

*Edward Fitzgerald*  
( 1809 - 1883 )

The 12<sup>th</sup> century **Persian poet Omar Khayyám**, is well known in the West, through the work of the English poet and translator Edward Fitzgerald.

Published in 1859, Fitzgerald's "Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám" attracted little attention until 1860, when it was discovered by other artists and literary figures, such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti who was a poet, and is well-known as one of the painters of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

The "Rubáiyát's" tendency to rebel against the restricting Puritanism of the Victorian era, captured the imagination of many freethinkers of the time, yet it was only universally appreciated, after Fitzgerald's death.

Today, Fitzgerald's Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám has been translated into many languages world-wide, and can be regarded as a masterpiece in its own right. Most importantly, Fitzgerald helped to create in the West, a real interest in Persian literature as a whole. Of the 107 [stanzas](#) in the poem (fifth edition), the [Oxford Dictionary of Quotations](#) (2nd edition) quotes no less than 43 *entire stanzas in full*, in addition to many individual lines and couplets. **The most familiar stanza is surely:**

**A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,  
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou  
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—  
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!**

However, the work is now held to be more reflective of Fitzgerald than of **Khayyam**, whose collected works have been corrupted by forgeries added over the centuries. It is necessary to seek out one of the scholarly editions of **Khayyam**; see Ali **Dashti's** *In Search of Omar Khayyam* for a good discussion of the problem. No women feature in Fitzgerald's *Rubáiyat* and "it is most probable that **FitzGerald** envisaged "the thou beside me" to accompany him in the wilderness as being a young male."<sup>[1]</sup>

In 1925, when [Billy Rose](#) and [Al Dubin](#) wrote the popular song "A Cup of Coffee, A Sandwich, and You", (\* see below) they surely expected listeners to "A Cup Of Coffee, A Sandwich And You" [Melody](#) - *Joseph Meyer, 1925; Seq. by [Don Ferguson](#)* ,*Billy Rose, Al Dubin, 1925* "A Cup Of Coffee, A Sandwich And You"

**In the movie plays of now-a-days,  
A romance always must begin in June,  
Tales in magazines have all their scenes  
Of love laid in a garden 'neath the moon.  
But I don't miss, that kind of bliss  
What I want is this,  
*Chorus:*  
*A cup of coffee, a sandwich and you,  
A cozy corner, a table for two,***

*A chance to whisper and cuddle and coo  
With lots of huggin' and kissin' in view.  
I don't need music, lobster or wine,  
Whenever your eyes look into mine.  
The things I long for are simple and few;  
A cup of coffee, a sandwich and you!*

<http://musicanet.org/robokopp/usa/cupofcof.htm>

**Allusion:** a **figure of speech** that makes a reference or representation of or to a well-known person, place, event, literary work, or work of art. Figures, like Allusion make speech more effective, they beautify and emphasize it in Rhetoric which is the art of speaking and writing effectively.

**Intertext** ( see Allusion above) A term used to denote a text referred to within a text. The Bible, the works of Shakespeare, and Classical myths, for example, are frequently found as intertexts in works of literature. [Julie Ellam]

**Intertextuality:** A term which can refer to a text's inclusion of intertexts, but is also a concept introduced by philosopher and semiotician Julia Kristeva, and used in poststructuralist criticism, according to which a text is seen as not only connecting the author to the reader, but also as being connected to all other texts, past and present. Thus there is a limit to the extent to which an individual text can be said to be original or unique, and a limit to the extent to which an individual author can be said to be the originator of a text. [Julie Ellam]

“The Invisible in Translation: The Role of Text Structure”

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**Yarmohammadi (1995) studied the rhetorical organization of Khayam's Robaiyat (quatrains) and compared it with its English translation by Fitzgerald. His study revealed that the macro-structure of all Khayam's Robaiyat included three components, namely, "description," "recommendation," and "reasoning" which can be used as a criterion to distinguish between the real Khayam's Robaiyat and those erroneously attributed to him. Based on his analysis, Yarmohammadi came to the conclusion that the reason for Fitzgerald's successful translation of Khayam's Robaiyat is that he was able to reconstruct the same macro-structures in English and then apply appropriate sentence structures and lexis. The following is an example of one of the Khayam's quatrains as translated by Fitzgerald.**

**Text analysis is, thus, becoming a promising tool in performing more reliable translations. There are numerous studies done on text analysis, which can have interesting messages for translators. For example, the kind of structure frequently reported for argumentative genres include "introduction, explanation of the case under discussion, outline of the argument, proof, refutation and conclusion" (Hatch 1992: 185). As a final word, we may say that in translation we should first try to reconstruct the macro-structure and rhetorical structure of the source text in the target language and then look for the appropriate words and structures; this is a procedure that skillful translators perform in the process of translation consciously or unconsciously.**