

Kafi

NOTE ON KAFI

Kafi is a form of poetry in which the first or the second line—at times both lines together—serve as the refrain. *Kafi* is often chanted like a song. At the end of a stanza the singers sing the refrain repeatedly with force and gusto. This helps to build a particular mood or atmosphere, and creates a forceful effect on the audience. The *kafi* is generally sung by *qawwals*, a group of singers. They get so deeply absorbed in the singing that they become a part of the chorus. The word *kafi* is derived from the Arabic “*kafa*” which means a group. Thus participation by the whole group has become an almost integral part of *kafi* singing.

In printing the *kafis* in this book the refrain and each stanza of a *kafi* have been distinctly shown separate from one another. In certain *kafis* the refrain at the end of each stanza has been eliminated in full or in part, because pleasant in singing, the repetition appears monotonous in reading.