet. Whether this sentiment was universally shared amongst all Babis of the time is another question, although it is certainly echoed by its first chronicle historian, Hajji Mirza Jani Kashani in *Nuqtat'ul-Kaf* (Book of the Point of Kashan)¹³. But that it was so finely articulated by Tahirih Qurrat'ul-'Ayn, the seventeenth Letter of the Living, the remover of the veil, the radical innovator of Badasht herself, speaks volumes indeed.

To my knowledge this is the first time ever this poem is being translated and so I have dubbed it *Azaliyyah*, "The Eternal." I would propose it be the subject of a future study outlining the itinerary of an ecstatic Babi metaphysics laid out so magnificently here by Tahirih. Besides Rumi, *Azaliyyah* immediately reminds one of the similar theopathic mono(-dia-)logues with the divine of the twelfth century Shirazi Sufi master Ruzbihan Baqli in *Abhar'ul-'Ashiqin* (Jasmine of the Lovers)¹⁴ and *Kashf'ul-Asrar* (Unveiling of Secrets). The current version of *Azaliyyah* contains the additional couplets left out by Browne in Materials. Browne's published text in Materials ends at 60 whereas the text in Qurrat'ul-'Ayn: be-yad-e sadomin sal-e shahadat-e nabeghe-ye dowran (Qurrat'ul-'Ayn: In memory of the 100th Anniversary of the Martyrdom of a Genius

¹¹ For an English translation of the famous *Hadith Kumayl* of the first Shi'ite Imam, see Appendix II of E.G. Browne's edition and translation of Mirza Husayn Hamadani's The New History of Mirza Ali Muhammad, the Bab (Amsterdam: 1975), see especially pp.330-331 where Browne gives a summary of Jani's arguments applying the theophanic sequences of the *hadith* to each of the first initial five years of the Babi movement. For our purposes, the final locution of the *hadith* states, "A light shining forth from the Morning of Eternity (Subh al-Azal) and irradiating the temples of Unity." For the Arabic text of the *hadith* with a illuminating commentary see Siyyid Haydar Amuli Jamia' al-Asrar wa Manba' al-Anwar (The Totality of Secrets and Wellspring of Lights) (ed.) Osman Yahya (Tehran: 1969), p.170 *passim*.

¹² See my translation of this Will and Testament, posted March 19th, 2004, on Bayan19@yahooogroups.com.

¹³ First critical edition, (ed.) E.G. Browne & Allameh Mohammad Qazvini (Leiden: 1910).

¹⁴ See my forthcoming translation of this work.

of an Era) (Tehran: 1368), pp.26-29, continues to 87. I have included the additional couplets in my translation but, as required, have marked the transition after 60 with two short dashes (--). Other than proper names, as with all modern translations of Arabic and Persian poetry, pronouns and divine attributes have been left uncapitalised. I have used punctuation to a bare minimum and have placed any insertions of words or short phrases by me in order to assist the flow of ideas into brackets []. The translation is free style. Any incorrect interpretations or mistakes in translation are my own. Withal, may the sweet musk scented fragrances of the Immortal Beloved waft forth from the Eternal Badasht by the tongue of that great, Living and Innovating muse, the genius of an Era.

Azaliyyah
(*"The Eternal"*)

1. He is the best Beloved!
2. Come, *Saqi*, O royal falcon victorious
And honor us with a cup of that reddish wine of the soul.
3. For I shall once more make an ornament from a wine goblet
Which will burn my firm footing, head to toe.
4. Come, O *Saqi*, give me a chalice of wine
So that the bitter pangs of yester may depart my heart.
5. Grant new life to the dead
And honor a cup to those dejected hearts.
6. Quality of a *Samandar* for I am in this fire
Sanctify it, O *Saqi*, this, my stuporless wine.
7. Cast now this veil from the moon's mien
Take it off and give a cup of wine.
8. From this chalice of my purity¹⁵, you, make me drunk!
And disclose the theophany of that friend to my soul.
9. In the light like Moses I shall swoon away from myself
Leveling this mountain of the body as like Sinai.
10. I shall burn away my existence, all of it, from top to bottom
So that in my two worlds no trace is left.

¹⁵ *Ze-jam-e tahuram tu sar shar* kon. Browne comments, "This is perhaps an allusion to Qurrat'ul-'Ayn's title *Janab-i-Tahira* ("Her Holiness the Pure").

11. O *Saqi*, bring wine to this associate of pain
For my pivot of the idols disheveled tress.
12. If I am intoxicated by that reddish wine of yester night
Bring me another goblet from yourself so that reason may return to my head.
13. Since I have bound my heart to your curly lock, *Saqi*
I have been delivered from the fetters of two worlds.
14. From pre-eternity I had no creed or religion
Other than the sun of your affection, I had no sacred rite.
15. With my pre-eternal covenant I have grown resolved
From faith I will make your love my free choice.
16. In that I should have accepted your love
Give a cup, do not make me blameworthy.
17. Moment to moment sanctify my chalice of wine
As I am drowned in a sea of woe.
18. A chalice of wine for me shall not suffice
Me to you, *Saqi*, other than the embrace of your ocean.
19. So that in that ocean I may dive therein
Be annihilated and quit of myself.
20. From this Yemen¹⁶ of the heart I shall break the shell
And take out the pearl of the soul and lay it upon my palm.
21. Come, O *Saqi*, the world has become a new spring
The land has become an emerald and verdant.
22. It is spring and the flower-gardens have blossomed
Spread yourself out in the rose-garden!
23. The singer intones the secret of the river's lute
Bringing consolation to the heart torn lovers.
24. Cast off this vest, O *Saqi*
And place the heavenly tunic upon the body.
25. Ambergris from the curly lock of the *houris*

¹⁶ *Amman* or *Umman-i dil*. Given the context, I am not sure exactly what the first word of this phrase is supposed to mean in its specific usage here and I have consulted Steingass, Wehr, Dehkhoda's *Amsal va Hikam* and Mo'in. I am guessing that it is a reference to the trope of the mystical, celestial Yemen since Steingass states *Umman* is a name of a town in the terrestrial one.

Burning for you in the incense of scattering gold.

26. To the folk of heaven open the gate of delight
To the inhabitants of paradise disclose the theophany of your self.

27. From the preeminence of your service in the sublimity of eternity
Say thou that *hourī* and youth shall inhabit the earth.

28. To the head to head joyous dancing of the rosy cheeked ones
This banquet shall become luminous like the moon.

29. The revolving Venus shall become clear in the mist
The clouds beholding the moon with Jupiter¹⁷.

30. You, spread out over the earth
As saith the angel in the empyrean firmament, 'praise'¹⁸!

31. To the created universe, O *Saqi*, give good tidings
For the eve of disconsolation attained the morning of delight¹⁹.

32. Give the chalice of purity to the misfortunate ones
Lift up the invitation²⁰ to the heart-torn lovers.

33. For the manifestation of the essence of eternity has come²¹
The beauty of godhood has appeared.

34. To this happy news, if my self-sacrifice be worthy,
Fortunate is [he], the Supreme Lord²², by this good tiding.

35. From the truly real his light has shown forth
His Sinai has enveloped the whole universe.

36. Place a chalice of wine in my hand right now!
So that in salutation to this king I may open my mouth.

37. If my laudation be not acceptable to him

¹⁷ Browne comments, "There may be an allusion here to the Babi assembly at Badasht, where the meeting of Qurratu'l-'Ayn and Janab-i-Quddus was hailed as the 'conjunction of the Sun and the Moon.' See *New History*, p.359, n.2 *ad calc.*"

¹⁸ There is a double *entendre* here since *afarin* means both to praise or applaud as well as to create or fashion. The verse can thus also be read 'As saith the creating [or fashioning] angel in the empyrean firmament'. However I much like the almost psychedelic flow of imagery this way better.

¹⁹ *Keh shod sham-i gham sobh-i 'eshrat resid*. Obviously a veiled reference to Azal.

²⁰ *Sala* can also be construed here as the call to prayer.

²¹ *Keh 'ayn-i zohur-i azal amadeh, jamal-i khoda'i hovayda shodeh*. This is now an explicit reference to Azal

²² *bih in mozhdeh gar janfeshanan ravast, az in mozhdeh khosh vaght-i rabb-e 'a'last*. This is the first reference to the Bab.

What shall I sing? This is my habit.

38. From the aeons of eternity my obligation remained firmly fixed [on this]
For I was nursed on the milk of his love.

39. O king, what exposition should I make of your description?
The singer of your praise, existent creation of being and becoming.

40. You are the one who is the almighty creator of this world
O God, you are the peerless and the ariser.

41. I have become a passive patient, I call you God
Many gods have become your upright slaves.

42. The criers of “I am God” are your servants
The god makers are your apprentices.

43. By your command were the atoms of creation [brought forth]
You are the first point²³, we proceed [from] you.

44. Because the light of your beauty became evident
You have been called the fruit by the mercy of the lord of the *Bayan*²⁴.

45. The intention of tree is nothing else than fruit
A tree becomes manifest by its fruit.

46. Because of you the *Bayan* became complete
All the hidden secrets were seen in truth.

47. There is naught in your [whole] existence but the *Bayan*
May there remain no trace of faith in the world.

48. From you the cause of God has become exalted
The majesty of gods have become manifest.

49. You are the goal of religion in every age
[As] the theophany of preeminence²⁵ of the aeon has proclaimed.

50. No seal [are you] that a last I should know you by
No principal [are you] that a first I should call you by.

²³ *Tu'i nuqta-ye avval, ma sabaq*. Tahirah calls Azal here the ‘first point’, which directly references one of the titles of the Bab, the Primal Point (*nuqta-ye ula*).

²⁴ *Cho nur-e jamal-e tu amad `ayan, samara khawandat az lotf-e rabb-e bayan*. Browne states, “These verses appear to be addressed to Subh-i-Azal, who is also entitled “the Eternal Fruit” (Thamara-i-Azaliyya).

” The Bayan is obviously the Babi Quran. Its Lord being the Bab.

²⁵ *Tajjali-e bahr-e dawr farmudeh-ye*, namely, the Bab.

51. In the universe you are the first of the last
You are manifest in the [very] atoms of the cosmos.

52. To each people has there turned a guide
The [point of the] worship [which] they indicate is you.

53. To a name of your names are they prostrated
The breadth of whose totality they are self-effaced and humbled [by].

54. Illumined by your light is church and sanctuary
You are [indeed] the manifestation of the essence of the face of the ancient.

55. Where am I, and where your description, O honored one?
Since obliterating nothingness becomes [all] descriptions of the essence of the ancient.

56. Everything is absolute idolatry, you are my mono-theity
You are [far] transcendent of my praises.

57. If I am an idolatrous heretic, it is from you
If am a sinning deviant, it is from you.

58. Sin has become the coquettish blandishment of the servants
And become the grace of forgiveness for the lord of sovereignty.

59. One cup with grace shall I sanctify
Which shall burn away all my idolatry, O honored one.

60. From the chalice of love honor me my wine
If the annihilation of my existence be my good fortune.

--

61. O that from the illumination of the beauty of [your divine] power
You burned the veils one by one.

62. Further, O all-powerful lord of the gates,
Nothing remains of any portion of any particle of any atom.

63. From the veils of the curtains of grandeur
By the stations of the coverings of limit.

64. O God, O creator, I burned
From the evils of divine gold [and silver].

65. O my lord, find from the excellences of existence
So that I may be ennobled by the attraction of being.

66. O beautiful one and O precious one of splendor²⁶
Illuminate the tablet by the fire of appearance.

67. Make the heart pure, O beloved of the gnostics
From that which negates certainty.

68. So that I may be exalted in the expanse of justice
From the resemblance of states other than emaciation.

69. O God, to me there was naught but you
Other than the twin bond there was no defender from the exterior.

70. O God, the truth of the king of kings [who is]
Reclining on the regal sofa of the excellences of the essences.

71. [I have] passed by from all the fetters of existence
Drunk and intoxicated by the proclamations of *Alast*²⁷.

72. They²⁸ saw the remitter of the fine and remitted the fine
That which they behooved they removed.

73. O God, their supreme design
Praise be to their exalted design.

74. Other than your pure face, O lord of existence,
The lofty expanses were annihilated by the vicissitudes.

75. From the inclining elevation and power of the *Bayan*
To the elevation of the expanses of the highest heights [of the divine] abodes.

76. Therefore the highest dwelling in the expanded breast of sublimity
Are the totality of the particles [of existence] innovated by them.

77. O God, from these excellences of yours
They found the power of these splendors of yours²⁹.

78. But, O lord, I must roll in the dust of the furrows of the ground
Next to that particle that was essentialised by them.

79. Because they are the most excellent and most noble
Possessor of being, they are the most sublime and the most lofty.

²⁶ *Ay jamil o ay `aziz be-abha`*. Here Tahiri refers to Azal with the title *Abha`* or *Baha`* (splendor) which Hajj Mirza Jani also mentions being one of Azal's several titles.

²⁷ The Quranic fiat by God in celestial pre-creation asking all things "Am I not your Lord? (*Alastu bi-rabbikum*)" by which all things reply, "Yes, yes, we witness [that thou art]! (*bala bala shahadna*)."

²⁸ In the next few verses the 3rd person nominative plural is only in the superlative sense to address the divinity in terms of the highest respect and should not be taken as addressing an ontological plurality.

²⁹ *Ya elaha, az ta fazolha-ye tu, yaftand in qodrat-e abha'-ye tu*.

80. O God, you have them [close] to yourself
You have them and you have them and you have them!

81. Their becoming, the station of no description
Their carrying off, to the abode of majesty.

82. You took away from them, and gave [them] your own state
Whatever was itself, it became that.

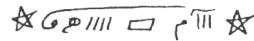
83. O God, I must purify myself
[And] let there be [the invocation of the] remembrance of holiness for them.

84. Perchance your grace will show assistance
From my custom in these states of contemptibility.

85. When you take nothingness away from me, O beloved
You bring forth absolute existence from out of my pocket.

86. O God, the truth of these king of kings,
Repeatedly I [find myself] in the grades of these mean spirits³⁰.

87. O God, the truly real, lord of the worlds
O sincere beloved, [you are] the greatest of all exonerating forgivers³¹.



³⁰ Perhaps this is a not so veiled reference to her captivity.

³¹ *Ya ilaha 'l-haqq, rabb al-'alimin, ya habib as-sidq khayr'ul-ghafirin.*