

Comparative Study of European and Islamic Aestheticism in *The Tales Of Dervishes* by Idries Shah



Farah Kiran	M.Phil Scholar, Department of English, NCBA&E University Bahawalpur kiranfarah171@gmail.com
Iqra Kiran	M.Phil Scholar, Department of English, NCBA&E University Bahawalpur
Ayesha Kiran	Visiting Lecturer, Department of English Literature, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur
Dr. Muhammad Arfan Lodhi	Higher Education Department (Collegiate Wing) Punjab, Pakistan samaritan_as@hotmail.com

Abstract: *The present research discusses and analyzes the modules of impermanence, human existence and stream of consciousness in Idries Shah's selected narratives. This study investigates fleeting nature of human, human struggles in inner self & outer world. In this study, terminologies stream of consciousness seeks to capture a character's thought process, his inner struggles and conflicts. It's more than just an internal monologue (Delf, 2019). Another term used in this research is "absurdity" that describes the representation of individuals, circumstances, or events that are ludicrous, unrealistic, or impossible (Rehmani, 2022). It is frequently employed as a tool to question conventional wisdom and investigate the meaning of life. The qualitative method is chosen for this research to acquire secondary information. The study has three steps. The first step in this research is to read the stories closely to understand the direction of humanity, elements of human existence, the impossibility of life and the perceptions of truth and pleasure. The second step is to analyze the terminologies used in the research like deception, human identity, human crisis, fleeting nature and impermanence. Findings indicate that although the stories in Shah's collection have their roots in Islamic (primarily Sufi) aestheticism, comparing them to European aesthetic ideals particularly those from 19th-century movements as if Aestheticism highlights important distinctions in the form and purpose.*

Keywords: Aestheticism; Mystic fiction; Human existence; Impermanence life; Fleeting nature

1. Introduction

Idries Shah was a Sufi writer and instructor considered for all ages. He is among the most significant intellectual writers of the 20th century. Shah dedicated his life in gathering, translating and modifying important sufi ancient literary works for western audiences. The writings that have some referred practical philosophy has century's worth of sufi and Islamic ideas focused on maximizing human potential. Millions of copies of his body of work, which consists of more than thirty volumes on

subject ranging from travelogues and cultural studies to psychology and spirituality, has been translated into languages. They are thought to constitute a crucial link between East and West cultures (Abdullah, 2014).

The reader is encouraged to consider Islamic art to be on par with other forms of art, neither superior nor inferior to them. As a result, unlike other forms of aesthetics, Islamic aesthetics does not call for the use of any techniques. The concept of aesthetics in the European tradition, which is a philosophical investigation of the

sense of beauty, came into being and took on its name in the eighteenth century, although similar issues had been discussed for two millennia prior in Europe. German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten (1714–1762) first used the word aesthetics, which comes from the Greek aesthesis (perception), in the contemporary sense in 1735. Baumgarten's goal was to create a "science of sensitive cognition." The first book with this new term in the title was Baumgarten's incomplete work *Aesthetica*. The phrase was not well-established in Great Britain and needed some time to take on. Modern European aesthetics is based on several eighteenth-century innovations. One is the increasing interest in taste judgments, particularly in the basis of attributions of beauty. The term "aestheticism" describes an art movement that reached its height in England in the late 1800s and valued art above all else due to its beauty and ability to elicit a holistic experience. The aesthetic movement had an impact on all forms of art, including literature, music, architecture, painting, and sculpture (Emma, 2024). Literature underwent a shift from Victoriana to the aesthetics. Victorian literature served a function, such as imparting morality and ideals. As a literary movement, estheticism evaluated literary writings based on their beauty or the sense of beauty. The key figures of aestheticism in literature include Oscar Wilde. Shah maintained that although humans are endowed with the highest potential, they opt to live well below it. Shackled by their own lower nature, which is a combination of fear, prejudice, greed, and laziness, they are propelled forward, harnessed, and restrained by their commanding self. He believed that vices are veils that hide our potential rather than ethically weighted sins, which turned morality on its head. Virtues are useful guidelines for the advancement of humanity, not far-off marvels to be desired. Among the qualities he highlighted were compassion, friendliness, humor, clarity of thought, and common sense, to mention a few.

1.1 Thesis Statement

The present research explores the comparative study of European and Islamic aestheticism in terms of experience of life and nature of human

beings. It indicates awareness and presence of mind. The study explores how the human mind perceives and responds to the world that is full of struggles, desires and hardships. Idries' *The Tales of Dervishes* talks about different scenarios and unpredictability of life. The present research resolves the issue of unanswered questions that reflects identity crises, abrupt endings and deeper connection of spiritual growth.

1.2 Research Questions

1. How the belief in beauty over morality is shown in narrative *The Tales of Darvishes*?
2. How is experiences and struggles of life explored in Idries Shah's text *The Tales of Darvishes*?
3. How one can relate Sufism with aestheticism in Idries Shah's works?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The present research relates the fictional world to the real world. It indicates that if a person's outer appearance is good; it is not obvious he is also good in his nature and one must stand according to society if society do something wrong it is not possible for that one person to live in a unique good way. This research shows that one must be aware of what is happening in his surrounding so that he can take good decision for himself and need to focus on meaning of life.

2. Literature review

Aestheticism's origins can be found in the 1860s, but the movement did not become particularly well known until the 1880s. The French phrase "fin de siècle," which means, "end of the century" and denotes the conclusion of one period and the start of a new one, is frequently linked to the aesthetic movement. It is frequently used to characterize late nineteenth-century Britain, when aesthetic values were beginning to take precedence over the ideals of the Victorian era. The decline of the Victorian era was largely due to the United States and other newly rising world powers challenging Britain's political and economic hegemony. The end of Britain's imperial heyday effectively marked the

beginning of a new, vehemently anti-Victorian school of thought. The Victorian era's somber morals and middle-class norms were despised by the Aesthetic movement, which promoted beauty as the goal of both art and life. Many people believe that Oscar Wilde's 1895 trial marked the end of the movement. By doing this, it made way for modernism to arise in the twentieth century.

Their art was highly sophisticated and visually appealing. "To appreciate a work of art means, therefore, to appreciate that work of art itself, as distinguished from appreciating something outside it, something accidentally or arbitrarily connected with it," said French writer Vernon Lee, summarizing the aesthetes' philosophy of art perfectly (Evangelista 5). Their art was highly sophisticated and visually appealing. "To appreciate a work of art means, therefore, to appreciate that work of art itself, as distinguished from appreciating something outside it, something accidentally or arbitrarily connected with it," said French writer Vernon Lee, summarizing the aesthetes' philosophy of art perfectly (Fox, 2002). Shah's thoughts on life experiences link humans to realities, struggles and complexities for example, in the story, *The Dog, The Stick and The Sufi* explains the nature of man as a person misbehaves with the dog. A man dressed as Sufi saw the dog seek for justice the dog explains that man dressed in Sufi look never harm him as man instead of the man dressed in ordinary dress. The dog's only mistake is that he thought about the appearance and linked this with his safety. Remove the elect's clothes off him if wish to chastise him. Take away his people of righteousness outfit.

Aestheticism was late 19th-century European art movement based on the notion that art need not be didactic, political, or have any other purpose beauty is the sole reason it exists. The movement started as a response to the dominant utilitarian social theories as well as the industrial age's perceived ugliness and philistinism. Immanuel Kant established the conceptual groundwork for it in the eighteenth century by arguing that aesthetic criteria are independent of morality, utility, or pleasure. In Germany, J.W. von Goethe, J.L. Tieck, and others advanced this

theory; in England, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas Carlyle did the same. Philosopher Victor Cousin, Théophile Gautier, and Madame de Staël first used the expression "art for art's sake, "or" l'art pour l'art, in France in 1818. Morality and evil regarding the relationship between morality and art, Wilde argues that creators of beauty are artists. Their only objective is to explore beauty; they have no desire to preach morals. It is impossible to define a book as morally or immorally. Books can have excellent or bad writing. The essays in this volume cover a wide range of topics, including the meaning and significance of aestheticism, as well as its historical boundaries. The volume has a thematic cohesiveness thanks to reflections on "de-humanizing" and "re-humanizing" within aesthetic movements. Kelly Comfort outlines a theory of de-humanization as, among other things, "the drive to free art from human utility or usefulness " and re-humanization as the subjective experience of engaging with art in her thorough introduction, drawing on Ortega y Gasset's well-known formulation of the "dehumanization of art" as well as on Theodore Adorno and Peter Bürger. When considering the relationship between aesthetics and ethics, Bruyn's "Art for Heart's Sake," which analyzes a tendency from Kierkegaard to Pater through Iser, arguably illustrates the path from devaluing to dehumanizing the most clearly. Many people contend that Islamic art requires a very specific kind of consciousness, that it differs greatly from other kinds of art, that Muslims are not permitted to depict humans in their works of art, and that calligraphy is the pinnacle of Islamic art. Oliver Leaman, who contends that they are incorrect, contests all these concepts. Rather, he contends that the standards we ought to use to evaluate Islamic art are the same as those that apply to other forms of art, and that the attempt to isolate Islamic art from other forms of art is a product of orientalism.

This research examines Idries Shah, the most widely read Western writer on Sufism, giving a summary of his writings and career. At their core, these are just retellings of Muslim folklore, particularly as presented in Nasir Uddin's charming tales, which is part of the reason

Shah's novels are so popular. The research contends that, on a deeper level, they nonetheless mirror Gurdjieff's influence and the example of Shah's friend Robert Graves, who also skillfully repeated captivating stories. This research explores Shah's nuanced connection to the Gurdjieff teachings and John G. Bennett. Shah refused to take on more than a small number of disciples despite the success of his works, denouncing both the gurus and those who followed them. Still, he made a significant impression on the public in the West. However, his knowledge of Sufism was lost when he passed away in 1996 (Sedgwick, 2016).

The wide issue of Islamic aesthetics includes several subtopics that relate to the various media and intellectual domains that are varyingly concerned with artistic creation and thought, as well as with how beauty is perceived, expressed, and experienced in Islam. Even though aesthetics may include the concept of beauty, it does not always define it. Aesthetics in Islam, like in any other environment, has two aspects: the theoretical and the practical. Aesthetics in applied art refers to both the phenomenological-physical qualities of a work as well as its philosophical-metaphysical foundations. Aesthetics elaborates on sensory perception and cognition in the realm of pure thought. It also discusses how the perceptual properties of cultural and natural objects might elicit phenomena of consciousness and psychological experience.

Sufism's aesthetics encourage people to always go beyond what is known and constrained and discovers his calling in all things beautiful; he embraces this aesthetic realm in the breathtaking sights, sounds, colors, and illuminations of nature, all of which he must discover and experience. By doing this, one will be able to enter the vast realm of aesthetics, which encompasses the original source of all beauty and beauty. A person who is influenced by such beauty would experience joys from which they will never want to escape and will always choose to remain in the exquisite and delightful realm of aesthetics. It explores the complex interrelationship between spirituality and aesthetics in the context of Sufism. Utilizing an

extensive array of writings, poetry, and rituals, it explores how the quest for beauty functions as a fundamental principle in the spiritual development of adherents. The study examines several aesthetics topics, such as the cultivation of inner beauty via mystical practices, the use of music and poetry as means of spiritual elevation, and the symbolism of art and architecture. It also explores the ways in which Sufi aesthetics highlight the significance of love, harmony, and oneness as the essential elements that underlie the beauty of the universe.

Shah, who reads Persian, Arabic, and Urdu, spent more than forty years searching through the great sea of Oriental literature and oral Sufi tradition. He returned with a wealth of insightful sayings, exquisite poetry, clever proverbs, and mental tricks. Among these were some Nasiruddin tales, which he popularized in the Western world. Shah was raised in a household rich in Islamic classical literature, both in writing and oral tradition. His delight of narrative, the grace of his style, his soft and unforced wit, and his love of stories and storytelling come through in all this work. The narrative instructs children to take immediate action if they anticipate trouble. In the story above, the first and second fish would have been captured as soon as they sensed danger if they had not acted accordingly. It is essential to adjust to changes; the one who doesn't die. This short story emphasizes the value of always being aware and having the presence of mind. When faced with a challenging circumstance, people ought to act to protect themselves instead than waiting for assistance from others.

Aesthetic formalism, which holds that an item has aesthetic value because of its perceptual qualities which include its visual, aural, gustatory, olfactory, and tactile qualities are the most common response to the topic of aesthetics. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, aesthetic formalism gained popularity at the same time as artistic formalism. At that time, everyone believed that artistic worth was a kind of aesthetic value, thus the only way for artistic formalism to become more popular was to bring aesthetic formalism along with it. However, aesthetic formalism has remained popular

whereas artistic formalism has subsequently faded. One may argue that aesthetic formalism's respect for the conceptual connection between the aesthetic and the perceptual provides the explanation. Any satisfactory response to the aesthetic issue needs to satisfy the so-called *perceptual constraint*, which is to say, it needs to explain how aesthetic value is seen in a plausible way. This is put in the clearest possible words by aesthetic formalism. Aesthetic formalism comes in several flavors. The strongest interpretations of it maintain that an object's aesthetic worth derives only from its perceptual qualities (Bell 1958/1914; Danto, 2003). Weaker versions either require that objects have aesthetic value paradigmatically in virtue of their perceptual properties (Levinson, 1996) or allow objects to have aesthetic value in virtue of their non-perceptual content if that content expresses itself perpetually (Zangwill, 1998).

3. Research Methodology

The current study used an exploratory design. Exploratory research is the process of examining research questions that have not yet been thoroughly examined. Exploratory research is frequently qualitative and largely exploratory. Nonetheless, an exploratory study with a large sample size could also be quantitative. Because of its adaptability and open-endedness, it is also

sometimes called interpretive research or a grounded theory method. In the past, it provided answers to questions like what, why, and how. George (2021) although the findings will not be definitive, the objective is to have a better understanding of the current research challenge. In this type of research, a researcher begins with a general idea and uses this analysis to pinpoint problems that might be the subject of further investigation. In this case, the researcher's willingness to alter course in response to fresh information or ideas is crucial. This type of research is usually conducted while the problem is barely beginning. It examines the following topics: awareness, fortitude, willpower, and faith-based leaps.

3.1 Sample of the Study

A sample is defined as a smaller quantity of data chosen by an investigator using a preset selection procedure from a large population. These constituents are referred to as test units, examining components, and sensations. One of the best ways to begin investigation is to construct a sampling. The chosen tales from Idries Shah's book *The Tales of Dervishes* serve as the sample for additional research. A variety of samples is examined, including the role of nature in human life, identity crises, stream of consciousness, and many other topics.

Table 1. Sample Description

Name of the Stories	Author Name	Page No.
The Three Fishes	Idries Shah	1
When the Waters Were Changed	Idries Shah	10
The Blind Ones and the Matter of the Elephant	Idries Shah	14
The Dog, the Stick and the Sufi	Idries Shah	16
How to Catch a Monkey	Idries Shah	18
The Tale of the Sands	Idries Shah	12
The Ancient Coffers of Nuri Bey	Idries Shah	20
The Three Truths	Idries Shah	22
The Merchant and the Christian Dervish	Idries Shah	36
Strike on this Spot	Idries Shah	45
Ogre and The Sufi	Idries Shah	33
Why the Clay Birds Flew Away	Idries Shah	47
The Oath	Idries Shah	59
The Idiot in The Great City	Idries Shah	60
The Bequest	Idries Shah	57
The Idiot, The Wise Man and The Jug	Idries Shah	52
The Dog and The Donkey	Idries Shah	73
The Man Who Was Easily Angered	Idries Shah	71

The Man Who Was Aware of Death	Idries Shah	69
The Founding of a Tradition	Idries Shah	61

3.2 Sampling Criteria

Purposive sample technique called "criterion sampling" is employed in research to choose participants according to predefined standards or attributes. Researchers might concentrate on study participants who have traits or experiences that are pertinent to the goals of the study by using this sampling strategy. When researchers have specific requirements that participants must fulfill to be included in the study, they opt for criterion sampling. These requirements may be predicated on several variables, including demographics, experiences, abilities, knowledge, or other pertinent characteristics. Researchers hope to guarantee that the sample reflects people with the relevant traits or experiences by choosing participants who fit these requirements. Researchers can target subgroups or individuals who can offer insightful information or who fit the research objectives by using criterion sampling, which gives them control over the participant selection process.

3.3 Data Processing Tools

To discover stated hypotheses, assess arguments, and evaluate outputs, data collecting is the process of gathering information about a cultural condition and forecasting figures on

factors of concern in an orderly, logical, and systematic fashion. In all areas of education, but especially in the natural sciences, economics, physiology, and society, data collecting is a standard component of evaluation. Although the methods differed depending on the genre, the focus on guaranteeing authentic and realistic diversity remained constant. First, information was gathered from the book, and then relevant books, journals, and articles were examined. This is the most crucial aspect of the study since it enabled the researcher to extract valuable information from the massive amount of data that had already been provided. The researcher examines, studies, and evaluates human identity, stream of consciousness, and its impacts on human society using the qualitative approach. The researcher focuses on stream of consciousness and human identity.

3.4 Framework of Analysis

"European and Islamic Aestheticism" is the theory that the researcher employed in this work. Identity crises, leaps of faith, machination, and stream of consciousness are all explored in this theory. Researchers discovered the following categories during the current study, and they are further discussed and clarified.

Table 3 2. Framework of analysis

Categories	Sub-categories
Impermanence	• Fleeting nature of beauty • Importance of appreciating the present moment
Individualism and self-cultivation	• Importance of individualism and cultivation • Pursuit of one's own desires and interests
Beauty as a ultimate value	• Prioritizes beauty and form over social and political messages
Continued relevance	• Importance of beauty, imagination and individualism • Continues to resonate with contemporary artists, writers and thinkers
Imagination and fantasy	• Values essential components of artistic creation and appreciation
Focus on individual experience	• Aesthetic experience • Relaxed and cheerful

4. Data Analysis

Literary themes of decay, change, and the transient nature of experiences are frequently used to explore the idea of finding beauty in the fleeting, transient, and flawed aspect of things. This is known as the impermanence of aesthetic beauty. This idea highlights the emotional connection and significance that can be gained from the beauty of things that are fleeting or temporary. In short, the things or beauty of nature that is not permanent. As in the story, *When the Waters were Changed*, after the announcement of water change one of the man saved enough clean water to avoid drinking changed water but could not stay on this tone for too long.

He found that they were thinking and talking in an entirely different way from before; yet they had no memory of what had happened, nor of having been warned. When he tried to talk to them, he realized that they thought that he was mad, and they showed hostility or compassion, not understanding (Shah, 1970).

This depicts a fundamental shift in the mental and emotional states of the persons involved, as well as the protagonist's increasing sense of estrangement. The shift in how people think and communicate shows a significant alteration, which could be the result of an external force or event. The phrase "entirely different" emphasizes the extent of this transition, implying that their cognitive processes and worldview have changed in a way that is evident to the protagonist. This implies that either whatever event or experience occurred (probably something major) has vanished from their brains or they are unable to recall it. This could signify a lack of personal agency or identity, with people being divorced from their past experiences and separating themselves from the protagonist. The protagonist's efforts to communicate or make sense of the situation are met with incredulity. The fact that people think he's "mad" shows that the protagonist's perceptions differ from theirs, exacerbating his feelings of solitude. His attempts to explain or relate to the new world prove unsuccessful, as the others regard him as insane. The altered individuals' responses are unclear. Compassion

conveys sympathy or care, whereas hostility conveys fear, rejection, or even violence. Nevertheless, neither reaction demonstrates genuine empathy or comprehension of the protagonist's plight. The absence of "understanding" in this case is significant because it demonstrates that other people's emotional reactions are flimsy and fail to recognize the situation's underlying complexity from the protagonist's perspective.

At first he drank none of the new water, but went back to his concealment, to draw on his supplies, every day. Finally, however, he took the decision to drink the new water because he could not bear the loneliness of living, behaving and thinking in a different way from everyone else. He drank the new water, and his fellows began to look upon him as a madman who had miraculously been restored to sanity (Shah, 1970).

In another story, *The Dog, the Stick and the Sufi*, the stick represents things that people pursue in life without realizing their underlying nature or origin, such as outward attractiveness or surface-level appeal. The stick is transient, in motion, and ultimately meaningless by itself, just like beauty fades. It attracts attention but has little long-term worth. The dog chases the stick mindlessly, just as people chase fame, beauty, or pleasure without understanding how ephemeral they are. This pursuit is never-ending and never-satisfying since beauty, like the stick, is ephemeral and changes over time. This is in line with the Sufi way, which looks beyond the fleeting and acknowledges that true fulfillment can only be found elsewhere, and that beauty is transient.

The Sufi answered: "Far from its being my fault, it is that of the dog. I did not strike him from a mere whim, but for the reason that he had fouled my robe."

But the dog persisted in his complaint.

Then the peerless one addressed the dog: "Rather than waiting for the Ultimate Compensation, allow me to give you a compensation for your pain." (Shah, 1970).

The Sufi initially justifies his decision by stating that he struck the dog in response to the dog

fouling his robe, not because he was reckless or malicious. A logical, cause-and-effect explanation for the activity is suggested by this framing. The Sufi attempts to frame his action as a legitimate reaction by doing so. He disassociates himself from causing injury, implying that the dog is the one who created the necessity for such a reaction by its behavior. Even when the Sufi explains, the dog still "complains." This tenacity could represent the innate character of suffering and the need for fairness or compensation. The emotional aspect of grievance that wants compensation for injury rather than merely accepting logical explanations may be symbolized by the dog's response. It might also allude to the idea that intellectual or logical justifications aren't always sufficient to ease emotional distress. The dog still needs a solution, even if the Sufi had good reasons for what he did.

By examining conceptions that are ephemeral, transient, and subject to change particularly those pertaining to intelligence, foresight, and opportunity Idries Shah's story *The Three Fishes*, explores the theme of fleeting concepts. Fishermen are preparing to invade the pond where the three fish reside. The smartest fish spot danger right away and take swift action to get away while there is still a chance.

But as the clever fish was holding his breath, the fisherman supposed that he was dead, and threw him back. This fish now glided into a small hole under the bank. Now the second fish, the half-clever one, did not quite understand what had happened. So, he swam up to the clever fish and asked him all about it. 'Simple,' said the clever fish, 'I played dead, so he threw me back.' So the half-clever fish immediately leaped out of the water, at the fisherman's feet. 'Strange,' thought the fisherman, 'they are leaping about all over the place.' And, because the half-clever fish had forgotten to hold his breath the fisherman realised that he was alive and put him into his satchel (Shah, 1970).

The second fish, who is "not as intelligent but clever in emergencies," manage to get out in time. Slow to react, the third fish is captured and perishes, missing its little opportunity to escape. The idea that opportunities are fleeting and that

waiting might have irreversible effects is emphasized by this progression. In the story, intelligence and folly are shown via time and action rather than being permanent attributes. The story implies that wisdom must be used in acting before it's too late, demonstrating that intelligence is more than simply knowing; it's also about discerning when to act, which is a transient idea in and of itself. The fishes view the pond as a place of safety and home, but the threat soon destroys this illusion, giving the fishes a false sense of permanency. This highlights the transience of comfort and safety as well as the necessity of being adaptable. Time is everything in this story. In contrast to the second fish's delay and the third fish's inaction, the first fish acts quickly.

The idea that opportunities are fleeting and that waiting might have irreversible effects is emphasized by this progression. In the story, intelligence and folly are shown via time and action rather than being permanent attributes. The story implies that wisdom is acting before it's too late, demonstrating that intelligence is more than simply knowing; it's also about discerning when to act, which is a transient idea in and of itself. The fishes view the pond as a place of safety and home, but the threat soon destroys this illusion, giving the fishes a false sense of permanency. This highlights the transience of comfort and safety as well as the necessity of being adaptable. Time is everything in this story. In contrast to the second fish's delay and the third fish's inaction, the first fish acts quickly. This disparity in how time is perceived and used illustrates how time is a limited resource, and how one uses it can have an impact.

Idries Shah's story, *The Tale of the Sands*, explores identity, control, metamorphosis, and permanence all of which are proven to be deceptive and transient and this topic of ephemeral conceptions is central to the narrative. As it attempts to traverse the desert, the river fears that it would vanish if it gives itself up to the wind. The wind, however, instructs the river to relinquish its present shape to transform into rain and proceed with its trip.

"It is so, and if you do not believe it, you cannot

become more than a quagmire, and even that could take many, many years; and it certainly is not the same as a stream."

"But can I not remain the same stream that I am today?"

"You cannot in either case remain so," the whisper said. "Your essential part is carried away and forms a stream again. You are called what you are even today because you do not know which part of you is the essential one (Shah, 1970)."

This emphasizes the idea that identity is dynamic and ever evolving, and that it is pointless to cling to a rigid sense of self. Acceptance and faith in the invisible process overcome the river's first reluctance to change. Compared to the everlasting movement of nature, this opposition is fleeting. The constant and resistance to the inevitable is a fleeting mood. Identity, control, shape, and resistance are all ephemeral ideas, as *The Tale of the Sands* demonstrates. The narrative promotes accepting change and impermanence as normal and essential aspects of life. It serves as an example of how holding onto the transient hinders genuine continuity and how letting go enables one to overcome constraints. The speaker is informed that staying the same is impossible, regardless of their wish to do so. Whether it happens quickly or slowly, change is not only inevitable but also necessary. It is presented as unwanted. The stream represents continuity, life, and fluidity. It stands for development, motion, and possibly a form of existential or spiritual exploration. This presents the notion that the "essential part"—that which is most important to humans—continues, changes, and re-forms on its own. Nevertheless, One's current identity is viewed as erroneous or lacking. It is influenced by a lack of awareness of what is fundamental or central to the self. To put it another way, humans give names to themselves (and others) without knowing what makes them who they are.

The blind men's limited perspectives each clinging to his own partial experience of the elephant and failing to grasp the whole truth allow Idries Shah's story "*The Blind Ones and*

the Matter of the Elephant" a retelling of the classic parable—to explore themes of individualism and self-cultivation. The narrative demonstrates how individuality without growth or openness can result in conflict and misunderstanding, and how true self-cultivation necessitates transcending one's own ego and constrained viewpoint. Every blind man only sees a portion of the elephant and takes his perspective to be the complete reality. Their inflexible individual viewpoints cause conflict and displaying individualism without humility or awareness can be deceptive and polarizing. The blind guys maintain that their own truth is absolute and will not consider the experiences of others. The blind residents' eagerness to express how they see the elephant illustrates the difficulties in communicating and the possibility of misinterpretation. This subject emphasizes how different viewpoints can cause misunderstandings when they are spoken without a thorough grasp of the totality. The whole truth is not contained in each person's unique experience. The elephant is only understood by blind people based on their personal experiences touching various parts of the animal. This highlights how one's vision of reality is shaped by personal experiences, which exemplifies the individualism concept. Because of their short interactions, each character thinks they know the truth, highlighting the possibility that personal understanding can be fundamentally faulty.

"Each thought that he knew something, because he could feel a part."

"Each had felt one part out of many. Each had perceived it wrongly."

"No mind knew all: knowledge is not the companion of the blind."

"The created is not informed about divinity."

"There is no Way in this science by means of the ordinary intellect."

This is an example of self-centered individualism, in which the narrow perspective of the ego prevents the group from understanding. Through the unique perspectives and experiences of the blind residents, "*The*

Blind Ones and the Matter of the Elephant" exemplifies the idea of individualism. The narrative highlights the limitations of individual viewpoints, the difficulties in communicating, and the need for group comprehension in the search for information and the truth. The story's ending highlights that conventional intelligence is insufficient to understand more profound truths. This illustrates the individuality theme by implying that although individual thought is important, it needs to be supplemented by knowledge that is more comprehensive and insight. The blind residents' limits are a metaphor for human perception's limitations and the need for a deeper understanding. The narrative implies that truth is complex and cannot be fully understood by relying solely on personal experiences.

In Idries Shah's story *how to Catch Monkeys*, the monkey's incapacity to let go of what ensnared it serves as a symbol for the concepts of autonomy and self-cultivation. The story illustrates how a lack of inner control and self-awareness may enslave people and how self-discovery, self-discipline, and the capacity for self-letting go the cornerstones of genuine individualism and self-cultivation are necessary for true freedom. By reaching for the food, the monkey thinks it is behaving freely, but in fact, it traps itself. This demonstrates a false individualism in which one is controlled by impulses and desires and confuses them with free will.

But, because his hand was, as he thought, stuck in the bottle, he could not move fast enough to escape.

But, as he thought, he still had hold of the cherry. The hunter picked him up. A moment later he tapped the monkey sharply on the elbow, making him suddenly relax his hold on the fruit.

This illustrates how people frequently make decisions based on a miscalculation of what is valuable, sacrificing long-term well-being for fleeting satisfaction. Since their refusal to release it results in incarceration, the monkeys think they own the fruit or nut, but it owns them. This illustrates how material possessions are ephemeral and how our attachment to them

frequently holds us back more than the item itself. The monkey is captured because it refuses to relinquish the bait, not because the trap holds it firmly. This illustrates how clinging to control over transient things can lead to entrapment and how control is an illusion. In *How to Catch Monkeys*, the monkey's connection to a transient object which results in long-term loss explores the idea of ephemeral conceptions. The narrative serves as a metaphor for how people, like monkeys, can become imprisoned by their own resistance to letting go of what is transient, giving up freedom for ephemeral pleasures. It explains that the secret to real emancipation is frequently letting go.

This is consistent with the Sufi belief that beauty reflects the divine and is expressed via clarity, freedom, and disengagement from the world's material trappings. In *The Ancient Coffin of Nuri Bey*, a story by Idries Shah, the idea of beauty as the ultimate worth is closely related to the search for wisdom, self-realization, and inner richness. The quest for comprehension and the discovery of a deeper meaning are what give this story its beauty, not the outward coffer or its outward contents. It embodies the Sufi notion that inner awareness is the key to uncovering true beauty, which lies underneath the surface. Ultimately, the narrative implies that genuine beauty is found within. As the real master of the story, the Sufi teacher's inner beauty and wisdom stands in stark contrast to the protagonist's infatuation with the coffin. The teacher is spiritually rather than physically beautiful, and it is this inner beauty that is most valuable. In *The Ancient Coffin of Nuri Bey* concludes by offering a complex and multidimensional examination of the idea that beauty is the ultimate worth. The story emphasizes the relative, ephemeral, and ultimately ephemeral aspect of physical beauty through the protagonist's quest for it, while implying that true beauty is found within. Nuri Bey shows that she accepts ambiguity by refusing to uncover her chest. Because it permits a loving connection to continue without the weight of uncertainty, this acceptance is a type of beauty. The narrative implies that peace can be maintained without disclosing everything and that beauty can be found in the unknown. In the

end, the narrative illustrates that the ability to preserve harmony and serenity is frequently what makes life and relationships beautiful. Nuri Bey's behavior demonstrates a profound awareness of what matters most in life: love, connection, and the capacity to put aside small frustrations in favor of a stronger bond.

"The matter was never referred to again."

"The woman handed over the key and herself withdrew, obviously troubled in mind."

Finally, *The Three Truths* offers a thorough examination of the idea that beauty is a supreme virtue. The story illustrates the subjectivity of beauty, acknowledges the heart's attraction to what it recognizes, and finally establishes a connection between ourselves and the holy through the dervish's trip. In this way, beauty is presented as an ultimate value, perhaps even a reflection of divine reality or the harmony of the universe, and the story emphasizes that some truths, like beauty, are not meant to be analyzed or explained but rather experienced directly, elevating beauty beyond intellectual understanding to something transformative, that changes the observer simply by being perceived. The final truth is not a logical proposition or a moral law it is Beauty itself. According to *The Three Truths*, beauty is the highest truth and the ultimate value that surpasses all others; it is not merely ornamentation or fleeting pleasure. According to the narrative, real comprehension arises when one recognizes beauty as a heavenly, unifying force rather than when one achieves cerebral mastery. The beauty of wisdom in communication is demonstrated by Omar el-Alawi's capacity to express truths in a way that Rudarigh can understand. He deftly handles the tyrant's demands, demonstrating that cunning and insight may effectively communicate true understanding. This demonstrates the elegance of applying one's intelligence to turn a perilous circumstance into one of freedom. Omar emphasizes the beauty of simplicity and clarity in understanding by presenting facts that are also self-evident. He takes the discussion above the level of words by expressing widely acknowledged truths, demonstrating the beauty that comes from acknowledging and embracing realities.

"I will now tell you not one truth, but three."

"For such a lord as you, to whom we can give not one truth but three, we can also give truths which will be self-evident."

Idries Shah's narration *The Merchant and the Christian Dervish* captures the idea of taking a "leap of faith" on the path to spiritual salvation, humility, and self-discovery. The merchant's experiences serve as an example of the transformational potential of asking for understanding and forgiveness. The merchant made a huge leap of faith when he decided to find Rumi, the smartest man in Konia. He is prepared to put aside his wealth and pride to seek direction. This tale emphasizes the merchant's realization that he needed assistance, showing that humility and an awareness of one's own limits are frequently the first steps toward true wisdom. When the merchant first meets Rumi, he is forced to face a sobering reality about his previous behavior that he had not really accepted. The merchant's metamorphosis is sparked by Rumi's capacity to expose his internal conflict. In order to take responsibility for his previous actions, the merchant must now take a risk. A crucial point in the narrative is, when Rumi orders the merchant to ask the Christian dervish for forgiveness. It forces the merchant to face his history and find forgiveness. The merchant must accept humility and move beyond his comfort zone in response to this call to action, demonstrating that genuine power comes from being prepared to make amends and seek forgiveness.

"A rich merchant of Tabriz came to Konia, looking for the wisest man there, for he was in trouble."

"You have lost two hundred, which is why you are here. God has punished you and is showing you something."

"You spat at him. Go to him and ask forgiveness, and give him our salutations."

"As he approached him, the Frankish dervish said: 'Our Master Jalal has communicated with me.'"

5. Justification of Research Questions

5.1 How is belief in beauty over morality shown in narrative *The Tales of Darvishes*?

The story is intriguing. It prompts one to reflect on how they would face life's obstacles. The man listened to his teacher's advice and ensured his own safety. He responded appropriately to brace for the impending drought. This can be likened to applying life's lessons to tackle problems, learning from history, or averting calamity by taking the right precautions. After the catastrophe, the individual continued to live in solitude and refrained from social interactions. Thus, rather than being a clever individual who had avoided the same fate as everyone else, he became an oddball. Someone who shunned social encounters due to a sense of paranoia. As a result, he had severed his own ties. This is often observed in individuals who have constructed barriers around themselves to prevent others from coming in. Even after the incident has passed, they continue to maintain a safe distance from everyone. Sometimes, it is necessary to take a chance, make a bold move, and simply allow events to unfold. The central theme of the story revolves around a spiritual contradiction: instead of diminishing their uniqueness, individuals uncover a deeper truth when they allow themselves to connect with the broader currents of existence. This resembles the soul's journey, which is in a constant state of change and development yet never forfeits its core identity. In the end, this narrative highlights the perpetual cycle of transition the process of existing, losing, and reclaiming one's true nature.

Spiritual growth in literature examines the deep relationship between the divine and human experience, frequently employing themes such as religion, metamorphosis, and the pursuit of meaning to ponder life's more profound issues and lead readers to introspection. The way that literary works examine the profound connections between human existence and the spiritual realm including topics like the pursuit of purpose, personal growth, and a connection to one's inner self or higher power is referred to as spirituality in literature. The narrative, *The Founding of a Tradition*, demonstrates how

spiritual traditions frequently start with genuine insight but eventually lose sight of their fundamental purpose as people become fixated on rituals and outward appearances. In this sense, spiritual progress is going beyond ritualistic pursuits to rediscover more profound significance. Awakening to the essence is necessary for true progress. Traditional religion has been dwindling in the Western world for more than a century, according to some recent demographic studies (Heelas 2005). Instead, a subjective socialization of self-awareness and an inner connection to one's own existence is taking its place. Ever-increasing subjectivity is replacing living in accordance with an external higher ideal for the greater good (Heelas 2005). The explanation of contemporary secularization trends as representing a pluralist world of conflicting beliefs and both international studies and seminal philosophical works (Heelas 2005; Hughes 2022; J. K. A. Smith 2014; Svenungsson 2021; Taylor 2007) have attempted growing unbelief.

The findings indicated in the story on the nature of understanding that respects its ambition while acknowledging its limitations is *The Blind Ones and the Matter of Elephant*. The story's blind men are observant, analytical rather than sentimental, wise, and confident in their ability to use careful, rigorous observation to draw conclusions about certainty and truth. The main message of the narrative is not to minimize attempts to find a reliable, verifiable truth in a world full of confusing, often contradicting phenomena. The story gives each blind man the opportunity to comment on his own understanding, without disputing any observation or exposing any bright man as a fool. Perceptions have a big impact on how people feel and handle mental health issues. Unfavorable or skewed perceptions can exacerbate conditions like anxiety and depression. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a therapeutic approach that attempts to treat these issues by altering negative thought patterns and beliefs. By helping patients identify and address cognitive distortions, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) encourages more balanced thinking and improved mental health

outcomes. Increasing perceptual intelligence involves improving awareness, putting practical strategies into practice, and seeking assistance when needed. Here are some crucial techniques to raise your perceptual intelligence:

The Ancient Coffin of Nuri Bey is an intriguing story about distrust and confidence. It challenges people to think about how they handle faith and uncertainty in their lives. These morals wisely and perceptively ask one to think on the delicate balance that must be found between skepticism and trust. The narrative also emphasizes the intricacy of interpersonal relationships and the challenges of communication. It highlights how crucial it is to have open and sincere discussions in partnerships devoid of suspicion. Miscommunications and mistrust may damage even the closest relationships. It encourages us to foster mutual respect and open lines of communication to prevent mistrust from destroying bonds.

In the tale *The Dog, the Stick, and the Sufi*, a Sufi-clad individual mistreats a dog. This parable taught us to never judge someone's goodness or badness based solely on their appearance. As the anecdote illustrates, the dog believed that a regular person wearing Sufi would never hurt him; he solely trusted the person based on his outward appearance. The deception of appearance literary theme explores how appearances may be deceitful and how reality can diverge from appearances. This theme is commonly used to emphasize the need of not trusting external appearances and the necessity of getting to know someone better to comprehend their true nature. Deception of appearance can be observed in the fable *The Dog, the Stick, and the Sufi*. When the injured dog saw a man wearing a Sufi dress, he assumed that he wouldn't harm him because a person's clothing might make him feel vulnerable. A Sufi person is close to Allah and will protect me for the benefit of humanity, but that Sufi individual was cruel and seriously injured the dog. The dog simply said that the cruel person did not deserve to wear this Sufi outfit when asked for his punishment.

5.2 How is experiences and struggles of life explored in Idries Shah's text *The Tales of*

Dervishes?

This brief story, *The Three Fishes*, highlights the value of mindfulness and present-mindedness. Instead than waiting for assistance from others, people should act to protect themselves under trying circumstances. Furthermore, rather than relying just on chance or fate, one must work toward their objective and put in the necessary effort if they wish to succeed in life. Children's imaginations are stimulated when they read stories with images because they can picture the characters and surroundings. Thus, recite this Panchatantra tale to a child who has trouble falling asleep the following time, and watch as they doze off without incident. This is an intriguing tale. It made one think about how they would respond to the difficulties of life.

Following his teacher's advice, the man took precautions. He prepared for the impending drought by taking the appropriate actions. The first fish in this short story, *The Three Fishes*, decided to leave the pond and go to a nearby lake; the second fish stayed and decided to figure out a method; while the third fish continued to believe in fate and did nothing. It highlights the need of being mindful and present-minded at all times. Instead than waiting for help from others, one should act to protect themselves when confronted with a difficult situation. Moreover, it is essential to work toward goals rather than depending entirely on luck. If people want to succeed in life, they must work hard and put in the required effort rather than depending solely on fate or luck. Existentialism is an approach to philosophy and literature that emphasizes the unique experiences and worldviews of everyone. Following World War II, several authors and philosophers believed that there were no universal laws that applied to everyone and that the world was an uncaring place. Instead of depending on a god, existentialists encourage people to accept responsibility for their role in the world. This is one of the traits of existentialism, which emphasizes the authenticity of single individuals as to how the world might change. For example, the existentialist sole thought or dilemma views the human experience as meaningless, at least when one first begins to evaluate the world, because of

living in a heartless society.

In a story *The Tales of Sands*, Existentialism is a literary and philosophical movement that emphasizes the existence, autonomy, and choice of the individual. It peaked in France in the middle of the 20th century, although it began in the middle to late 19th century. It is based on the notion that people try to make logical decisions and find their own purpose in life even if they live in an irrational reality. Its focus is on the problem of human existence and the belief that there is no essential meaning or purpose to life. It holds that since there is no God or other transcendent power, the only way to overcome this emptiness is to accept existence. According to existentialism, people are fully free to accept personal responsibility for themselves, even if this responsibility involves angst, intense agony, or fear. It also emphasizes action, freedom, and decision as crucial to overcoming humanity's ludicrous situation. Existentialists contend that existing schools of thought are intellectual, shallow, and divorced from reality, and they reject the sufficiency of any collection of concepts or systems. In the story *The Blind Ones and The Matter of Elephant*, Mindfulness reduces stress and enhances emotional control. Education is mostly responsible for increasing perceptual intelligence. Understanding cognitive biases, emotional triggers, and practical coping strategies can improve accurate situational perception. Participating in self-improvement activities, such as reading self-help books, attending workshops, or signing up for online courses, can also be beneficial. Understanding the psychology of perception can help one make better decisions and advance personally. Being more assertive makes it simpler to express needs and emotions in a confident and effective manner. By reducing misunderstandings and enhancing interpersonal ties, using force encourages healthier and more productive interactions. There are times when difficult perception-related issues call for professional help. Online counseling services like Taktsang provide access to experienced psychologists who can provide beneficial support. Professional aid may provide specially devised therapies and coping techniques to

address specific challenges. Improving decision-making skills is just one facet of increasing perceptual intelligence; it is also a way to achieve advancement and personal growth.

The Tales of Dervishes' story, *Ogre and the Sufi* by Idries Shah explores a variety of topics. This example of the difference between outward appearances and inner reality emphasizes how the Ogre's threatening exterior belies his kind and considerate nature. The story encourages empathy and understanding by challenging readers' preconceptions and beliefs about other people. The transformation of the ogre from a vicious animal to an intelligent and compassionate creature is a metaphor for the potential for introspection and spiritual growth. The ogre's transformation and behavior best exemplify the Sufi concept of repentance, which involves turning away from negativity and towards the divine. The Sufi's role in helping the ogre achieve self-awareness and transformation demonstrates the importance of spiritual guidance and mentoring. To improve their self-awareness and spirituality, the story pushes readers to examine their own inner life and confront their shortcomings and worries. This narrative offers an engaging analysis of these ideas, inspiring readers to reflect on their own assumptions, evaluations, and potential for personal development. Using words to explore emotional and intuitive experiences, writers can convey their feelings, and readers are able to relate to and understand characters and topics more deeply. Various people play distinct roles, as in the tale of *The Merchant and the Christian Dervish*. One sought solace from Maulana, but Maulana informed him of his misbehavior when he spat on a Christian dervish. The merchant's emotional journey, which includes his first confusion, annoyance, and eventual awakening—illustrates the transforming power of feeling and intuition. He finally learns to open his heart and feel rather than just think when his encounters with the dervish challenge his cerebral haughtiness. This emotional engagement ignites his spiritual awareness.

5.3 How one can relate Sufism with aestheticism in Idries Shah's works?

English literature has been profoundly impacted by Sufism, the mystical aspect of Islam, through its philosophical principles, lyrical expressions, and spiritual notions. Sufi concepts like divine love, self-annihilation, and the soul's journey towards God have served as inspiration for English literary personalities over the ages. This research investigates the subtle but substantial presence of Sufism in English literature, tracing its influence from the works of poets like William Blake and Samuel Taylor Coleridge to modern authors. The study demonstrates how Sufi philosophy has influenced themes of transcendence, mysticism, and universal love in English literature by examining important texts. This study also demonstrates how Sufi ideas have been modified to represent deeper spiritual truths and the relationship between humans and the divine in the canon of Western literature. Beyond its Islamic origins, Sufism—also known as Islamic mysticism—has spread throughout many cultures and religions, flourishing in Western literature, philosophy, and theology.

Sufi principles like self-renunciation, oneness with the Divine, and the pursuit of spiritual truth have been quietly but significantly represented in English literature. Although Sufism is more prevalent in Arabic and Persian literature, it has had a substantial impact on many English authors, poets, and intellectuals over the years. Sufi themes' emergence in English literature emphasizes how global Sufism's spiritual pursuits are, across both religious and cultural divides. Through an examination of certain English literary works, this study traces the spiritual undercurrents and shows how Sufism's emphasis on love, reflection, and oneness with the Divine has enhanced English literary traditions. Islam's mystical branch, Sufism, provides a distinct and profound spiritual path that prioritizes inner purity, divine love, and a close relationship with God. It has influenced many different civilizations and literary traditions, including English literature, and is not just found in the Islamic world.

In the story, *The Tales of Sand*, Impermanence is the essential quality of everything being

fleeting, ephemeral, and changeable. This idea can promote gratitude for the present by highlighting the idea that nothing lasts forever and that everything is always changing. Impermanence is used as a reminder to appreciate the beauty of life's fleeting occurrences in a variety of literary and artistic forms, particularly those influenced by Eastern philosophy. This story's focus on the transient nature of sand reflects the Islamic notion of the transient nature of worldly existence. In the story *The Blind Ones and The Matter of Elephant*, the Sufi Humility is a cornerstone of many ancient religious and ethical systems. For instance, humility in the Confucian sense is extremely other-oriented and always puts the good of society above our own personal objectives. In its ancient Chinese form, humility can significantly enhance our sense of social cohesion and belonging. Knowledge, in the words of the Greek philosopher Socrates, is essentially the capacity to know what we do not know. He promoted an intellectual humility that openly acknowledges our knowledge gaps and genuinely attempts to address our blind spots.

Idries Shah's *The Oath* in *The Tales of Dervishes* teaches us to always honor our commitments and uphold our moral principles, particularly in trying times. The dervish's dedication to keeping his word highlights how important trust and dependability are in spiritual relationships. Throughout the narrative, the need of dedication and accountability for spiritual development is mentioned. In the story, *The Dog, The Stick and The Sufi*, the concept of the "dark side of human nature" is introduced at the beginning of the study, along with a summary of the work that notable existential philosophers have done on the subject. It continues by offering some insights into the discipline of writing and filmmaking as practiced by their practitioners, as well as oral storytelling. Next are explicit criteria for determining the topic properties of films and writings that explore the more sinister sides of human nature. Lastly, give examples of two literary-inspired games and briefly explain how the characteristics of books and films that explore the darker aspects of human nature are like or different from those that other authors

have highlighted. The following goals are to analyze the distinct function that literature and film play in relation to individuals, compare this role to their distinctive characteristics, and investigate the potential for other, as-yet-undiscovered, distinctive characteristics.

The Ancient Coffin of Nuri Bey makes us think about how we perceive the world and how often our quest for something leads us to discover its actual meaning. Speculative fiction is a large literary "super genre" that includes genres like science fiction, fantasy, and horror. It often poses "what if" scenarios about society and reality while exploring possibilities and impossibilities. The various theories concerning the contents of the coffin reveal more about what people want to be true than what is actually true. Some people see wealth, while others see wisdom or power. As an example of how people see the unknown through their own lenses, speculation can become a projection of one's own values, desires, or anxieties. "*The Ancient Coffin of Nuri Bey*" presents speculation as a two-edged blade that can lead to erroneous conclusions and wasted effort, even while it also demonstrates creativity and curiosity. The story asks readers to reflect on how often they make assumptions and whether it is better to rely on experience and observation for understanding rather than speculating.

He is imprisoned by his own connection in the story "*How to Catch Monkeys*"; he made himself easy prey by grabbing something from a jar and refusing to let go. In contrast to the ugliness of greed and clinging, this story demonstrates the beauty of letting go. The objective of aesthetics is freedom via detachment, a sophisticated and elegant escape from desire. In accordance with Sufism's teaching that spiritual beauty consists of freedom from attachment, this story illustrates that true elegance lies in knowing when to let go rather than clinging to what traps the soul. Partial facts lead to conflict and discord, whereas truth brings beauty, harmony, and balance. Wholeness and harmony are beautiful in terms of aesthetics, but fragmentation is chaotic. Sufism emphasizes seeing the whole picture, which leads to spiritual grace and beauty. By demonstrating that truth is not only true but also

harmonious and attractive, the story exemplifies the aesthetic nature of true understanding. In "*The Man Who Was Easily Angered*," a story by Idries Shah, the protagonist's journey toward self-awareness and transformation subtly illustrates the beauty of impermanence. The narrative centers on a man who, after many years, realizes that his short fuse has caused major problems. Since he is committed to changing, he asks for guidance and learns anger management techniques. Through persistent effort, he modifies his behavior, improving his relationships and general well-being. The man's ability to overcome his long-standing anger management pattern shows how fleeting human traits are.

6. Conclusion

Idries Shah's *The Tales of the Dervishes* provides a comparative analysis of Islamic and European aestheticism, providing valuable insights into two different perspectives on art, beauty, and the function of storytelling. Although the stories in Shah's collection have their roots in Islamic (primarily Sufi) aestheticism, comparing them to European aesthetic ideals particularly those from 19th-century movements like Aestheticism highlights important distinctions in the form, purpose, and philosophy of beauty and art. "God is beautiful and loves beauty," according to the belief that beauty is a manifestation of the Divine. The spiritual purpose of artistic expression, which includes narrative, is to awaken inner perception (basira) and bring the seeker closer to the truth. Stories are wisdom-carrying tools that may instruct, transform, and lead readers through complex levels of meaning. Function above form: Spiritual substance takes precedence over aesthetic form, even when beauty is valued. The idea that beauty and art are valued regardless of their moral or practical significance is known as "art for art's sake." Many people view art to express oneself, feel deeply, and have a sensory experience. Artworks and stories serve as ends in and of themselves, seeking to arouse emotion or intellectual awe. Form is praised: Form, style, and grace can be just as significant as substance, if not more so. Bypassing the logical intellect and appealing to the intuitive heart, symbolism,

metaphor, and contradiction are employed. Simplicity, depth, and layers intended to gradually unveil truth via reflection are what make something beautiful. Tales such as those found in *The Tales of the Dervishes* are useful instruments for change rather than ornamental ones. Symbolism is also employed, but more frequently for aesthetic or emotional appeal than for spiritual enlightenment. Ornament, language, and emotional impact can all be considered forms of beauty that strive to arouse the senses or prompt thought.

References

- Black, D.L. (1990). *Logic and Aristotle's 'Rhetoric' and 'Poetics' in Medieval Arabic Philosophy*, Leiden: Brill.
- Al-Farabi (c.870-950). *al-Madina al-fadila* (The Virtuous City), ed. and trans. R. Walzer, *Al-Farabi on the Perfect State*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Al-Farabi (c.870-950). *Kitab al-shi'r* (Book on Poetics), ed. and trans. A.J. Arberry, 'Farabi's Canons of Poetry', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 17 (1938): 267-78; ed. M. Mahdi, *Shi'r* 3 (1959): 91-6.
- Al-Farabi (c.870-950). *Ihsa' al-'ulum* (The Book of the Enumeration of the Sciences), ed. U. Amin, Cairo: Librairie Anglo-Égyptienne, 3rd edn, 1968.
- Al-Farabi (c.870-950). *Kitab al-huruf* (The Book of Letters), ed. M. Mahdi, Beirut: Dar el-Mashreq, 1969.
- Baldwin, E., (2021). Existentialism. Poem Analysis. Retrieved from <https://poemanalysis.com/definition/existentialism/>
- Fiveable. (2024). Materialism – World Literature II. <https://fiveable.me/key-terms/world-literature-ii/materialism>
- Fox, P. (2006). *Decadences- Morality and Aesthetics in British Literature*. Expanded Edition.
- George, T. (2023). Exploratory Research. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/exploratory-research/> Machination.
- (n.d.). Retrieved from wordnik.com/words/machination
- Fu A., & Warje, K. (2021). Materialism. The Decision Lab. Retrieved from 2025, from <https://thedecisionlab.com/reference-guide/philosophy/materialism>
- Heath, P. (1992). *Allegory and Philosophy in Avicenna (Ibn Sina)*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Ibn Rushd (c.1174). *Talkhis kitab al-shi'r* (Middle Commentary on the Poetics), trans. C.E. Butterworth, *Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's 'Poetics'*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Ibn Rushd (c.1179-80). *Fasl al-maqal* (Decisive Treatise), trans. G.F. Hourani, *Averroes on the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy*, London: Luzac, 1961. (Translation of Ibn Rushd's analysis of the links between religion and philosophy.)
- Ibn Sina (980-1037). *al-Isharat wa'l-tanbihat* (Remarks and Admonitions), ed. J. Forget, Leiden: Brill, 1892; part translated by S.C. Inati, *Remarks and Admonitions, Part One: Logic*, Toronto, Ont.: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984.
- Ibn Sina (980-1037). *al-Shifa' (Healing)*, *Kitab al-shi'r*, trans. I.M. Dahiyat, *Avicenna's Commentary on the 'Poetics' of Aristotle*, Leiden: Brill, 1974.
- Ibn Sina (980-1037). *Risala fi al-'ishq* (Treatise on Love), trans. E. Fackenheim, 'A Treatise on Love by Ibn Sina', *Mediaeval Studies* 7 (1945): 211-28.
- Kemal, S. (1991). *The Poetics of Alfarabi and Avicenna*, Leiden: Brill.
- Kemal, S. (1996). 'Aesthetics', in S.H. Nasr and O. Leaman (eds), *History of Islamic Philosophy*, London: Routledge, ch. 56, 969-78
- Mehrani, S. & Sindhu, H. (2023). Aestheticism in Sufism. *Research Journal of Islamic*

- Theology*, Vol. 2 No. 02. Retrieved from <https://almithaqjournal.org/index.php/home/article/view/49>
- Mishra, S. (2022). *The Three Fishes* with moral lesson. Retrieved from <https://www.firstcry.com/intelli/articles/three-fish-story-with-moral-for-kids/>
- Pedamkar, P. (2023). Types of Research Methodology. Retrieved from <https://www.educba.com/types-of-research-methodology/>
- Saxe, G., J. (1872). *The Blind Man and The Elephant*. Retrieved from <https://www.supersummary.com/the-blind-men-and-the-elephant/summary/>
- Sparklekaz, S. (2012). *When The Waters Were Changed* Summary. Retrieved from thegodlight.proboards.com/thread/4607/when-waters-changed-sufi-story
- Ninivaggi, J.F. (2020). Consciousness and Awareness: East and West. *Physician Engagement and M.D. Wellness*, Pages 1-29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-816484-6.00001-4>.
- Seager, W. (2002). Emotional introspection, *Consciousness and Cognition*, Volume 11, Issue 4, Pages 666-687. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-8100\(02\)00027-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-8100(02)00027-2)
- Shah, I. (1967). *The Tales of Dervishes*. Idries Foundation
- Shah, I. (2024). *The Tales of the Sands – A Sufi Spiritual Story* by Idries Shah. (2024). Retrieved from <https://spiritualgrowthevents.com/tales-of-the-sands-sufi-spiritual-story-idries-shah/>
- Rühlemann, C. (2022). How is emotional resonance achieved in storytelling of sadness/distress? *ORIGINAL RESEARCH article Front. Psychol*, retrieved from Volume 13 - 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.952119>.
- Vyas, V. (2023). The Art of Emotional Resonance: A Critical Chapter in the

Manual of Your Life.
<https://simplyvinita.medium.com/the-art-of-emotional-resonance-a-critical-chapter-in-the-manual-of-your-life>.