

## Halqa Meeting November 15, 2015

Abdul Hayy Khilwati: I would like to speak with you about the saying, “**Die before you die.**” [*mutu qabl an tamutu*]. The Sufis hold that this ‘dying’ takes place when the shadow of egotism is effaced in God’s light and a person regains the primordial awareness of his or her unborn and undying Divine Aspect. This science is verified through effacement, and effacement is reached through *zikr*, the invocation of the Truly Real. Another way to put it is that when the heart is emptied, the Truly Real becomes apparent. This is like the sun rising, in that its truth and clarity becomes self-evident. Whoever stabilizes this realization may be described as ‘dead’ even though still alive in this world. To quote Ibn Arabi’s *Fusus al-Hikam* from the chapter Elias, (Austin’s translation, pg. 234):

“The gnostics appear in this world as if they were in worldly forms, by reason of its [apparent] effect on them, but God has transformed them inwardly into their other-worldly state, without a doubt. [Veiled] in their forms, they remain unknown except to one whose inner sight God has uncovered to perceive [spiritual reality], **nor may anyone know God in His Self-manifestation except he be in his other-worldly form.** He has already been gathered in [for the Hour] in this world, and is brought forth in the grave...”

The Sufis, like most religious people, do not regard death as the cessation of personhood. They regard death as a transition to another state of personhood, one that is not limited by the physical body. Anyone one can observe those times when they are less aware of the physical body—even some occasions when they completely lose awareness of it. People also have mental, imaginal, and energetic bodies that abide after physical death, although these function somewhat differently in the afterlife. When the mystic experiences God’s presence, this overwhelms the earthly faculties and awakens some of the faculties of the afterlife.