Sufism, as defined earlier in Chapter IV along with its characteristics, origin, growth and development had considerable impact on the Assamese Romantic poetry. Jatindranath Dowera and Ananda Chandra Barua are the chief exponents of this kind of poetry. Persian Sufi poetry had gained an immense popularity in Europe through the translations of the Persian Sufi poets like Omar Khayyam, Shaikh Sadi, Firdausi, Hafiz and others. The late nineteenth century English Victorian mind, too, caught the mystic sensibilities of the Sufi poets. Edward Fitzgerald was the first English poet of the Victorian Age to translate the eleventh century Persian poet Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* which brought about a marvellous epoch into the nineteenth century English poetic trend. LeGoulls and Casamian describe it as:

modernized with bold yet delicate skill, moulded and arranged in a personal way, expresses the innermost soul and the subllest essence of the nineteenth century melancholy, which, acquiring thus the depth of a far-distant past, seems to spread well over humanity.  

Subsequently, the Sufi poets, especially of the Persian literature have found a popularity all over the world through their

translations into different languages.

JATINDRANATH DOWRAH: 'OMARTIRTHA':

Sufism has left deep imprints in the mystic vision of Jatindranath Dowerah's art. His Omartirtha is a work of the great artistic excellence. The seventy-one quatrains of exquisite lyric grandeur of Omartirtha vouchsafes the pilgrimage of Omar Khayyam in human life's journey to the Infinite, culminating in the union of the human soul with the Absolute through the states of 'fana' and 'baqua'.

The word 'Rubaiyat' is the plural form of the Persian word 'Rubai', which literally means a 'quatrain' or a poem of four-lines. Each quatrain is complete in itself with a singular idea. But the central philosophy is the same all throughout the quatrain-verses. About twelve hundred of 'Rubais' are ascribed to Omar and his followers like Nizami, Attar and others. Edward Fitzgerald's fourth version of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam gives a number of one hundred and one quatrains. The first version of translation in 1859 found little appreciation in the English literary world. A year later, the poets like Swinburne and Rossetti discovered the poem, and eight years later, the
second edition appeared. A number of Victorian poets like Tennyson and even Thomas Hardy, the English poet and novelist were greatly attracted by Fitzgerald's version of Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*. Louis Untermeyer in his introduction to Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat* observes, "The *Rubaiyat* served as a small but concentrated expression of the revolt against Victorian conventions, the prevailing smugness, the false acquiescence and hypocritical prudery."²

*Omartirtha* first published in 1926 consists of seventy-one quatrains as against the fifth and last edition of Fitzgerald's translation containing one hundred and one rubais. Jatindra Dowerah's *Omartirtha*, the very title, literally means 'The Pilgrimage of Omar'. The literal meaning of the world 'Omar' means 'brave', while 'Khayyam' is the title of a tent-maker. Born at Naishpur in Khorassan, sometime during the later half of the eleventh century, Omar was called Ghiyathuddin Abulfath Omar bin Ibrahim Al-Khayyami. He seems to have followed his father's trade of tent-making in boyhood. But, later on, he took to the study of science, astronomy and is said to have written...

a standard book on algebra. According to a biographical sketch available from Louis Untermeyer, "During the few intervals when he was free of computations, Omar indulged himself in the pleasures of poetry. He celebrated two intoxicants: verse and wine."³

Omar, however, was one of the first Sufis when Sufism began to flourish throughout the Islamic world. Some are likely to call him an atheist. But, in fact, he believed in God. Being a believer in the cult of 'purity' both 'outer' and 'inner', he had a deep faith in 'Allah' whom he tried to commune with through poesy by means of 'sukr' and 'saki'. The Infinite Supreme Reality is addressed as a beloved. As he was both a scientist and astronomer, so he made a rational enquiry into human existence in the cosmic context.

Unlike the medieval Bhakti saint-poets, who addressed God as a lover, Omar Khayyam, like other Sufi poets, addressed God as a beloved.

In the contemporary Persian society, the men were much attracted towards Sufism. The essence of Sufism "Twakkal-tu-Allah!", i.e., 'complete surrender to the will of God', led them

towards asceticism, Omar very well realized that a mere passive surrender to His will would not solve the human problems. His inquisitive mind made him probe deep into the process of creation and man's place in it. Thus, Omar tends to be a pessimist. In this connection, the remark made by Eric B. Ceadel is noteworthy, "Umar did not descend into true pessimism by declaring, like the Old Greek philosopher, that the 'sumnum bonum' is never to have been born at all."  

Sufism is essentially a mystic apprehension of the Lord by means of intuition. It is through divine-love that Omar reaches the state of 'fana' or self-annihilation in 'Allah'. The human power of logical arguments fail to realize the Divine Reality, which transcends human intellect. Omar's faith in his beloved is so firm that he desires a Union with her through 'sukr' or wine and the imagery of 'saki', that is, 'God who pours out wine'. This has been profusely used as a symbol of the Supreme Being. The symbolic wine is not merely the earthly liquor, but spiritual love itself. Jatin Dowerah too makes use of the imagery of wine and 'saki' in his poem.

Omar Khayyam's mystic philosophy is mainly based on a disbelief in orthodox life as a protest against the Orthodox Islamic theology. Because of his scientific outlook on life, he did not believe in the external manifestation of God, who may be perceived through mystic contemplations alone. Though, at times, Omar's mystic attitude to life tends towards ' Fatalism', yet he cannot be discarded merely as an atheist or as a mere hedonist of the Western philosophy.

The essence of Omar Khayyam's mystic attitude to life leans towards hedonism seeking pleasure through a cup of wine. Pleasure is the be-all and end-all of hedonistic ethics.

Nor Khayyam may be called an Epicurean expounding 'hedonistic ethics' for man to like a happy life.

To sum up, Khayyam's mystic vision is based on a sort of principles born out of a sense of frustration in life and, hence, he makes complaints to Allah. There is a mixed disposition of pains and pleasures. The pain is caused by the non-fulfilment to love in earthly life and pleasure in the divine love, culminating in a mystic union with the divine beloved who appears in all sensuous forms. The Rubaiyat of Khayyam bears a pervasive
sense of ridicule for the human superstitions and hypocrisies. There is, also, a fervent cry of the poet’s soul’s yearning for a discovery of the mystery of human life in the cosmic existence.

However, Jatindranath Dower, in his opening lines of the preface to Omartirtha states that a poet plays upon such a tune in his own life’s lute which reverberates through the hearts of the entire humanity. Every man’s heart is ever eager for such a tune, which is beyond the senses of pleasure and pain, yet its development finds expression through the feelings of pleasure and pain.

Dower, in search of Beauty and Truth, acknowledges to Omar that his greatest contribution lies in his giving the glimpse of Truth to mankind. An intense feeling of sorrow is the fountain-source of his poetry.

He also feels that the eternal question of the enquiry into Truth and Beauty is difficult to be solved through the human power of logical analysis. Hence, through a process of scientific analysis, logical inferences, combined with philosophical speculations and the power of intuition, he probes into the deepest

However, Dowera’s translation of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam is not a mere rendering of the Persian quatrains into Assamese. Omartirtha appears to be based mainly on Fitzgerald’s Rubaiyat. In this connection, Dr. Prafulladatta Goswami observes that like Fitzgerald’s translation in English, Dowera’s Omartirtha, too, is a valuable asset of Assamese literature.  

According to an available source from the critic’s valuable essay on Omartirtha, the young poet Jatin Dowera was advised by a friend to go through Fitzgerald’s translation, which subsequently led him to compose Omartirtha in a state of reminiscence.

It is true that Dowera’s original in his work of sufi mysticism. Because, in his mystic vision of life, Omar’s sufism whets him upto a new inspiration to give vent to his personal feelings. The learned poet Jatin Dowera discovered some resemblances to his own feelings in Omar Khayyam’s Rubaiyat. He imbibed the true spirit of Omar, as it is evident from a comparative analysis with Fitzgerald’s version.

Omartirtha, meaning the pilgrimage of Omar, resembles the Upanishadic view of life as a journey to the Eternal. It is full of artistic excellence.

In the history of various rich languages of the world the translated literature, too, holds a prominent place. Like Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat*, Dowera's *Omartirtha* (1926) is also an excellent piece of translated literature. It may be noted that Rabindranath's translation of Shelley's "Love's Philosophy" brought him laurels. Similarly, *Omartirtha* of Jatindranath put him in the glorious pedestal of poetic world.

In this context it should be noted that many rich literature of the present world profusely depended upon translation of good works of great literatures. For example, "the early revival of the Bohemian language was very modest and at first almost exclusively translations from foreign languages were published." Dwelling upon the importance and utility of translation works the renowned scholar K.K. Handiqui noted that in the Hungarian language "the translation of the best works of foreign author on History, Philosophy, Law and Science, including amongst others almost all the standard works of English literature" was undertaken by the reputed scholars.

9. Ibid., p. 42
Like George Chapman's translation of Homer's 'Iliad'
and the 'Odyssey' or P.B. Shelley's translation of 'Hymn', Dowere's translation of Omar is certainly creative. Because, it is not merely an imitation of the theme and style, Dowere finds causes to identify his feelings with Omar's and chooses the right words and adopts himself to the outpourings of inspiration to the 'creative impulse which animates his poem. A.F. Scott observes that the beauty of the translator's production depends upon his handling of the target language and, it is always different from the beauty of the original because in poetry the meaning of words lies in their sound as much as in their sense.10

Omar Khayyam in the Sufi tradition gave an elevated position to the theme of love for the Divine Beloved, i.e., 'Allah'. Omar enquires into the questions of life and death, the sufferings of humanity etc. All such universal questions had an appeal to Dowere.

Edward Fitzgerald's translation of the Rubaiyat begins with a sensuous apprehension of the divine beauty in human form. The first quatrain begins as:

Wake! For the Sun, who scatter'd into flight
The stars before him from the Field of Night,
Drives night along with them from Heav'n and strikes
The Sultan's Turret with a Shaft of light.

(Fifth Edition, Quatrain I, L : 1-4)

Dowera has given to Assamese poetry a wealth of verbal and metrical beauty through his exquisite and delicate rendering of Khayyam's Rubaiyat. The similes and metaphors drawn from Sufism heightens the poetic beauty of this work.

The first verse of Omartirtha opens with the imagery of a golden chariot of the Sun-god. The simile of the Sun-god as a hunter with golden arrows and removing the darkness, makes the deer run out of eye-sight within a moment:

Sonal rathat aloki biman
Marile suruje sonar karh
Palai andhar- hariniye yen
Hay nimishate chakur anir

(Verse I, Bubai I)

This according to Fitzgerald's first version appears as:

And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of light

(Rubaiyyat, First Version, Quatrain I, L : 3-4)Ⅺ

It is only in the seventh and the eighth lines of the first verse
that the first line of the first Version: "Awake! for morning
in the Bowl of Night" or "Wake! For the Sun, who scatter'd into
flight" of the fifth version of Fitzgerald's work appeals in Dowera.
Of course, it is the gist of the Fitzgerald's Version, whether of
the first or of the last, running through Dowera's lines in
Qwartirtha. A true Assamese poet Jatin Dowera does not forget the
natural beauty and the Indian mystic tradition of 'Ushadevi' or
the goddess Dawn coming out veiled in blue with a beautiful face
full of smiles:

Michhiki hanhik ushadevi ahe
Nil akashar erani loi.
(Verse 2, L : 1-2).

The poet, then, contemplates on the transitoriness of
earthly life with the arrival of a guest who insists him on
filling in the cup of desires and, thus, on enjoying the plea­
sures of life:

Piyala tomar
Thakote samay bharai lea
(Verse 2, Quatrain 11, L : 1-2).

Unlike Fitzgerald who like a sceptic says,
You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more.

Dowers is never forgetful about the concept of re-birth of the
Upanishadas and the Bhagavadgita. What Dowers says in Omartirtha
is that once the beauty of youth withers away, there will be no
restoration of it:

Jeevanar madhu shukale ebar
Aru jano tak dunai pos?

Some of the verses deal with the poet's frustrations in life.
The rains of summer arouse in him the despair of failures of the
past:

Nava Varashat Uthichhe pranat
Kata atoetak bhipal asha.

(Verse 3, Quatrain, 2, L : l-2).

The landscape beauty of Nature has been in her green hue. This,
too, happens at the touch of a Divine power, "Prabhu Parashat".

Omar Khayyam, in his search for the questions of human
existence, felt a discontentment in mind. The knowledge of science,
mathematics and astronomy could not fulfill his thirst for divine
knowledge and the exploration of the mystery of life. Hence, there
is the soul's cry for the utter helplessness of man at the cruelty
of Fate. Hence Dowera says,

srilo sakalo yuktA tarkA aji
Kata din aru thakim dhari
Mite nite kato auli udbeg
Katakal sakha aru aahiba pari

(Verse, 38, quaTRAIN III)

The poet has given up his logic and arguments as he cannot
forbear them. Life is full of cares and anxieties which increase
from day to day.

Like Omar, Dowera, too, does not accept the conventions
of the society, such as, the set rules of the scriptures, the
preachings of priests etc. His soul yearns for a communion with
the Divine Being appearing before him in all sensuous forms of
beauty with rosy cheeks, purple face etc. Unlike a sceptic, the
poet does not deride upon human logic, but he cries out naturally
with a desire for happiness almost like a hedonist:

Thakak gyanIye shastrar majat
SristI prakaran bakhya kari
Yaon hera aha tumI aru moI
Apadiya hai urumi eri.

(Verse, 46, quaTRAIN- 3, L : 9-12).
The wise men may remain immersed in their study of scriptures and discuss the process of creation and such other matters. But the poet in union with his beloved desires to leave the distressful and noisy worldly life.

Omar's heart is filled with tears at the sad plight of mankind in the hands of Fate or Destiny. So is the case with Dowera:

Raj sukh ashe konoba baliya
Konoye bichhare sarag sukh.

(Verse 8, Quatrain 4, L : 1-2).

Some men are in pursuit of royal pleasure, while some others desire for heavenly bliss. But all these are nothing but a race after a mirage in the transitory mundane existence. As a solution to the gross tyranny and materialism of the contemporary Persian world, Omar emphatically persists on the realization of one's own self through the power of intuition, leaving aside the "tarka bagh jal katal pandita" (Verse 39, Quatrain 2, L : 1) which he had got by heart in his early youth ("Sarute achhil sakalo dhyan" (Verse 39, Quatrain 2, L : 4). The power of human logic is limited. The transcendental God is beyond the reach of human intellect.

But what in reality Omar learns through his experiences in life is that the drinking of wine alone is the only way of solution to these problems. The wine is a spiritual wine poured
out by a divine beloved from heaven:

Nijan rati saragar para
Kone yen nam kalashahi

(Verse 40, Quatrain 3, L : 3-4).

The divine communion is possible through 'grape juice' which is capable of bringing a solution to the human question of the sources of pains and pleasures in life. 'Sura' gives spiritual ecstasy while 'saki', is the divine beloved. The Sufi imagery of Omar's Union with the Divine takes place in a state of high spiritual ecstasy when the divine wine is poured out by his beloved. The poet feels the annihilation of his self in God through the intoxication of spiritual wine:

Acharit i ye angurar rash
chumilo yetia piyala dhari

(Verse 41, Quatrain 1, L : 3-4).

All the religions of the world come up to the same and the spiritual wine which is capable of bringing the soul's annihilation in God, the Creator, transcends all human logic:

Tomar amogh juktir agat
Sakalo dharmar ekate lay

(Verse 41, L : 3-6).
Like the Sufi poet, Jatin Dowerah is somewhat sceptical about the pre-natal and post-natal life as a mystery unknown to man:

Iyar agate kot ba achhilo
Kakno sudhim kathati mor?
Iyar pachhat kon deshalei
Noaro bujiba rahasya ghor

(Verse 20, quatrín 3, L : 9-12)

There is a similar note in Fitzerald too:

Drink! For you know not whence you came nor why,
Drink! For you know not why you go, nor where

(Fifth Version of Rubaiyat
Rubai- LXXIV, L : 3-4).

Human life is transitory, man comes to earth like guests to an inn. The human body is a temporary shelter for the immortal soul (alahi ghar). Men after men come to this earth for temporary rest. They disappear from the mundane scene one after another. But none returns to the world again in his former form:

Ejanar pechhe jai ejan
Joar jan aru duni nahe

(Omarcirtha - Verse 32, L : 7-8).

Pre-life and the life after death are covered with veils of deep darkness. Hence, this very life on earth is to be enjoyed in full.
But Omar is unlike an egoistic hedonist to whom pleasure is the end-all and end-all of everything. Because, Omar's grief-stricken heart looks into the cosmic essence of human existence and is unable to explore its mystery through the power of human intellect. The melancholy that lies deep in the poet's heart seeks a relief through a union with the Infinite with the help of spiritual wine, because the earth is like an ale-house (madiralay). Nor Omar may be called a mere Epicurean to whom pleasure is the highest good.

Summarily, the Epicurean philosophy, in the words of Frank Thilly is:

Epicurus rests his entire proof of the trustworthiness of sensations on the Democratian theory of sense perception. It is not the objects themselves which are directly perceived but copies of them, produced by the influence of objects on the sense organ.12

But Omar's heart holds a firm faith in the power of the Infinite. There is a deep note of melancholic strain in his suffering soul caused by the cosmic speculations about man's sad plight in the earthly existence. In Omartirtha picture of heaven and hell within the very existence of human life has been put as follows:

Prithivi majat purile basana
Dharila takei sarag buli
Biphal basana Kathor nirashe
Dhare narakar chhabiti tuli

(Verse 46, quarrain 1, L : 1-4).

This means that if the human desires are fulfilled, the world, then, is like heaven to a man. But in the case of non-fulfilment of such desires, the world turns into hell.

According to Omar, the thoughts of the past and the future are meaningless. Here, he somewhat resembles an Existentialist philosopher like Soren Kierkegaard in so far as his literary and artistic 'sensitivity' is concerned, which is "manifest both in the poetic and imaginative form of his writings and in an essentially romantic interpretation of human nature."\(^{13}\) In spite of being individualistic in its very essence, the individual has a communion with God. The individual's temporary existence has been placed in the context of God's Eternal Reality and Infinite power. However, the Danish philosopher and Christian mystic Kierkegaard holds that the paradox of man's transitory existence and God's 'eternal reality' "exists only for the speculative intellect and which can be embraced without difficulty as a truth of faith."\(^{14}\)

However, to the average man, the momentary pleasures and pains matter most. But to the Sufi mystic Omar, his individual experiences convinced him of a life of faith in God through the

\(^{13}\) F. Thilly : Ibid, p. 583

\(^{14}\) Ibid, p. 584.
Sufi path, 'Tariqua', of prayer (namaj), fasting, feasting, and the sensuous enjoyments finally leading to the 'fana' (self-annihilation), and the 'baqua' which is a refined and pure form of the human soul.

As Omar believed in the Almighty Lord (Allah), he too believed in the 'living present'. This idea vibrates through

\[\text{Loan tatalike yi poa hatat} \]
\[\text{Nopoa khini thakak baki} \]

(\textit{Omartirtha, Verse 9, L : 12, Quatrain 1})

This, in Fitzgerald's words, appears as:

\textbf{Ah, take the cash and let the credit go,}
\textbf{Nor heed the rumble of a distant drum!}

(Rubaiyat, Quatrain XIII, L : 3-4).

There is a pervasive note of unshakable faith in the light of the Divine which ever illumines his soul: ("Tomar namar alok shikhai") and he makes a complete self-surrender to the will of God (Allah) in the evening of his life's journey:

\[\text{Gadhuli parat bhagari-juguri} \]
\[\text{Tomar ochhar chapilo moi} \]

(\textit{Omartirtha, Verse 57, L : 7-8}).

Dowarda's romantic humanism is identified with Omar's dream of
a land in which the kings, the princes, even their subjects
and common people could enjoy a life of equal happiness:

Raja pra\text{j}a tat sakalo saman
Nai Bad\text{shah} Ghazn\text{ipur}

The people of Naishpur or Babylon would all enjoy:

Ruti etukura, surar piyala
Kemita Kunwari akul pran

(Omartirtha, Verse 8, L : 3-4).

It has been pointed out in a verse section of Omartirtha that
the paths of pains and pleasures, heaven and hell are all
hidden within a man's self in tune with the concept of the
Sufi mysticism which resembles the Vedantic concept of earthly
life:

Manar majate sarag-narak
Bich\text{a}ri beleg nepalo m\text{oi}

(Omartirtha, Verse 45, L : 11-12)

The vanity of human envy, pride etc. creates a hell for men.

Hence, Omar lashes at such untoward human passions and activi-
ties. He discovers that the Sultan Dayud lies buried and the
flower garden of Iran or Persia has withered away and the multi-
coloured seven-ringed cup of Jamshyd and the legendary Persion
king Kaikabad have all been dissolved in dusts. Everything that
was pleasant in the past, is now extinct.

The mists of doubts are gradually dispelled through a firm faith in the Creator:

\[\text{Matir manuh sarajila tum} \]
\[\text{Papar kalima tumiyey dila} \]

(Verse 56, L : 3-4).

\textbf{Qentraltha} leaves a message of a new kind in the Assamese Sufi tradition. The poet sings of a life full of love, music and merriment. 'Sura' or wine gives an endless spiritual vitality, 'saki', the divine beloved who pours out wine gives him eternal happiness. All these sensuous imagery bear deep spiritual significance in the Sufi mystic's apprehension of Truth and realization of the 'Self'. The earthly life is a 'madiralay' or ale-house. The cup symbolizes human body. The act of pouring of wine by the beautiful 'saki' signifies the mystic state of a Sufi in the trance of divine love.

There is a singleness of purpose and a sincerity of tone through the book.
Like Dowera, Ananda Chandra Barua's was also a votary of Sufism. Barua's *Hafizar Sur* first published in 1933 is a metrical translation of the famous Persian poem *Diwan-I-Hafiz* of the fourteenth century. The title, 'Hafiz' is in fact, given to one who learns the whole of the 'Nuran' by heart. His real name was Shamsuddin Muhammad, born in a village near Musselah in Iran. Reuben Levy, while writing the history of Persian Literature places Hafiz at par with Shaik Sadi, as both of them were famous specifically as lyric poets.15

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, referring to the Persian poets Sadi and Hafiz observes that in them, "there is one message which they gave to the world, it is that God is not somewhere above us, but that He is the innermost Being of one's own self, wrapped up, so to say, in so many covers and layers."16

Shaikh Sadi of Shiraz who lived in the thirteenth century and Hafiz who lived in the fourteenth century, were both masters of 'Ghazal'. But Sadi, with his works like *Bustan* (Scented Garden) *Gulistan* (Rose-Garden) excelled for the beauty of his

diction, while Hafiz with his masterpiece, Diwan-I-Hafiz, a collection of poems, won reputation for Rubais, the exquisite single verses in quatrains. Commenting on the achievement of these two Sufi poets L. Reuben has observed, "Each a pearl, fit to be strung everywhere on the line of a ghazal."^17

The Rubais or 'quatrains' were the favourite verse-forms of the Sufi poets for ventilating their intensely personal feelings in matters of the soul and its relationship to the Lord "Allah".

Ananda Chandra Barua, the mystic poet was gifted with rare romantic sensibilities for fondness of the theme of love. The mystic poet makes an effort to explore the Beauty and the Truth through metaphysical contemplations. The book 'Hafizir Sur was first published in 1933 with a preface to it by Laksheswar Sarma. According to Dr. Satyendranath Sarma the translation of the Persian Sufi Poet- Hafiz Establishes Ananda Barua as a poet in the literary scene and like Dowre's Omartirtha these love-poems of Hafiz find an aesthetic expression through the touches of Barua's poetic genius."^18 There is a fanciful flight

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of imagination with an intensity of feelings and emotions vibrant through the quatrains. The poet's power of intuitive perception of beauty and love with a nobility of thought and expression has been revealed through a careful handling and exploration of the Sufi wisdom of love for the Divine Being. The personal sorrows and thoughts full of tears, find a dissolution through the artistic treatment of the popular Persian 'Rubais' full of mystic fervour.

Hafizar Sur that is, the 'Voice of Hafiz' consists of one-hundred and forty-three quatrains. The third edition of the poem in 1970 begins with a poem of eighteen lines "Hafiz Madira"

The poet identifies himself with Khayyam or Hafiz:

Khayyam-Hafiz yen achhilo moyei
Dighal-darhiya vesh, muda muda chaku

( L: 5-6).

There is a Preface (Patani) to the poem by Lakheswar Sarma in which the critic observes a relationship of the devotee to God and the Divine inspiration in a "State of equipoise" in which the poet attains the Supreme Bliss of oneness with the Absolute.

The poet himself expresses in his introduction to the poem that the universe is an eternal sea of joy (bliss). All the activities of the works of God's creation, such as, bird's songs, animal's movements, the co-existence of morning and the evening, seasonal changes etc. echo a tune of bliss. All the objects of creation are ever eager to make a self-surrender to God in such a state of Bliss. However, the mystic poet Ananda Baruah feels an ecstasy of joy which he expresses in the opening poem Hafiz Madira that he himself is amidst the Vineyard with full of grape-juice flowing spontaneously out of a container,

Serahi bagari yoa angurar rasar
Molayem rahanat mataliya hoi

(L. 9-10).

He, in a state of mild spiritual intoxication, senses the flow of emotions amidst the trees and their leaves. This is reflective of John Keats's words:

O, for a draught of Vintage

(Ode to a Nightingale, L : 11)  

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and,

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet.
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness. 22

(St. 5, L : 41-43).

Thus, Ananda Barua's *Hafizar Sur* is not a mere rendering of Hafiz's 'rubais', but an original work peculiar to his poetic vision and sensibilities.

The poet himself, in presenting the poem to the readers, expresses his speculations on Hafiz and the human life in general. Also, he defines Sufism and points out its characteristics.

The book is dedicated to the sweet memory of his late sister-in-law Urmila whose premature death troubles his soul. Hence, the poet is very much concerned with man's sad plight on earth. He is eager to know the process of creation and the cycle of birth and death. Urmila died leaving behind her eight-month old baby.

The event of Urmila's death at her mother's lap makes him speculate on the existence of God because he made repeated prayers to Him for her recovery (Yantranat-chat-phat karadekhi Isvarak kiman anunay-vinay karilo, keni lar dil). 23 In a state of

22. Ibid.
spiritual crisis the poet's soul raises a vehement protest against God's will and questions Him about the cause of human sadness, and poverty. "Manuh imman daridra kiya?".

Hafiz, a Sufi, wearing white woolen attire, contemplated on the questions of life and death. Being intoxicated with the love of the Divine Being, the poet thinks that there is no other way to escape death than to surrender to His will. Like Khayyam's Hafiz's heart is also filled with griefs and sorrows for the miserable plight of man. Ananda Barua', similarly, turns his personal sorrows to the contemplations about the Universe. Hafiz, like Khayyam, drinks the wine of love, which is not an ordinary grape juice, but the intoxicant capable of inducing a trance in human soul's yearning for union with the Divine Being.

Like that of other Sufis, God is addressed as a beloved in Hafizar Sur. The first quatrains says,

Tomar Chhabike dhyan kari priya,
Dristi ye mor Sadai thir,
Tomar Gharar Batti eri
Nalay bhariye Keniyoe bhir

(Quatrain I, L: 1-4).
The poet's eyes are ever fixed like that of a yogin in meditation of the Supreme One that becomes symbolic of his beloved. The lover's foot-steps do not move elsewhere than to the house of the Divine Beloved.

The second quatrain reveals that the poet's soul is restless and this makes him spend sleepless nights because of the mental agonies and sufferings of his heart. The mystic poet's ever-awakened intuitive power of perception of man's sad plight and the thought of man's helpless condition due to the darkness of death makes him miserable.

Jagat khanire lagichhe chakut
Dhuniya topani duniya-bhola

(Quatrain 2, L : 1-2).

In the context of deep slumber of all worldly men, the poet alone is deprived of such a blessing:

Akal morehe chaku-mani yore
Nepale nidrādavīr kola

(Quatrain 2, L : 3-4).

Then follows a sensuous imagery of a vial full of wine amidst a scene of festivity:
Maha-maujar ayojan aji
Sajoa patra sudha opochai

(quatrain 3, L : 11-12)

Like the nineteenth century English romantic poet John Keats, Ananda Chandra Barua, too, seeks a relief from the cares and anxieties of the earthly life. Keats sought relief from them with the help of:

A beaker full of the warm south,
full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene

(Ode to a Nightingale, L : 13-16)

and yearned for leaving the "world unseen" (Ode, L : 19).

Because, men in the world "hear each other groan/where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs" (Ode, L : 24-25).

However, Hafiz is a Sufi mystic and so he seeks a communion with God, and wants to free his soul from the earthly bondage of suffering. By destroying his ego i.e., 'Fana'. Hence, there are rich symbolic expressions like "Laun nigarai Rupali othar/Souna-angur pakichhe jahi" (2. 9, L : 3-4). In the fourth quatrain, the poet makes an address to the Supreme One as 'Priya', i.e., darling

O Mor Priya! Shuna mor katha
Dukhar Kahini pariba tal

(quatrain 4, L : 3-4).
All the trials and tribulations of life would come to an end at the very moment when the human soul is united with the Divine.

Ananda Barua raises a vehement protest against the cruelty of Fate or Destiny in his *Hafizar Sur*. Hafiz rebelled against the social conventions, customs and ideas of the Orthodox Islamic Society. In the same vein Baruah, too, expresses a protest and revolt in the following lines:

*Ahanhata jane khhatphatanit*
*Bichara shanti narare tej;*
*Janichho tomaro hriday bisham,*
*Bichara Chatur Kapati bej*

*(Quatrain 10, L : 1-4).*

The injured person alone knows the pain and seeks peace and solace when the bleeding does not cease. Now, the lover realizes that his beloved is cruel-hearted, hence, there is the necessity of a clever quack.

The natural panorama with its scenic beauty is full of flower gardens wherein 'bulbul' birds pour out their soul. The weather of the month of 'Phaguna' is enchanting to human sight; "enue phagun phular batar". The whole world, then, appears as filled with pilgrims in their pilgrimage to the Absolute;
Visvakhani Tirtha-Yatri
Tomar batake jagate chine

(Quatrain 13, L : 1-2).
The swarms of bees with their open mouths going towards the
pomegranate flowers symbolize their eye-sight turning towards
the Divine Beloved.

The radiant beauty of the poet's beloved leaves deep
imprints on the Sun-rays,
Tomar akul aloke rodat
Pelay tomarei gahari dag

(Quatrain 15, L : 1-2).
The Full-Moon in the night is like a queen wearing a crown on
her head. Since her hairy dark 'flag' is unfurled by her friend
Evening (Sandhiya Sakhi), the beautiful Dawn always smiles at
her beauty: "Ushall sadai hanhe michikai". Such is the descrip­
tion of the physical charms of the beloved.

Then, the poet, at once, feels like a (forlorn) lover.
He spend sleepless nights for the pangs of separation from the
Divine Beloved,
Aji rati mor nolai samay
Moiye bukur bandhoi heen

(Quatrain 17, L : 3-4).
Then, again the lover calls God the "Queen of Light" (Jyoti Rani). The Sun, Moon, and stars are enslaved by her charms (Jon beli tara golam tomar). The Moon receives her coolness and the Sun receives his heat only due to the light sent forth by his Beloved's charms:

Rag-anurag mohere mihali
Tomar-rupare pohar labhi
Chandra iman snigdha sheetal,
Iman deepa hoichhe rabi

(Q quatrain 24).

The beauty of the poet's Divine Darling is so much enchanting that it dispels his feelings of sorrow. The touch of her lips removes the heavy weight of his pains:

Akal tomar othatehe guchhe
Dukh-yatanar gadhur bhav.

The petals of rose fall upon the Beloved's cheeks. The face, then, turns silvery with juicy lips. The flowery-faced Darling surpasses the beauty of flowers:

Phulako jinichhe Phulla-Mukhiye
Suadi hahire harichhe dukh

(Q quatrain 32, L : 3-4).
The intoxication of spiritual drink, through a flow of the nectar of bliss, would make his life immortal. Because, nobody would like to return to the worldly life which is full of griefs: "Konno ahiba dunai Oi?" Like that of all the Sufis, here lies Hafiz's disbelief in rebirth. Men are like slaves to the earth. Love is begotten of pretty flowers. They are merely like waves of a wind:

Eti lahamar echhati batah
Tatehe habala gaiche gan?

(quatrain 34, L : 3-4).

Ananda Barua identifies his own 'Self' with Hafiz, as if the poet himself has the mystic perception of Hafiz's ecstatic feelings. The materialistic life led by the rich and the worldly knowledge are unable to perceive God through material wealth, logic, science, astronomy etc. The Divine Beloved appears only to those who are gifted with the power of intuition, which is superior to intellect:

Dhan-Son aru giyan-buddhi loi,
Thake yar chit bandhat pari,
Noare sinhate preyasir tanu
Mor buli laba apon kari

(quatrain 41).
The human beings whose hearts are always confined to wealth, intelligence cannot embrace their beloved.

To the Sufi mystic, it is wine alone which possesses the spiritual power for a communion with the Supreme One. Thus, the poet views the Divine Being in human form of a fair 'saki' through a mystic insight and proposes to her to come to the river-side and fill his cup with wine from the 'sorahi' (container) "bhara sorahir amiya jol" (43, L : 2). As the earthly life is transitory and man is merely a "musafir", that is, traveller in his journey to the Infinite, so this life should be fully enjoyed:

\[ \text{Lut kara aji hanhir Madhuri} \]
\[ \text{Prem rasere bharoa ghat} \]

(quatrain 44, L : 3-4).

The imagery of 'sorahi' gives place to that of a 'gnat' or an earthen pot.

Destiny makes man's lot miserable, hence the frustrated lover has to accept the life as an empty dream. Fallen upon the courtyard of the inn, it (the human heart) even picks up a fistful of dust from the way and prays to the Almighty.

\[ \text{Atithisalar chotalat pari} \]
\[ \text{Lay Yi-Khaniye batar dhuli} \]

(48, L : 3-4).
Hence, the only way for salvation of the soul lies in the human lover's union with his Divine Beloved. The soul, then, will be freed from "Ei potashal". The symbolic 'potashal' or dark cell resembles the sufi concept of 'maqam', i.e., earthly life.

The inquisitive human lover, then, asks a question if any one's beloved's works are not in keeping with his soul's desires then there will be a complete failure in his love-affair. The poet's feeling of love is so intense that he even desires to die in union with his Beloved. The simile of the bee, while sucking honey from a flower and facing death, implies the mystic poet's desire for self-annihilation:

Pran aru mor sakir lagat  
Seihe baliya moi,  
Samadhi bhedio ahim olai  
Moino Karichho kihar bhay?  

(Quatrain 62)

This is the expression of an ecstasy of a joyful consummation of love in union with the beloved. The poet's soul has attained the state of 'Fana' or self-annihilation in the Divine Being. It leads to the symbolic State of inner purity and refinement of human soul in contact with the Supreme One. Thus, the
soul has attained a sort of refinement and immortality and it fervently desires for a return to the world in a purer form. This is in tune with the Sufi concept of 'baqua'.

Thus, it is evident that Hafiz clearly expresses his faith in 'Divine Mercy'. Also, there is a note of complete 'Surrender to the will of God' when he wrote through his lines:

Ajiok Hodar pabitra peethat
Epheri bharasha thoichho sanchi

( L : 1-2).

He hopefully waits for a thousand of doors that would be wide-open for him with Fate profusely offering 'Ashoka' flowers:

Alekh duar mel khaba mor
Bhagye dibahi Ashok Yachi.

As the lover is advancing in his age, his eyes turn pale, eye-sight becomes dim, and hair turns grey. The lover, in an ecstasy, catches hold of the Beloved's silken hair and fiddles it with his fingers. She, at once, sharply replies to him in the eighty-fourth quatrains:

Leave off the hair, catch upon the two lips of mine
Do not desire for a long earthly life
End up every thing here itself: ;
Dirgha jeevan nukhujiba aru
Karachon sakalo lyste oor.

( L : 3-4).

The adamant lover insists on the fact that he has spent a sleepless night. As he is unable to persuade his beloved, he speaks of his miseries to himself alone: "Nijake nijak koicho katha". There are reference to the "Khaybar dwar", i.e., the doors of the province of Khaybar in Arabia; Ali, the son of Prophet Muhammad who broke the doors of Khaybar fort with his fists. Also, there are the scriptural allusions, such as, to 'Kunwar Shah', the emperor of Kunwar, famed for 'Charity' etc.

This is symbolic of the Sufi ideals of sacrifice and poverty. The rich used to give alms and the poor used to approach the rich for it: "Duhate akale danak di" (3. 87, L : 4). Hafiz makes a self-enquiry whether he, too, feels a thirst for 'Divine Mercy'. But its answer lies in the very truth that the Beloved of life's elixir alone knows the cause or fountain-source of it: "Jeevan sudhar sakhiye her/Sei jhamar batari jane" (3. 88, L : 3-4).

Thus, the sufi poet's firm belief in the 'Divine Mercy' finds a full affirmation. Hence, Hafiz advises his friends to
observe 'patience', 'silence' and to forbear all troubles for the sake of love of the Lord: "Pahari sakalo Karachon ahari" (p 89, L : 3).

The Sufi poet also feels a sort of contentment in the fulfilment of love. It is the 'wine' which is symbolic of spiritual love that fulfils his amorous desires (Phatikar ei Khuri-batitite/Par hero tar hriday mor" (p 101, L : 1-2). There is not the least fear for death as his embalmed soul has gained spiritual strength through a union with the Almighty:

Shayno kihar tar pichh dina
Ahe yadi dut yamar para


All his griefs end in a mystic contentment. The spiritual wine has restored the vitality of his life. His mind is now full of peace. He is free from all desires of life. He is now in such a state of happiness that thousands of pearls are not equal to it:

Ayut mukuta dileo sonti
Noaro eriba seiti khor

(p 112, L : 3-4).

The coral-hued lips of the poet's beloved symbolize his life's elixir: "Jeevani Shakti mor" (p 112, L : 2).
In the midst of spiritual darkness the poet has not been reduced to despair. His endeavour will continue to reach his ultimate goal.

The poet is elated to hear the message of solace—"aswas vani" amidst the desert of despair.

In the long last, the poet surrenders to the Divine Will and begs the mercy of God. He will eagerly wait for whatever is granted by God. God is the source of his life: "Pranar Utsa" and His voice is the voice of his Divine Beloved: "Prajar nichina mithamat" etc.

In the march of his life for the happy union with God, the poet sometimes behave like an insane person, sometimes he appears to be a gambler, still the mystic poet would ever cherish the hope of realizing the Supreme One through his purity of mind and faithful prayers to God. In such a state of serenity, the intoxication of divine love with "Sukdr" is poured out by the Sufi poet's 'Saki' makes him realize his self.

Lastly, the poet wants to refrain from all sorts of child comforting play like things in life:

Aji shesh kar ei jivanar
Lora nichukoa guloi-baji

(Quatrain 143, L : 2-3).
He, therefore, wants to drink the full glass i.e., he wants to leave aside the mundane affairs and comforts and lead a life which belongs to the Supreme One. Hence he sounds a note of spiritual contentment:

Etiya ye tor nimat hobar
Parichhehi pal kangal herei,
Tei tuki pela shunya gilach,
Dhalide shehar madira tebei

(quatrain 144)

Thus, it may safely be concluded that Ananda Chandra Sarua proves himself to be a true votary of Sufi mystic philosophy and he will stand the test of time as one of the fore-runners of Sufi poetry in Assamese.