



The *Winged-Heart* Calligraphy

This type of calligraphic device is known as a *tughrā*. Most Sufi orders have a calligraphic design which is emblematic of their Order, constructed from the name of their founding Pīr and outlining the shape of the head-gear (*tāj*, or “crown”) worn by their founding Pīr and passed to the Order’s Lineage Holders in initiatic succession. The basic form is that of a cap with a turban wound around the base. For example, the *tughrā* of the Mevlevi Order looks like Rumi’s *tāj* (left), and the *tughrā* of the Rifā’i Order, looks like the *tāj* worn by the Rifa’i shaikhs, handed-down to them by Aḥmad Rifā’i.



Pīr-o-Murshid ‘Ināyat Khān did not transmit a *tāj*, but he did leave us with his Winged-Heart symbol. Contained within all three of these designs is the phrase “*Yā Ḥaẓrat-i* [name of saint]. In Arabic, one speaks to a respected person with “*Yā*” and their first name, title, or honorific. The word “*Ḥaẓrat*” (sometimes rendered in Roman letters as “*Ḥaḍrat*”) means “Presence” in Arabic and Persian. It was not ‘Ināyat Khān’s name but is an honorific.* “*Yā Ḥaẓrat-i*” means roughly “O! Presence of —” and is a traditional phrase invoking the Being of a Sufi saint. So, the Winged-Heart *tughrā* says, “*Yā Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Ināyat*” — “O, Presence of ‘Ināyat” — in the left wing and this is mirror-imagined on the right-hand side. The Mevlevi *tughrā* says “*Yā Ḥaẓrat-i Mevlānā Muḥammad Jelāluddīn,*” Rumi’s honorifics and given name.

Contained within these designs is also the phrase *Qaddas-Allāh Sīrrahū*, which, literally translated, is usually rendered “God Sanctify His Secret” and is a traditional eulogistic formulation invoked in juxtaposition with mention of the name of a departed saint. *Qaddas* is from the same root as *Quddūs*, (sanctified, holy) and *Sīrrahū* is from the same root as *sīrr*, “the innermost Secret” or the “ineffable depth of Being of which naught cannot be spoken.” In the Winged-Heart *tughrā*, this phrase forms the “heart” portion of the design. What this phrase means esoterically is not usually spoken about, but this is my sense: There is a tradition within the Sufi path that the full *barakat* (transformative blessing power) of a master is not fully available until s/he has become unburdened of the physical body and personality, i.e., “death” (from our limited perspective). So, in a sense, *Qaddas-Allāh Sīrrahū* means “May his Secret (his “Message”) Be Spread.”

Notes by Hafizullah. Design ©Hafizullah.

* I have heard “*Ḥaẓrat*” translated as “Holy.” This is not quite correct, at least in the Western European (Christian/Jewish) sense of “holy.”