

Society and Culture  
in the Early Modern  
Middle East  
*Studies on Iran in the  
Safavid Period*

—  
*Edited by*  
Andrew J. Newman



BRILL

SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN  
THE EARLY MODERN MIDDLE EAST

# ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION

STUDIES AND TEXTS

EDITED BY

WADAD KADI  
AND  
ROTRAUD WIELANDT

VOLUME 46



# SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN THE EARLY MODERN MIDDLE EAST

*Studies on Iran in the Safavid Period*

EDITED BY

ANDREW J. NEWMAN



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For Chris Rundle, With Many Thanks

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## FOREWORD

Standing between the Indian subcontinent, Asia and the Middle East of the Eastern Mediterranean, Iran's political, socio-economic and cultural dynamic has historically interacted with those of these other areas, in the process mediating and transforming traditions and institutions received from and transmitted to each. The Safavid period (907–1135/1501–1722) is of especial import as the Safavid dynamic provided the link between the medieval and modern periods of both the history of Iran and that of the region as a whole. It is often identified as the period when, for example, 1) Iran adopted Shi'ism as its formal, state religion, and the material and theological/doctrinal foundations of the modern religious infrastructure were laid; 2) Persian was increasingly identified as Iran's pre-eminent language; 3) the borders of what is today the modern Iranian state were first established; and, 4) Iran's political, social, economic and cultural spheres began to interact with those of the West on a previously unparalleled scale especially as the Spanish-Portuguese dominance of world trade gave way to the dominance of the British-Dutch trading systems.

In 1974 the US-based Society for Iranian Studies sponsored a colloquium on the city of Isfahan, established as the Safavid capital in the seventeenth century, at the Fogg Museum of Art, Harvard University, papers from which were later published as a special issue of the Society's journal *Iranian Studies*. A general history of Iran in the Safavid period was produced by Roger Savory in 1980, and published by Cambridge.

Since that time, however, the number of scholars engaged in the study of various aspects of Safavid society has witnessed phenomenal growth. In the last decade alone there have been three international colloquia, all held in Europe, which addressed issues in Safavid society and culture. In March 1989 Jean Calmard of the CNRS organised the First International Round Table on Safavid Persia. Under the auspices of French Research Institute in Iran and the CNRS some eighteen scholars from Iran, Europe and the US gathered in Paris to discuss aspects of Safavid social, economic and cultural history. The resulting volume of papers, *Etudes Safavides*, sous la direction de Jean Calmard (Paris-Teheran: Institut Français de

Recherche en Iran, 1993) contained eighteen papers on sources, socio-cultural and socio-economic history. 1993 also witnessed the gathering of over twenty scholars, from Iran, Europe, the US and Japan, for the Second Round Table, organised by Charles Melville, in Cambridge. On this occasion Safavid art and architecture were also included as part of the Round Table's remit. The resulting volume, *Safavid Persia, The History and Politics of an Islamic Society*, Charles Melville, ed. (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996) contains fifteen papers on such topics as history and historiography and society and commerce.

Early in 1998 Sheila Canby organised a British Museum conference on 'Safavid Art and Architecture', attended by some 24 scholars from Iran, Russia, Europe and the US. An edited volume of these papers has now been published (*Safavid Art and Architecture*, edited by Sheila R. Canby, London: British Museum, 2002). In May of the same year, in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, some fourteen scholars based in the US gathered for a conference entitled 'Safavid Iran and Her Neighbours'.

In 1998 the Third Round Table on Safavid Persia was convened at the University of Edinburgh, as part of the run-up to the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the establishment of courses in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University. So large had the field become that there was but a modicum of overlap between the speakers, the topics of their papers and the attendees at all of these 1998 gatherings.

In keeping with the increasingly broad and interdisciplinary remit of the Round Tables the 1998 Round Table included some forty specialists drawn from such diverse fields as political and military history, art and architecture, language and literature, religion and philosophy, geography, anthropology and sociology, and the history of science and medicine presented papers over three days. (A full list of presenters and paper titles is found below.) Such a gathering facilitated an exchange of ideas, information, and methodologies across a broad range of disciplines between scholars from diverse research backgrounds with a common interest in the history and culture of this important period of Iran's history.

The Round Tables have sought also to identify newer scholars in the field world-wide particularly, for example, those without permanent academic posts, and bring them together with those who are better established.

Finally, bringing together the most productive and creative scholars from the many different sub-disciplines of Safavid studies, as in

the past two Round Tables, also encouraged the identification and promotion of items for future research and analysis.

Of the papers delivered at the 1998 Round Table the twenty articles in the present volume reflect the successful manner in which the Round Table itself achieved its stated goals. The contributions to the present volume are the work of scholars from Iran, Russia, the Continent, the UK and the US. These articles underscore the contributions of relatively newer scholars in the field from all these geographical regions: the articles of Bashir, Blake, Quinn, Matthee, Newman, Rührdanz, Sifatgol, and Ja'fariyān, half of the papers included, both add significantly to the field's knowledge and challenge some of its underlying assumptions. The contributions of Sifatgol and Ja'fariyān from Iran, both especially prominent among the younger Iranian scholars of the Safavid period, attest to the appearance of a new, post-war generation of scholars in Iran ready and able to succeed such of the 'founding fathers' of the field in Iran as Afshār and Ishrāqī, both of whose papers are also included in the present volume.

Also in keeping with the 'mission statement' of these Round Tables, these articles reflect the effort to foster an exchange of ideas and information between scholars engaged in research across many fields and scholarly disciplines. Roughly one-third of the papers presented at the Round Table addressed aspects of Safavid 'culture', broadly construed. In the present volume eight articles, one-third of the total, address such issues as painting, carpet production, Qur'ān illumination, and literature.

Finally, especially inasmuch as it was in the Safavid period that Twelver Shī'ism was first established in Iran and that, consequently, the key religious concepts and material infrastructure that underpin the present-day relationship between religion and the state in Iran were given such important impetus, the Third Round Table included some seven papers on such topics. The present volume includes five articles on religio-spiritual aspects of Safavid society.

### *Themes and Organisation*

The twenty articles in the present volume are divided into six sections, entitled 'History and Historiography', 'Sources on Safavid Society and Culture', 'Culture and Patronage in the Safavid Period', 'Art and Identities', 'Culture, Economy and Politics in Peripheries and

Centres' and 'The Spiritual Realm: Medicine, Manuscripts, Money and Movements'.

In the first section, 'History and Historiography', Michele Bernardini examines two works of poetry completed by Hātifi (d. 929/1522) and Qāsimī Gunābādī (d. 982/1574), a pupil of the former, both of Khurasan and known to have been Shī'ites. Hātifi completed a *Tīmurnāma* between 898/1492 and 904/1498 and a *mathnavī* dedicated to Ismā'īl. His pupil authored *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismā'īl* in the year 940/1533. Both authors attempted to endow their subjects with superhuman qualities and, especially, identify Ismā'īl with Timur himself. In terms of territory this identity was shaped in parallel with the Il-khanid concept of Iran as it was created under Mongol rule. This territory was mentally tightly linked up to the political capacity of the Safavid dynasty to whom the reassembling of the whole territory was ascribed. Sholeh Quinn suggests that in the Safavid period Timurid historiography continued to supply imitative models—highly conventional and imitative prefaces, rulers' genealogies and dreams narratives—containing general themes which later historians, engaging in what she calls an 'inter-dynastic dialogue', could adapt to their own times to promote their own dynasties' ideology and legitimacy. Karin Rührdanz argues that comparing illustrated copies of Zakariya b. Mohammed b. Mahmud al-Qazwini's *'Ajā'ib al-makhlūqāt wa gharā'ib al-mawjūdāt*, in Arabic as well as in Persian and Turkish translations, reveals the extent to which such work was undertaken with a distinctively contemporary agenda in mind. The illustrations and the contents of the interpolation, in particular, send messages about the interests of the intended audience and challenge conventional notions as to the stagnation and decline of culture in late medieval and early modern Islam.

In the section on 'Sources on Safavid Society and Culture', Iraj Afshār notes the preoccupation with political, military and diplomatic events over urban, social and cultural affairs which address aspects of daily life. In particular he calls for further attention to such government documents as firmans, judicial decrees, petitions, land grants, royal mandates, wills, and a host of other miscellaneous writings. Of these some are available in India—some of which are now located abroad—but there are some also in Iran, and the latter run to some fifty or sixty volumes and are located, in the main, in Kitāb-Khāna-i-Markazī (Central Library) of Tehran University, Malik National Library and Majlis Library in Tehran, and Mar'ashī Library in Qum.

Afshār highlights some of the most important of these documents. Charles Melville evaluates the importance of the third volume of Fażlī Khuzānī's court chronicle *Afzal al-tavārikh* which he discovered at Cambridge miscatalogued as a manuscript of Iskander Beg Munshi's well-known *Tārikh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī* and which, in fact, covers the reign of 'Abbās I. Melville highlights the importance of this source for the light it sheds on affairs in the Caucasus, provincial administration, and patronage networks within the administration. Anthony Welch brings to light the journals of the nineteen year-old Venetian nobleman Ambrosio Bembo who, in 1085/1674, visited Shiraz, Qumisheh and Isfahan. There he stayed with the Carmelites and met Raphaël du Mans, who had already completed his *Estat de la Perse en 1660* at the request of Louis XIV's minister Colbert, and Jean Chardin. Bembo reports at length on food, customs, and clothing, and the doctrinal differences amongst both the Muslim and Christian populations of Isfahan, as well as contemporary Zoroastrians. He visited Persepolis and Kirmanshah as well. Of special, additional interest are the drawings which accompany the work by his companion the French artist G.J. Grélot, whom Bembo met in Isfahan.

In 'Culture and Patronage in the Safavid Period' Sheila Blair explores the provenance and, as importantly, attempts to reconstruct the religio-political background to Shah Ṭahmāsp's commissioning, ca. 946/1539–40, of the matched pair known as the Ardabīl carpets, the largest and most famous of the Safavid period—one each of which is now at the Victoria and Albert and Los Angeles County Museums—as well as that of the Ardabīl shrine more generally. Reconstructing the carpets' history shows how the matched pair, originally ordered to fit a specific building, were adapted to meet the changing needs of the shrine at Ardabīl. The period of 'Abbās' renovations to the Ardabīl shrine in the early seventeenth century is most likely when the two carpets were shortened, as this was the first time since Ṭahmāsp's work at the shrine that substantial monies were spent there. The shah's attention to the shrine bespoke a desire to heighten his family connections; thus, also, his grandfather's bones were also moved back to Ardabīl. Stephen Blake argues that 'Abbās I's transfer of the Safavid capital from Qazvin to Isfahan occurred in 999/1590—not in 1006/1597–8, as is usually thought. Initially the shah undertook to redevelop the older part of the city, centred on the Harun Vilayat bazaar, an effort which lasted until 1004/1595. Ca. 1011/1602, however, he decided to shift the political, economic



and religious nucleus of the city to ‘an undeveloped garden retreat district in the southwest’, what would become *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān*. Blake explains this two-stage process of the city’s transformation from provincial centre into an imperial capital in light of political and economic reforms undertaken by the shah over this period. Robert Hillenbrand investigates a rare masterpiece of Islamic woodwork—the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā‘īl in his tiny mausoleum attached to the shrine complex of Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn at Ardabīl. With its intricate intarsia work in ivory and sandalwood, it falls naturally into the late Timurid tradition of luxury woodwork as used for doors, fences, screens and the like. The paper attempts to place this royal sarcophagus within the tradition of court luxury arts in late Timurid and early Safavid times.

The three papers in ‘Art and Identities’ address generally-accepted notions of identity and artistic accomplishment. Based on detailed analysis of ‘their’ works A.T. Adamova argues that the artist Muḥammed Qāsim l’Ancient who worked in the late sixteenth century and the Muḥammed Qāsim who worked in the latter half of the seventeenth century were, in fact, the same individual, who died in 1070/1659. She then groups his work by stylistic periods noting, for example, the introduction of rich landscape settings into individual drawings and paintings in works completed between 1014/1605 and 1037/1627 and such innovations as rendering the foreground with tiny strokes or points, and leaving ‘reserved’ flowering bushes, including irises which would become standard in the later works of both this artist and others. Barbara Brend considers works that bear the names of two artists, Mīrzā ‘Alī and ‘Abd al-Ṣamad, the latter a key figure in Kabul’s Mughal school in the sixteenth century, to suggest that they are the *oeuvre* of one and the same individual. The paper, again, also reveals something of the nature of the production of culture in the process. Jonathan Bloom discusses the ‘discovery’ in early Safavid times of a magnificent copy of the *Shāhnāmeḥ* illustrated nearly two centuries earlier and the lessons Safavid artists and patrons drew from the earlier model.

In ‘Culture, Economy and Politics in Peripheries and Centres’ E. Bahari attributes the establishment of the Bukhara school of painting to ‘Ubaydallāh Khān’s capture of Hirat in 935/1528, when the Uzbek ruler sent the renowned ‘Shaykhzadeh’ Maḥmūd Muzahhib, the able pupil of the master Bihzād, Mulla Yūsuf and the famous calligrapher Mīr ‘Alī Hiravī to Bukhara. Soon thereafter the art of

the book in Bukhara, with which the school is especially identified, suddenly blossomed, some superbly illustrated manuscripts being produced up to around 1570. The article both highlights the interest of the courts of this period in culture and the importance of patronage to the continued health of ‘high’ culture in particular. Rudi Matthee uses numismatics as a source of historical information to shed light on the relationship between the centre and the periphery in Safavid times. His discussion of the coinage of Ḥuvayzeh in south-western Iran shows ‘unity within diversity’. Ḥuvayzeh coins conformed to Safavid patterns in royal inscriptions, yet appear as a regional coinage in style, layout and calligraphy. This situation mirrors the position of the Musha‘sha‘ rulers of Ḥuvayzeh, vis-à-vis the central state. Though tributary to the shah, they enjoyed considerable administrative and financial autonomy.

In ‘The Spiritual Realm: Medicine, Manuscripts, Money and Movements’, considering the fifteenth as a century marked by messianic movements, Shahzad Bashir addresses the development of the Nūrbakhshīyya Mahdist movement which matured slightly ahead of the Safavids in the fifteenth century, whose leadership, unlike the Safavid order, did not advocate recourse to arms to vindicate its claims and which, following the death of its Mahdi, disappeared as a distinctive religio-spiritual movement in Iran. Jean Calmard explores the efforts of Shī‘ī clerics to curtail certain forms of popular literary expression and ritual, particularly story telling. Calmard addresses Shah Ismā‘īl’s *divān*, the *Abū Muslim-nāmeḥ*—in which the partisans of the *Ahl-i bayt* and Abū Muslim continued to be called ‘Sunnites’—, the *Mukhtār-nāmeḥ*, the several epics of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and Amīr Hamza, the *maqṭal nāmeḥs* and various non-Islamic forms of popular literature such as fables and sagas of non-Muslim heroes, all of which were singled for condemnation by prominent, orthodox clerics in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Iḥsān Ishrāqī contributes important new information to our understanding of the Nuḡṭavī movement in the Safavid period suggesting, for example, the extent to which the movement both represented a continuation of earlier Sufi-style movements even as, in this period in particular, it became a locus for urban-based opposition to an oppressive state structure and, there, the official religion of that state. Rasūl Ja‘fariyān notes that, although there has much discussion of the migration of Arab Twelver Shī‘ī scholars to Safavid Iran, the prior existence in Iran of manuscripts of key works on Twelver

doctrine and practice has not been addressed. Indeed, Jaʿfariyān suggests that Rumlū’s statement in his *Aḥsan al-Tavārīkh* that in 907/1501, when Ismāʿīl captured Tabrīz and proclaimed the establishment of the faith, the court had access to few, if any, major works of Twelver *fiqh*, applied only to Azerbaijan. Manuscripts of Shīʿī works on *fiqh* were made in such key Shīʿī centres in Iran as Kashan, Sabzavar, Astarābād, Ray and Tus. A number of old manuscripts brought by immigrant scholars from such Arab centres of the faith as Iraq, Baḥrayn and Jabal ʿĀmil in the Lebanon during the early years of Safavid rule were kept at Ardabil. Our own paper argues for a re-examination of the legacy of the well-known late Safavid-period Shīʿī *faqīh* Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī, suggesting that with regard to the materia medica in his famous Twelver *akhbār* compilation *Biḥār al-Anwār* there is little hint of the ferocious anti-philosophical and anti-Greek tendencies for which he is usually identified in the secondary sources. Nor is there evidence in this material for the supposed fatalism with which Shīʿī prophetic medicine is generally associated. Finally, Maṣṣūr Şifatgol notes that at a time when no governmental budget existed for the maintenance of schools, mosques and other popular institutions, the huge income from *avqāf* was fundamental to the cultural, economic and social life of Iran. Focusing on the seventeenth century Şifatgol suggests that during ʿAbbās I’s reign the *avqāf* institution became institutionalised and centralised. *Avqāf* increased markedly following his death and ʿAbbās II sought to assume direct control over an *avqāf* system which had become quite complex. If Shah Sulaymān himself did not create large amounts of *avqāf*, family and many courtiers did and during the reign of Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn endowments from family members, courtiers and statesmen, increased considerably, as did the influence of members of the religious institution who managed them.

\* \* \*

The Third Round Table enjoyed extra-ordinary support from such diverse organisations as The Iran Heritage Foundation; The Foreign and Commonwealth Office; The University of Edinburgh’s Arts, Divinity, and Music Faculty Group Research Fund; The Barakat Trust; The British Institute of Persian Studies; The National Museums of Scotland; The Binks Trust; Out of the Nomad’s Tent, Edinburgh; The British Academy; and The University of Edinburgh’s Development

Trust. Thanks are also due to the University of Edinburgh Library, and especially Frances Abercromby, for mounting 'An Exhibition of Persian Manuscripts from the Collections of Edinburgh University Library' during the Round Table. All of the participants, and myself especially, are very grateful to all of them. All of the participants, and the organiser, were very appreciative for the support and encouragement of all these organisations. The present volume is dedicated to Chris Rundle who recently retired from the Foreign Office. During his tenure Chris was a constant and consistent source of assistance to Iranian studies in the UK and all of us in the field are immensely grateful for all his help.

All of those at the 1998 Round Table were grateful to those who presented papers. The contributions of the Round Table's session chairs, Rob Gleave, Edmund Herzig and Paul Luft, were also much appreciated. Special personal thanks are also due to Charles Melville and Jean Calmard for their encouragement and advice throughout the organising process. Yasir Suleiman of the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies and Chair of the Edinburgh Institute for the Advanced Study of Islam and the Middle East, under whose immediate auspices the Round Table was held, as well as Carole Hillenbrand and Robert Hillenbrand whose support was also much appreciated. The Faculty of Arts, University of Edinburgh also gave me leave time in Spring, 2000, to complete work on this volume. My thanks also to my wife Margaret and our daughter Mary Katherine for their patience and encouragement from Autumn 1996, when I first began organising for the Round Table, until Autumn 2002 as the editing process winds down.

With regard to that editing, I have exercised a very light touch. I have attempted to standardise transliteration and bibliographic entries based on those utilised by the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, but I have left untouched some names and words for which there are conventional English spellings available. Thanks are due to Ms Nafisa Abd el-Sadek for her able assistance in this process. The volume has benefitted in particular as well from the much-stretched patience of Ms Trudy Kamperveen and of Irene van Rossum of Brill with whom it has been of the utmost pleasure to work!

The appearance of this volume of selected articles from the 1998 Third Round Table is especially timely as the field continues to expand, both in the number of scholars engaged in research in related specialisms and in the number of symposia and conferences. In

September 2002, the London-based Iran Heritage Foundation recently organised the extremely successful ‘Iran and the World in the Safavid Age’ in London and the Fourth Round Table has already been spoken for. It is to be hoped that the same friendly atmosphere which has prevailed at the three Round Tables and other Safavid-period gatherings to date will continue to mark all these future gatherings and scholarly exchanges.

Andrew J. Newman  
 Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies  
 The University of Edinburgh  
 September 2002

\* \* \*

List of Papers Delivered at the  
 Third International Round Table on Safavid Persia,  
 Edinburgh, August, 1998

(full details of presenters and paper abstracts are  
 to be found on the web at:

<http://www.arts.ed.ac.uk/eiasime/events/RoundTable.html>)

- ‘*Afzal al-Tavarikh* and the Battle of Jam (935/1529): A Reassessment’, Mrs Simin Abrahams  
 ‘Muhammad Qasim and the Esfahan School of Painting’, Dr Adel T. Adamova  
 ‘*Majmu’ehs* and *Maktubs* as Essential Sources for Safavid Research’, Mr Iraj Afshar  
 ‘The Houses of Isfahan: Architecture, Patronage, and Social History’, Dr Sussan Babaie  
 ‘From Tabrīz to Isfahan: The Reconfiguration of the Safavi Household (Dudman)’,  
 Dr Kathryn Babayan  
 ‘The Sixteenth Century School of Bukhara Painting and the Arts of the Book’, Dr Ebadollah Bahari  
 ‘After the Messiah: The Nurbakhshīyya in Safavid Times’, Professor Shahzad Bashir  
 ‘Some Safavid Historical Books of Kings: Hatefi’s *Timurname* and *Fotuhāt-e Shāhi* and Qasemi’s *Shahname-ye Esmāil*’, Dr Michele Bernardini  
 ‘The Ardabīl Carpets in Context’, Dr Sheila Blair  
 ‘Isfahan as Safavid Capital: When, Where, Why?’ Dr Stephen P. Blake  
 ‘Epic Images Revisited: An Ilkhanid Legacy in Early Safavid Painting’, Dr Jonathan M Bloom  
 ‘A New Career for Mirza ‘Ali?’ Dr Barbara Brend  
 ‘‘Abbās II and the Rulers of Bukhara and Balkh’, Dr Audrey Burton  
 ‘Popular Literature Under the Safavids’, Dr Jean Calmard  
 ‘Dr Kaempfer’s Album’, Dr Sheila Canby  
 ‘Ethnic Variety and Minority presence in later Safavid Iran: Some European Evidence’, Dr John Emerson  
 ‘The Nuqtavian of Qazwin in the Safavid Period’, Professor Ehsan Eshraqi  
 ‘Trimetallism in Practice: Iran 1500–1750’, Dr Willem Floor and Patrick Clawson  
 ‘Mapping Safavid Iran: Territorial Perceptions of Iran and Its Neighbouring Regions

- Between the 14th and 17th Centuries', Professor Dr Bert Fragner
- 'An Outsider's View of Safavid History: Shah Isma'īl Reconsidered', Professor Gene R. Garthwaite
- 'Newly Discovered Sources on the Life of Jean Chardin', Professor Masahi Haneda
- 'The Iconography of a Safavid Ceramic Dish', Gisela Helmecke
- 'The Early Safavid Sarcophagi in the Ardabīl Shrine', Professor Robert Hillenbrand
- 'The Migrated Manuscripts', Mr Rasool Ja'farian
- 'A "New Testament" for the Safavids', Dr Todd Lawson
- 'The City as Poem: 'Abdi Beyk's *Khamsah* on Ṭahmāsp's Capital in Qazvin', Dr Paul E. Losensky
- 'The Coinage of Late Safavid Iran: The Mint of Hūvayzeh', Dr Rudi Matthee
- 'A Pilgrim's Progress: The Iranian Segment of Abd al-Aziz Khan's Hajj of 1681–1682', Professor Robert D. McChesney
- 'In Search of Distinctive Scenes in Illustrated *Shahnama* Manuscripts of the Safavid Period', Dr Farhad Mehran
- 'A New Chronicle of the Reign of Shah 'Abbās I', Dr Charles Melville
- 'A Research on "Shatter", a Social Status in the Safavid Era', Dr Hossein Mirjafari
- 'Khwaja 'Ali and the Safavid Succession', Mr A.H. Morton
- 'Baqir Majlisi and Islamic Medicine: Safavid Medical Theory and Practice Re-examined', Dr Andrew J. Newman
- 'The Timurid Historiographical Legacy', Dr Sholeh A Quinn
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- 'Iran seen through Venetian Eyes', Professor Anthony Welch
- 'Early Eighteenth-century Iranian Society as Seen from Ottoman Tapu Registers: Settlement Patterns in the Province of Ardalan', Mr Akihiko Yamaguchi
- 'The definition of the Safavid Style and its Relation to Ottoman and Mughal Qur'ans', Dr Dzul Haimi bin Md Zain

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PART ONE

HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

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HĀTIFĪ'S *TĪMŪRNĀMEH* AND QĀSIMĪ'S  
*SHĀHNĀMEH-YI ISMĀ'ĪL*: CONSIDERATIONS  
FOR A DOUBLE CRITICAL EDITION

Michele Bernardini

The present article deals with the works written by two Persian poets living in Khurāsān during the 9th–10th/15th–16th centuries, when the Timurid rule was giving way for the Safavid power.<sup>1</sup> The first of them, Hātifī, died in the year 929/1522 and had been living at the village of Khargird-i Jām (nowadays Langar).<sup>2</sup> The second poet is Qāsimī Gunābādī who died in the year 982/1574, after a life spent at Gunābād (Junābād), according to his *nisba*, too.<sup>3</sup> Qāsimī was one of Hātifī's pupils and shared his master's literary style and his Shī'ī religious beliefs.<sup>4</sup> The respective works of these two authors show an undeniable connection.

Hātifī wrote a *Tīmūrnāmeḥ* (*Ẓafarnāmeḥ-yi Tīmūrī*) between 898/1492 and 904/1498.<sup>5</sup> He also commenced a *maṣnavī* to Shāh Ismā'īl, the *Futūḥāt-i Shāhī* (also *Ismā'īlnāmeḥ*), and it is unfinished.<sup>6</sup> As to Qāsimī,

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<sup>1</sup> This essay is based on a preliminary collation of manuscripts. See also Michele Bernardini, 'Il *Tīmūrnāme* di Hātefi e lo *Shāhnāme-ye Esmā'īl* di Qāsemi (il Ms. Frazer 87 della Bodleian Library di Oxford)', in *La civiltà timuride come fenomeno internazionale*, (*Oriente Moderno*, XV [LXXVI], 2, 1996), I, 97–118.

<sup>2</sup> Concerning this author cf. intr. to 'Abdallāh Hātifī, *Shīrīn i Khusrav*, Saadullo Asadulloev, ed. (Moskva: Nauka, 1977), 3–46; Abdullo Hotifī, *Layli va Majnun*, ed. Saadullo Asadulloev (Dushanbe: Universiteti Davlatii Tojikiston, V.I. Lenin, 1962), I–IV; 'Abdallāh Hātefi, *I sette scenari*, M. Bernardini, ed. (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, Series Minor, 1995), 9–34. See also the intr. to 'Abdallāh Hātifī, *Ẓafarnāmeḥ-yi Hātifi*, ed. A.S. 'Usha', (Madras: University Islamic Series XIX, 1957).

<sup>3</sup> Compared with Hātifī the approach of the scholars to Qāsimī's work was certainly less significant. A recent article represents a new step in the research: Simin Abrahams, 'The Career of Mirzā Qāsem Jonābādī in the light of *Afzal al-Tawāriḥ*', *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli*, LIX/1–4 (1999), 1–15.

<sup>4</sup> Muḥammad Muẓaffar Husain Ṣabā, *Rūz-i Raushan*, M.R. Ādamiyat, ed. (Tehrān: Rāzī, 1343/1964), 151.

<sup>5</sup> For the date of the *Tīmūrnāmeḥ*, see my intr. to 'Abdallāh Hātefi, *I sette scenari*, 18.

<sup>6</sup> This last work merits study. Frequently mentioned as an unfinished work, the *Futūḥāt-i Shāhī*, is preserved only in a few examples some of which confuse it with the *Ismā'īlnāmeḥ* of Qāsimī. This confusion is attested also in some old notes concerning

we will concentrate on his *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismāʿil* (also known as *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Māzī*), that was finished in the year 940/1533.<sup>7</sup> Neither the author or his works have attracted the attention of biographers and critical editors.

Hātifi's *Tīmūrnāmeḥ* and Qāsimī's *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismāʿil* are inserted into a *khamseh* and for this reason they are normally considered to be reprising Alexander's epic. However, in their poems both authors refer to Firdawsī's *Shāhnāmeḥ*, though showing conventional references to Iskandar/Dhu'l-Qarnayn of the Muslim tradition.<sup>8</sup> These late-Timurid and proto-Safavid epics should be viewed as chapters (about 4.000 couplets each) relating to the life of a single king, to be added to the ancient masterpiece. Hātifi, for instance, objected virulently to those who considered him to be a hopeless imitator of the models set by Niẓāmī and Amīr Khusraw.<sup>9</sup> Of course its style and language cannot be compared to those of Firdawsī, even if Muḥammad Ja'far Mahjūb considers Hātifi's work as a late evidence of the survival of a still-living *sabk-i khurāsānī* (Khurasani style).<sup>10</sup> The position held by the Iranian scholar is highly significant and, moreover, consistent with the narration of all the pertinent *tazkirehs* as a peculiar feature of Hātifi's poetical career. Still very young, he was called to the Timurid court in Hirat, in the presence of Jāmī and 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī, in order to give a *javāb* to the verses which Firdawsī, in his turn,

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Hātifi's manuscripts: see for ex. O. Codrington, 'Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian, Hindustani and Turkish Mss. in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society', *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society* (1982), 541. On this confusion between Hātifi and Qāsimī, see our 'Un manoscritto persiano proveniente dalla prima biblioteca lincea', *Bollettino d'Arte*, 74/53 (1989), 1–10, esp. note 14. On Hātifi's *Khamseh*, see note 2.

<sup>7</sup> This is utilizing a lithographic edition, published in India (Lucknow, 1870).

<sup>8</sup> Bernardini, 'Il *Tīmūrnāme* di Hātefi e lo *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismāʿil* di Qāsimī', 104–110.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>10</sup> Muḥammad Ja'far Mahjūb, *Sabk-i Khurāsānī dar Shīr-i fārsī*, (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Firdaus [1966]), 124–125. Recent studies have underlined the importance of the imitation of classical literary models in the Timurid period. See, for example, Riccardo Zipoli, *The Technique of the Ġawāb: Replies by Navā'ī to Hāfiz and Gāmi*, (Venice: Cafoscarina, 1993 [Eurasistica 35]); Paul E. Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī. Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal*, (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1998). Aside from these important works, there is still need for extensive study of the *Shāhnāmeḥ* imitations. This kind of phenomenon could be also a consequence of the exceptional editing work carried out by Baysungūr, the most 'credited', by the way, to Jalāl Khaliqī Muṭlaq's new edition, although we cannot measure its impact on Hātifi and Qāsimī. This research covers both some basic aspects of literary technique and different ideological aspects, as Bert G. Fragner had clearly demonstrated in his recent *Die 'Persophonie': Regionalität, Identität und Sprachkontakt in der Geschichte Asiens*, (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch [Anor 5], 1999), 59–61.

had composed as a *javāb* to some couplets by Abū Shakūr Balkhī. Of course, he passed this examination, and was admitted into the panoply of Timurid poets.<sup>11</sup>

Undoubtedly Hātīfī and Qāsimī may be connected to their famous mentor as well by daily circumstances, that is their strong links to a proto-bourgeois living in small towns and villages in the Khurasani rural world. It is for this reason that Hātīfī kept aloof from the sophisticated court of Hirat and preferred to spend his life in his own *chahārbāgh* at Khargird-i Jām.<sup>12</sup> It is just the same behaviour held by Ibn-i Ḥusām who, half a century before, wrote a *Khāvarnāmeḥ*, a sort of *Shāhnāmeḥ*, in which ‘Alī takes the place of Rustam. He ‘wrote his own verses on the handle of his spade’ and, just like Firdawsī, ‘had no interest for the luxury of royal banquets’.<sup>13</sup> As to Hātīfī, he was the keeper of the Qāsim-i Anvār’s shrine in his native Khargird-i Jām and showed clearly his attachment to rural society, in strict coherence with the tradition connected with the *dihqān* Firdawsī. Qāsimī, too, for a period, was the *kalāntar* of Gunābād.<sup>14</sup>

Now to a closer examination of the two *masnavīs*. My interest was spurred by the first analysis I made of a manuscript presently kept at the Bodleian Library of Oxford. Though very late, Ms. Frazer 87 reveals very clearly the links between the works of Hātīfī and Qāsimī. This miscellaneous manuscript is dated 1105/1693–4 and is signed by Muḥammad Qāsim of Shīrāz.<sup>15</sup> In the centre of the page appears a *Tīmūrnāmeḥ* disposed on two columns; in the upper and external margins a *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismā‘īl* has been copied as well. This last epic is much shorter than the main one and it ends before Hātīfī’s text. In the margins of the following pages the *Tuḥfat al-ahvār* of Jāmī has been copied. The simultaneous appearance of these works is not accidental. It is intended to permit an easy comparison of the different epics when similar episodes are involved. As to

<sup>11</sup> Hātefi, *I sette scenari*, 18–19.

<sup>12</sup> Mullā ‘Abd al-Nabī Fakhr al-Zamānī Qazvīnī, *Tazkīreh-yi Maykhāneh*, ed. Aḥmad Gulchīn Ma‘ānī (Tehran: Iqbal, 1340/1961), 115.

<sup>13</sup> Giovanna Calasso, ‘Il Xāvar-nāme di Ebn Ḥosām: note introduttive’, *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, 68 (1973–1974): 153–173; Ead., *Un’«epopea musulmana» di epoca timuride: il Xāvar-nāme di Ibn Ḥosām*, (Roma: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1979).

<sup>14</sup> Amīn Aḥmad Rāzī, *Haft iqlīm*, ed. Jawād Faḍīl, (Tehran: ‘Ilmī, 1340/1961–2), 2: 311–314.

<sup>15</sup> E. Sachau, H. Ethé, *Catalogue of the Persian, Turkish, Hindūstānī and Pashtu Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), I: 458, nr. 514; Bernardini, ‘Il *Tīmurnāme* di Hātefi e lo *Shāhnāme-ye Esmā‘īl* di Qāsemi’.

the main texts, it is possible to notice frequent interpolations and variations if compared with more ancient manuscripts. The ‘synchronous’ edition of such ‘historical’ *masnavīs* is, moreover, far from unique. Two other interesting examples are the ‘binary’ editions of Hātīf’s *Ṭīmūrnāmeḥ* and Qāsimī’s *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismā‘īl*, now kept at the Royal Asiatic Society (Ms. 305),<sup>16</sup> and in Istanbul (Aya Sofya 3284).<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately these two manuscript editions appear to be unfinished (the RAS one), undated, and unsigned. Tauer dated the Aya Sofya manuscript to the 10th century.<sup>18</sup> But a closely comparative reading of Ms Frazer 87, Ms. RAS 305 and Aya Sofya 3284, shows that the copyists themselves adapted the texts according to the thematic similarities they intended to highlight. In other words, the imperial events relating to the Central-Asiatic king are connected to similar episodes of Shah Ismā‘īl’s history. Therefore, the latter appears as Timur’s emulator.

More recently there is the consideration of other more ancient manuscripts. As to the *Ṭīmūrnāmeḥ*, we must note that the sumptuous specimen (Ms. Persan 357, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, of Sulṭān ‘Alī Qā’inī), executed during the lifetime of the poet (between 898/1492 and 902/1496), demonstrates evidence of manuscript production at court.<sup>19</sup> The same may be said about another high quality codex, a miscellaneous Safavid manuscript kept in the Vatican Library, the Barberini Or. 104, dated 968/1560 and signed by Muḥsin b. Luṭfullāh Ma‘ād Ḥusaynī Sabzavārī.<sup>20</sup>

Qāsimī’s works are mainly attested by cheaper form of manuscript production. These include Ms. 1974 of the Palatina Library in Parma, copied by Muḥammad b. Abū Bakr b. ‘Izz al-Dīn Maḥmūd b.

<sup>16</sup> Codrington, ‘Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian, Hindustani and Turkish Mss.’, 541, no. 208. Charles A. Storey, *Persian Literature. A Bio-Bibliographical Survey*, 1, (London: Luzac, 1970), 1/1, 303, no. 373. Storey confused Ms. 305 of the Royal Asiatic Society, Qāsimī’s *Ismā‘īlnāmeḥ*, with Hātīf’s *Futūḥāt-i Shāhī*. See also here note 6.

<sup>17</sup> Felix Tauer, *Les manuscrits persans historiques des bibliothèques de Stamboul III*, *Archiv Orientalní*, 3 (1931), 480, no. 427.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> See Bernardini, *I sette scenari*: 39–42; Francis Richard, *Catalogue des manuscrits persans. I, Ancien Fonds* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1989), 360, no. 357; Francis Richard, *Splendeur persanes. Manuscrits du XII<sup>e</sup> au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1997), 103, no. 59.

<sup>20</sup> Ettore Rossi, *Elenco dei manoscritti persiani della Biblioteca Vaticana*, (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1948), 159–160; Bernardini, ‘Un manoscritto persiano’, 1–10; Hātēfi, *I sette scenari*, 59–61.



Muḥammad and dated 954/1547.<sup>21</sup> Another copy of similar quality is Ms. Ouseley 218, dated 957/1550, also at the Bodleian Library of Oxford.<sup>22</sup> Both the Parma and Oxford copies were written during the lifetime of Qāsimī, but in the last there is a large number of interpolations.

The large manuscript production both of Hātīfī's *Tīmūrnāmeḥ* and *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismā'īl*, (see Appendix I and II) confirms the widespread attention given these works. It was in the Ottoman world that the *Tīmūrnāmeḥ*, first of all, represented a model to be followed by the writers of similar celebratory texts. A preliminary study of them has been made by Christine Woodhead<sup>23</sup> and István Nyitrai,<sup>24</sup> but in a more general way, this style as a whole has been studied in some masterly seminal works by Z. Şafā on the *ḥamāseh-sarāyī* literature.<sup>25</sup> Şafā traced the history of the origins of this imitative literary form to reveal the presence of prior works. Probably the first imitation *Shāhnāmeḥ* of this kind was written by a certain Muḥammad Pāyizi, who celebrated the Khvārizmshāh Quṭbuddīn Muḥammad (490–521/1097–1128).<sup>26</sup> Şafā also considered the *Tīmūrnāmeḥ* of Hātīfī and the *Shāhnāmeḥ* of Qāsimī. More recently Murtaẓavī tried to insert the *Tīmūrnāmeḥ* into the complicated frame of the Ilkhanid-Timurid historiography.<sup>27</sup> This is one of the more difficult aspects of our research. Jean Aubin, although he emphasized the need for an exhaustive analysis of them, accorded to both Hātīfī's and Qāsimī's works limited historical value.<sup>28</sup> Certainly they are not 'true' historical sources in which we may find information about specific events. Indeed, they

<sup>21</sup> Angelo Michele Piemontese, *Catalogo dei manoscritti persiani conservati nelle biblioteche d'Italia* (Roma: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1989), 215, no. 242.

<sup>22</sup> Sachau, Ethé, *Catalogue*, 457–458, no. 513.

<sup>23</sup> Christine Woodhead, 'An experiment in Official Historiography. The Post of *Şehnameci* in the Ottoman Empire c. 1555–1605', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 75 (1983), 157–182.

<sup>24</sup> István Nyitrai, 'Rendering History Topical: One aspect of a 16th Century Historical Epic in the Ottoman Empire', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 48/1–2 (1995), 108–116.

<sup>25</sup> Z. Şafā, *Hamāsasarāyī dar Īrān. Az qadīmtarīn 'ahd-i tārikhī tā gam-i chahārdahum-i hijrī*, (Tehran: 1333<sup>2</sup>/1954), 360–362, 364–366; *idem*, 'Hamāсахā-yī tārikhī wa dīnī dar 'ahd-i Şafavī', *Iran-name*, I/1 (1982), 5–21, esp. 6–8.

<sup>26</sup> Muḥammad 'Awfī, *Lubāb'ul-Albāb*, ed. Edward G. Browne, (Leiden: Brill, 1903), 2: 346–346, no. 124.

<sup>27</sup> Manūchihlr Murtaẓavī, *Masā'il-i 'aṣr-i Ilkhānān*, (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Āgāh, 1991), 562–589.

<sup>28</sup> Jean Aubin, 'Chroniques persanes et relations italiennes. Notes sur les sources narratives du regne de Shāh Esmā'il I<sup>er</sup>', *Studia Iranica*, 24/2 (1995), 247–259, esp. 251.

bear the traces of the political use of history put into practice by the Timurid and Safavid sovereigns during the 9th–11th/15th–17th centuries.

In a general way we can suggest derivation from consolidated historiographical models. The *Tīmūrnāmeḥ* may be linked with the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* of Yazdī and the *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismāʿīl*, in a general way, reminding us of the various works completed during the 10th/16th century. But such a derivation, as already suggested by Murtaẓavī, cannot be considered automatic and rather implies conscious choice from a wide range of possible sources. The two literary works, indeed, must be viewed as a literary effort to confer an aura of super-humanity over trivial historical facts.

Moreover Qāsimī, when reprising Hātīfī's *Tīmūrnāmeḥ*, certainly intended to retain the structure of his own model, even when the comparison between Timur and Ismāʿīl involved some anachronisms. The salient moments of both conquerors' lives are connected into a common historiographical frame which, in fact, twists the historical sequence of events. To keep the pace, Qāsimī resorts to different literary devices, including the insertion of long *Sāqīnāmeḥs*. These are intended also to make up for the 'gap in glory' which separate the Safavid ruler from the central Asian king. For instance, it is interesting to notice the parallel disposition of the respective enemies in an expressive thematic equivalence: the deeds of Tīmūr against Toqṭamīsh Khān have their equivalent in Shāh Ismāʿīl's campaign against the Uzbek Muḥammad Shaybānī. The same happens with the replacement of Bāyazīd I with Salīm I, the new antagonist in the Western part of the Safavid realm. Also in the historical prefaces, where the differences ought to appear more evident, the kings are compared. Hātīfī celebrates the Timurid house of his time with a reference to Timur's forerunner, Qarachar Barlas. Qāsimī, after a long dissertation about the major representatives of Shīʿism and a celebration of the house of Ardabīl, exalts Ismāʿīl's successor Ṭahmāsb, who is the real 'recipient' of the epic. However, we cannot find any explicit comparison of Ismāʿīl to Timur, even in Qāsimī's panegyric dedicated to his master Hātīfī, which gives the motivation of his replay-remake (*tatabbuʿ*, as he defined it).

Nevertheless one of the most relevant aspects of these literary works is their use at the courts in which they were written. Hātīfī wrote his *Tīmūrnāmeḥ* for the court of Badīʿ al-Zamān Mīrzā. The same received directly from Shāh Ismāʿīl the order for the compi-

lation of his *Futūḥāt-i Shāhī*, and possibly that ruler knew of the previous work dedicated to Timur.<sup>29</sup> Contrary to Hātīfī's work, Qāsimī's production seems to have had a short life in the proper courtly environment. Maybe this fact derived also from the treacherous behaviour and the consequent fall of Sām Mīrzā, the former patron of the poet and the brother of the Safavid Shah.<sup>30</sup> Several manuscripts of the *Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismā'īl* were written during the 10th/16th century, in popular formats which, while preserving a fairly good quality, are certainly not courtly works. But it is also possible that their reading was practised in public contexts and, as I have shown elsewhere, Hātīfī's work represented a model for a popular literary gender which involved public readers: Hātīfī himself, in his *Haft Manzar*, attributed to some *pardanishīns*, intended as story-tellers, an important rôle in the construction of the novel.<sup>31</sup> This behaviour appears to be consolidated in the social context of the author. In 949/1542 the Italian Michele Membré reported that 'public readers explained pictures for a little money'. The same persons were seen by Membré, 'with books in their hands, reading the battles of *Alī* and the fightings of the old kings and *chiach Ismail*, receiving money for their works'.<sup>32</sup> Membré mentions also some *tepperrai*, i.e. *tabarrā'ī*. These persons are also mentioned in later sources, dealing with the future conquest of Constantinople, and the future installation on the Ottoman throne of Ṭahmāsb's brother, Sām.<sup>33</sup> These *tepperrai/tabarrā'ī* were charged with denigrating the three first caliphs. They were evidently engaged also in the 'foundation' propaganda of the Safavid Dynasty. Moreover, the more recent celebration of Timur in *tā'zīyehs*<sup>34</sup> reveals a link

<sup>29</sup> Sām Mīrzā-yi Ṣafavī, *Tuḥfeh-yi Sāmī*, Vahīd Dastgardī, ed. (Tehran: Armaghān, 1314/1936), 94–97. See also, for Hātīfī and Ismā'īl, Rīzāqūlī khān Hīdāyat, *Majma' al-Fuṣṣahā*, (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1339/1960), 2: 116. It is important to note that the same request was also addressed to other persons. For instance, Ibrāhīm Amīnī Haravī was the author of two more *Futūḥāt-i Shāhī*, one in prose and the other in verses, both completed in 938/1531, cf. Maria Szuppe, *Entre Timourides, Uzbeks et Safavides. Questions d'Histoire politique et sociale de Hérat dans la première moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, (Paris: Cahier de Studia Iranica [12], 1992), 54–55; Aubin, 'Chroniques Persanes', 249–250.

<sup>30</sup> The recent research of Simin Abrahams regarding the *Afzāl al-tawārīkh*, offers some new elements concerning the relations between Qāsimī and the Safavid court.

<sup>31</sup> Hātefī, *I sette scenari*, 26–26.

<sup>32</sup> Michele Membré, *Relazione di Persia (1542)*, Giorgio R. Cardona, Francesco Castro and Angelo Michele Piemontese, eds. (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1969), 59.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 227–228; cf. Jean Calmard, 'Tabarru', *ET*, (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 10: 21–23.

<sup>34</sup> S. 'Abbās Banisadr, *La Tā'zīyē ou le Drame Persan*, (Vancouver: n.p. 1994), 112–140.

between Shīrī martiriology and the history of such ‘founders’ as Timur himself. This inclusion involves Safavid religiosity from previous times, as Heribert Horst,<sup>35</sup> Sholeh A. Quinn<sup>36</sup> and Maria Szuppe<sup>37</sup> have clearly pointed out.

### *Appendix I*

#### *Provisional list of the Manuscripts of the Tīmūrnāmeḥ*

1) Ms. Ancien Fonds 357, Paris Bibliothèque Nationale de France (hereafter, Paris), 1492–96, cf. Francis Richard, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Persans*, I Ancien Fonds, (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France: 1989), 360; 2) Ms. from the antiquarian market, 905/1499, cf. *Fine Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures*, (London: Sotheby’s sales, 21.XI.1985–18.XI.1985): no 408; 3) Ms. 253 (P.) Moty Mahall, Library of the King of Oudh, Calcutta, 908/1502–03, cf. A. Sprenger, *A Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Hindústāny Manuscripts in the Libraries of the King of Oudh. I, Persian and Hindústāny Poetry*, (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1854), 422; 4) Ms. 2568, India Office Library, London (hereafter India Office), 927/1521, cf. Hermann Ethé, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office* (Oxford: India Office, 1903), 1: 778–779, no. 1410; 5) Ms. Elliot 403, Bodleian Library, Oxford (hereafter Oxford), 934/1528, cf. Sachau, Ethé, *Catalogue of the Persian, Turkish, Hindústānī, and Pushtū Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), 646, no. 1006; 6) Ms. 2204, Akademija Nauk Uzbekistan, Tashkent (hereafter Tashkent) 943/1536, cf. A.A. Semënov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej Akademii Nauk Uzbekskoj SSR*, (Tashkent: Izdatelstvo Akademii Nauk USSR, 1954), 2: 235–236, no. 1324; 7) Ms. 2838, British Museum Library, London, 945/1538, cf. Charles Rieu, *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British*

<sup>35</sup> Heribert Horst, *Tīmūr and Hōgā ‘Alī. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Safawiden*, (Wiesbaden: Akademie der Wissenschaften und Literatur in Mainz 1958).

<sup>36</sup> Sholeh Ann Quinn, ‘The Dreams of Shaykh Safi al-Din and Safavid Historical Writing’, *Iranian Studies*, 29/1–2, (1996), 127–147; *idem*, ‘The Historiography of Safavid Prefaces’, in *Safavid Persia. The History and Politics of an Islamic Society*, ed. by Ch. Melville, (Cambridge: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 1–25.

<sup>37</sup> Maria Szuppe, ‘L’évolution de l’image de Timur et des Timourides dans l’historiographie safavide du XVI<sup>e</sup> au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle’, in *L’Héritage Timouride. Iran-Asie Centrale-Inde XV<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, ed. Maria Szuppe (Tashkent – Aix-en-Provence: *Cahiers d’Asie Centrale* 3–4, 1997): 313–331.

*Museum*, (London: British Museum, 1895), 191, no. 297; 8) Ms. 328, Kitābhāneh-yi Majlis, Tihiran (hereafter Majlis), 947/ 1540–41, cf. Storey, *Persian Literature. A Bio-Bibliographical Survey* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1970), 289; 9) Ms. H. 1594, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, Istanbul (hereafter Topkapı), 947/1540, cf. Fehmi Edhem Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Farsça Yazmalar Kataloğu*, (Istanbul: Kütüphane, 1961), 264–65 no. 766; 10) Ms. 418, University Library, Princeton, 949/1542, cf. Nicholas N. Martinovitch, *A Catalogue of Turkish and Persian Manuscripts belonging to Robert Garrett and deposited in the Princeton University*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1926), 16; 11) Ms. Add. 1109, Library of the University, Cambridge, (hereafter: Cambridge), 950/1544, cf. Edward G. Browne, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896), 363–364, no. CCLXXX; 12) Ms. Sa‘īd Nafīsī Private Library, 950/1543, cf. [Saadullo Asadulloev] ‘Abdallāh Hātifi, *Shīrīn va Khusraw* (Moskva: Nauka, 1977), XLIX; 13) Ms. H. 1465, Topkapı, 952/1546, cf. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi*: 265, no. 767; 14) Ms. Or. 33, Biblioteca Reale, Torino, fist half of XVI c., cf. Angelo Michele Piemontese, *Catalogo dei manoscritti persiani conservati nelle biblioteche d'Italia*, (Roma: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1989), 301 no. 342; 15) Ms. Or. 2867, British Museum Library, London, first half of XVI c., cf. Rieu, *Supplement*: 190, no. 295; 16) Ms. Na20 [762], Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, (hereafter Asiatic Society Bengal), 958/1551, cf. Maulavī Mirzā Ashraf ‘Alī, *Catalogue of the Persian Books and Manuscripts in the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, (Calcutta: Asiatic Society 1890), 91; 17) Ms. 1410, Browne Collection, [Cambridge], 960/1553, cf. Reynold A. Nicholson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Oriental Mss Belonging to the Late E.G. Browne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), 264–265, no. V.79 (9); 18) Ms. Riedel 38, National Library, Stockholm, 960/1553, cf. Storey, *Persian Literature* 1/1: 289; 19) Ms. CDXLIV, Public Library, St. Petersburg, (hereafter St. Petersburg), 963/1555–56, cf. B. Dorn, *Catalogue des manuscrits et xylographies orientaux de la Bibliothèque Imperiale publique de St. Petersbourg*, (St. Petersburg: Imprimerie de l’Académie Impériale des sciences, 1852), 381–83; 20) Ms. Barberini Or. 104, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Città del Vaticano, 967/1560, cf. Ettore Rossi, *Elenco dei manoscritti persiani della Biblioteca Vaticana*, 159–60; 21) Ms. no. 353, Buhar Library, 968/1560–61, cf. M.Q. Rižavī, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Būhār Library*, (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1921): 262; 22) Ms. 43,

Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft, 969/1562, cf. Muhammed Musharraf-ul-Hukk, *Katalog der Bibliothek der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, (Leipzig: np, 1911) B: no. 43; 23) Ms. no. 354, Buhar Library, 970/1562, cf. *ibid.*: 262; 24) Ms. B 143 [185a], Institut Narodov Azii, Moskva, (hereafter Inst. Nar. Azii) 972/1564–65, cf. N.D. Miklukho-Maklaj, *Persidskie i tadzhikskie rukopisi Instituta Narodov Azii AN SSSR*, (Moskva: Nauka, 1964), I: 135, no. 878; 25) Ms. B 145 [185c], Inst. Nar. Azii, 976/1568–69, cf. Miklukho-Maklaj, *Persidskie i tadzhikskie rukopisi*: 135, no. 880; 26) Ms. 211, Farhād Mu‘tamid Library, 976/1568, cf. Asadullaev, Shīrīnva Khusraw: XLIX; 27) Ms. 525, Farhād Mu‘tamid Library, 977/1569, cf. *ibid.*: XLIX; 28) Ms. 3746, Nūr-i Osmaniye, Istanbul, 973/1566, cf. Felix Tauer, ‘Les Manuscrits persans historiques des bibliothèques de Stamboul. III’, *Archiv Orientalní*, 3 (1931): 480, no. 421; 29) Ms. 2102, Tashkent, 976/1568, cf. Semēnov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 236, no. 1325; 30) Ms. from the antiquarian market, about 1570, cf. *Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures*, (London: Sotheby’s sale 24.IV.1996): no. 38; 31) Ms. Persan 232, Ancien Fonds, Paris, 978/1570–71, cf. Richard, *Catalogue des manuscrits persans*: 239; 32) Ms. FY 5 [2694], Üniversite kütüphanesi, Istanbul, 979/1572, cf. Ahmed Ateş, *Istanbul kütüphanelerinde farsça manzum eserler*, (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1968) 1: 470–471, 422, no. 694; 33) Ms. 303, Lala Ismail Efendi, Istanbul, 979/1572, cf. Tauer, ‘Les manuscrits’: 480, no. 423; 34) Ms. 1154, Kitābhāneh-yi Sipāhsalār (today Muṭṭaharī), Tehran, 980/1572–73 c., cf. Ibn Yūsuf Shīrāzī, *Fihrist-i Kitābhāneh-yi Madrasa-yi ‘Alī Sipāhsalār*, (Tehran: Chāpkhāneh-yi Dānishkadeh, 1318/1939–40): 545, no. 1154; 35) Ms. 2787, Tashkent, 981/1573, cf. Semēnov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 236, no. 1326; 36) Ms. Add. 205 [Lewis 23], Cambridge, 980/1573, cf. Browne, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts*, 364, no. CCLXXXI; 37) Ms. 3030 (1), Aya Sofya, Istanbul, 982/1574–75, cf. Tauer, ‘Les manuscrits’: 480, no. 424; 38) Ms. 123, Kitābhāneh-yi Malak, Tehran, 983/1575, cf. Āqā Buzurg Tihriānī, *al-Ẓar‘a ilā taṣānīf al-shī‘ya*, (Tihran: np, 1343/1944) 15: 62; 39) Ms. Laud 301, Oxford, 983/1576, cf. Sachau-Ethé, *Catalogue* 1: 646, no. 1007; 40) Ms. Persan 234, Paris, 985/1577, cf. Richard, *Catalogue des manuscrits persans*: 240; 41) Ms. Cod. 1447 Testa, University Library, Leiden, 984/1576–1577, cf. R.P.A. Dozy, *Catalogus codicum orientalium bibliothecae Academiae Lugduno Bataviae*, (Leiden: Brill, 1861), 2: 122; 42) Ms. 4408, Tashkent, 986/1578, cf. Semēnov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 236–9, no. 1327; 43) Ms. CDXLV, St. Petersburg,

987/1579, cf. Dorn, *Catalogue*: 381–83; 44) Ms. R., Topkapı, 989/1581, cf. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi*: 265, no. 768; 45) Ms. 302, Lala Ismail Efendi, Istanbul, 990/1582, cf. Tauer, ‘Les manuscrits’: 480, no. 426; 46) Ms. C 1687 [Nov. 1483], Inst. Nar. Azii, 991/1583–84, cf. Miklukho-Maklaj, *Persidskie i tadzhikskie rukopisi*: 135, no. 883; 47) Ms. 23597, Majlis, 993/1585, cf. Fakhrī Rastgār, *Fihrist-i Kitābkhāneh-yi Majlis-i Shurāʾī-yi Millī*, (Tehran, 1347/1968–69) 8: 5–6, no. 2320; 48) Ms. 4959, Farhād Muʿtamid Library, 990/1587, cf. Asadullaev, *Shīrīn va Khusraw*: XLIX; 49) Ms. 233, India Office, 999/1590–91, cf. Ethé, *Catalogue*: 779, no. 1411; 50) Ms. 3752, Tashkent, 1000/1592, cf. Semënov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 239, no. 1328; 51) Ms. 3284, Aya Sofya, Istanbul, X/XVI c., cf. Tauer, ‘Les manuscrits’: 480, no. 427; 52) Ms. 280, Kitābkhāneh-yi Sipāhsalār (today Muṭṭaharī), Tehran, X/XVI c., cf. Ibn Yūsuf Shīrāzī, *Fihrist*: 545, no. 1152; 53) Ms. H. 1593, Topkapı, X/XVI c., cf. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi*: 265, no. 769; 54) Ms. Codices Orientales fr. 757, Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb, X/XVI c., cf. microfilm 3821, Central Library of Tehrān; 55) Ms. R. 1520, Topkapı, X/XVI, cf. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi*: 265–66, no. 770; 56) Ms. Add. 22,703, British Museum Library, London, XVI c., cf. Charles Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, (Oxford: British Museum, 1879 [1966<sup>2</sup>]), 2: 654; 57) Ms. Add. 6618, British Museum Library, London, XVI c., *Ibid.*: 654; 58) Ms. Or. 340, British Museum Library, London, XVI c., *Ibid.*: 654; 59) Ms. Add. 7780, British Museum Library, London, XVI c., cf. *Ibid.*: 653–54; 60) Ms. 225, Oriental Public Library, Bankipur, apparently XVI c., cf. E. Denison Ross, *Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Oriental Public Library at Bankipore*, (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1910) 2: 116–118; 61) Ms. 4504, Akademija Nauk Uzbekistan, Tashkent, end XVI c., cf. Semënov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 239, no. 1330; 62) Ms. 1465, Tashkent, end XVI c. [1828?], cf. *Ibid.*: 239, no. 1329; 63) Ms. Or. 261, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, end XVI c., cf. A.J. Arberry, *The Chester Beatty Library. A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, 1962), 35–36; 64) Ms. Supplément Persan 641, Paris, end XVI c., cf. Edgard Blochet, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Persans*, (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1928), 3: 334, no. 1803; 65) Ms. C 1848, Inst. Nar. Azii, 1009/1600–1, cf. Miklukho-Maklaj, *Persidskie i tadzhikskie rukopisi*: 135, no. 884; 66) Ms. Supplément Persan 1268, Paris, 1012/1604, cf. Blochet, *Catalogue*, 3: 335; 67) Ms. Orient. 215, Stadtbibliothek, Hamburg, 1014/1605, cf. Carl Brockelmann, *Katalog*

*der Orientalischen Handschriften der Stadt-bibliothek zu Hamburg*, (Hamburg: Otto Meissners Verlag, 1908), 1: 94, no. 179; 68) Ms. 2833, India Office, 1027/1618, cf. Ethé, *Catalogue* 1: 779, no. 1412; 69) Ms. Or. 264, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, 1028/1619, cf. Arberry, *The Chester Beatty Library*: 36; 70) Ms. 2766, India Office, 1038/1628, cf. Ethé: *Catalogue*, 1: 779, no. 1413; 71) Ms. Asiatic Society Bengal, 1041/1631–32, cf. Wladimir Ivanow, *Concise descriptive Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the collection of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1924): no. 651; 72) Ms. Persan 233, Ancien Fonds, Paris, 1053/1643, cf. Richard, *Catalogue des manuscrits persans*: 239–240; 73) Ms. from antiquarian market, 1061/1650, cf. *Important Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures*, (London: Sotheby's sale, Monday 23.IV.1979): 128, no. 173; 74) Ms. Laud 94, Oxford, before 1633, cf. Sachau-Ethé, *Catalogue*: 646, no. 1008; 75) Ms. 1141 [Nov. 182], Inst. Nar. Azii, 1043/1633–34, cf. Miklukho-Maklaj, *Persidskie i tadzhikske rukopisi*: 135, no. 882; 76) Ms. Laud 308, Oxford, before 1635, cf. Sachau-Ethé, *Catalogue*: 646, no. 1009; 77) Ms. Add. 3149, Cambridge, begin. XVII c., cf. Browne, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts*: 361–62, no. CCLXXVIII; 78) Ms. 4107, Halis Efendi, Istanbul, XI/XVII c., cf. Tauer, 'Les manuscrits': 480, no. 428; 79) Ms. 5217, Mahmud Efendi, Istanbul, XI/XVII c., cf. Tauer, 'Les manuscrits': 480, no. 429; 80) Ms. 113, Library of the University, Bombay, 1052/1642–43 [?], cf. Shaykh 'Abdu'l-Kadir-e-Sarfarāz, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Urdu Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Bombay*, (Bombay: University of Bombay, 1935): 256–57, no. 176; 81) Ms. 274, Biblioteca Lindesiana, Manchester (hereafter Manchester), about 1650, cf. J.L. Lindsay, *Handlist of Oriental Manuscripts, Arabic, Persian, Turkish*, (Aberdeen: [private printing] 1898): 146; 82) Ms. 224, Manchester, about 1650, cf. *Ibid.*: 147; 83) Ms. FY 109, Üniversite kütüphanesi, Istanbul, 1070/1659, cf. Ateş, *Farsça manzum eserler*: 471, no. 695; 84) Ms. 18 II 8 (b), Königlichen Bibliothek, Berlin, 1077/1666, cf. Pertsch, *Verzeichnisse der Persischen Handschriften*: 891–893, no. 908; 85) Ms. Add. 25,829, British Museum Library, London, 1085/1674, cf. Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts*: 654; 86) Ms. 3563/III, Tashkent, 1092–3/1681, cf. Semënov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 239, no. 1331; 87) Ms. 2442/f, Kitābkhāneh-yi Millī-yi Īrān, Tehran (hereafter K. Millī), XI/XVII c., S. 'Abdallāh Anvar, *Fihrist-i nusakh-i khattī-yi Kitābkhāneh-yi Millī-yi Īrān*, (Tihran: Kitābkhāneh-yi Millī-yi Īrān, 1365/1986), 5: 582–83; 88) Ms. Frazer 87, Oxford, 1105/1693–94, see here note 23; 89) Ms. Edwin Binney 3rd Collection,



end XVII–beginnings XVIII c., Edwin Binney, *Turkish Miniature Paintings and Manuscripts from the Collection of Edwin Binney 3rd*, (New York-Los Angeles: The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1973): 126; 90) Ms. Rossiano 875, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, XI/XVII c., cf. Rossi, *Elenco dei manoscritti persiani*: 179; 91) Ms. 61974, Majlis, XI/XVII c., cf. Rastgār, *Fihrist*, 8: 6–7, no. 2321; 92) Ms. Supplément Persan 1924, Paris, 2nd half XVII c., cf. Blochet, *Catalogue*: 335, no. 1807; 93) Ms. 18 [Ms. Orient. Fol. 209], Königlichen Bibliothek, Berlin, undated, cf. Wilhelm Pertsch, *Verzeichnisse der Persischen Handschriften der Königlischen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, (Berlin: A. Asher and Co., 1888), 60–66; 94) Ms. 305, Royal Asiatic Society, London, about XVIII c., cf. here note 24; 95) Ms. II, 271, Curzon Collection, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, end of the XVII c., W.I. Ivanov, *Concise descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Curzon Collection*, (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1926): 185; 96) Ms. Na23, Asiatic Society Bengal, 1121/1709–10, cf. Ashraf Ali, *Catalogue*: 91; 97) Ms. 74, Manchester, ca. 1710, cf. *Handlist of Oriental Manuscripts*: 147; 98) Ms. Add. 750, Cambridge, 1127/1715, cf. Browne, *A Catalogue*: 364–65, no. CCLXXXII; 99) Ms. CXLV, Library of the Calcutta Madrasa, Calcutta, apparently beginning XVIII c., E. Denison Ross, *Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the Calcutta Madrasa*, (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1905): 90–91; 100) Ms. 23197, Majlis, XII/XVIII c., cf. Rastgār, *Fihrist* 8: 7, no. 2322; 101) Ms. 190/VIII, Tashkent, 1134/1721, cf. Semënov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 240, no. 1332; 102) Ms. Ouseley 124, Oxford, before 1140/1727–28, cf. Sachau-Ethé, *Catalogue*: 647, no. 1010; 103) Ms. 218, Manchester, ca. 1192/1778, cf. *Handlist of Oriental Manuscripts*: 147; 104) Ms. 2640/f, K. Millī, 1223/1808–9, cf. Anvar, *Fihrist* (1372/1993), 6: 199; 105) Ms. 101/I, Tashkent, 1241/1825, cf. Semënov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 240, no. 1333; 106) Ms. Nov. 430, Universitätsbibliothek, Uppsala, 1269/1852–53, cf. K.V. Zetterstéen, *Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek zu Uppsala*, (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1930), 291, no. 456; 107) Ms. Supplément Persan 1923, Paris, 1272/1855–56, cf. Blochet, *Catalogue*: 334; 108) Ms. 812, Kitobkhona-i Doulati, Dushanbe, 1292/1875, cf. Asadulloev, *Shīrīn va Khusrāw*: XLIX; 109) Ms. 792, Tashkent, 1275/1858, cf. Semënov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 240, no. 1334; 110) Ms. 1885, Tashkent, 1295/1878, cf. Semënov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej*, 2: 240, no. 1335; 111) Ms. R. 916, Topkapı, date uncertain, cf. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi*: 266,

no. 771; 112) Ms. 909, Königlichen Bibliothek, Berlin, undated, cf. Pertsch, *Verzeichniss*: 891–893; 113) Ms. Or. 104, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München, undated, cf. J. Aumer, *Die Persischen Handschriften der K. Hof- und Staatsbibliothek in Muenchen*, (München: 1866): 34; 114) Ms. Or. 105, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München, undated, cf. *ibid.*: 34; 115) Ms. CDXLVI, Public Library, St. Petersburg, undated, cf. Dorn, *Catalogue*: 381–83; 116) Ms. CDXLVII, Public Library, St. Petersburg, undated, cf. Dorn, *Catalogue*: 381–83; 117) Ms. 394, Kitābkhāneh-yi Sipāhsalār (today Muṭahharī), Tehran, undated, cf. Ibn Yūsuf Shīrāzī: 545, no. 1153; 118) Ms. 2504, Maʿashī Library, Qum, undated, cf. Aḥmad Ḥusainī, *Fihrist-i nuskkhah-hā-yi khuṭṭī-yi kitābkhāneh-yi ʿumūmī Ḥaẓrat-i Āyatullāh al-ʿazmī Maʿrashī*, (Qum: Kitābkhāneh-yi ʿumūmī Āyatullāh al-ʿazmā Maʿrashī, 1358/1979): 92; 119) Ms. King’s No. 85, King’s College University, Cambridge, undated, cf. Edward G. Browne, *A Supplementary Hand-List of the Muḥammadan Manuscripts*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1922): 60, no. 344; 120) Ms. Thurston 16, Oxford, undated, cf. Sachau-Ethé, *Catalogue*: 647, no. 1012; 121) Ms. A 27 [185e], Inst. Nar. Azii, undated, cf. Miklukho-Maklaj, *Persidskie i tadzhikskie rukopisi*: 134, no. 877; 122) Ms. B 144 [185b], Inst. Nar. Azii, undated, cf. *Ibid.*: 135, no. 879; 123) Ms. C 65 [185d], Inst. Nar. Azii, undated, cf. *Ibid.*: 135, no. 881; 124) Ms. C 2453, Inst. Nar. Azii, undated, cf. *Ibid.*: 135, no. 885; 125) Ms. 2640/f, K. Millī, undated, cf. Anvar, *Fihrist*, 6: 202–203; 126) Ms. 234, India Office, undated, cf. Ethé, *Catalogue* 1: 779, no. 1414; 127) Ms. 2140, India Office, undated, cf. *ibid.* 1: 779, no. 1415; 128) Ms. 2568, India Office, undated, cf. *ibid.* 1: 779–780, no. 1416; 129) Ms. 650, Asiatic Society Bengal, undated, cf. Ivanow, *Concise*: no. 650; 130) Ms. 652, Asiatic Society Bengal, undated, cf. *ibid.* no. 652; 131) Ms. 44, Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft, undated, cf. Musharraf-ul-Hukk, *Katalog*: no. 44; 132) Ms. 48, Kitābkhāneh-yi Āṣafiyya, Haydarābād, (hereafter Haydarābād) undated, cf. Storey, *Persian Literature*: 290; 133) Ms. 204, Haydarābād, undated, cf. *ibid.*: 290; 134) Ms. 236, Haydarābād, undated, cf. *ibid.*: 290; 135) Ms. 145, Gouvernement Oriental MSS. Library, Madras, undated, cf. Storey, *Persian Literature*: 290; 136) Ms. no. 4, Mullā Fīrūz Library, Bombay, undated, cf. Storey, *Persian Literature*: 290; 137) Ms. Fātiḥ 4430, Türk Islam Eserleri Müzesi, Istanbul, undated, cf. Tauer, ‘Les manu-scripts persans’: 481, no. 431; 138) Ms. 11, Āstāneh-yi quds-i Rażavī, Mashhad, undated, cf. Asadullaev, *Shīrīn va Khusraw*: XLIX; 139) Ms. 318, unknown Library [Fakhr al-Dīn ?],

undated, cf. Asadullaev, *Shīrīn va Khusrāw*: XLIX; 140) Ms. 318, Kitābkhāneh-yi Millī, Tabrīz, wrongly dated [856/1452 *sic*], cf. *ibid.*: XLIX; 141) Ms. 146, Kitāb-khāneh-yi Malak, Tihran, undated, cf. Āqā Buzurg, *al-Ẓarī'a*: 62.

## Appendix II

### *Provisional list of the Manuscripts of the Shāhnāmeḥ-yi Ismā'īl*

1) Ms. 1974, Biblioteca Palatina, Parma, 940/1533, cf. Piemontese, *Catalogo dei manoscritti persiani*: p. 215, nr. 242 (see note 27 here); 2) Ms. Add. 7784, British Museum Library, London, 948/1541, cf. Rieu, *Catalogue*, 2: 660; 3) Ms. Mxt. 403, Nationalbibliothek, Wien, 974/1567, cf. Gustav Flügel, *Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Handschriften der Kaiserlich-Königlichen Hofbibliothek zu Wien*, (Wien: K.-K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1865), 1: 602–603; 4) Ms. King's no. 238, King's College, Cambridge, 975/1567–68, cf. Browne, *A Supplementary Hand-List*: 129 no. 790; 5) Ms. Ouseley 218, Oxford, 979/1571, cf. Sachau-Hermann Ethé, *Catalogue*: 457–458, no. 513; 6) Ms. 449 [Móty Mahall], King of Oudh Library, 982/1574–75, cf. Sprenger, *A Catalogue* 1: 534–535; 7) Ms. 3030/2, Aya Sofya, Istanbul, 982/1574–75, Tauer, 'Les Manuscrits persans': 484, no. 438; 8) Ms. 253 (5), Curzon Collection, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 982/1574–75, cf. Ivanov, *Concise descriptive Catalogue*: no. 253; 9) Ms. Supplément Persan 1985, Paris, 993/1584–85, cf. Blochet, *Catalogue* 3: 347–48, no. 1828; 10) Ms. 553, Lala Ismail Efendi, Istanbul, 1000/1592, cf. Tauer, 'Les Manuscrits persans': 484, no. 440; 11) Ms. 3284/1, Aya Sofya, Istanbul, X/XVI c., *ibid.*: 484, no. 439; 12) Ms. 190/VIII, Tashkent, X–XVI c., cf. Semënov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisej* 2: 242, no. 1341; 13) Ms. 4362, Mūzeh-yi Īrān Bāstān, Tehran, 1017/1608–09, cf. Micr. 3821, Dānishgāh-i Tihran (Kitābkhāneh-yi Markazī); 14) Ms. Frazer 87, Oxford, 1105/1693–94, see here note 23; 15) Ms. Add. 8991, British Museum Library, London, XI/XVII c., cf. Rieu, *Catalogue*, 2: 819; 16) Ms. 26595, Majlis, XI/XVII c., cf. Rastgār, *Fihrist*, 8: 408–409, no. 2661; 17) Ms. Or. 339, British Museum Library, London, 1180/1767, cf. Rieu, *Catalogue*, 2: 661; 18) Ms. Elliot 328, Oxford, undated, cf. Sachau-Ethé, *Catalogue*: 458, no. 515; 19) Ms. Caps. Or. C.4, Oxford, undated, cf. *ibid.*: 458, no. 516; 20) Ms. Caps. Or. C.4, Oxford, undated, cf. *ibid.*: 458, no. 517; 21) Ms. 888, India Office,

undated, cf. Ethé, *Catalogue* 1: 790–791, no. 1437; 22) Ms. 2140, India Office, undated, cf. *ibid.*: 791, no. 1438; 23) Ms. MDLVII, St. Petersburg), undated, cf. Dorn, *Catalogue*: 457; 24) Ms. 300, Royal Asiatic Society, London, undated, cf. O. Codrington, ‘Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian Hindustani, and Turkish MSS. in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society’, no. 300; 25) Ms. R. 1549, Topkapı, undated, Karatay, *Topkapı*: 272, no. 786.

THE TIMURID HISTORIOGRAPHICAL LEGACY:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PERSIANATE  
HISTORICAL WRITING

Sholeh A. Quinn

*Introduction*

During the period following the symbolic end of the Abbasid caliphate in 1258, the post-Mongol Islamic world absorbed new notions of political sovereignty brought into the Islamic heartlands as a result of successive Turko-Mongol migratory waves. Rule based extra-Islamic legal codes and theories such as the Mongol *yasa*, and nomadically-inspired concepts of authority, including various sorts of universal pretensions to leadership, were just some of the concepts which came into prominence during this time. After the fall of the Mongol and Timurid empires, the Islamic world, from Anatolia to the Indian subcontinent, was ruled by one of four dynasties, all sharing some sort of Turko-Mongol descent and a similar cultural legacy, yet espousing a variety of political ideologies in order to legitimize their rule. It has been suggested that these ideologies reflect rival dynasties' attempts at presenting universalistic claims in order to justify conquering fellow Muslims.<sup>1</sup> The way in which historians expressed these universalistic claims and counterclaims, and their underlying notions of political authority, deserve further study. New insights can be gleaned from careful consideration of post-Timurid Persian chronicles.

The purpose of this study is to examine historical writing in specific portions of post-Timurid Persianate histories in order to discover how historians inheriting the same historiographical tradition, and writing in the same language—but under different dynasties—modified, expanded, altered, and interacted with that earlier tradition. An analysis of three specific historiographical elements in a variety of chronicles from Mughal India, Chaghatayid Central Asia, Safavid

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<sup>1</sup> See Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: the Historian Mustafa Âli (1541–1600)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 273–275.

Iran, and Kurdistan will form the basis of this essay. These elements include (1) lists of the benefits of history, (2) legitimizing genealogies, and (3) dream narratives.

*The Legacy of Timurid Historiography*

Before analyzing the sources, a brief overview of Persian historiography will help contextualize the relevant issues. Post-Timurid Persian chroniclers follow the earlier established Timurid tradition of historical writing.<sup>2</sup> One important aspect of this tradition is its practice of imitative writing. For instance, late Timurid chroniclers used early Timurid histories and ‘updated’ them in specific ways, while retaining the syntax and style of the earlier text.<sup>3</sup> However, the post-Timurid historians were also writing for rival dynasties. Thus, knowing more about the interaction between the legacy and power of the Timurid models on the one hand, and the need to modify those models to suit various post-Timurid agendas on the other, helps us to understand the diverse elements in these texts.

Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī’s *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* ranks as the Timurid source most often cited by post-Timurid historians. In his study on the rise of Timurid historiography, John E. Woods assesses Yazdī’s *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* as the ‘best known representative of early Timurid historiography in Persian,’ stating that after its composition, it was ‘widely acclaimed as a model of elegance and style for historical writing in Iran, Central Asia, and India.’<sup>4</sup> Yazdī primarily used an earlier Timurid history by the same name, Mawlānā Nizām al-Dīn ‘Alī Shāmī’s *Ẓafarnāmeḥ*, as an imitative model, which he reworked to remove Chingizid ref-

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<sup>2</sup> Nearly all post-Timurid historians of Iran, India, and Central Asia upheld Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī’s *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* as a model chronicle, and others considered ‘Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī’s *Maṭla’-i Sadayn*, worthy of emulation. See, for example, Qāzī Aḥmad Munshī Qummī *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh*, 2 vols, ed. I. Ishraqī (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tehran, 1363 [1984]), 5–6 (hereafter cited as *Khulāṣat*); and Iskandar Beg Munshī, *Tārīkh-i ‘ālam-ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī*, ed. Īraj Afshār, 2nd ed., 2 vols (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1350 [1971]), 373 (hereafter cited as *TAAA*). For an English translation of this text, see Iskandar Beg Munshī, *History of Shah ‘Abbās the Great*, trans. by Roger Savory, 2 vols., Persian Heritage Series, 28 (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1978), 544, hereafter cited as Savory. For more information on the Timurid legacy in Persianate historiography, see See Stephen Frederic Dale, ‘The Legacy of the Timurids,’ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 8 (1998): 43–58.

<sup>3</sup> Woods, ‘The Rise of Timurid Historiography,’ *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 46 (1987): 81–107.

<sup>4</sup> Woods, ‘The Rise of Timurid Historiography,’ 99.

erences, replacing them with more ‘Islamic’ ones in order to appeal to evolving Timurid notions of legitimacy.<sup>5</sup> Safavid, Mughal, and Central Asian histories are replete with references to the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ*. For instance, Iskandar Beg Munshi cites the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* as a model chronicle, and both Muḥammad Qandahārī and Muḥammad Ḥaydār Dughlat quote directly from the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* in their prefaces.<sup>6</sup>

Post-Timurid historians did not, however, merely inherit and reproduce the Timurid tradition of historical writing. They also responded to the ideologies and legitimizing themes that they read in each other’s chronicles. Thus, the various post-Timurid Persian historiographical strands, such as the Safavid and Mughal, did not develop independently of each other. Historians from Safavid Iran went to Mughal India as did the poets; chroniclers writing for the Mughal kings were well aware of Safavid histories, and vice-versa. One example of this phenomenon occurs with Ghiyās al-Dīn Khvāndamīr, author of the history *Ḥabīb al-siyar*, an important source for early Safavid history. Khvāndamīr based his work on his maternal grandfather Mīrkhvānd’s *Rawzat al-ṣafā*, a late Timurid history. In 935/1528, Khvāndamīr went to India and met Bābur, who mentions Khvāndamīr in his memoirs, the *Bāburnāmeḥ*.<sup>7</sup> After Bābur died, he was succeeded by his son Humāyūn, to whom Khvāndamīr dedicated his *Humāyūn-nāmeḥ* (1534/940), also known as the *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī*.<sup>8</sup> Khvāndamīr

<sup>5</sup> Woods, ‘The Rise of Timurid Historiography,’ 98–99; 104–105, 102, 105.

<sup>6</sup> See *TAAA*, 373, Savory, 544. Ḥājji Muḥammad ‘Arif Qandahārī, *Tārīkh-i Akbarī: ma’rūf bih tārīkh-i Qandahārī*, ed. Ḥājji Sayyid Mu’īn al-Dīn Nadavī, Sayyid Azhar ‘Alī Dihlavī, Imtiyāz ‘Alī ‘Arshī (Rampur: Hindustan Printing va Raks, 1382 (1962); translated by Tasneem Ahmad as *Tārīkh-i Akbarī*, (Delhi: Pragati Publications, 1993), 2 and 18. Henceforth, citations to the *Tārīkh-i Akbarī* will be to the Persian edition, followed by the English translation in parentheses. In the introduction to Book Two of his history, Muḥammad Ḥaydār Dughlat states that in other historical works from Transoxiana, Khurasan, and Iraq, the Moghul *khāqāns* are only mentioned briefly and peripherally. One of the five texts Dughlat mentions here is Yazdī’s *Ẓafarnāmeḥ*. The others are Rashīd al-Dīn’s *Majma‘ al-tawārīkh* (better known as the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*), Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī’s *Tārīkh-i guzīdah*, ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s *Tārīkh-i manzūm* (i.e. *Maṭla‘-i Sa’dāy*) and Mīrzā Ulughbeg’s *Ulus-i arba‘a*. Mīrzā Ḥaydār Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī: a History of the Khans of Moghulistan*, trans. and ann. by W.M. Thackston, Sources of Oriental Languages & Literatures 38 (Cambridge: Harvard University Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1996). Citations of the text of the *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* will include the page reference to the Persian text followed by the page number of Thackston’s English translation in parentheses. See Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* viii–ix, 110 (89–90).

<sup>7</sup> See Bābur, *The Bāburnama: Memoirs of Bābur, Prince and Emperor*, trans. and ed. Wheeler M. Thackston (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 403, 442.

<sup>8</sup> Khvāndamīr, *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī*, ed. M. Ḥidayat Ḥosain (Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1940).

enjoyed great prestige under Humāyūn, who eventually made him his chief chronicler.<sup>9</sup> Khvāndamīr thus served not only as the historiographical bridge between the Timurid and Safavid dynasties, but he also linked the traditions of Safavids and Mughal historical writing by writing for both.

Another example of post-Timurid historians responding to earlier traditions can be seen in Muḥammad Ḥaydār Dughlat's *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*. Dughlat completed his *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, an account of the khans of Moghulistān, in 1546. Moghulistān at that time referred to the eastern portion of the *ulus* Chaghatay, encompassing modern day Kazakhstan, Kirghizistan, Chinese Sinkiang, and western Mongolia. The history covers the years 1329–1533.<sup>10</sup> Dughlat was obviously quite aware of the importance of the Timurid historiographical tradition, as can be seen in his preface (*dībācheh*) and elsewhere in his history. Generally, in their *dībāchehs*, writers showcase their best poetry and language, and this 'conventional requirement' apparently caused Dughlat great concern. He states that although no one had written anything about the Moghul 'khāqāns' and their history had been forgotten, and despite realizing what an important task it was for him to write a history, he does not know how to begin: '... I find that I do not have it within me. I am not capable even of making an introduction and beginning to the book with a praise of God and the Prophet.'<sup>11</sup> Instead of continuing along to the best of his ability, his solution was to copy portions from another preface into his own narrative: 'Therefore, for auspiciousness and for good luck, I have first quoted verbatim the introduction to Mawlānā Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī's *Ẓafarnāmeḥ*.'<sup>12</sup> In another section in his history, following his explanation of the Chaghatayid Tuqluq Timur's conversion to Islam, Dughlat states that 'as for the history of the khan [i.e. Tuqluq Timur], nothing is known among the Moghuls. It is to be found, however, in the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ*, and it is quoted here verbatim.'<sup>13</sup> He then proceeds to reproduce entire chapters of the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* in the first sections of book one of his history. The portions that he incorporates from the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* are those concerning Tuqluq Timur,

<sup>9</sup> *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī*, xv.

<sup>10</sup> Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, vii–ix.

<sup>11</sup> Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* 4 (3).

<sup>12</sup> Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* 5 (3).

<sup>13</sup> Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* 13 (11).



Amir Qamar al-Dīn and their various dealings with Timur. By quoting from such a well-known work which narrates the interactions of a ruler of Moghulistān with Timur, Dughlat gives his work historiographical and historical legitimacy.

### *The Benefits of History*

As stated above, the post-Timurid historians did not merely appropriate Timurid texts—they changed them to suit their own purposes. Furthermore, not every convention of Timurid historiography continued into the later period; some strands barely survived, while others more were fully developed and expanded. For instance, Sharaf Khān b. Shams al-Dīn Bidlīsī preserved a pre-Timurid convention in his history, the *Sharafnāmeḥ*. Bidlīsī (b. 949/1543) was chief of the Rūzagī tribe of Kurds in Bidlīs, eastern Anatolia. He grew up with Shah Ṭahmāsp's sons after his father lost rule of Bidlīs, and held several important government positions. He seems to have fallen out of favor with the Safavids, however, because after Shah Ismā'īl II appointed him to the position of *amīr al-ʿumārāʾ* of the Persian Kurds, he sent him to Nakhjavān. Eventually, Bidlīsī sided with the Ottomans, received the title of Sharaf Khan from Murad I, who returned to him his father's kingdom of Bidlīs.<sup>14</sup> Sharaf Khan's shifting allegiances between the Ottomans and the Safavids is significant because it reflects the rather fluid nature of intellectual and political sympathies of the Persianate elite of the period.

Bidlīsī mentions Mīrkhvānd's *Rauzāt al-ṣafā* in the preface to his own history. Like the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ*, *Rauzāt al-ṣafā* was an extremely important historiographical model to many Safavid era historians. Bidlīsī incorporates a section of the *Rauzāt al-ṣafā* into his narrative that no other non-local Safavid chronicler reproduces: a discussion of the benefits (*fāyideḥ*) of history.

The practice of a historian listing the advantages of studying history goes back to at least the twelfth century, when Ibn Funduq included such a list in his *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq*.<sup>15</sup> Although we do not yet have a

<sup>14</sup> See C.A. Storey, *Persian Literature: a Bio-bibliographical Survey*, 3 vols. (London: Luzac & Co., 1927), I: 367.

<sup>15</sup> See Ibn Funduq, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq*, Aḥmad Bahmanyār, ed. (Tehran: Mu'assas va Mudīr-i Bungāh-i Dānish, 1317 [1938]), 7–17.

systematic study of the evolution of ‘the benefits of history’ section over time, a diverse group of historians, including Khunjī Iṣfahānī, author of the 15th century Āq-quyūnlū history, the *Tārīkh-i ‘ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*, and Muṣṭafā Naima, an early 18th century Ottoman historian, included similar lists in their prefaces.<sup>16</sup> The Safavids, however, largely discontinued the convention, probably because Khvāndamīr chose not to reproduce and/or modify this section from the *Raużāt al-ṣafā* in his *Ḥabīb al-siyar*. The *Ḥabīb al-siyār*, in turn, was one of the most popular imitative models for later Safavid historians.

Mīrkhvānd’s ten benefits (*fayideh*) of history are as follows: (1) In order to become acquainted with affairs of the world, one must read works based on things heard, (2) history promotes cheerfulness and exhilaration, (3) history can be easily studied and remembered, (4) one will acquire the skill of distinguishing between truth and falsehood, (5) one obtains experience by studying history, (6) students of history read opinions of wise men, which are more sound than those of one’s contemporaries, (7) the intellect is strengthened by study of history, (8) studying history gives the hope of success at times of calamity, (9) one gains patience and acquiescence to the divine will by studying history and (10) kings are instructed by history; they are warned by the past and this causes them to behave better.<sup>17</sup>

Utilizing imitative writing, Sharaf Khan reproduces an abbreviated version of Mīrkhvānd’s list in his text, thereby perpetuating late Timurid attitudes regarding the meaning and importance of history, albeit with one significant alteration in the sixth *fayideh*. In *Raużāt al-ṣafā*, the sixth ‘benefit’ implies that what people had written in the past was more ‘sound’ than what people were writing at the time of Mīrkhvānd, because they were minding their own business. Mīrkhvānd then explains that by studying the past, one can partake of the experience of many individuals, thereby preventing calamities

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Fażl Allāh b. Rūzbihān Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Tārīkh-i ‘ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*, ed. J. Woods, abr. Eng. trans. V. Minorsky, rev. and aug. J. Woods (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1992), 80–86.

<sup>17</sup> Mīrkhvānd, *Tārīkh-i Raużāt al-ṣafā*, 7 vols, [ed.] ‘Abbās Parvīz ([Tehran]: Khayyām, 1338 [1959]), trans. E. Rehatsek as *Raużāt-us-ṣafā or, Garden of Purity*. 3 vols, ed. F.F. Arbuthnot, Oriental Translation Fund, New Series 1 (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1891). Hereafter citations will be for the Persian edition. In those cases where I have used Rehatsek’s English translation, I include the page number in parentheses following the citation for the original.

and bringing ones own affairs ‘to a prosperous end.’<sup>18</sup> Bidlīsī, who imitates Mīrkhvānd by reproducing the first sentence or so of each *fayideh* word-for-word, changes only this particular *fayideh* to state the exact opposite, as seen in the following parallel passages:

*Rauzāt*

He who studies the science of history, reads what the wise ones of the world said about the events that have happened, and it is clear that this type of consultation is superior to consulting with ones contemporaries.

Mutaʿamil-i ʿilm-i tāriḫ rā dar vāqiʿah-i kih sānaḥ shavad martabah-i mashvarat bā ʿuqalā-yi ʿālam dast dādah bāshad va uluv-i martabah-i īn naw mashvarat nisbat bā mushāvirat-i abnā-i ʿaṣr zāhir ast.<sup>19</sup>

*Sharaf*

The one who is learning the science of history, has *no* need to consult the wise ones about the events that take place.

Ānkih mustahzar-i ʿilm-i tāriḫ dar vāqiʿah-i kih sānaḥ shavad iḥtiyāj bi-mashvarat-i ʿuqalā nadārad.<sup>20</sup>

It is unclear why Bidlīsī, who in the rest of this section very closely imitates Mīrkhvānd, uncharacteristically changes the narrative in this way. Aside from scribal error, one reason may be the history of his own family’s shifting allegiances to the Ottomans (his grandfather) and the Safavids (his father), and his own dealings with both, which could have caused him to believe that one cannot trust what past historians have said. It is also possible that earlier historians would tend to minimize or ignore the history of the Kurds, which was Bidlīsī’s main purpose in writing. At any rate, it is interesting to note that although the official Safavid court chroniclers did not preserve this significant component of the Timurid and pre-Timurid historiographical legacy, it did survive in a local history from the Safavid period.

<sup>18</sup> *Rawzāt al-ṣafā*, 11 (26).

<sup>19</sup> *Rawzāt al-ṣafā*, 11.

<sup>20</sup> Sharaf Khān b. Shams al-Dīn Bidlīsī, *Sharafnāmeḥ*, V.V. Zarnūf, ed. (Pitriburgh: Ākādamiyah-i Impirātūriyah, 1862), I: 6.

*Legitimizing Genealogies*

In contrast to Bidlīsī, who almost single-handedly seems to have perpetuated the ‘advantages of history’ conventional element into the Safavid era, genealogies appear in nearly all post-Timurid Persian histories. The practice of a historian listing a ruling dynasty’s genealogy goes back to the Ilkhanid period of Iranian history, as seen in works such as Rashīd al-Dīn’s *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh* and his *Shu‘āb-i panjgāneh*, both Chingizid genealogies.<sup>21</sup> Timurid historians, of course, focused on Timur’s genealogy, as they initially sought to emphasize his common ancestry with Chingiz Khan.<sup>22</sup> Genealogy continued to be very important in post-Timurid chronicles, as historians traced various ruling dynasties’ family trees back to a diverse group of significant figures such as Oghuz Khan, Chingiz Khan, Timur, the Imam Mūsā al-Kāzim, and Adam, as part of their legitimacy claims.

In Safavid histories, nearly all chroniclers include at least one family tree of the Safavids in their histories. Without describing in an indepth manner the problems associated with various versions of the Safavid genealogy, it is nevertheless important to note that beginning with the first Safavid chroniclers, Ibrāhīm Amīnī and Khvādamīr, the Safavid genealogy tracing Shaykh Ṣafī’s descent back to Mūsā al-Kāzim, the seventh Imam of the Twelver Shī‘a, appears in almost the same form in nearly every Safavid history. Since the Safavids were unable to claim Timurid descent as the Mughals did, the genealogical component of Safavids political legitimacy consisted of promoting their alleged Imami Shī‘ī descent. This claim was one principal aspect of the Safavids’ overall legitimizing program.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See Sholeh A. Quinn, ‘The *Mu‘izz al-Ansāb* and *Shu‘āb-i Panjgāneh* as Sources for the Chaghatayid Period of History: A Comparative Analysis,’ *Central Asiatic Journal* 33 (1990): 229–253.

<sup>22</sup> See Woods, ‘Timur’s Genealogy,’ in *Intellectual Studies on Islam: Essays Written in Honor of Martin B. Dickson*, ed. Michel M. Mazzaoui and Vera B. Moreen, (Utah: University of Utah Press, 1990), 85–125.

<sup>23</sup> The Safavids were also sensitive, however, to the fact that dynasties, in particular the Mughals, were using Timurid descent as a source of legitimacy by dynasties such as the Mughals, and they attempted to counter those claims by emphasizing connections with Timur in non-genealogical ways. They accomplished this in a variety of ways, such as narrating the alleged meetings of Khvājah ‘Alī with Timur, using the term *ṣāhibqirān*, or linking Shah ‘Abbās’s name with Timur in other ways. See Sholeh A. Quinn, ‘Notes on Timurid Legitimacy in Three Safavid Chronicles,’ *Iranian Studies* 32 (1998): 149–158.

In contrast to the Safavids, the Mughals were able to make much use of their Timurid genealogy, for they were actual descendants of Timur. Muḥammad Qandahārī probably completed his *Tārīkh-i Akbarī* in 988/1580. The *Tārīkh-i Akbarī* is a Mughal history consisting of a brief overview of the reign of the Mughal emperor Humāyūn (r. 937–947/1530–1540; 962–963/1555–1556) and a detailed account of Humāyūn's son, the emperor Akbar (r. 963–1014/1556–1605). In his introductory section to the *Tārīkh-i Akbarī*, Qandahārī includes a discussion of Akbar's genealogy in terms of one major distinction: that Akbar was a seventh generation descendant of Timur.<sup>24</sup> However, by this time it was not enough merely for the Mughals to claim Timurid descent. Qandahārī adds several legitimizing layers over the Timurid genealogy by launching into an explanation of the significance of the 'mystery' of the number seven, associating it with a variety of natural and religious phenomena, thereby linking Akbar's Timurid descent to Qur'anic symbols and ancient cosmological assumptions about the universe.<sup>25</sup> For instance, he states that God made the sky in seven layers, there are seven planets, seven metals obtained from the earth, and seven days. Among the religious significances are the *Ṣūrat al-Fātiḥa* has seven verses (*ayāt*), and pilgrims run seven times between Ṣafa and Marwa. Qandahārī ends the section by stating his overall purpose for elaborating on the number seven: 'By all this my object is to convey that the personality of Khāqān Akbar is endowed with infinite superiority.'<sup>26</sup> The number seven is very important in the Perso-Islamic tradition. Qandahārī's excursus on the significance of this number touches on the most important of these associations, and he obviously invokes this rich history of the number seven because it is quite useful for legitimizing purposes.

The Mughal emperor Akbar commissioned Abu'l-Faḥr to write an official history of the Mughal dynasty from its origins, which he continued working on until his death in (1011/1602).<sup>27</sup> Akbar made certain that Abu'l-Faḥr had at his disposal a considerable amount of chancellory information in order for him to write his celebrated *Akbarnāmah*.<sup>28</sup> Abu'l-Faḥr devotes considerable attention to Timurid

<sup>24</sup> Qandahārī, 8 (14).

<sup>25</sup> Qandahārī, 8–9 (14–15).

<sup>26</sup> Qandahārī, 9 (14–15).

<sup>27</sup> EIr, s.v., 'Akbarnāmah.'

<sup>28</sup> Harbans Mukhia, *Historians and Historiography during the Reign of Akbar* (New Delhi: Vikas Pub. House, 1976), 66–72.

genealogy in his history, for he not only traced Akbar's genealogy back to Timur, but he broadened it by extending Timur's genealogy to back to Adam, via Alan Qoa—an ancestor of Chingiz Khan—and a number of Biblical figures.<sup>29</sup> There is an indirect precedent for this: Woods has noted how Timur's historians traced the genealogy of the 'ray of light' that impregnated Alan Qoa to show descent from 'Alī and the 'Abrahamic Holy Spirit.' In this way, they were able to connect two traditions after the Mongols converted to Islam: the Mongol and the Semitic.<sup>30</sup> Abu'l-Faẓl likewise first presents the Mughal genealogy, then provides a brief biography of each individual whom he mentions. Although Akbar was not a direct descendant of Chingiz Khan, Abu'l-Faẓl nevertheless includes his name and a brief summary as part of another branch of the family tree. At the same time, however, Abu'l-Faẓl also invokes Jayn and Brahma notions of cycles of time and alludes to Akbar as the fulfillment of certain beliefs within each of these traditions, thereby broadening the Mughals' legitimizing ideology.<sup>31</sup>

In the same way that the Mughals were invoking Timurid descent, the khans of Moghulistan emphasized their descent from Chingiz Khan, and the *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* also contains genealogical material. Dughlat emphasizes Tughlugh Timur's descent from Chaghatay, son of Chingiz Khan.<sup>32</sup> Tughlugh Timur, who lived in the 14th century, ruled the eastern portion of the Chaghatayid khanate, which came to be known as 'Moghulistān.'<sup>33</sup> There are significant parallels here between Dughlat's history and the Indian Mughal historiographical tradition. This could partly result from the fact that Dughlat himself was, on his mother's side, a first cousin of Bābur, founder of the Mughal dynasty and mentor of sorts to Dughlat.<sup>34</sup> The most significant similarity between these inter-related traditions, in terms of genealogy, has to do with

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<sup>29</sup> Abū al-Faẓl Mubārak, *Akbarnāmeḥ*, ed. Ghulām Rizā Ṭabātabā'ī Majd (Tehran: Mu'assasah-yi Muṭāla'āt va Taḥqīqāt-i Farhangī, 1372 [1993]), 91–124, trans. H. Beveridge as *The Akbar nama of Abu'l-Faẓl*, vol. 1, (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1989), 155–203. Subsequent citations will refer to the Persian edition, with corresponding pages from the English translation in parentheses.

<sup>30</sup> Woods, 'Timur's Genealogy,' 88.

<sup>31</sup> *Akbarnāmeḥ*, 88–90 (147–152).

<sup>32</sup> In this way, Dughlat highlights not Timurid, but Chingizid descent, although he narrates a great deal about Timur when he reproduces several chapters of the *Zafarnāmeḥ*, as mentioned above.

<sup>33</sup> See Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* viii.

<sup>34</sup> Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* vii.

Chingiz Khan's ancestry. In addition to tracing Tughlugh Timur's descent from Chingiz Khan via Chaghatay, Dughlat also traces Chingiz Khan's genealogy back to Alan Qoa. He then relates, on the authority of the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ*, the story of Alan Qoa's impregnation by the ray of light. This anecdote includes Yazdī's comparison of Alan Qoa's pregnancy with that of Mary, mother of Jesus. He ends the section by noting that Alan Qoa's genealogy is well known and 'goes back to Japheth, the son of Noah.'<sup>35</sup> Thus, here we have two historians writing in different places—one chronicling the reign of Akbar and the other, Tughlugh Timur and his descendants—yet both draw on a common historiographical tradition to serve these different ends. That tradition, of course, is the Timurid one, and in this instance both historians rely on and respond to information in the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ*.

### *The Dream Narratives*

Persian chroniclers also emphasize a third common theme in their chronicles: dreams. Dream narratives appear in Persian texts dating as early as the Buyid period, and also can be found in many Mughal, Central Asian, and Safavid histories. Various scholars have discussed the significance of such texts, especially in terms of their political import.<sup>36</sup> In these dream accounts, the historians express contemporary notions of political legitimacy by including their own elaborations on the dream's interpretation and its significance. The dreams themselves tend similarly to emphasize how the reign of a particular ruler was pre-destined and divinely approved.

Many such narratives which appear in Persian histories of the post-Timurid era, whether written under the Safavids, Mughals, or Ottomans (in Ottoman Turkish in this last instance). The notion of an individual dreaming of a world-encompassing light portending an auspicious future event, whether that be the rule of a particular king, conversion to Islam, or spiritual and temporal authority recurs in many post-Timurid histories. For instance, the *Akbarnāmeḥ* includes at least eight dream narratives, one of which builds and expands on

<sup>35</sup> Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* 8 (6).

<sup>36</sup> See, for instance, Roy Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 69, 71, and Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: the Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 132–33.

an earlier account in the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ*.<sup>37</sup> In this dream, Abu'l-Faẓl emphasizes connections with both Chingiz Khan and Timur, thus legitimizing Mughal rule. Safavid chroniclers, on their part, were perpetuating dream narratives of Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn. A succession of writers wrote and rewrote this dream narrative in order to make Shaykh Ṣafī's authority seem predestined, and the later rule of Safavid kings such as Shah Ismā'īl seem fore-ordained.

The *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* is no different in that it contains a dream narrative that discusses light and the future destiny of a particular ruler. In addition to stressing Chingizid heritage, Dughlat was also concerned with portraying the Moghulistān rulers as Muslims, thereby sharing some of the concerns of late Timurid chroniclers. Dughlat's Islamic legitimizing program is most evident in his dream narrative describing how Tughlugh Timur converted to Islam.

Dughlat explains how the Sufi Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn had a dream which he related to his son Mawlānā Arshād al-Dīn:

‘I had a dream,’ he said, ‘in which I was holding atop a hill a lamp by which all the lands of the east were illuminated. After that, Tughlugh-Temur Khan came to me in Aksu and spoke (as has already been mentioned). Since I will not have the chance during my life time, you be ready. When that young man becomes khan, go to him. He may keep his promise and convert to Islam, and this felicity, by which a population will be enlightened, will be due to your endeavor.’<sup>38</sup>

Dughlat continues by stating that the Shaykh's dream came true and Tughlugh Timur did indeed meet the Shaykh's son, just as he predicted, and converted to Islam. Dughlat viewed Tughlugh Timur's conversion as an extremely important episode for the history of Moghulistan, and in his introduction, he states that one of the three reasons why he begins his history with Tughlugh Timur is that ‘of the Moghul khans it was he who converted to Islam, and after him the Moghuls' necks were freed of the yoke of heathenism, and by the grace of Islam, like all other peoples, they entered among the Muslim peoples.’<sup>39</sup> In other words, Tughlugh Timur was the ‘founding father’ of Moghulistan, not unlike his neighboring thirteenth-fourteenth century counterparts, Osmān Ghāzī and Shaykh Ṣafī

<sup>37</sup> See Sholeh A. Quinn, *Historical Writing during the Reign of Shah 'Abbās*, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000).

<sup>38</sup> Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* 12 (10).

<sup>39</sup> Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* 5 (4).



al-Dīn, founders of the Ottoman and Safavid dynasties, respectively. Although Dughlat states elsewhere in his history that his only audience was the eastern Chaghatayid Moghuls of Moghulistan, and that ‘no one other than a Moghul will derive any benefit from these words and what they convey,’ it appears that he may also have been writing for secondary audiences, including, perhaps, historians writing for rival dynasties and perpetuating the dream narratives associated with their dynasty’s own founders.

### *Conclusion*

Post-Timurid Persianate historians, regardless of which dynasty they were writing for, inherited an extremely powerful historiographical tradition, which supplied them with imitative models containing the general themes by which they could promote their dynasty’s ideology and legitimate right to rule. Whether in their highly conventional and imitative prefaces, their ruler’s genealogy, or in their dream narratives, the historians refashioned these texts in different ways, adding new strands reflecting changes the Islamic world experienced in the post-Timurid age. Although distinct political units were in control of various portions of the Persian-speaking world, the historians writing under these dynasties spoke in a cultural language that transcended political boundaries and was broadly understood. In this way, the chroniclers engaged in what one might call an ‘inter-dynastic dialogue.’ The best way to understand this dialogue would be to look for all the participants, and this is best achieved by reading the chronicles of more than one dynasty in light of their common Timurid historiographical legacy.

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ILLUSTRATED PERSIAN *‘AJĀ’IB AL-MAKHLŪQĀT*  
MANUSCRIPTS AND THEIR FUNCTION IN  
EARLY MODERN TIMES

Karin Rührdanz

At first glance it may appear that illustrated copies of Zakariyā b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Qazvīnī’s *‘Ajā’ib al-makhlūqāt wa gharā’ib al-mawjūdāt*, in Arabic as well as in Persian and Turkish translations, were made everywhere from Turkey to India, and all the time since the late 7th/13th century. A second look reveals that continuous, trickle production was not the rule. From time to time the manuscripts form clusters, as the style of the illustrations in particular helps us to recognize. Of course, the impression created by the preserved and known manuscripts might be distorted by pure chance. However, if the disappearance of one group of illustrated manuscripts and the emergence of another is accompanied by changes in language, content and interpretation of the text by the cycle of illustrations, the role of chance is minimized. Comparing groups of illustrated copies of Qazvīnī’s *‘Ajā’ib al-makhlūqāt* made in Persia this paper deals with the question what kind of his work was popular in 16th century Safavid Iran and what functions these manuscripts fulfilled.

In early Safavid times a workshop intending to produce an illustrated copy of Qazvīnī’s work had, at least theoretically, the choice between two Arabic redactions,<sup>1</sup> two Persian versions,<sup>2</sup> and the creation of new versions either of the Arabic text<sup>3</sup> or the Persian translation.<sup>4</sup> In reality, the choice may have been more limited. The fact that only two Persian translations were available suggests a choice

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<sup>1</sup> Two of the four Arabic redactions distinguished by Ruska are preserved in—mostly illustrated—early manuscripts up to the 9th/15th century. Ruska’s elusive third Arabic redaction postulated as the base of an existing Persian version can be neglected here. So far, no manuscript containing this text in Arabic has been found. See Julius Ruska, ‘Qazwīnistudien’, *Der Islam* 4 (1913), 14–66, 236–262.

<sup>2</sup> Again, the availability of two Persian versions is proved by the existence of early, mostly illustrated manuscripts since the 820s/1420s, respectively the 870s/1470s. See Charles A. Storey, *Persian Literature*, II/1 (London: Luzac, 1972), 125–126, (a) and (b).

<sup>3</sup> This was a real possibility, as Ruska’s ‘fourth redaction’, a late major reshaping of the Arabic text demonstrates, see Ruska, ‘Qazwīnistudien.’

<sup>4</sup> For other Persian translations, see Storey, *Persian Literature*, 126.

had to be made between them. Also, an illustrated copy would have been preferred as model manuscript. Most probably, this would reduce the options to three:

- Using the second redaction of the Arabic text as preserved in the Munich Ms. C. Arab 464 and the so-called Sarre group of illustrated manuscripts.<sup>5</sup> Late 16th-century manuscripts, probably from India, show that this was not a merely theoretical option.<sup>6</sup>
- Keeping to an anonymous Persian translation appearing in illustrated manuscripts since the 820s/1420s. This translation was, most probably, based upon the first Arab redaction because it includes the chapter about *jinn* not found in the second one. Five illustrated manuscripts of this early Persian rendition are known, the first four originating from Shiraz. The Berlin fragment<sup>7</sup> and its twin copy in Istanbul, this dated 823/1421,<sup>8</sup> document the beginning. They are closely followed by two manuscripts in London, dated 844/1441,<sup>9</sup> and Manchester.<sup>10</sup> These four copies form a cluster while the fifth manuscript could be called a dislocated offshoot. It was copied 909/1503–04 in Hirat by a calligrapher from Shiraz and illustrated in a simplified Hirat style,<sup>11</sup> with minia-

<sup>5</sup> For an analysis of this group, see Julie Badiee, 'The Sarre Qazwīnī: An Early Aq Qoyunlu Manuscript?', *Ars Orientalis* 14 (1984), 97–113.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 102; *idem*, 'Angels in an Islamic Heaven,' *Los Angeles County Museum of Art Bulletin* 24 (1978), 50–59. A completely different and, so far, singular ms. is D-370, dated 988/1580, in the Oriental Institute in St. Petersburg. Using an Arabic text (not mentioned which redaction), it follows a Persianized cycle of illustrations and is attributed to 'the region of Baghdad-Tabrīz,' see A. Alikberov and E. Rezvan, 'Adjā'ib al-Makhlūqāt by Zakariyā al-Qazwīnī (d. 682/1283): 16th Century Illuminated Manuscript from the St. Petersburg Academic Collection,' *Manuscripta Orientalia* 1/1 (1995), 56.

<sup>7</sup> Museum für Islamische Kunst, I. 6943. See Ernst Kühnel, 'Das Qazwīnī-Fragment der Islamischen Abteilung,' *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 64 (1943), 59–72; Karin Rührdanz, 'Zwei illustrierte Qazwīnī-Handschriften in Sammlungen der DDR,' *Persica* 10 (1982), 97–114.

<sup>8</sup> Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, R. 1660. See Fehmi E. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Farsça Yazmalar Kataloğu* (Istanbul: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, 1961), 74, no. 193.

<sup>9</sup> British Library, Add. 23564. See Charles Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, 2 (London: British Museum, 1881), 464; Norah M. Titley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts: A Catalogue and Subject Index of Paintings from Persia, India and Turkey in the British Library and the British Museum* (London: British Library, 1977), 87–91, no. 238.

<sup>10</sup> John Rylands Library, Ryl Pers 37, see Basil W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the John Rylands Library* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1980), 35–69.

<sup>11</sup> London, British Library, Or. 12220, see Titley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts*, 110–115, no. 246; George M. Meredith-Owens, *Persian Illustrated Manuscripts* (London: British Museum, 1973), 21, and pl. 14.

tures partially displaying a different iconography compared to the Shiraz manuscripts. As the preserved manuscripts show, this text was surely available to Shiraz workshops and, most likely, in north-eastern Iran too.

- Using a second Persian translation, a newly compiled version of particular character.<sup>12</sup> It is less faithful to the Arabic text compared to the first one.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, it comprises two additional chapters.<sup>14</sup> Some copies contain the information that the book was translated for a certain princely person, ‘Izz al-Dīn Shāpūr b. ‘Uthmān, or b. Raḥman in other mss., who remains unknown. The authorship is also discussed.<sup>15</sup> It may well be that this version was composed in the later part of the 9th/15th century in Shiraz for the immediate use of the workshops there to produce illustrated copies of Qazvīnī’s cosmography.<sup>16</sup> About ten illustrated manuscripts attributable to the last quarter of the 9th/15th century, and all with miniatures in the Shiraz Turkman style are known (Figs. 1, 5).<sup>17</sup> Regarding the total output of the Shiraz workshops during that period this is a small but noteworthy number.

<sup>12</sup> For this paper, the edition by Naṣrallāh Sabūhī, Tehran: Kitābkhāneh-i Markazī, 1340/1961, has been used.

<sup>13</sup> Rieu, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts*, 2, 464.

<sup>14</sup> See, particularly, the second part of Ruska, ‘Qazwīnistudien,’ 236–262 where he deals with the ‘third redaction.’

<sup>15</sup> The author may be a certain Mullā ‘Abd al-Rashīd, called Bāyazīd al-Bastakī, see Francis Richard, *Splendeurs persanes: Manuscrits du XII<sup>e</sup> au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1997), 101. Another candidate is Faḏl-Allāh b. Muḥammad Ja‘far Astarābādī, see Īraj Afshār, ‘Mutarjīm-i ‘ajā’ib al-makhlūqāt va gharā’ib al-maujūdāt,’ *Rāhnāmā-yi kitāb*, 21 (1357/1978), 107–108. Both suggestions are rejected by Muḥammad T. Dānishpazhūh, ‘Dāstān-i tarjumeh-yi dū ta’lif-i Qazvīnī,’ *Āyanda*, 6 (1359/1980), 422.

<sup>16</sup> This needs further checking. Of the two earlier ms. in Storey’s list (Storey, *Persian Literature*, 125) the Princeton copy said to date from 1460 is about two hundred years younger and does not concern us here. It would be interesting to know, however, which translation is used in WMS. Pers. 479, dated 1458, of the Wellcome Institute, see Fateme Keshavarz, *A Descriptive and Analytic Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine* (London: Wellcome Institute, 1986), 214.

<sup>17</sup> Among those manuscripts, four are dated: H. 410 of the TSM, copied by Muḥammad Baqqāl in 1479, and R. 1659, dated 1494/95, see Karatay, *Farsça Yazmalar*, 74–75, nos. 192, 194; N.F. 155 in Vienna, copied by Pīr Husayn in 1492, see Dorothea Duda, *Islamische Handschriften, I: Persische Handschriften* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1983), 76–82; and suppl. pers. 1781 in Paris, dated 1488, see Richard, *Splendeurs persanes*, 101, no. 56. This ms. is a special case because it was copied by Sultan Muḥammad Nūr and, therefore, obviously in Hirat. The illustrations, however, follow the Turkman model in the selection of subjects as well as in style.

Compared to the Turkman cluster of illustrated cosmographies the scarcity of such manuscripts from the early 10th/16th century is striking. One ms. was copied by Naʿīm al-Dīn b. Munʿīm al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Awḥadī al-Ḥusaynī in 920/1514–15<sup>18</sup> and illustrated in typical Shiraz style. A copy from about 947/1540 in New York follows,<sup>19</sup> and one in Dublin, dated 952/1545 and written by another well-known Shiraz calligrapher, Murshid al-Kātib al-Shīrāzī, called ʿAṭṭār.<sup>20</sup> Two more manuscripts, now in the Topkapi Saray Museum in Istanbul, are dated 968/1560 and 976/1568–69, respectively (Figs. 2, 3, 4).<sup>21</sup> There are other copies from the later half of the 16th century, either fragmentarily preserved or insufficiently published.<sup>22</sup> Those manuscripts studied all comprise the ‘second’ Persian translation and belong to different versions of the Shiraz style. For the 10th/16th century, the impression is that of a limited but continuous production. The focal point is probably in the third quarter of that century, but there is nothing like the late 9th/15th-century cluster.

Still, the 10th/16th-century Shiraz style production of illustrated cosmographies was not only a perpetuation of a tradition but also a deliberate choice, as comparison with other regions and other groups of manuscripts show. No illustrated cosmography is known from 10th/16th-century Central Asia, for instance. Concerning India, we know about a new Persian translation made in 954/1547 for Ibrāhīm ʿĀdil-Shāh of Bījāpūr,<sup>23</sup> and there is a group of illustrated Qazvīnī manuscripts with Arabic text which may have been made

<sup>18</sup> St. Petersburg, Russian National Library, PNS 265, see Galina I. Kostygova, *Persidskie i tadzhikskie rukopisi Gosudarstvennoi Publichnoi Biblioteki im. Saltykova-Shchedrina*, II (Leningrad: Gos. publichnaia biblioteka im. M.E. Saltykova-Shchedrina, 1988–9), 49, no. 849.

<sup>19</sup> New York Public Library, Spencer Pers. ms. 49. See Barbara Schmitz, *Islamic Manuscripts in the New York Public Library* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 79–93, no. II.5.

<sup>20</sup> Chester Beatty Library, Pers. 212. See *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, Arthur J. Arberry, et al., eds. (Dublin: Hedges, Figgis, 1959–62), 2: 75–77. For reproductions see, for instance, *ibid.*, pls. 34–40; Laurence Binyon, John V.S. Wilkinson, and Basil Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pls. 96–97; Basil Gray, *Persian Painting* (New York: Skira, 1961), 150 (in colour).

<sup>21</sup> H. 407, copied by Muḥammad al-Qivām al-Shīrāzī, and H. 403, copied by ʿAlā al-Dīn b. Hidāyatallāh al-Sharīf, see Karatay, *Farsça Yazmalar*, 75, nos. 196 and 197.

<sup>22</sup> For instance, for a copy attributable to the Shiraz style about 968/1560 because of its miniatures, see *Sotheby's Catalogue of Highly Important Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures: The Property of the Kevorkian Collection*, (London, 6 December 1967), 69, lot 202.

<sup>23</sup> See Storey, *Persian Literature*, 126 (d).

in India since the 978/1570's.<sup>24</sup> The decision of the Shiraz workshops for a Persian version of Qazvīnī's text, and for the 'second' translation in particular, implies that this version was recognized as best suited to certain demands.

Setting off the particularities of this text, we must first pay attention to the fact that it is a translation from Arabic into Persian. Persian encyclopaedias, compared to Arabic ones, are called 'ouvrages de vulgarisation'<sup>25</sup> and, to a certain extent, this may be true for translations too. In 9th/15th and 10th/16th-century Iran, however, the translation into Persian of Qazvīnī's cosmography and encyclopaedia of natural sciences also restored the initial situation, as far as the audience is concerned. In the 7th/13th century, Qazvīnī wrote his book as a compendium for the educated public.<sup>26</sup> During the 9th/15th or 10th/16th century, the same addressee was, most probably, better served by a Persian translation.

More important for the character of the work are the changes introduced in the text of the 'second' translation. As Ruska pointed out already, the part about embryology and anatomy of the human body was radically reduced. At the other hand, the text incorporated a large interpolation comprising, first, an account of different peoples and tribes and, second, a chapter about crafts, sciences and tricks.<sup>27</sup> There are other, smaller changes. A comparison<sup>28</sup> of the geographical part shows that the number of entries (mountains, rivers, springs etc.) was reduced. Their structure, however, remained largely the same, with slightly more emphasis on the sympathetic qualities.<sup>29</sup> The chapter on metals, stones, minerals etc. has fewer and shorter entries. The material abridged concerns description and details of occurrence as well as sympathetic qualities. Since the omissions reflect a tendency to adapt the text to a more popular use one can expect the additions serving the same purpose. However, this does not tell us much about the character of the large interpolation that takes up

<sup>24</sup> See note 6.

<sup>25</sup> Ziva Vesel, *Les encyclopédies persanes* (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les civilisations, 1986), 6.

<sup>26</sup> Maria Kowalska, 'Bericht über die Funktion der arabischen kosmographischen Literatur des Mittelalters,' *Folia Orientalia* 11 (1969), 178–179.

<sup>27</sup> Ruska, 'Kazwīnistudien,' 66.

<sup>28</sup> These comparisons refer to spot-checks in the Arabic manuscripts in London (Or. 14140), Gotha (Ms. Orient. A 1506) and Munich (C. Arab. 464).

<sup>29</sup> On these qualities, see Manfred Ullmann, 'Khāṣṣa,' in *ET*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 4: 1097–1098.

between a fifth and a sixth of the whole text, including introductions, and could not fail to influence the nature of the work.

The portion interpolated has a homogeneous character only as far as it adds another dimension to that part of Qazvīnī's work that deals with the human being. Originally, 'the first kind of living beings' was dealt with only as an element of natural history; now it was also treated as social being, partly at the expense of information concerning the human body. On the other hand, the interpolation comprises rather divergent tendencies.

The information about different peoples clearly concentrates on the pre-Islamic and the non-Islamic, even if the Arabs and the Persians are dealt with, and sounds particular anachronistic about the *ṣinf al-rūm*. This does not necessarily imply that an old text had been interpolated. We meet the same stubborn adherence to traditional knowledge in European cosmographies of the later Middle Ages and early Modern Times. The main effect of the chapter upon the text is the addition of popular stories or just the allusion to such stories (Fig. 5).

The second part of the interpolation on crafts and trades, their use for mankind and their astonishing results, about arts, occult sciences and strategems, has a more mixed effect upon the structure of the text. Some subchapters consist of descriptions of items, including marvellous objects like automata and talismans (Fig. 4). Others, like those on agriculture and hunting, mainly list secrets of the craft and tell the reader how to achieve a certain aim. Finally, the subchapters about the ruses applied by rogues and women add amusing stories. In the manuscripts checked, there are always more subchapters announced in the table of contents than really comprised by the text.<sup>30</sup> There is no obvious reason for the omission of one third of the announced subchapters since they are of different character. In case, the chapter on crafts, sciences and tricks was specially compiled to be added to the translation these subchapters were probably planned but never written.

Thus, the contents of the interpolation sends conflicting messages about the interests of the consumers it aimed at. With some reservation, one may say that it satisfies curiosity in areas not covered

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<sup>30</sup> In general, the picture remains the same already noticed by Ruska, 'Qazvīnī-studien,' 244–245.



by the Arabic text, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, stresses practicable knowledge.

The third indicator of changes in consumer tastes is the illustrations. Compared to the first manuscripts comprising Qazvīnī's Arabic text, the cycle of illustrations experienced some changes. In Safavid manuscripts until the end of the 10th/16th century they are limited, however.

1. The encyclopaedic element loses some of its importance. This is most obvious in the chapter about trees and plants that remains unillustrated sometimes, but more often has a selection of trees and plants illustrated, or only trees considered. It is also possible that the stars were not represented or not all animals depicted. Nevertheless, the singular figure dominates the illustrations. No matter, how many stories are told about the sheep—it is only the figure of the sheep that is shown against a background of landscape elements (Fig. 3).
2. The narrative potential of the interpolations is only partly exploited. Concerning the selection of subjects for illustration, the first, i.e. the Turkman manuscripts seem to explore the narrative possibilities more eagerly than Safavid copies do. If we consider that a fine copy like H. 407 of 1560 offers only four miniatures in the subchapter about the Persians (modelled after *Shāhnāme*h and *Khamseh* illustrations) but no illustration in the other subchapters about the Turks, the Indians etc. the original impetus behind the commercial Turkman copies can be better recognized. In Safavid manuscripts of the 10th/16th century it was not developed further, but sometimes weakened.
3. Among the possible subjects for illustration offered by the second part of the interpolation, it is usually not the stories that attract the main interest but the descriptions of automata and talismans (Fig. 4). Their depiction became a permanent feature of all manuscripts whatever the quality of the copy or the ability of the artist to represent these objects.

These results must be seen against the background of Shiraz manuscript illustration in the second part of the 10th/16th century. When the reconstructed cycle of illustrations for the 'second' translation emerged in the late 9th/15th century the extremely simplified and laconic commercial Turkman style restricted iconographical

development. In the 10th/16th century, particularly since the late 940s–950s/1540–1550s, Shiraz painting looked different, and it would have been easy to enrich the iconography. Generally, this did not happen although regarding some subjects, particularly in the Dublin ms. Pers. 212, the iconography was elaborated. This is an indication that the popularity of the ‘second’ translation of Qazvīnī’s cosmography did not chiefly rest on the stories it contained. Although they were surely liked by the readers the main interest was in information. The work preserved its encyclopaedic character.

Thus, the illustrated manuscripts of Qazvīnī’s ‘reworked’ Persian version fulfilled the same function the author had intended two/three centuries earlier. The book responded to the curiosity of the educated public interested in knowledge of the natural world for the sake of knowledge as well as in information of more utilitarian character. It never tries to hide any knowledge from ‘uninitiated’ readers. Protection of knowledge against misuse is not discussed. Qazvīnī was confident of the usefulness of knowing about and contemplating the marvels and miracles of nature and of the human mind and creativity. Neither this attitude of the author nor the collection of information he had compiled was ‘outmoded’ in the late 9th/15th and in the 10th/16th centuries. This may sound apologetic, but the level of literature to compare with in Europe is that of educated people not engaged in specialized research. At the same period, the compendia popular with the educated public in Europe looked remarkably similar.<sup>31</sup>

Whereas the large interpolation introduced into the ‘second’ Persian version, in general, did not change the function of Qazvīnī’s book it brought some modification. The interpolation talks about practical knowledge and crafts, in a broad sense, including marvellous constructions and magical means and procedures. The distribution of illustrations accentuates automata (dealt with in the subchapter about carpentry) and the talismans of the planets. Although this reserves special attention for them, one should keep in mind that this is partly the result of the object-centred character of the cycle of illustrations. As mentioned above, the subchapters differ: some concentrate on the description of various objects, other talk about actions, i.e. they

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<sup>31</sup> For an example, see Louis B. Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1935), particularly chapter XV ‘The Strange World of Science.’

tell the reader what to do in order to produce a certain effect. The first kind is well suited to encyclopaedia-style illustration; the second kind asks for narrative pictures—how to catch birds, for instance—or renders depiction rather difficult, as in case of recipes. Overestimating the importance of the illustrated subchapters would be as much a mistake as neglecting them. They played their particular part in a chapter displaying professional knowledge, useful household experience, parlour tricks and practical magic.

Information of this kind is a quite common element in encyclopaedias of natural history, usually as part of the individual entries.<sup>32</sup> What we are told in the interpolation's subchapter about the wonders of agriculture does not differ much from the marvellous experience with some species contained in the entries of Qazvīnī's respective chapter about trees, plants and herbs. However, the original division of his second *maqāla* had no space for the secrets of the urban crafts and trades. Thus, despite its lack of uniformity, the interpolated chapter about crafts, sciences and tricks brought about a certain change in emphasis in favour of 'the secrets of the arts.' Also, while the information for the sake of curiosity continued to dominate the text, knowledge of immediate practical use gained weight.

This seems to parallel developments in Europe which finally resulted in the emergence of the 'Books of Secrets.'<sup>33</sup> The isolation of the 'secrets of nature' from the description of the object, and their collection in special books for practical use was the final step of a process which had started with the concentration on the marvellous qualities and effects of the individual object. On this way, the interpolated Persian version of Qazvīnī's *'Ajā'ib al-makhlūqāt* should be located somewhere halfway, and it is quite possible that the parallel ends here.<sup>34</sup>

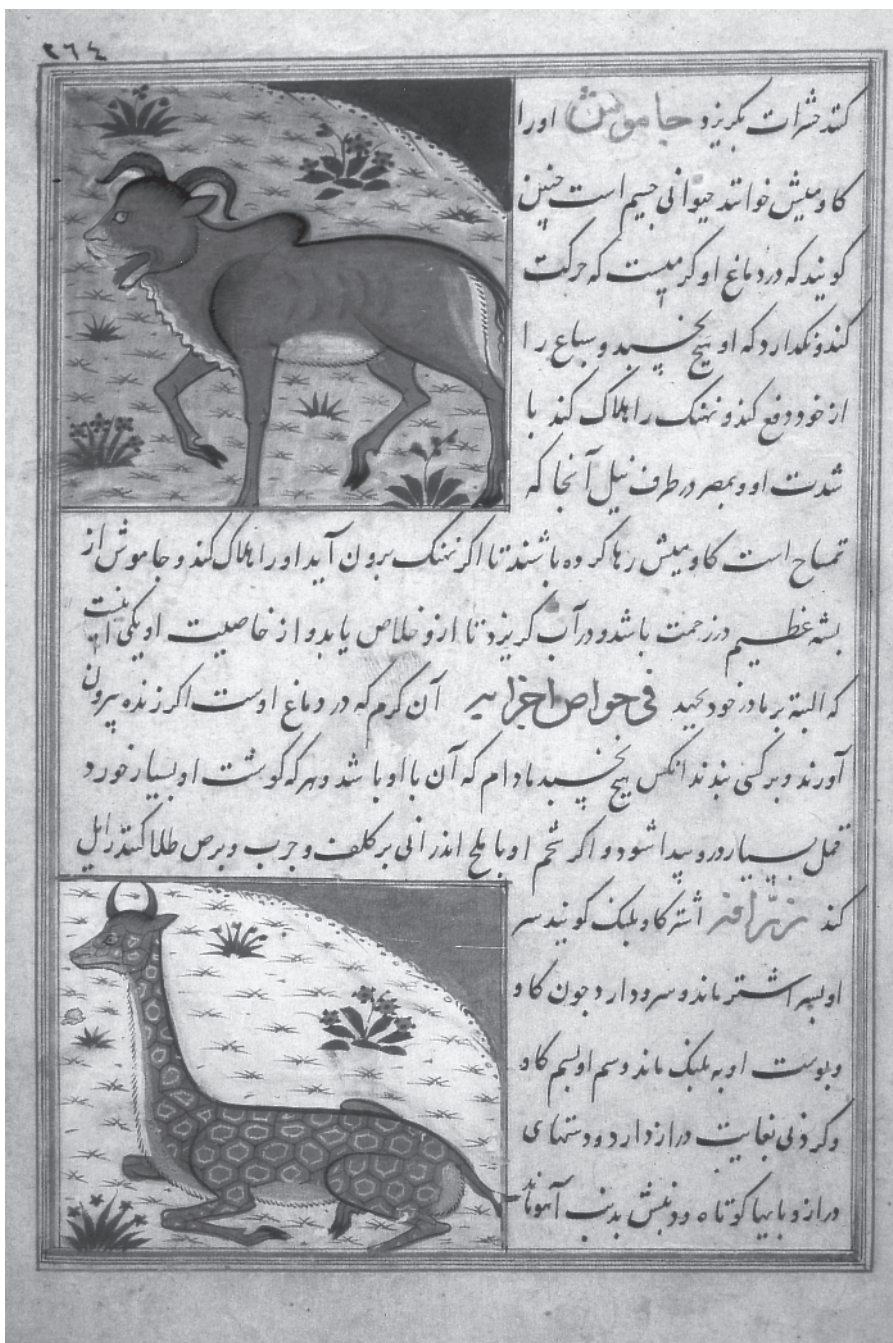
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<sup>32</sup> Manfred Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften im Islam* (Leiden, Köln: Brill, 1972), 5–6, 393–416, 427–429.

<sup>33</sup> On the various aspects of this complex problem, see William Eamon, *Science and the Secrets of Nature: Books of Secrets in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

<sup>34</sup> This needs further investigation. Since not only the economic conditions but also the printing press promoted the development in Europe, it is more likely that the correspondences are restricted to the earlier stages of the process. It would be even more premature to speculate about continued or renewed cross connections during the 15th and 16th centuries.

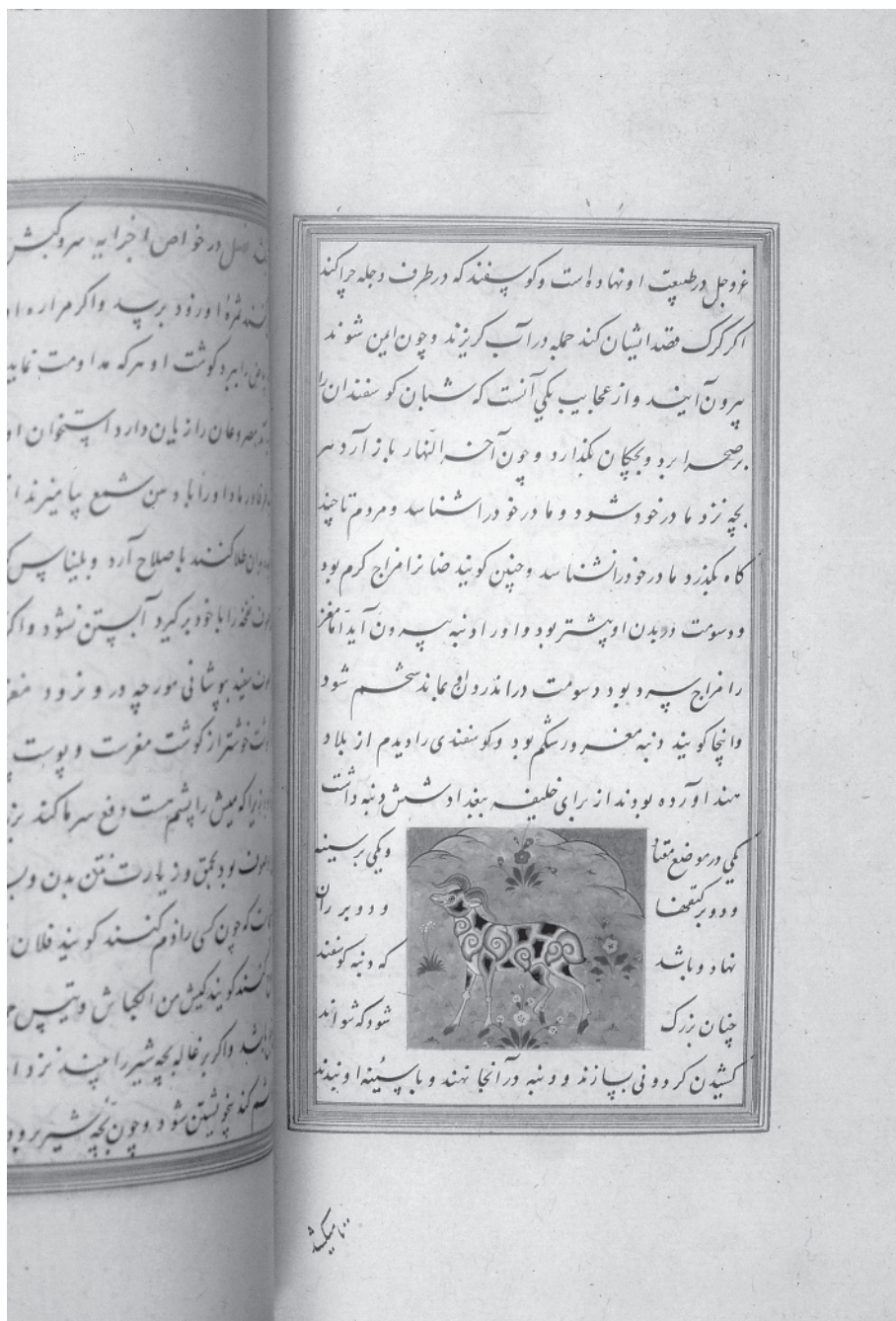
So far, one may safely say that the Persian manuscripts of Qazvīnī's *‘Ajā’ib al-makhlūqāt* produced in early Safavid Iran responded to an extensive curiosity in the secrets of nature by the educated public as did those in Arabic made in the late 13th and 14th centuries. In a certain way, however, they had been modernized, reflecting interest in the secrets of the arts. Seen from that angle, the changed text of Qazvīnī's work puts another question mark behind the much repeated statement about the stagnation and decline of cultural development in Islamic lands during the later Middle Ages and early Modern Times.



1. Buffalo and giraffe, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, N. F. 155, fol. 264a.



2. Traveller helping the dawrfish inhabitants of an island in the red Sea against attacking birds, Topkapi Saray Museum, H. 407, fol. 116a.



3. Fat-tailed sheep, Topkapi Saray Museum, H. 407, fol. 396b.



4. Automata, Topkapı Saray Museum, H. 407, fol. 328b.



کي از ايشان چون خوانند که خود را هلاک کند بر در سپرای ملک آید و از وی دستور می خوانند  
 و او را بر چهار پای نشانند و در میان شمشیر بگردانند با بطول و بروی جامه حریر بود لیکن  
 بر خود در یزید باشند و حوالی او اهل و اقربان او باشند و بر سر او کلبلی از ریجان باشد  
 و دماغ خود را قوار بدیده باشد و از نبت و سدر و پس در اینجا نماده و دماغ او سوزد و  
 از ورق بتبول خاید چون او را کرد بازار یا کرد آید باشد آتشی عظیم افزون شده باشد  
 بخبری بدست کپرد و در میان آتش رود و خود را هلاک کند و منها خدمت الاصل  
 چون کي از ايشان مدتی مدید خدمت اصنام کرده باشد تا جی بیازند از پینه و آنرا

قطران ملخ کند و از برای  
 هر آنکشتی نیکه سازند از  
 پینه قطران آلوده انگاه  
 آتش در آن پنهانند و درش  
 صنم رود و نشیند تا انگاه  
 که هلاک شود و بسیار شده شود هم



باشد که کي از سند و قمار باز و تا انگاه که بسمله مال او تبار بر بند و چون مال نماند بدین  
 شروع کند و از برای آنکشتی یازد اگر غلبه کند هیچ محابا کند و آنکشت میرند و بجان  
 نشیند و از بهر آنکشتی دیگر یازد و منها الحلف بالمیاء و الناس شخصی حکایت کند که مرا

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PART TWO

SOURCES ON SAFAVID SOCIETY AND CULTURE

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MAKTŪB AND MAJMŪ‘A:  
ESSENTIAL SOURCES FOR SAFAVID RESEARCH

Iraj Afshār

Research on the Safavids has been increasing, and several historical and literary texts, and many collections of documentary materials of that period have been published. However, bibliographic discussion about the quality of the sources of that period and their different types, and especially the availability of shorter documents, is still needed. The brevity of such materials means that they are easily overlooked.

It may be correct to say that the main defect of studies relating to the Safavid period is that they give too much attention to certain types of evidence. First, it has been mainly political, military and diplomatic events (and, naturally, relations between Iran and neighbouring states) which have been the subject of discussion. By contrast, details of urban, social and cultural affairs, and elements which throw light on daily life, have been discussed less often. Secondly, the original sources of this research have been based mostly on well-known historical texts and the observations of European travellers and merchants; scattered sources in local collections, which will form the main subject of the present paper, have been given less attention.

Inscriptions also have not been used properly as references owing to their being located in the Iranian countryside and because of the non-availability of their corpus. For instance, there are two inscriptions of Shah ‘Abbās’ *firmān* in which it is explicitly stated that if Sunnis adopt Shī‘ism, they will be exempted from paying taxes.

The details of coins and stamps of kings and ministers are not given adequate recognition and the main general source are in still available only in the works of Rabino. It is necessary to collect an accurate list of all the mints working during the Safavid period. For instance Iskander Beg, in his book *‘Ālam Āra*, noted the existence of a mint in Astarābād. Such a list may gradually complement Zambauer’s *Dār al-Ṣarbhā*. Similarly a list of the rhymed prose of the stamps should be compiled.

A few collections of poetry (*divāns*) have been published but these, too, have been neglected in historical research. We have not taken poetry seriously and not as an historical source, yet the only document

concerning the decline of monetary conditions in Shah ‘Abbās II’s period is a short *masnavī* in *Tazkireh-i Naṣrābādī*. Poetry can yield a variety of details about the victories, ranks, buildings, deaths, births, guilds and social classes. *Risala-i Kayvānī* is a good example of the importance of poetry in that connection as the content of the poem, published by Rasūl Ja‘fariyān, comprises another perspective on social life during the period of Safavid weakness.

A glance at the *Dīvān* of ‘Alī Naqī Kamrā’ī Shifāyī, Khādim Iṣfahānī and Zāhid Tabrīzī, who had a particular voracity in composing *Mādda-i Tārīkh* (chronogram), satire, panegyric and *Ikhvānīyāt* (friendly letters), offers the historian the opportunity to pursue new aspects of Safavid history.

This Round Table, in addition to presenting individual items of research, ought also to highlight new ways forward for the expansion and development of Safavid studies so that, in the words of Persian poetry, it may not be said that, ‘*Neshistand-o-guftand-o-barkhastand*’ (‘they sat, conversed and arose’). For this reason, instead of presenting a particular discussion, I wish to present a report on types of documents.

In addition to the documents mentioned above, an original and relevant category which helps to advance Safavid studies is the originals of government documents like *firmānhā* (firmans), *ḥukmhā* (orders or judicial decrees), *misālkhā* (royal orders) and *manshūrkhā* (royal mandates). The number of these is not great, and fortunately they are given sufficient attention. Generally scholars who acquire such documents publish them and there is little need for concern that they will be overlooked. The work of Dr Bert Fragner records the activities carried out in this field up to 1980. Of course, catalogues prepared by the libraries possessing such documents are very useful. Of these I have seen three volumes in Armenia, seven in Georgia and two in Baku.

However, in addition to these types of research sources, an important category of documents is copies of *firmāns*, judicial decrees, orders, royal mandates, letters of princes (*nishānhā*), regulations (*dastūr al-‘amalhā*), agreements (*qarārdādkhā*), registers (*mahzarhā*), the records of the courts of judicature and sentences of a judge (*siyillāt* and *sukūk*), deliberate writings (*tarassulāt*), official compositions (*munsha‘āt-i rasmī*), personal letters which have been copied and are included amidst the pages of *majmū‘āt* (collections), literary miscellanies (*junghā*), fair copies (*bayāzhā*) and books or notebooks (*safīnahā*). These contain a wealth of governmental, social, cultural and urban information, but since

detailed and annotated catalogues and indexed reports for and about them are not available, they have attracted little attention from scholars. Unfortunately, descriptions of these in catalogues are generally brief, and lack the beginnings and ends of the text. Therefore scholars have not had sufficient opportunity to gain adequate access to their contents. Furthermore, since there is no cumulative catalogue of such materials and the bibliographies of Storey and Munzavi do not discuss such types of manuscripts the number of copies of such documents and their availability cannot be accurately determined.

The main collections, notebooks, fair copies and literary miscellanies of the Safavid period which contain copies of documents can be divided into two categories. One category is those copied in India, the other is those copied in Iran; the latter is the more significant. I estimate the number of important collections of both categories to be fifty to sixty volumes.

Another noteworthy point is the location of these collections in libraries. Whatever has been written in India is mostly in the libraries of India and the India office, the Bodleian library, Oxford, and the British Library. The *majmū'āt* (collections) copied in Iran are preserved mainly in Kitābkhānah-i Markazī (Central Library) of Tehran University, Malik National Library and Majlis Library in Tehran, and the Mar'ashī Library in Qum. There are also some *majmū'as* in the libraries of Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Italy, St. Petersburg and Turkey. The compilation and collection of *majmū'as* have been carried out in two ways. In one group, all the insertions and writings are by one *munshī* (secretary), such as the *majmū'as* of Ṣādiqī Afshār, Ṭāhir Vahīd Qazvīnī, Naṣīra of Hamadān, Qāri Ṭabasī, Khān Aḥmad Gīlanī, Ḥasan Shāmlū, Futūḥī Shīrāzī and others. Another group comprises different documents from different periods and compiled by several different *munshīs*. Their compiler may be known, as in the case of the *munsha'āt* (compositions or writings) of Farīdūn Beg, 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Naṣīrī and Ḥayder Ivāghlī, but most collections are by compilers whose names are not known.

Owing to the fact that the originals of most of these—probably more than ninety per cent—have been destroyed, these copies will inevitably be used as references in research. By finding different manuscripts and producing critical editions, they may be substituted in place of the originals. However, the essential condition for attaining this goal is the preparation of a new, chronological catalogue for such sources giving a summary of each of them, and keeping the

codicological rules in mind. Meanwhile it is necessary we note the following documents: *farmān* (firmān), *ḥukm* (order or judicial decree), *‘arīza* (petition), *nāmeḥ* (letter), *vaqf-nāmeḥ* (endowment deed), *mahzar* and *qabāla* (register or testimony and deed of sale or marriage contract etc.), *sukūk* (sentences of a judge), the figures relating to titles, *manāṣib* (ranks), *suyūrghāl* (feudal tenure), *āzād-nāmcheh* (letters of freedom), *bahr-i tavīl* (long metre), *shahr-āshūb* (poetry in praise or criticism of the people of a city), *tauba-nāmeḥ* (a written expression of repentance), *mādda-i tāriḵh* (chronogram), *ta‘ziyat-nāmeḥ* (note of greeting), *‘ahd-nāmeḥ* (letters of agreement), *nikāḥ-nāmeḥ* (marriage contract) and *vaṣīyat-nāmeḥ* (last will and testament).

In the hope that such a catalogue may be started I have, with the help of some colleagues, given some consideration to its plan. It is necessary to give some details regarding the quality of the documents.

### *Historical Events*

Until now scholars who have quoted or considered such documents have been mainly interested in historical-political correspondence between kings and subjects, relating to foreign relations, wars and, sometimes, the principles of administration and statesmanship. However, no care has been taken to edit these critically. An example is the text of the *firmān* of Shah ‘Abbās in connection with British citizens in Iran, issued in 1026/1617, on the arrival of a trader named E. Connock, on behalf of the East India Company. It has been copied in the *Majmū‘a-i ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā’ī* (Tehran, : Bunyād-i Farhang, 1360/1981), as an agreement from the copy inserted in *Majmū‘a-i Khaftī* no. 5032 of Majlis (Tehran), vol. 15 of the catalogue. It has few variations from the text existing in the fair copy (*bayāz*) manuscripts of the copies of the orders remaining from the Safavid period (from Rauzāti’s copy in Majlis, facsimiled print in *Farhang-i Irān Zamīn*). The main variation is that one of its articles is not found in Navā’ī’s edition. This *firmān* contains eighteen articles rather than seventeen. Furthermore, this *firmān* cannot be considered as an agreement, as has been mentioned in Navā’ī’s collection and Ferrier’s article. An agreement is normally a document signed by two parties. It is therefore essential to compare and verify the different copies of such documents available in *majmū‘as*.

The chronicle of conquests (*fathnāmas*), such as the *Fathnāma* for Qandahār—the city which from the beginning of the Safavid period



had been the object of both talks and sieges several times—is another type of reliable document. Its specimen is preserved in *Majmū‘a* no. 2464/7 (M). In the same chapter there is a document in which the news of conquering Qandahār has been given to Khusraw Khān Beglar Begī 2591/79 (M). In other words, this is the sign that the news of victory and peace in the east of the country was announced to the northern region so that people could learn what had happened. Regarding the siege of Qandahār, there are also other documents like no. 2591/53 and the letter of Munshī al-Mamālik no. 2591/85 (M), or nos. 2591/83, 2591/54 (M) and 8235/59–62. One of these types of documents is the description of Safavid warriors and the battle of Sulaymān Kurd during the time of Shāh Sultān Ḥusayn, written by Bāyandūr Khān, the ruler of Qāja-dāgh, no. 2591/143 (M).

‘*Arz-i Lashkar* (review of the army) of Shah Sulaymān Ṣafavī 2978/7 (M) reveals something about the military position of Iran. It is perhaps the source of information in which we read about the latter part of the Safavid period and the earlier part of the Afshar dynasty in the report published by Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh in the Los Angeles manuscript (*Farhang-i Irān Zāmīn*).

The Safavids considered dynastic power important. Probably one of the most significant documents on this subject is the description of the glories and benefits of the dynasty, written by the famous religious leader Āqā Ḥusayn Khvānsārī (see manuscript nos. 2454 (M), 4727 (M) and 8235/193 (M). Another instance of honouring this dynasty is this title phrase in manuscript no. 5894 (M): “*Abbāsīya-i Ṣafavīya-i Mūsavīya-i Ḥasanīya-i ‘Alavīya-i Fāflimīya*” (*Markazī* catalogue 135:6). Dates concerning accession to the throne, such as in the writings of 2464/6 (M) and 2591/72 (M) or an essay on the death of Shah ‘Abbās (*vāqī‘a*), 6543 (M) are also useful for research on the Safavid dynasty.

Letters and writings showing the relation between the Safavid government and Indian rulers, Uzbek emirs, Ottoman sultans, European kings and the Pope’s court form the main part of the writings in these *majmū‘as*. However, apart from these what has been found in new *majmū‘as* is still not categorised. For instance, both the announcement regarding Iran’s roads being open for the passing of Uzbek pilgrims to Mecca, and the delivery of the property of an Iranian-trader, who died in India, to Imām Qūlī Beg Yasaval are found in *Majmū‘a* no. 2591 (M). Some instances of details revealing aspects of relations with foreigners are the sending of a wine goblet made by Venedik on behalf of a Roman king to Iran, no. 130, called

*Majmū'a-i Hasil al-Hayāt*, the sending of three horses on behalf of Sharīf Ḥasan of Mecca to Ummat Khān, the Amīr al-Umāra (prince of princes) of Fars, no. 2042/6 (M), and the sending of a prayer rug on behalf of Shah 'Abbās to Amir Uzbek, no. 2465/17 (M).

### *Cities and Buildings*

*Majmū'as* also contain information relating to cities and buildings. For instance, the description praising the *Tāvūshkhāna Garden*, built by Shah 'Abbās II on the bank of the Zāyandahrūd has been mentioned in *'Abbās-nāmeḥ*. There is a reference to it by Mansūr Simnānī in *Jung* no. 3010 (M). This kind of note also occurs in mention of the construction of *Chihil Sutūn* in 1116, in the contents of the *masnavī* of Badī' Naṣrābādī, no. 2591 (M), and also in 1144 in the poetry of Khādim Iṣfahānī, no. 3331 (M).

Any researcher of Isfahan should be aware of the introduction of *Bāzācha-i Hasanābād* (Isfahan), written by a person having Bayānī as his pen-name, in *Majmū'a* no. 1420, in Sepahsalar Library. Also significant for Isfahan is the introduction of Humāyūn Tappa, built in the period of Shah 'Abbās in Mazandaran, by Zāhīr al-Dīn 'Ulya in *Majmū'a* 4727 (M), and the report on the building of *Sa'adatābād Garden* in 1144/1731 (i.e. the year in which *Chihil Sutūn* was repaired).

Dates of earthquakes may also be derived from notes written in *junghā*. For instance, there is information on the Shirvān earthquake in *Majmū'a* no. 3010 (M) and on the 1139/1718 earthquake of Tabrīz in *Majmū'a* no. 2591 (M).

News of the construction of *Rawza-i Ṭūs* (Mashhad) in the years 1084/1678 and 1089/1678, *Qadamgāh* of Nīshābūr in 1091/1680, the construction of a dam in Khurasan in 1100/1688 and a *rabaṭ* in 1099/1687 is found in poetry by Mīrzā Qāsim Tabrīzī, nos. 4623 (M).

### *Social Topics*

Presented here are some examples of details shedding light on aspects of daily life.

There is a *mahzar* (verbal process) concerning the behaviour of the ruler of Yazd in *Munsha'āt-i Viqārī Ṭabasī*, no. 3402 (M).

There is criticism of the taking of bribes, and satire on one of the ministers, Halākī Hamadānī, in the writing of Afshār Šādiqī. The poet considers him as bad as Mahmūd Pasīkhānī Nuqflavī, no. 7395 (M). There is an obscene satire of Mīrzā Mu‘min Kirmānī, the minister of Shah ‘Abbās, by Ḥakīm Shifāyī, Oct. 985, and a *firmān* concerning the style of dress of ministers, prime ministers and other classes, addressed to Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā, the ruler of Khurasan, no. 4436/17 (M). In addition there is a description of Yazdī *sha‘r-bāfān* (weavers) addressed to Mīrzā Ja‘far, the minister, written by Viqārī Ṭabasī, no. 3402 (M). Apparently this Mīrzā Ja‘far is the same person whose year in office is referred to as 1078/1667 in a chronogram by the Isfahani poet Ismā‘īl Kāshif. There is also the *raqam* (note or writing) sent to the people of Simnān stating that they may go to Damāvand to present their petition, no. 8235/22 (M).

Among the social issues sometimes given attention by the Safavid government were a ban of shaving the beard, no. 2465/20 (M), a ban on drinking alcohol during Shah Safī’s period, no. 3454/8 (M), and a ban on other prohibited things, no. 5654/80 (M). Regarding the consumption of alcohol, there are two more important writings. One is *Qadghan-i Sharāb* (‘A ban on wine’) by Šā‘ib, no. 2591 (M). The other is *Qurq-i Sharāb* (‘A restriction on wine’) by Āqā Ḥusayn Khvānsārī, no. 2465 (M). Permission for smoking the *qabyan* or hubble-bubble and *shurb-i tanbākū* (the smoking of tobacco) are also among the social issues of the period, and contrasting views were expressed. Rasūl Ja‘fariyān has recently calculated the number of treatises on this subject. Among the important writings which we find located in collections is Šā‘ib Tabrīzī’s writings including no. 2591/97 (M) and no. 564/27 (M).

*Tawba-nāmehs* (letters of repentance) are another indication of the problems relating to *muḥarramāt* (prohibited things). One example is the detail about Lūlī’s penitence in manuscript no. 2191 (M). We see several letters of repentance by members of different classes of society in *Musha‘at-i Viqārī Ṭabasī*, and these reveal reasons for the repentance.

Descriptions of *awbāsh* (lewd persons) and *akwāt* (rascals) (2911 *Sipahsālār*), and information relating to *qahva-khānehs* (coffee or tea houses) form another element of description of social conditions. *Rasm-i ‘Ashiqī dar qahva-Khāneh-hā* (the custom of love making in tea houses), by Kāshif Iṣfahānī, no. 2934 (M) is another example, as is

the circumstances of Shah ‘Abbās’ falling in love with the beloved of this poet.

Other documents useful in adding to the writings of *Tazkirat al-Mulūk* and *Dastūr al-Mulūk* include: the manner of keeping watch over Isfahan’s trading practices, especially in the letter addressed to Amir Rukn al-dīn, no. 8235/41 (M); an order addressed to bakers and butchers (8B *Adabīyāt*), the two guilds which were needed daily by society, and thus required careful regulation of their behaviour; and the type of measures taken by police in relation to eye-witnesses.

We have several writings, letters and poems revealing details of the items people needed and requested. The following list presents some of these:

– Irrigation for the garden, nos. 2591/12 (M), 5645/35 (M) and 8235/315 (M)	آب باغچه
– Horse, nos. 5645/37 (M), 8235/95 (M)	اسب
– Astrolabe, nos. 2591/17 (M), 5645/34 (M) and 5645/94 (M)	اسطرلاب
– Hawk, no. 5645/36 (M)	بازشکاری
– Fur cloak, no. 2476/27	پوستین
– Tree grafting, no. 8235/316 (M)	پیوند درخت
– Opium, no. 2591/118 (M)	تریاک
– Rosary, nos. 2591/17 (M), 1997/25 (M), 8235/257, 270, 311 and 386 (M)	تسبیح
– Tobacco, no. 8235/277 (M)	تنباکو
– Arrow, no. 2465/1 (M)	تیر
– Limbs, no. 8235/312 (M)	جوارح
– Walnut, no. 2591/87 (M)	جوز
– Tea, no. 2191 (M)	چای
– Lamp-stand, no. 2191/102 (M)	چراغدان
– Walking stick, no. 2591/133 (M)	چوب
– Pill, no. 2591/(M), 2944 (M)	حب
– Henna, no. 2591/201 (M)	حنا
– Tabrīz stone pool, 95-J <i>Adabīyāt</i> , no. 8235/307 (M)	حوض سنگی تنریز
– Melon, no. 2591/125 (M)	خربزه
– Tambourine, 95-J <i>Adabīyāt</i> , no. 8235/292 (M)	دایره
– Collyrium, no. 2591/118 (M)	سرمه

- Marble, no. 3213/29 (M) سنگ
- Wine, nos. 2591/12 (M), 8235/291 (M) مرمر
- Copper bowl, no. 3213/28 (M) شراب
- Tray, no. 3213/28 (M) طاس
- Spectacles, nos. 1997/27 (M), 1997/30 (M),  
2591/122 (M), 3010 (M), 3098/60 (M),  
5645/32 (M) and 5645/98 (M). عينك

Here it is interesting that someone asked for spectacles in place of the ones brought for him by the envoy of Russia, Ḥajj Ḥusayn Āqā, which had been broken. From this it is evident that spectacles were brought from Russia.

- Egyptian polemoniaceae, no. 2591/115 (M) فلونیای مصری  
and *Hāsīl-al-Hayāt*, 79
- Pen, nos. 2191 (M), 5645/31 and 5645/33 (M) قلم
- Paper, no. 2591 (M), 8235/284 (M) کاغذ
- Partridge, no. 8235/313 (M) کبک
- ‘Kitāb-i Irshād’, no. 2591/116 (M) کتاب ارشاد
- Bow, no. 8235/385 (M) کمان
- Bag, *Hāsīl al-Hayāt* کیف
- Playing cards, no. 2934 (M) گنجفه
- Sheep, no. 2464 (M) گوسفند
- Lala (tulip or candle holders), no. 8235/272 (M) لاله
- Yoghurt, no. 8235/293 ماست
- Ink, no. 2591/23 (M) مرکب
- Goblet for rosewater, no. 2191 (M) مینا برای گلاب
- Nargisdān (pot for narcissus), no. 2591/5 (M) نرگسدان
- Ruby, no. 8235/390 (M) یاقوت

A minor element of the social situation of the time is related to the circumstances of some Christians like ‘Isā Khān Gurjī, no. 3213/22 (M), and some other Christians, becoming Muslims in the year 1130/1717 in *majmū‘a* no. 2591/101 (M). Also worthy of note are: Marzbān Zardūshī’s becoming Muslim, no. 4503 (M); a dialogue with European scholars, no. 2591/24 (M); a description of the duties of *Shaykh al-Islām* mentioned in writing their orders; the case of imprecation of opponents, no. 2042/20 (M); rejection of Sufi sects and letters to the distinguished men of Nūrbakhshīyeh, no. 2042/10 (M).

Information concerning *Tawḥīd Khāneh* (House of Unity) apparently occurs for the first time in *Ālam Ārā-i ʿAbbāsī* and also in *Dastūr al-Mulūk*. I have seen two documents showing that the existence of *Tawḥīd Khāneh* was recorded in Qaracheh Dagħ, one being the letters of that city's ruler, Bāyandūr Sulṭān. It is therefore clear that *Tawḥīd Khāneh* was not found only in Isfahan and Ardabīl. In addition, in a government regulation, along with reference to stipulating the correct titles of Safavid kings, it is stated that *Ẓākīrīn* (praisers of God, professional narrators of the tragedies of Karbala) in *Tawḥīd Khānas* must refer to the Safavid kings by their official titles (no. 8235 (M)).

### *Cultural Subjects*

Our information about cultural subjects should not be confined to the divāns of poets and the tazkiras of that period. From letters and documents like endowment deeds, whether official or not, we learn how metres were shown for a *ghazal*, their composition (*tarḥ-i ghazal*) in literary gatherings, and what story-tellers and praisers of the Prophet and his companions sang in *qahwa-khānehs* and *ḥammāms* (public baths). We also learn what people did on the occasion of the festivals of *Naurūz* and *Ābpāshān* (a festival during which each person sprinkles rose water on his neighbour), and how the king and his relatives associated with the people. We also learn of entertainments commonly performed in public squares. For instance, one day an expert juggler in *Maydān-i Saʿadat* (Saʿadat Square) in Isfahan staged his performance in the presence of the Shah, but it emerged that the juggler was a secret agent of the Ottoman government (no. 2412 (M)). From a letter by Ulugh Munshī, written in Hirat concerning the year 1094/1682, we learn that there were sixty-five famous types of grapes in the city (no. 3010 (M)). Some letters contain literary jokes and puns on the names of people like Āqā Shāhī Salkhak, Mawlāī and Julāq Tabrīzī (no. 3213/19 (M)).

### *Government Organization*

*Tazkīrat al-Mulūk* and *Dastūr al-Mulūk* are undoubtedly two important sources of information about government ranks and officers, and even the names of guilds and professions. However, important infor-

mation may also be gained from letters, orders, *firmāns* and codes of conduct preserved in *majmū'as*. For instance in *junghā* the following posts, ranks and professions are mentioned: *charkhchūgarī* and *serīshkārī* (2591), *ishrāf-i tavīls* (2591/10), *bāghbāshīgarī* and *mīrābī* (95C *Adabīyāt*), *istīfāy-i munshī al-mamālīk* (2042/9), *tamghāchī* (2042/9), *kitābdār* (1997/42), *sharbatdār* (3213/107), *mī'mār* (2042/11), *qiṣṣa-khvān* (3213/33 and 41), *muzāhhib* (3213/36 and 38), *kamāncheh-navāz* (3213/42, 3213/52), *sar-tarāsh* (3213/49), *tūshmāl-bāshī* (8235/36), *qūrchū bāshīgarī-i rikāb* (8235/49), *shātīran* (8235/398), *kalāntārī* (3213/40), *ṣāhib-ʿayānī* (3213/40), *kalāntar qapān* (2591/128). The title of some of the ranks may be seen in *Ravā yeh al-Inshā* by ʿAlī Naqī Turshīzī, written on the order of Fath ʿAlī Khān Beiglar Beigī, Mashhad (no. 3010).

### *Economic Affairs*

There is little accurate information available about the level of earnings and taxation in the Safavid period. These matters were usually mentioned in orders, royal mandates, feudal tenure and salaries firmans, and sometimes in copies in *majmū'as*. Some instances are: the request for exemption from the onion and cereals tax (no. 2191); cancellation of tax of Mīr Shikārī of Astarābād (no. 2591); the volume of ʿAshshār in Bandar-Hind (no. 4053); the tax rebate in Mashhad on the occasion of Īravān's conquest in 1045 (no. 2591); oil and salt revenues in Bādkūba (no. 5645/85); Nazar Beg's annual balance (no. 5645/87); *suyūrghal-idahnīm-i a'ma'dīn* (no. 8435); *suyūrghālkhā* (fiefs) (no. 2591/19 and 2591/45); *suyūrghul* of Qum (no. 59 *Hāsīl al-Hayāt*); the salary for *nuqabā* (leaders) of Medina in the year 1046 (no. 2591); and the verification of estates and properties in Simnām (no. 8235/224).

This brief report is offered in order to demonstrate the need for these new types of research which would enable the preparation of catalogues of Safavid material. I am ready to co-operate with any interested scholars, and some manuscript experts from Iran have already expressed favourable opinion concerning such a project. There is also a need to gather information from *majmū'as* from India, Pakistan, Europe, Russia and America.

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NEW LIGHT ON THE REIGN OF SHAH 'ABBĀS:  
VOLUME III OF THE *AFẒAL AL-TAVĀRĪKH*

Charles Melville

In circumstances already noted briefly elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> while routinely checking early manuscripts of Iskandar Beg Munshī's *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*, I came across a chronicle that had been incorrectly catalogued as Iskandar Beg's history in the Library of Christ's College, Cambridge.<sup>2</sup> Subsequent closer inspection of the text revealed it to be the third volume of the *Afẓal al-Tavārīkh* of Faẓlī b. Zayn al-'Ābidīn Khūzānī, covering the reign of Shah 'Abbās. The name of the author appears as Faẓlī b. Zaynal b. Khvājeh Rūḥ-Allāh Iṣfahānī in a deleted passage (f. 20r) at the end of the index (see Plate 1).

It is not necessary to substantiate this identification here,<sup>3</sup> though I will make some observations on the author at the end. Rather, this paper will concentrate on the issues raised by the discovery of the manuscript and by its unfinished state, and evaluate the significance of the work for the study of Shah 'Abbās's reign. In the space available, it is not possible to pursue all these questions fully, but I hope to point to some of the directions that might prove fruitful in future. The investigation of this large and rich text is still in progress.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Shah 'Abbas and the pilgrimage to Mashhad', in C. Melville, ed., *Safavid Persia* (Pembroke Papers, 3), (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 211–12.

<sup>2</sup> The manuscript is described briefly in E.G. Browne's *A supplementary hand-list of the Muhammadan manuscripts . . . in . . . the University and Colleges of Cambridge*. (Cambridge: University Press, 1929), 139, 313. The two entries differ on the number of folios, and in fact the manuscript had been inaccurately paginated every ten folios; I have renumbered them and refer throughout to this revised pagination (which unfortunately postdates the microfilm). Browne's working handlist gives no details of the date (cf. Storey, *Persian Literature* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1970) I/i, 311, where the ms. is also undated).

<sup>3</sup> See also my brief notice, 'A lost source for the reign of Shah 'Abbas: the *Afẓal al-Tavārīkh* of Fazlī Khuzani Isfahani', *Iranian Studies*, 31/ii (1998), 263–5.

*Provenance and History of the Manuscript*

Ms. Dd.5.6 reached Christ's College from the collection of John Hutton of Marske in Yorkshire (d. 1841), who is described by Peile as a patron of societies for agriculture, literature and science. 'He made a very valuable collection of books, chiefly Oriental (also 50 mss. Arabic, Persian, Hindustani—catalogue published by F. Jenkinson, Univ. Librarian).' These were inherited by his brother Timothy of Clifton Castle, who left them to the College in 1861.<sup>4</sup> This simple statement proves to be more mysterious than it seems. First, there is no record of F. Jenkinson's catalogue of Hutton's manuscripts (Jenkinson was Cambridge University Librarian from 1889 to his death in 1923), nor of any competence on his part in this field.<sup>5</sup> Secondly, though the catalogue mentioned is presumably a draft version of Browne's, this was not published until several years *after* Peile's reference to it. Thirdly, Browne identifies only twenty of the Christ's mss. as the gift of Hutton, not fifty, but a brief inspection of the whole collection reveals that forty-eight of the volumes bear Hutton's bookplate, and two others, which lack their original covers, were certainly his too.<sup>6</sup>

The manuscript itself is of large dimensions: a text block of 9 × 4.4 ins (23 × 11 cm) within a folio size of 13.6 × 8.2 ins (34.7 × 20.7 cm), i.e. with spacious margins, on good quality Indian paper.<sup>7</sup> The volume has been rebound with covers typical of Indian 18th-century work, and has a paper label, partly effaced, stuck on the front cover, with the words now rather faint: 'No. 15, alemara abbassy, histoire de chaabbas 2 eme (*sic*) [...]. . . rse par Mirza

<sup>4</sup> *Biographical register of Christ's College, 1505–1905*, by John Peile, II (1666–1905) (Cambridge: University Press, 1913), 332. Cf. James Raine, 'Marske in Swaledale', *Yorks. Archaeol. and Topogr. Jnl.*, 6 (1879–80 [1881]), 172–286 (esp. 262–3). A copy of the College's letter of acceptance of the gift is preserved in its archives, and also in the North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton; there is no accompanying inventory of the books. I am grateful to M. Ashcroft, County Archivist, for his help over Hutton's papers.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. H.F. Stewart, *Francis Jenkinson: a memoir* (Cambridge: University Press, 1926), with a bibliography of his writings, 137–9. E.G. Browne, *A catalogue of the Persian manuscripts* (Cambridge: University Press, 1896), xxxiii, acknowledges Jenkinson's help, but makes no reference to any list of oriental works by him, published or otherwise.

<sup>6</sup> Including a fine illuminated ms. of Ḥāfiẓ's *Dīvān*, Dd.3.11, from the royal library of Golconda.

<sup>7</sup> Much of what follows is based on an appraisal of the ms. made at my request by M. Francis Richard of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, to whose unrivalled knowledge (and generosity with it), I happily acknowledge my debt. I would also like to thank Mrs Courtenay in the Christ's Library for her assistance during M. Richard's visit to Cambridge and on many other occasions.

Kan[der ?] per[. . .], . . . volume. 204'.<sup>8</sup> This characteristic label, together with the Persian seal on f. 1r, indicates that the manuscript belonged to Jean-Baptiste Gentil (1726–99).<sup>9</sup> Fol. 1r also contains a pasted strip of paper bearing (on the reverse) the notice of ownership by J.H. Hindley in 1803.<sup>10</sup> Hindley sold the manuscript in 1805; it was bought by a certain Hall, whom I have still to trace.<sup>11</sup> On the inside cover there is the bookplate of John Hutton, Esq., Marske. As yet I have also been unable to establish when Hutton purchased the volume.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> One unexplained aspect of this is why the author of the *Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī* was thought to be 'Mirza Kan'; my reading of Kan[der] is only very tentative. There may be some distortion of Iskandar at the root of this. The same designation is found in Hindley's 1793 sale catalogue of what must, presumably, be a different ms. and a genuine *Ālam-ārā*. The entry reads 'Alemara Abassi, or History of Chaabbas II (*sic*). King of Persia, by Mirzakan his Secretary, Japhan, in 1035 Hejira'. See *A catalogue of the curious and very valuable library of books and classical and oriental manuscripts of the Rev. John Haddon Hindley . . .*, Leigh & Sotheby, London, 1793, 42 (no. 1238). This wording, so close to Gentil's label of the Fazlī ms., suggests that the latter was perhaps already in Hindley's possession by 1793, but retained by him till the sale of 1805 (see below, n. 11).

<sup>9</sup> For Gentil, see F. Richard, 'Jean-Baptiste Gentil collectionneur de manuscrits persans', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 28 (1996), 91–110. There is another example of Gentil's seal in the Hutton mss, no. Dd.3.1 (also part of Hindley's collection, see note 10). Dd.5.5, an *Akbar-nāmeḥ*, was also owned by Gentil, as is clear from his handwriting, which gives the price as 12 rupees. This later became part of Archibald Swinton's collection, the source of many of Hutton's mss. Swinton died in 1804 and his library was sold at Christie's on 6 June 1810 (see *A catalogue of a very valuable collection of Persian, and a few Arabic, Mss . . . by Archibald Swinton, Esq.* (London, 1810). I do not yet know how Hindley acquired Gentil's Fazlī ms.

<sup>10</sup> The notice reads: 'This ms. belongs to the Theol. J.H. Hindley of Brasenose College Oxford and Christ College, Manchester, 1803'. A similar inscription is found on the reverse of a similar strip of paper, containing an identification of the work, pasted inside Christ's ms. Dd.3.1 [the *Makhzan-i Afghānī*, see Storey, 394]. John Hindley was appointed librarian of Chetham's library in Manchester in 1792. His interest in Persian was evidently not simply that of a collector: in 1800 he published *Persian lyrics, or scattered poems, from Ḥāfiẓ . . .*, and in 1809, the *Pendeh-i-Attar; the counsels of Attar*. He died in Surrey in 1827; see Jeremiah Finch Smith, ed., *The admission register of the Manchester School . . .*, vol. 1. From A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1775. Chetham Soc. Manchester, 1866, 205–6. Many of his own copies of Persian mss ended up in the British Library, see the introduction to Rieu's *Catalogue*, III, xxii (*sic*, for xxvi).

<sup>11</sup> Hindley put a collection of his books and mss on the market in 1793 (see above) and again in 1805. At the sale on 6–7 June 1805, most of the oriental works were purchased by Hall, see *A catalogue of a small, elegant, and valuable collection of manuscripts . . .*, Leigh & Sotheby, London, 1805, annotated with the prices and names of purchaser. Our text appears as the '*Alem aray Abassy*. The History of Persia from the beginning of the empire of the Sefy family to Shah Abbas the cruel, by Mirzā Khān: written in a good Talik hand, and in excellent condition', sold for £5–15–6, 14 (no. 310).

<sup>12</sup> Several of Hutton's purchases were made on 17 February and 2 March 1819,

Typically for Indian manuscripts, the volume is quite worm-eaten, especially at the end, but not penetrating right into the middle. Repairs to the paper generally affect only the margins (and are not written on), but minor repairs to worm holes within written areas sometimes obscure the text. Some of the marginal repairs are inked over with blue border lines, indicating that the ruled margins were added at a later stage (but before the new folios were added to the beginning of the volume, for which see below).<sup>13</sup> Several folios containing substantial marginal additions also show that the original text had no ruled borders at all, and in some cases the additions have been cut off by subsequent trimming for rebinding (e.g. ff. 25r–26r, 33r, 56r, 109v, 182r–v, 280r–v) (see Plate 5).<sup>14</sup> The volume has therefore probably undergone several stages of alteration before reaching its present condition and appearance.

In brief, the manuscript was certainly written in India in the first half of the 17th century (see below for the date), where by the end of the following century some of the preliminary matter was missing or damaged, and recopied onto new pages inserted in the front of the book, probably at the time of rebinding and its purchase by Gentil.

The present appearance of the manuscript raises interesting and complicated questions not only about the history of the volume itself, but about the composition of the *Afzal al-Tawārikh* as a whole and the status of the text that has come down to us.

### *The State of the Text*

The manuscript reveals a work in the process of revision. It is immediately clear that the bulk of the manuscript does not simply contain a fair copy of a ‘finished’ work. Rather, we appear to have a professional copy of a version of the text, which has then been worked over quite thoroughly, corrections and additions being made in a

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but I have so far found no relevant sale catalogues for those dates. Hutton seems barely to have travelled outside Yorkshire and had no obvious personal connection with India; but see Raine, 262n, for a quick dash to London to buy a book.

<sup>13</sup> On f. 560 there is a major repair to the paper, on which the text has been carefully rewritten and the margins redrawn.

<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, on f. 174r, a flap of paper has been folded in, preserving marginal text in Fażlī’s hand, and giving some idea of the size of the sheet before trimming.

variety of hands, including the author's, to create a revised version. Nevertheless, if it were not for the scruffy appearance created by the various erasures and additions, it would have been a very handsome copy, of far superior quality to those of the other two volumes.<sup>15</sup>

Before considering the emendations, which are largely contained in the margins (deliberately left wide for this purpose?), I will first describe the characteristics of the original text, lying within the inner ruled borders.

The incorrect cataloguing of the work is explained by the fact that the first two sheets, ff. 1v–2r, exactly follow the introduction to volume 2 of Iskandar Beg's *'Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*.<sup>16</sup> From f. 2v onwards the text is entirely different, though it includes on f. 4v the chronogram in Iskandar Beg (p. 379); what survives of Fażlī's introductory material is thus considerably longer, but not totally independent of his predecessor's: not surprising in view of his acknowledged debt to Iskandar Beg (see below).

The first three folios are distinct from the rest of the ms. The size of writing and of the ruled text area is larger, 9.8 × 4.4 ins (25 × 11 cm); there are 20 lines to the page. Starting with folio 4, the dimensions of the text are smaller (though slightly irregular) and the script is smaller too, but there are still 20 lines to the page for the next three folios (4r to 6v); thereafter (from f. 7r) there are 21.<sup>17</sup> In other words,

<sup>15</sup> For vol. 1 (hereafter, Fażlī, I), see next note; vol. 2 (Fażlī, II) is found in British Library ms. Or. 4678, see Rieu, *Supplement*, no. 56, 37–8.

<sup>16</sup> See ed. I. Afshār (Tihran: Amīr Kabīr, 1334/1956), 377–8; the exact point of transition is 378, line 13, after the words *aẓ hadāyā-yi āsmānī*. The sudden contrast between Iskandar Beg's ornate prose and Fażlī's down to earth language is quite dramatic. The misidentification clearly originated from the time of purchase by Gentil.

It is a coincidence that vol. 1 of Fażlī's work was also confused with the *'Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*; see Cambridge University Library, Eton-Pote ms. 172. The Pote collection, divided between Eton and King's College, Cambridge, derived largely from that of Antoine-Louis-Henri Polier (1741–95), for whom see G. Colas & F. Richard, 'Le fonds Polier à la Bibliothèque Nationale', *Bull. de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 73 (1984), 99–123; see now also S. Subramanyam, 'The career of Colonel Polier and late eighteenth-century orientalism', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 10/i (2000), 43–60. See also D.S. Margoliouth, *Catalogue of the Oriental manuscripts in Eton College library* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1904), 4 and 22, where the work is entitled *Tā'rikh 'Ālam-ara*, though the author's name is given as Fadli Ispahani. Cf. Storey, I/ii, 1278 and G.M. Meredith-Owens, 'A short account of the first volume of the Afzal ul-Tavārīkh of Fażlī Işfahānī and its author', *British Museum Quarterly*, 25 (1962), 24–6.

<sup>17</sup> Browne, 139, says the ms. has 21 lines per page. There are 20 lines in the ms. of vol. 2 of the *Afzal al-Tavārīkh* (after f. 2r, with 19). Vol. 1 generally has 21 lines, though there are frequent departures from this rule, see below.

the change in paper and handwriting (after f. 3v) does not coincide with either (i) the change from Iskandar Beg's to Fażlī's text (after f. 2r), or (ii) the change of number of lines per page (after f. 7r).

It would therefore seem, first, that Iskandar Beg's introduction has not simply been grafted onto the beginning of Fażlī's original manuscript: the opening passages of Fażlī's work must have been partly missing and partly badly damaged,<sup>18</sup> and were freshly copied and inserted into the beginning of the volume, with Iskandar Beg's introduction making up for the lack of the opening folio(s). The inserted pages are clearly newer (not damaged at all by worm) and of inferior quality, and were probably added in India when the book was rebound in the 18th century. These opening three folios do not have either the inner or outer blue ruled borders that are characteristic of the rest of the manuscript, nor the overlining of personal names in red. Secondly, the clumsy transition in the number of lines per page, from 20 to 21 (at f. 7r), does not coincide with a change of hand and paper, but is due either to the recopying of the initial passages, or to a very early alteration of the text. As we will see later (p. 72), the passage starting on f. 7r was probably inserted into existing text.

Thus, although Fażlī's work starts on f. 2v, the original copy starts on f. 4r. Browne describes the handwriting as 'Indian *ta'liq*', which could also be called *nasta'liq*; the body of the text is in the neat hand of a professional scribe. On f. 375r there is a change of handwriting, to a slightly coarser but still professional hand, which remains more or less constant till the end (see Plate 2). This occurs towards the end of the annal for Luy-il (1616–17/AH 1025–6, year 30 of the reign), which happens also to be the place at which Iskandar Beg finished Book I of his volume on 'Abbās. The significance of this is discussed below.

Similar observations lead to the conclusion that there is a further, more distinct break later in the original text, which continues uninterruptedly to f. 419v. Material here, concerning Naurūz at the start of Takhaquy-il (1621/AH 1030), is deleted, and repeated on f. 420r (see Plate 3). The discontinuity is confirmed by the fact that the gathering marks become highly irregular around this point, indicating that the original sequence of bound folios has been disturbed and some sheets have been removed, or other new ones added.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Cf. the opening folio(s) of vol. 2.

<sup>19</sup> From f. 372a–b (i.e. 371v–372r), gathering marks appear regularly every 8 folios to f. 412a–b. However, instead of f. 420a–b, the next marks appear on f. 423a–b

From f. 420r onwards, the text continues without further interruption to the end; beyond a couple of minor insertions by the scribe, there are almost no erasures or marginalia, in striking contrast with the section of the manuscript before f. 375.<sup>20</sup>

The overlining of personal names in red ink continues to approximately the same place, becoming almost non-existent after f. 375v. The start of each annal and section title is also written in red, but from f. 412r and again from f. 542r onwards, many of the headings have not been written into the spaces left for them, including the beginning of the year (ff. 413r, 420r). Furthermore, from f. 420 onwards such headings as occur are in the same hand as the text, in contrast to the much freer *shikasteh* hand, sometimes resembling Fażlī's own (see below), that is characteristic of many headings in the earlier part of the manuscript and which, in the discrete section of text between ff. 375r and 420r, has left distinctive red smudges on the facing page.

The ms. has a colophon on f. 566r, giving the date of completion as Thursday 17 Rabi' I, 1045/(Friday) 31 August 1635. No place or scribe are mentioned.

This is followed by a *fihrist* of *'ulamā*, *fużalā*, *shu'arā* etc.,<sup>21</sup> from f. 566v to 579r. The same feature occurs in volume 2 on Shah Ṭahmāsp, and follows the example set by Iskandar Beg.<sup>22</sup> Fażlī's annex is of interest not only in giving a long list of the provincial viziers (unfortunately excluding himself), but also in providing a statistical breakdown of the numbers of military and bureaucratic officials at court and in the different provinces.<sup>23</sup>

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(i.e. after 11 folios), and then on f. 432a–b (9 folios) and 439a–b (7 folios), before resuming the regular 8 folio gatherings. This disturbance of the sequence thus occurs exactly at the point where the continuity of the text is interrupted.

<sup>20</sup> Possible signs of disturbance, however, are that five of the remaining eighteen gatherings contain seven folios, not eight. There is a rare authorial annotation on f. 410v.

<sup>21</sup> Fażlī, III, f. 569r refers to his own *Tazkireh-yi shu'arā-yi Qizilbāsh* of talented poets he had either heard or seen for himself from the time of Ismā'il 'to the present', arranged in three sections; first, rulers and members of the Shaykhavand family and descendants of Imam Ḥusayn; second, a summary of the poets of each Qizilbāsh oymaq; third, those *ghulāms* and attendants who were promoted in the Qizilbāsh oymaqs in the time of the deceased (Shah 'Abbās). Cf. A.H. Morton, 'The early years of Shah Isma'il in the *Afzal al-Tawārīkh* and elsewhere', in Melville, *Safavid Persia*, 27–51 (30).

<sup>22</sup> Fażlī, II, ff. 274v–275v; cf. Rieu, 38. See also Iskandar Beg, 125–91 (for Ṭahmāsp) and 1084–93 (for 'Abbās).

<sup>23</sup> Fażlī, III, ff. 572r–579r. See also below.

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Turning to the alterations to this basic text, these can be classified as editorial and authorial, by which I mean to indicate corrections to the language or changes in contents respectively. As noted above, the alterations are in more than one hand (including the author's) and suggest different layers of reworking. Some minor textual and marginal additions are made by the original scribe to correct the language or make good omissions from the text (e.g. ff. 96r, 178r, 206r, 212v, 221v, 292r). Other additions are documents transcribed in the margins, often in the same neat hand.<sup>24</sup>

Among the most striking alterations to the text are the numerous erasures. Sometimes, several words or lines of a passage are crossed through and a preferable version continues after the erasure.<sup>25</sup> In some cases a longer passage or a whole folio is scored through; not infrequently, these passages contain personal information (as in the one containing the author's name, f. 20r, and see also below). One of the most systematic modifications to the text concerns the titulature, honorifics being very frequently deleted. The reason for this is presumably that the person in question had fallen from favour by the time Fażlī came to revise the work;<sup>26</sup> a more thorough investigation of this might provide clues as to the timing of the various phases of composition, or suggest some other reason connected to Fażlī's general outlook. Simin Abrahams noted similar characteristics in the ms. of volume 2, and considers the crossings out to be the work of a later reader correcting 'historical inaccuracies or discrepancies'.<sup>27</sup>

Considerably more work needs to be done on these alterations, which are far more extensive in volume 3, before reaching any such

<sup>24</sup> E.g., ff. 34r–35v, 45r–v, 60v–62r, 64v, 76v–79r, 85v–92r, 93r–94r, 101r–107r, 169v–174v. Occasionally, as on ff. 112v, 225v, 308v, 320r, 328r, 330v, 340r, 383r, Fażlī evidently intended to add the text of a document, but this was not done.

<sup>25</sup> For example f. 74r, where the fate of the Nuqtavīs is first mentioned briefly and then in more detail. The significance of this discussed below.

<sup>26</sup> E.g. among numerous others, ff. 64v (Farhād Khān); 73v (Shaykh Aḥmad Āqā); 74v (Allāhvardī Sultan); 95v (Dhu'l-Fiḡār Khān); 134v ('Alī-Qulī Khān Shāmlū; Maḡsūd Beg Nāzīr); 181v (Qāzī Khān); 207r ('Abbās-'Alī Sultan); 221r (Allāhvardī Khān); 221v (Mīr 'Abd al-Mu'mīnī); 2254r (Āqā Khīzr-i Nihāvandī); 313v (Muḡhibb-'Alī Beg). Even his own superior, Paykar Khān, once (f. 240r).

<sup>27</sup> S. Abrahams, *A Historiographical study and annotated translation of volume 2 of the Afzal al-Tawārīkh by Fażlī Khūzānī al-Isfahānī*, unpub. PhD. thesis, Edinburgh, 1999, 31–2. I am grateful to Dr Abrahams for a copy of her dissertation.



conclusion. A few comments may be the work of a later reader, but the more substantial additions seem to have been made by Faḏlī himself though written by another scribe.<sup>28</sup>

We are on firmer ground with the numerous marginalia added in the author's own hand, which can be identified by comparison with volume 2 of the *Afḏal al-Tawārīkh* (compare Plates 4, 5). This is considered to be the author's autograph copy, on the grounds of his autograph colophon on f. 274r, perhaps written at Golconda in the Deccan five years after the completion of the manuscript of volume 3;<sup>29</sup> his hand is rather distinctive. His annotations are often fairly brief but of intrinsic interest; they include such things as the name of the architect of Allāhvādī Khān's bridge, Mīr Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Jābirī;<sup>30</sup> a cross-reference to volume 1;<sup>31</sup> an explanation that Qāzī 'Imād al-Dīn Ṭūsī was the ancestor (*jadd*) of Ḥātim Beg Urdūbādī;<sup>32</sup> an account of the appearance of an island offshore from Baku, on which a type of sweet seedless melon grew,<sup>33</sup> as well as much more substantial passages.<sup>34</sup> As noted above, they all occur in the first part of the manuscript; naturally, as an insight into the development of the text, they will be crucial to any detailed analysis of Faḏlī's methods and intentions.

If, as thus seems certain, the Christ's ms. represents a finely produced fair copy of volume 3, on which the author then made substantial revisions, this raises questions about the process of composition of the *Afḏal al-Tawārīkh*, and the order in which the different volumes were written.

<sup>28</sup> On f. 177r, a substantial addition on events in Khurasan in 1014/early 1606 starts in one hand and is taken up seamlessly by Faḏlī himself on f. 177v.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Morton, 29; Abrahams, 21, 31. Neither identify the castle (*qal'eh*) as Golconda, near Hyderabad: this reading is rather speculative.

<sup>30</sup> Faḏlī, III, f. 225r. The construction of the bridge, the beauty of which is described, is put in 1016/1607; Faḏlī says it took five years to complete; cf. L. Hunarfar, *Ashnā'ī bā shahr-i tārikhī-yi Isfahān*, (Isfahan: Intishārāt-i Gulhā, 1373/1994), 96, who dates it 1005/1596–7.

<sup>31</sup> Faḏlī, III, f. 221v.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 326v.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 220v; he came across this story in 1030/1621 when in Baku in connection with collecting the *chūpānbeḡī* in some of the districts of Shirvan; cf. Morton, 'Early years', 29.

<sup>34</sup> E.g. ff. 34r, 39r, 59r–60r, 75v–76r, 109v, 177v–179r, 192v, 220v, 336v–337r.

*The Composition of the Afzal al-Tavārikh*

The main outlines of the process of composition of the *Afzal al-Tavārikh* have already been given,<sup>35</sup> but without reference to volume 3, the discovery of which raises as many questions as it resolves. In my earlier notice of the work, I discussed the order of its composition from rather a literal interpretation of Fażlī's statements;<sup>36</sup> as noted by A.H. Morton, the chronicle contains passages written at different periods, and it is clear from the autograph volume 2 of 1049/1639 that Fażlī was still revising the text over twenty years after the composition was conceived. Indeed, considering the prolonged effort of rewriting, it is rather remarkable that he was still so far from producing a final, polished and consistent version of his history.

There is no reason to disbelieve Fażlī's statement in volume 1, the only known manuscript of which is unfortunately undated, that he began to compose his history in the winter of 1025–6/1616–17, while at camp in Daneqī (near Ganja), beginning with the reign of 'Abbās. The first draft was written rather quickly, but having won the approval of those he showed it to, he determined to write a detailed history of the dynasty in three volumes.<sup>37</sup>

It is obvious that what he wrote then, 'in a few days' (*dar andak rūzī*), only covered 'Abbās's reign to that date, which also happens to be the point at which Iskandar Beg brought volume 1 of the *'Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī* to an end and, as noted above, the point at which a change of handwriting can be discerned in the Christ's manuscript; this change is in fact dated AH 1026 (see Plate 2).<sup>38</sup> It is reasonable to assume (i) that Fażlī's speed of composition might be attributed partly to the fact that he had access to Iskandar Beg's text (see also below)<sup>39</sup> and (ii) that the first part of the manuscript is, if not this original composition, at least an expanded version of it. The nature of some of the corrections to language and contents, noted above, suggests that the copyist was working from a heavily revised draft

<sup>35</sup> Morton, 'Early years', 29–30; Abrahams, 25–9.

<sup>36</sup> See 'A lost source', 264–5.

<sup>37</sup> Fażlī, I, f. 2r; cf. Morton, 'Early years', 29, Abrahams, 25–6.

<sup>38</sup> The start of the animal year, Yilan-il (March 1617), has been scored through; the conclusion must be that the work was taken up at the start of 1026/January 1617.

<sup>39</sup> Fażlī, I, f. 2v, refers to Iskandar Beg's *Tārikh-i khuld-ārā* as one of his sources, being a history of 'Abbās to AH 1026: perhaps the original title of part 1 of the *'Ālam-ārā*.

of the original text and that some of Fażlī's previous alterations were careless or unclear, necessitating further editing. In the annals for 1016/1607 and 1021/1612, Shah Şafī is referred to as the reigning monarch,<sup>40</sup> and there are grounds for thinking the text was being compiled as late as AH 1042, while Iskandar Beg was still alive (see below); anyway, it was certainly written down in India, as we have seen. Fażlī's annotations, and the other marginalia that occur so profusely in the first part of the manuscript, reveal his continuing revision of the work. It is another assumption that this took place after 1045/1635, the date the ms. was finished, though it is possible that this date only refers to the second part.

The status of this second part of the text, from c. 1026/1617, is less certain. Naturally, it cannot have been completed before the death of 'Abbās, in 1038/1629, but do we have a fair copy of a work that was compiled over a number of years, or was it only started and written after that date? Perhaps the dramatic hiatus in the text at the start of Takhaquy-il/Spring 1621 indicates the composition was done in at least two separate periods, or is this just a scribal mishap?<sup>41</sup> Behind this lies the question, was it brought from Iran and copied in India, or was it actually completed in India shortly before 1045/1635? Does the lack of marginal annotation indicate that Fażlī regarded it as finished, or did he never get round to revising this part of the manuscript? Why were the headings not inserted? The relevant wording was presumably available in the *fihrist* at the beginning of the manuscript (see also below).

Such questions arise because we know from volume 2 that Fażlī was still working on his chronicle in 1049/1639, four years after the completion of the copy of volume 3. As already noted, volume 2 is the autograph and similarly a working copy, not intended for presentation.<sup>42</sup> Fażlī's revisions do nothing to unify the text, for at the outset of volume 2 it is implied that the reigns of Ismā'īl II and

<sup>40</sup> Fażlī, III, ff. 220r, 313v. The latter passage has been scored through. It comes in an interesting account of 'Abbās's foundation of the Masjed-i Shah in Isfahan that year, which Fażlī says remained unfinished on his death. Most sources give the year as AH 1020, cf. Stephen P. Blake, *Half the world. The social architecture of Safavid Isfahan, 1590–1722*, (Costa Mesa: Mazda, 1999), 140–7.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. above, n. 19. It is clear, from the erasures on f. 420r (omitted when the text resumes), that the text has been rewritten.

<sup>42</sup> Abrahams, 31. As noted above, however, the manuscript of vol. 3 is altogether a more stylish production than that of vol. 2; perhaps by 1639 Fażlī's affairs were rather straightened.

Muḥammad Khudābandeh will be written next, and he states that all these earlier sections are merely a prelude to one on ‘Abbās, which is still to be composed. This passage is not in Faḏlī’s handwriting and has presumably survived from an earlier draft.<sup>43</sup> Elsewhere in volume 2, the year of composition is given as 1026/1617.<sup>44</sup> This, as we have seen above, is when work started in earnest on the full chronicle of the Safavid dynasty. We should therefore not interpret any such references to a future volume on Shah ‘Abbās to mean the initial draft to the end of 1025/1616, which was the first part of the work to be completed, but the fuller version written later. Clearly, however, the volume on ‘Abbās *had* been ‘finished’ by the time Faḏlī rewrote the manuscript of volume 2, as had his account of the events leading up to the reign of ‘Abbās.<sup>45</sup>

Data in volume 1 tell a different, but similarly inconsistent story, the introduction indicating that the whole work to the end of ‘Abbās’s reign was complete, the end referring to ‘Abbās as still alive and anticipating the final volume dedicated to him.<sup>46</sup> This formula does not perhaps preclude the work being largely written and merely provides the reader a lead into the next volumes. Nevertheless, the introductory passage to volume 1 is the only one to specify that Ṣafī was the reigning monarch, and it is clear that it was added later: the first 10 folios of volume 1 are in an entirely different hand from what follows and f. 10r–v has only 19 lines of spaciouly written text

<sup>43</sup> Faḏlī, II, f. 2r; cf. Rieu, 37 and tr. Abrahams, 111. Faḏlī’s handwriting in vol. 2 starts on f. 3r and continues to the end of the ms.

<sup>44</sup> Faḏlī, II, f. 212v; Abrahams, 29. Her earlier suggestion that Faḏlī was already at work in 1023/1614 seems improbable, and the 80 years from AH 943 should be taken as a rounded figure.

<sup>45</sup> Faḏlī, III, f. 2v, confusingly refers to vol. 1 (*jild-i avval*) for this. Perhaps the history of ‘Abbās was conceived in two parts, the first covering events from his birth.

<sup>46</sup> Faḏlī, I, ff. 3v (indicating that he now hopes to give an account of the reign of Shah Ṣafī), 276v. There are numerous other references in vol. 1 to ‘Abbās being alive and to material that will follow, including e.g. a reference to the submission of the Georgians (*ba-nawā‘ī kih dar jild-i siyūm-i Afzal al-Tawārikh nivishteḥ khvāhad gardīd*), f. 86r. Whether this and other such references literally mean ‘will be written’ or merely ‘will be found’, taken at face value they suggest that after the first draft of the reign of ‘Abbās, Faḏlī composed his work more or less in chronological order. Perversely, the section on the Georgians comes in a passage of text that has been rewritten and inserted between ff. 85v and 88r. The implication is presently obscure to me, but it is interesting that the previous 11 sections of ‘local rulers in Iran’ follow exactly those in Khākī Shīrāzī’s *Muntakhab al-Tawārikh*, one of Faḏlī’s acknowledged sources (see below, n. 49), to which the section on Georgia is Faḏlī’s own original addition; cf. Rieu, *Catalogue*, III, 887, with ref. to BL. ms. Or. 1649, f. 302 et seqq.

in order to join up with the beginning of f. 11r at the correct place.<sup>47</sup> It is evident from the fact that this ms. too is of Indian origin that what has come down to us is again at least partly a product of the reign of Shah Ṣafī. It seems to represent a finished version of the text, though it can hardly be regarded as a fair copy, so much as a composite one.<sup>48</sup> On this basis, and the fact that there are almost no marginal or textual alterations, it is possible that the manuscript postdates the other two.

In conclusion, it is clear that the surviving text of the *Afzal al-Tawārīkh* was composed over a lengthy period and still being substantially rewritten and revised in the reign of Shah Ṣafī. This revision took place in India, the manuscripts written there not simply being copies of finished texts brought from Iran.<sup>49</sup> In particular, Fażlī continued to work on the chronicle some time after the Christ's manuscript on the reign of Shah 'Abbās was produced in 1045/1635. However, his history, with the possible exception of volume 1, is left incomplete, and the dates of the mss of volume 2 and 3 do not indicate the order in which they were composed. The volume on 'Abbās appears to fall into two parts, the first a new recension of the earliest version of the text, down to the end of 1025/1616, the second probably written after the volumes on Ismā'īl and Ṭahmāsp, which were largely finished while 'Abbās was still alive. Fażlī was perhaps revising volume 3 soon after completing his copy of volume 2. In all three volumes, the introductory pages are not an entity with rest of the text, but are grafted into it more or less uncomfortably.

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<sup>47</sup> Another indication of some disturbance to the original text is that there are gathering marks at ff. 5a–b and 15a–b, instead of ff. 7a–b and 15a–b as one might expect.

<sup>48</sup> At least five different hands can be identified, each occurring in more than one section of the text. Disturbances in the regular 8-fold sheet gatherings, often coinciding with changes in the numbers of lines per page, are ample testimony to the patchwork nature of the final product. There is not room to substantiate this observation here, and its value for an analysis of the composition of the text is reduced by the fact that we have no way of knowing what was altered in the process of revision. In several places there are indications that it is copied from an existing text, such as the words *balagha* or *balagha al-muqābala* in the margins (ff. 12v, 96v, 271v, etc.), or the titles to be written in red ink later (esp. ff. 83r–85v, 90r etc.). I am grateful to Francis Richard for drawing this to my attention.

<sup>49</sup> This is also clear, of course, from the Indian histories he cites as sources, such as Khākī Shīrāzī's *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh* and the work of Sulṭān Muḥammad Fil-i Mashhad, written in Golconda for the Quṭbshāh Muḥammad Qulī (d. 1020/1612); Fażlī, I, ff. 2v–3r, cf. Meredith-Owens, 26; Abrahams, 35–6, 39 (the former is surely more likely to have been encountered in India than in Iran).

The discovery of other mss in India would ideally cast more light on the question of what stage in the composition of the *Afzal al-Tavārīkh* is represented by the text as we currently know it.<sup>50</sup> Unfortunately, at present no further information is available to explain either the reason or the exact timing of Faḏlī's departure for India; his son, Najm al-Dīn Aḥmad, merely mentions briefly his own tribulations that finally brought him to the Deccan, a destination that is at least consistent with Faḏlī's presence there in 1049/1639.<sup>51</sup> For now, it is sufficient to note the rare opportunity provided by these manuscripts of a chronicle frozen at a particular, late moment in its composition, to investigate the working methods of its author. The intrinsically interesting physical state of the ms. is matched by the considerable importance of its contents.

### *The History of Shah 'Abbās*

#### *Organisation and structure*

After the introduction describing 'Abbās's accession to the throne and execution of the rebellious amirs, the author introduces his index (*fihrist*), which is found on ff. 7r–20r: this will set out the details of the Shah's conquests and wars, and the events of his reign, from 7 Sha'ban 995 [13 July 1587], two months (*sic*) from the beginning of Tanguz-il,<sup>52</sup> when he ascended the throne, up till his death on 24 Jumada I, 1038 [19 January 1629], two months into Luy-il (*sic*),<sup>53</sup> arranged year by year. He continues:

Anyone who wishes to know about any deeds, conquests [or] wars, [or] about those who died, changes and transfers [of officials] or other events, having checked in the above-mentioned (?) index, can turn to

<sup>50</sup> A copy of at least part of the *Afzal al-Tavārīkh* has been recorded in a private collection near Fayzabad, see Muḥammad Muḥsin, Āqā Buzurg Tihrānī, *al-Dharī'a ilā taṣānīf al-shī'a*, II (Najaf: Maṭba'a al-Gharī, 1355/1936), 259; cf. Abrahams, 25.

<sup>51</sup> See Najm al-Dīn, *Tirāz al-akhbār*, British (ex-India Office) Library ms. Ethé 122, f. 2r. The work was started in 1052/1642 according to the chronogram on f. 2v; cf. Storey, I/i, 126. I am grateful to A.H. Morton for drawing this reference to my attention. The autograph (in Lahore) may provide interesting possibilities of identifying the son's hand at work on Faḏlī's mss. See also M. Haneda, 'Le famille Ḥūzānī d'Isfahan (15<sup>e</sup>–17<sup>e</sup> siècles)', *Studia Iranica*, 18/i (1989), 91; Abrahams, 22–5.

<sup>52</sup> Tanguz-il began on 20 March 1587.

<sup>53</sup> He presumably means two months before the end of Luy-il, which ended in March 1629.

it immediately without the labour of looking right through the book. If anyone has no time to read the full particulars, he may become informed of some of the details by studying the summary in the index and finding what he wants.

This is an innovation of considerable originality; though already common in western historiography by this time,<sup>54</sup> I am not aware of any earlier (or for that matter, later) Persian chronicle with such a detailed summary of its contents. The index is, on the whole, an accurate guide to the work, with an emphasis on administrative appointments, military actions, building works, embassies and so on. Most of the short headings are found in extended form, in the same order, in the body of the annals themselves (though some are amalgamated into one heading, and from about f. 412r onwards, as noted above, they are often missing). The first two volumes of the *Afżal al-Tawārīkh* have the same arrangement, a summary of the events of the reign year by year preceding the detailed narrative.<sup>55</sup> In volume 2, the method is taken, as it were, for granted, but Fażlī also explains its purpose in volume 1, in very similar terms,<sup>56</sup> and it is possible the idea was first carried through there.

It is worth noting that as it stands, the index in volume 3 is an insertion into the text, as shown by the clumsy transition from f. 6v to 7r and the crossing out on f. 20r (ll. 1–5) of text duplicated on f. 7r (ll. 13–18).<sup>57</sup> On f. 7r this passage introduces the index, but on f. 20r it seems to have been followed by the first full annal for Tanguz-il (see Plate 1). I still have to think of a satisfactory explanation for this. As for the insertion of a new index, the obvious reason is that the original one only reflected the contents of an earlier draft of the chronicle and the new one took account of the completed work, though the truth is unlikely to be so simple.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>54</sup> E.g. B. Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique dans l'Occident médiévale*, (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1980), 227–9.

<sup>55</sup> Abrahams, 125–39, translates the entire index of vol. 2, see Fażlī, II, ff. 9v–14v; cf. Fażlī, I, ff. 88v–93r.

<sup>56</sup> Fażlī, I, f. 3v (briefly), f. 88v (at more length). See also Meredith-Owens, 25.

<sup>57</sup> The index, with 21 lines per page, is inserted into text with 20 lines on either side (f. 6v, 20v), see above. Furthermore, the gathering marks at the beginning of the ms. confirm its irregularity, the first 3 (new) folios forming one section, then two of 9 folios (to 12 a–b, 21 a–b) instead of the more usual 8. At the same time, the misleading reference to an 'above-mentioned' index shows that this is not part of the same recension as the passage that precedes it, in which no index is mentioned.

<sup>58</sup> A close comparison of the index with the actual headings in the text, particularly where the headings have been expanded in Fażlī's hand or where gaps have

*Chronology*

Throughout the chronicle, the material is organised in annals seemingly based on the 12-year Turkish animal cycle. In volume 3, Fażlī is clearly following Iskandar Beg, as he has the same sequence of years, starting with regnal year 1 = Tanguz-il = AH 996 (*sic*, for 995/1587).<sup>59</sup> On the other hand, the same element of inaccuracy does not arise because Fażlī does not give hijri dates for the start of the year (or indeed for many other things). He does occasionally indicate dates such as two months or six months into the animal year (e.g. ff. 70v, 521r, 539v), but as we have already seen, these are invariably imprecise. There are, however, other consequences of the false assumption of a one-to-one correspondence between the animal and the lunar year. Notably, events dated by the hijri calendar do not necessarily fall in the animal year assigned to them; also, periodically an extra animal year is introduced erroneously, since every 34 years one hijri year is contained entirely within a solar year.<sup>60</sup> Perhaps largely for this reason, Fażlī often deals with events in the annual preceding or following the year in which it is treated by Iskandar Beg.

In volumes 1 and 2, where Fażlī does not have Iskandar Beg to rely on (though he is hardly reliable), his use of the animal year is very inaccurate. It is clear that he simply calculated backwards from Tanguz = 996 in giving animal equivalents for hijri years in the reigns of Ismā‘īl and Ṭahmāsp: he makes 984 (1576–7) equivalent to Tanguz for the last year of Ṭahmāsp and works back from there to make Ismā‘īl’s first year, 906 (1500–1), equivalent to Yilan (which actually began in Spring 1497): four years adrift. This in turn suggests that he was not familiar with the more accurate works of previous authors such as ‘Abdī Beg Shīrāzī and Qāzī Aḥmad Qummī.<sup>61</sup>

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been left in the later sections of the ms., would probably provide some clues as to how the work evolved. Some text headings are not, for instance, found in the index, and the index also contains some information not found in the text. This point cannot be elaborated here.

<sup>59</sup> See R.D. McChesney, ‘A note on Iskandar Beg’s chronology’, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 39/1 (1980), 53–63 (61). In vol. 2, Fażlī (f. 10r) equates the start of year 1 of Ṭahmāsp’s reign with the first Naurūz (i.e. 1525). This definition of the accession year (*julūs*) was perhaps the common practice, rather than the year in which the reign actually began. On this model, however, year 1 of ‘Abbās should have Sichqan-il (began March 1588).

<sup>60</sup> E.g. for ‘Abbās’s reign, the year AH 1019, cf. McChesney, 57. The same phenomenon occurred twice in the course of Ṭahmāsp’s long reign and once in Ismā‘īl’s, there being no Naurūz in AH 917, 951 or 985. For the consequences of this, see below.

<sup>61</sup> Abrahams, 29–30, merely notes that Fażlī disagrees with Qummī; see Qummī,



Fazlī's use of the animal calendar should thus be ignored for chronological purposes in volumes 1 and 2, which in practice are probably modelled on Ḥasan Rūmlū's hijri-based annals.<sup>62</sup>

Fazlī thus follows a format of seasonal annals in volume 3 of the *Afzal al-Tavārīkh*, each year concluding with details of 'Abbās's winter quarters. However, within each annal there is very little chronological precision and the correct sequence of events is often not clear. On the whole, his history of 'Abbās is moulded into a continuous narrative rather than treated as a series of discrete events.<sup>63</sup>

*The Value of Volume III for the Reign of Shah 'Abbās*

From Fazlī's own index of contents, the main impression we receive is that the work follows Iskandar Beg closely, as might be expected from its similar chronological structure. Most of the headings describe events that are also covered by Iskandar Beg. It is not until we turn to the body of the work itself that the full extent of its value becomes apparent. I have already presented evidence of this in my paper on Shah 'Abbās's pilgrimage on foot to Mashhad, Fazlī's version containing much information not found elsewhere.<sup>64</sup> In addition, an important aspect of his work is the inclusion of various official documents, either transcribed or summarised.<sup>65</sup> Among these is the *farmān* issued by Shah 'Abbās to establish the royal monopoly of the silk trade in 1028/1619; my provisional translation of this has been reproduced in the recent book by Rudi Matthee.<sup>66</sup> So far as I know, this is not reported in any other Persian chronicle of the period.

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*Khulāṣat al-Tavārīkh*, ed. I. Isrāqī (Tihiran: Dānishgāh-i Tihirān, 1359–63/1980–4), esp. 591, 644, 667 for the dates of Naurūz from 1576 to 1578; the correct years are also found in 'Abdī Beg Shīrāzī, *Takmilat al-akhbār*, ed. 'A. Navā'ī (Tihiran: Nashr-i Nau, 1369/1990), who realises, for example, that there was no Naurūz in 917, correctly including both 917 and 918 in Pichi-il (began March 1512), 50–1.

<sup>62</sup> Fazlī, I, f. 88r, himself says he uses hijri annals in vol. 1. He also says he used Ḥasan-i Rūmlū's chronicle, I, f. 2v; cf. Morton, 'Early years' and Abrahams, 76ff.

<sup>63</sup> See the comments of R.S. Humphreys, *Islamic history. A framework for inquiry* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1991), 130, on these aspects of traditional Persian historiography.

<sup>64</sup> Melville, 'Pilgrimage to Mashhad', 211–14.

<sup>65</sup> See Rieu, 38; Abrahams, 41–2, gives a list of those given in vol. 2. See also above, n. 24.

<sup>66</sup> Fazlī, ff. 409v–410r; cf. Rudolph P. Matthee, *The politics of trade in Safavid Iran. Silk for silver 1600–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 102, citing the original pagination of the ms.

Indeed, the work is so full of such important new material that I can do no better, in the space of this brief review, than to touch on a few episodes that have recently attracted scholarly interest, and which highlight some of the characteristic strengths (and weaknesses) of Fażlī's history. These allow some idea of the contribution he makes to the history of 'Abbās's reign.

*Shah 'Abbās's intervention in southern Iran.* As discussed elsewhere,<sup>67</sup> early in his reign 'Abbās undertook a long expedition to establish his authority in southern Iran, in the years 998–9/1589–91. Fażlī gives no dates at all for the Shah's itinerary, but describes the journey south with a wealth of detail about local affairs and local personalities, not mentioned elsewhere: Ḥusayn Beg 'Abdallū was made governor of Qum, Ganj-'Alī Beg was given the territory (*ulkā*) of Sāveh and Budāq Khān was made governor of Hamadan. Having transferred Kashan to the *khāṣṣeh* (royal demesnes), he made Khvājeh Malik Ḥusayn Mālmīrī vizier of Kashan and then proceeded towards Isfahan. He bestowed the governorship of Naṭanz on Maḥmūd Beg, son of Mīrzā Jān Beg [son of] Najm-i Sānī. Mīrzā Hidāyat, Maḥmūd Beg's elder brother, was appointed *Mīr-shikār*. Yūlī Beg, with the agreement of the great sayyids and notables of Isfahan, entered royal service and found favour. Mīrzā Aḥmad Nāzīr-i Iṣfahānī was dismissed and fined and replaced as chief *nāzīr* by Maqṣūd Beg Qarācha-Dāghī, son of Miḥrāb Beg Taḥvīldār Shuturkhān of the *khāṣṣeh*. Thereupon, the Shah entered Isfahan and stayed in the *'imārat-i mahdī Naqsh-i Jahān*, 'which was one of the innovations of Shah Ismā'īl', and drew up plans for buildings and gardens.<sup>68</sup>

By comparison, Munajjim Yazdī gives none of these details of the Shah's activities en route, nor does Iskandar Beg, beyond the appointment of Yūlī Beg.<sup>69</sup> Of the earlier sources, Naṭanzī refers to various appointments in Qum but quickly has the Shah in Isfahan and

<sup>67</sup> Ch. Melville, 'From Qars to Qandahar: the itineraries of Shah 'Abbās I (995–1038/1587–1629)', in J. Calmard, ed. *Études safavides* (Tihiran: IFRI, 1993 [1995]), 202–7; see also Sholeh A. Quinn, *Historical writing during the reign of Shah 'Abbas: ideology, imitation and legitimacy in Safavid chronicles* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000), ch. 5.

<sup>68</sup> Fażlī, III, f. 39r. It is interesting that the index (f. 8r) does not specifically refer to the Shah's journey, only to the appointment of some of the officials mentioned.

<sup>69</sup> Yazdī, *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsī*, ed. S. Vahīdīniyā (Tihiran: Intishārāt-i Vahīd, 1366/1987), 87; Iskandar Beg, 426/tr. R.M. Savory, *History of Shah 'Abbās the Great* (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1978), 602.

also concentrates on the story of Yūlī Beg.<sup>70</sup> Qummī merely confirms that when 'Abbās reached Isfahan, he stayed in the Naqsh-i Jahān, which was the *dawlatkhāneh* and a mirror of paradise.<sup>71</sup> This last piece of information, combined with Fażlī's, does not appear to assist Stephen Blake's recent contention that 'Abbās's construction works were restricted to the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat* in the old city centre, although there is still Junābādī's evidence to accommodate.<sup>72</sup> Elsewhere, Fażlī also provides important new information about 'Abbās's building programme in Isfahan, for example in connection with the construction of the mosque of Shaykh Luṭf-Allāh opposite the *Ālī Qāpū*, which he dates to AH 1002, when the Shah brought Luṭf-Allāh with him from Qazvin. In a marginal note in his own hand, Fażlī adds that the Shaykh was put in charge of the completion of chambers and *shabistāns* for ascetics and other worshippers and specified the allowances and stipends necessary for their upkeep, to be drawn on the revenues of the crown estates.<sup>73</sup> Fażlī's account is also unique in providing details of the appointments gained by members of the Khūzānī family.<sup>74</sup>

Fażlī describes the return journey from Isfahan the following year in similar detail:<sup>75</sup> 'Abbās stayed several days in Naṭanz, and gave orders for the construction of a garden at Tājābād;<sup>76</sup> then he entered Kashan. During the few days that the Shah stayed there, Kūr Ḥasan Ustājlı was executed at the hands of Ḥasan Beg Khāşşlar Ustājlı. The vizier, Khvājeh Ḥusayn Mālmīrī did various services. It was

<sup>70</sup> Naṭanzī, *Nuqāvat al-āthār*, ed. I. Ishraqī (Tihran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1350/1971), 332.

<sup>71</sup> Qummī, 902–3. Otherwise, he only mentions the great cold.

<sup>72</sup> Blake, 16–20, does not discuss Qummī's account. Naṭanzī, 376, also refers to 'Abbās's residence in the *bāgh-i Naqsh-i Jahān*, but Blake is probably right (p. 18) to distinguish this from the building works then described by Naṭanzī in the old centre; Fażlī's imprecision may be taken to echo this and thus does not invalidate Blake's argument.

<sup>73</sup> Fażlī, III, f. 74v; on its completion, the mosque was named after the Shaykh, who performed the Friday prayers there. He adds that 'Abbās also laid out the plans for the *Chahār Bāgh* and Guldasta palace, and inspected the half-completed work on the *Qayşariyyeh* and *Chahār Bāzār*, the plans of which had been drawn up previously; cf. Blake, 18–19 (*Qayşariyyeh* and *Chahār Sūq*), 20 (the events of 1002/1593), 147–9 (Shaykh Luṭf-Allāh). Unfortunately, like the other writers, Fażlī does not specify the *Hārūn Vilāyat* area for some of these works, so that Blake's thesis continues to rely solely on Junābādī.

<sup>74</sup> See also Haneda, 'La famille Hūzānī', 83; Abrahams, 14–15 and below.

<sup>75</sup> Fażlī, III, f. 48r–v; after dealing with affairs in the south. See also Quinn, *Historical Writing*, 95–124. Again, there is little hint of this in the index, f. 8r.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Yazdī, 330.

decided that Mīrzā Ḥātīm Beg Urdūbādī the new *mustawfi al-mamālik* would remain there with the *daftarkhāneh* to settle the revenue assessment of Kashan, and then follow on. In Qum, the governor Ḥusayn Khān came out to greet ‘Abbās. The Shah brought Mīrzā Malikī son of Khvājeh Afzal Iṣfahānī into his service as vizier of Qum. His father had been vizier of ‘Alī-Qulī Khān in Herat and in those days the son was a fellow student of ‘Abbās and a talented young man.<sup>77</sup> The Shah performed the rites of pilgrimage at the immaculate shrine and then set off for Sāveh. Ganj-‘Alī Sultan, the governor, came and demonstrated his sincerity, while Dādā Dhu’l-Fiqār Igrīmī attracted the Shah’s favour and was allocated Mihrābād-i Sāveh as his *tuyūl*.<sup>78</sup> ‘Abbās then returned to Qazvin and spent the winter there, and drew up plans for a *khayābān* and buildings; Farhād Khān too founded buildings round the *Bāgh-i Sa‘adatābād* and for several days they went to the site and laboured over the plans.

Again, comparison with other sources shows Fażlī’s attention to minor details, but a complete absence of dates. Qummī merely says that because of the great cold, the Shah hardly stopped on the journey; both he, Naṭanzī and Iskandar Beg refer to the execution of Kūr Ḥasan in Kashan.<sup>79</sup> Yazdī mentions some other events in Naṭanz.<sup>80</sup>

Many of the appointments mentioned by Fażlī in the different towns are not referred to at all by the other chroniclers of the time; he thus allows us to penetrate into another level of the local and provincial administration. His information about the *daftarkhāneh* remaining in Kashan provides useful additional evidence of the peripatetic nature of ‘Abbās’s administration, while the reference to ‘Abbās’s devotions in Qum contradicts assertions I have previously made on this subject.<sup>81</sup> Fażlī’s information about building works, at Tājābād, Isfahan and in Qazvin (as elsewhere) also supplements our existing knowledge.<sup>82</sup> Against this useful factual detail, however, Fażlī

<sup>77</sup> For Khvājeh Afzal, who died in Dhu’l-Hijja 991/December 1583, see Qummī, 755–6. For his relations with the young ‘Abbās in Herat, see Iskandar Beg, 285, 303, 305/tr. Savory, 416, 436, 438.

<sup>78</sup> See also below.

<sup>79</sup> Qummī, 922, 1081; Naṭanzī, 377; Iskandar Beg, 438/Savory, 612, calls his executioner Hasan Beg the *qirchī-yi chatr*.

<sup>80</sup> Yazdī, 107.

<sup>81</sup> Melville, ‘From Qars to Qandahar’, 222–3; ‘Pilgrimage to Mashhad’, 217.

<sup>82</sup> For Qazvin, see M. Szuppe, ‘Palais et jardins: le complexe royal des premiers safavides à Qazvin, milieu XVI<sup>e</sup>–début XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles’, *Res Orientales*, 8 (1996), 143–77. She does not refer to ‘Abbās’s work in the capital at the beginning of his reign, before the decision to transfer to Isfahan. Later, Fażlī also has a great deal of information about the development of Ashraf and Farahabad.

offers little or no analysis of, or explanation for 'Abbās's actions, of the type provided by Iskandar Beg, or even by Naṭanzī.

*Suppression of the Nuḡṭavīs*

Let us turn to Faḡlī's treatment of another important episode in the consolidation of 'Abbās's political authority, namely the suppression of the Nuḡṭavīs in 1002/1593–4.<sup>83</sup> On the whole, our author's treatment is not so different in its general outline from other versions, but he again provides more detail about the people involved. In particular, a certain 'Ināyat Kal-i Iṣfahānī<sup>84</sup> is very prominent in his account, and indeed is the chief agent of 'Abbās's move against the Nuḡṭavīs. According to Faḡlī,<sup>85</sup> 'Abbās himself initially specified a place for their *takiyyeh* in Qazvin, and gave orders for their daily needs to be met; no heresy could be found in them. While 'Abbās was away in Luristan, 'Ināyat Kal heard through Yūsufī Tarkishdūz about their boasts of eliminating 'those of defective faith' and replacing the Shah's attendants with their own numbers, which were alleged to amount to 40,000 Turks and Tajiks. A list of their adherents was eventually extracted from Yūsufī. 'Ināyat Kal only showed this piecemeal to the Shah, to protect many great ones and sons of great ones who featured on the list and against whom there was no particular evidence. He recommended to 'Abbās that, Yūsufī having been fined by the attendants of the *jārchī-bāshī* (chief herald), Malik-'Alī Beg, orders should be given for Darvīsh Khusraw to be imprisoned by the *dārūgheh* of Qazvin, Shaykh Aḡmad Āqā.<sup>86</sup> Then, on the advice

<sup>83</sup> See in particular, K. Babayan, 'The Safavid synthesis: from Qizilbash Islam to Imamite Shi'ism', *Iranian Studies*, 27 (1994), esp. 147–56, and A. Amanat, 'The Nuḡṭawi movement of Maḡmūd Pisīkhānī and his Persian cycle of mystical-materialism', in F. Daftary, ed., *Mediaeval Isma'ili history and thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), esp. 290–2.

<sup>84</sup> 'Ināyat Kal is mentioned in the aftermath of the Nuḡṭavī crisis by Yazdī, 123, but not in connection with the affair: the residue of the estate of Sulṭān Muḡammad Khudābandeh's mother went to him. 'Ināyat Kal died in Mashhad, 23 Ramadan 1017/31 December 1608 N.S., Yazdī, 356. Cf. Naṭanzī, 507ff.: he says Maulānā 'Ināyat was arrested but released after the 'reign' of Yūsufī, 523.

<sup>85</sup> Faḡlī, III, ff. 72v–74r; cf. index, f. 9r.

<sup>86</sup> Shot by mistake on 3 Ramadan 998/6 July 1590 N.S., he went with Yazdī the following year to bring back Khān Aḡmad's daughter for 'Abbās. In 1001/1593, he was delegated by the Shah to recover some camels stolen by highwaymen, from Ottoman territory. He was killed at the end of Rabi' I, 1014/mid-August 1605; see Yazdī, 92, 108, 120, 284; Iskandar Beg, 686–7/tr. Savory, 876–8; Faḡlī, III, ff. 184v–185r. Naṭanzī, 544–5, refers to him as governor and *dārūgheh* of Qazvin and mentions his role in a revolt of the Gilanis in 1002/1594.

of the astrologers, the Shah abdicated for three days and Yūsufī, at the suggestion of ‘Ināyat Kal, was enthroned as Shah, during which time the Nāzīr, Maqṣūd Beg, furnished him with whatever he required from the royal workshops. The Shah passed the day riding in seclusion with Yārshāṭīr Ḥājjī and Bābā Ulmās,<sup>87</sup> and spent the night at the house of ‘Ināyat Kal rather than the *dawlatkhāneh*. After three days, Shaykh Aḥmad Āqā brought Darvīsh Khusraw for questioning. The *majlis* investigating his heresy consisted of Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir Dāmād, Shaykh Bahā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad, Mawlānā Ḥusayn Yazdī, Mawlānā Ḥājjī Bābā Qazvīnī, Mawlānā Muṣṭafā, Shaykh Luṭf-Allāh and others. ‘Ināyat Kal produced all Darvīsh Khusraw’s books, from which his heresy and previous dissimulation became clear, and he and his followers were condemned. ‘Ināyat Kal ‘hoping for a reward’ tore open their stomachs and had them butchered in a ring of armed *ghulāms*. Among the casualties were Mawlānā Sulaymān Ṭabīb Sāvajī and Mīr Sayyid Aḥmad Kāshī, Turāb Iṣfahānī, Nizām Taghāllī and Kamāl.

Apart from the details not found elsewhere,<sup>88</sup> Faḏlī’s account is important because it plays down the role of ‘Abbās, emphasising instead the initiative of the *‘ulamā* in combating the ‘heretics’ and their active direction of the prosecution of the ringleaders. It is too early to say whether Faḏlī’s perspective on the matter is the result of a bias against ‘Abbās or due to the fact that by the time he came to write this version of the text, he did not need to portray him in the flattering light that more contemporary authors were obliged to adopt. There is, ostensibly, a great difference from Faḏlī’s attitude towards Shah Ṭahmāsp, as remarked by Simin Abrahams, which will need to be considered in the light of his overall portrayal of ‘Abbās.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>87</sup> According to a passage that has been discretely erased, ‘Abbās rode behind Yārshāṭīr Ḥājjī, who had a decanter of wine in his hand, and Bābā Ulmās who held his reins. Iskandar Beg, 475/tr. Savory, 649, merely says the Shah spent the time with two or three grooms.

<sup>88</sup> Iskandar Beg, 476/tr. Savory, 649–50, mentions most of these victims, and also a Darvīsh Biryānī. However, he gives no details of the *‘ulamā* who investigated the case.

<sup>89</sup> Abrahams, 46–9. On the other hand, she exaggerates the Shah’s lack of ‘a central role’ and the extent to which the work is a personal memoir rather than a court history.

*The career of Sārū Taqī*

One major figure in the Safavid hierarchy who has recently attracted some attention is the vizier, Sārū Taqī.<sup>90</sup> Of the Persian sources currently known, only Fażlī gives an account of the castration of Sārū Taqī in its proper place, in his annal for 1025/1616.<sup>91</sup> According to him, the accusation against Sārū Taqī was brought by a boy from Ganja called Mu'min, a furrier who claimed that Sārū Taqī and five others had oppressed and dishonoured him in the citadel of Tiflīs. The Shah was enraged and after the truth was confirmed, handed Sārū Taqī, at this time vizier of Qarābāgh, over to Mu'min for castration, while Ḥājji Ghiyās Kāshī, who had apparently instigated this, had his tongue cut out. Sārū Taqī suffered the complete removal of his manhood without flinching. Mu'min was given 20 *tumāns* from the *jihāt* of Sārū Taqī and the rest was confiscated. Sārū Taqī was then handed over to a *ghulām*, Dhu'l-Fiqr Beg, for safe-keeping. This was evidently before 'Abbās came to Daneqī for the winter. Once there, Sārū Taqī was put in charge of erecting a suitable *dawlatkhāneh* for the Shah; his position seems not to have been affected by his temporary disgrace, and when the Shah left Daneqī the following spring, Sārū Taqī dealt with those who had opposed 'Abbās's presence in the area.<sup>92</sup> After leaving Daneqī, in 1026/1617, Sārū Taqī was made *vazīr-i kull* of Mazandaran, apparently to compensate for his castration.<sup>93</sup> Thereafter, there is abundant evidence of his high rank and influence (e.g. f. 550v).

<sup>90</sup> W. Floor, 'The rise and fall of Mirza Taqī, the eunuch Grand Vizier (1043–55/1633–45). *Makhdum al-Omara va Khadem al-Fogara'*, *Studia Iranica*, 26/ii (1997), 237–66; see also Matthee, *The Politics of Trade*, 129ff., 148ff.

<sup>91</sup> Fażlī, III, f. 359v. There are various deletions in the passage and the text is not always clear. Iskandar Beg Munshī, *Zayl-i Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsi*, ed. S. Khvānsarī (Tihiran: Islāmiyya, 1317/1938), 263, mentions this in his short biography of the vizier (evidently written in fact by Muḥammad Yūsuf Vālih). For other accounts, see Floor, 242. The incident occurred after the Shah had visited the tomb of Niẓāmī of Ganja.

<sup>92</sup> Fażlī, III, ff. 374r, 378v–379r. The author is also quite prominent in these pages, referring to himself as vizier of Barda', and writing of Sārū Taqī's services at Daneqī partly in the present tense.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 380v.

*Autobiographical information*

Apart from the deleted mention of his name (which also occurs at the start of the prosopographical annex on f. 566v), Fazlī's authorship is clear not only from the structural similarity of the three volumes, but also from the autobiographical details that he provides, together with abundant information about the Khūzānī family. Among the most significant is the following passage concerning how he came to write his chronicle:<sup>94</sup>

Sikandar Beg the Munshī of Shah 'Abbās, who is (*sic*) the *ghulam* of the deceased Mīrzā 'Aṭā-Allāh Khūzānī, grandfather of Mīrzā Shāhvalī the former I'timād al-Dawla, and who after the death of Mīrzā 'Aṭā-Allāh joined the roster of the scribes of the *daftarkhāneh* of Shah Ṭahmāsp, acted for several years as an office scribe. In the time and reign of Shah 'Abbās, when Nāṣir Khān Beg the nephew of I'timād al-Dawla,<sup>95</sup> was *munshī al-mamālik*, he [Nāṣir Khān] enrolled him [Iskandar Beg] in the list of the scribes of the *dār al-inshā* of the *Dīvān-i a'lā*. From that time until now, he and Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Beg<sup>96</sup> son of Farah Beg, the nephew of the above-mentioned [Iskandar Beg], whose father was the *davatdār* of Mīrzā 'Aṭā-Allāh in the days when he was vizier of Azarbajjan, have been in service at the [*dār al-*] *Inshā* [. . .]. From that date [*sc.* the pilgrimage on foot, 1010/1601] it was determined that the above-mentioned Sikandar Beg should assemble [details of] the life of the Shah and the events of his conquests and should write a history of them. The above-named, who is adorned with a variety of talents, ability and aptitude, has perused many histories of different countries, and has spent 74 years of his life (*sic*)<sup>97</sup> in

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 136r–v. I am indebted to A.H. Morton for his help in translating this passage.

<sup>95</sup> I.e. Ḥātīm Beg Urdūbādī, for whose family see A.H. Morton, 'An introductory note on a Ṣafawid *munshī*'s manual in the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies', *BSOAS*, 33/ii (1970), 352–8 (357–8). Nāṣir Khān is not specifically named; his place in the family and period in office are not mentioned in the chronicles. Elsewhere, Fazlī, III, f. 251r, mentions that he was the son of Abū Turāb Beg (the passage is crossed through). Morton indicates that 'Abd al-Ḥusayn son of Adhām Beg was *munshī al-mamālik* for many years.

<sup>96</sup> Iskandar Beg himself refers to this nephew, quoting some of his chronograms and there is some information about his service under Sārū Taqī, particularly at Najaf. Iskandar Beg, *Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*, 837, 968, 1013; *Zayl-i Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*, 91, 92, 95; Muḥammad Yūsuf Vālih, in *idem*, 208, 297; cf. my 'Pilgrimage to Mashhad', 212, 225 n. 78. For Sārū Taqī's brother of the same name, see Floor, 244, 249. Fazlī also had a maternal uncle of this name who was *mustawfi* of Fars in 1012/1603, see f. 162r (the reference to himself is deleted).

<sup>97</sup> Since Iskandar Beg was born in either AH 968 or 969, this indicates that Fazlī wrote this passage in about AH 1042, the year before Iskandar Beg died. Cf. R.M. Savory, 'Eskandar Beg Torkaman', in *ELI*, VIII, 602–3. This in turn may suggest he didn't leave Iran till after that date.



acquiring knowledge, set about writing and commemorating the circumstances of the *khāqāns* of Iran.

Since the author had a sincere attachment to the above mentioned [Iskandar Beg] because of his relationship as cousin to the sons of Mīrzā 'Aṭa-Allāh, and because he would sometimes go to attend on them, he read some of his compositions. In short, he acquired some knowledge of what he had seen [and of] the events about which the late Ḥasan Beg Rūmlū had written, concerning the Shahs Ismā'īl and Ṭahmāsp. The deceased Ṣādiqī Beg Naqqāsh Afshār<sup>98</sup> too had drawn up several reports of particular episodes (*fard*); Asad Beg,<sup>99</sup> paternal uncle of the author, also had skill in *inshā* and recording events (*vaqā'ī-nivīs*) and other circumstances, some of which he had heard about. For several years [the author] also was himself in the *urdū* and had witnessed things with his own eyes. He sought help from the souls [of these authorities] and made a start on recording those circumstances, which were the cause of lifting affliction and the means of mentioning the people enthusiastic about such events. He hopes, having found divine assistance, to bring this to completion and succour the spirits of the historians.

Like others containing personal details, this passage has been almost entirely crossed out. Assuming this is not because it is factually incorrect, we learn from it not only that Iskandar Beg was commissioned to write his chronicle in 1010/1601, but that Fażlī became acquainted with it through his relationship with Iskandar Beg's patrons in the Khūzānī family. Iskandar Beg was evidently still alive at the time when Fażlī was revising his own work. We also learn of Fażlī's other sources, apart from his own observations and experiences in the service of the Shah.<sup>100</sup>

There is ample evidence of this involvement in the affairs he reports, supplementing the information provided in the first two volumes of his chronicle.<sup>101</sup> From an account of various promotions

<sup>98</sup> See Qāzī Aḥmad, tr. V. Minorsky, *Calligraphers and painters*, Freer Gallery of Art Occasional Papers, 3/ii (Washington: Smithsonian, 1959), 191: 'at present (*sc.* 1005/1596–7) acting as *kitābdār* (librarian) to Shah 'Abbās'; he was a painter and poet rather than historian. Cf. Iskandar Beg, 175/tr. Savory, 271–2. See also A. Welch, *Artists for the Shah* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 41 ff.

<sup>99</sup> Agent of the vizier of Khurasan, cf. Haneda, 85, citing Fażlī, II, f. 262v. It was misreading Asad Beg as Sikandar Beg that led to my first, erroneous, conclusion that the author of the ms. was Mīrzā Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ.

<sup>100</sup> Fażlī also mentions his sources for vol. I, ff. 2r–3r, cf. Meredith-Owens, 25–6, and II, f. 2r, cf. Rieu, 38, and the discussion in Morton, 'Early years', 30–2, Abrahams, 32–43. Fażlī, III, f. 233r, cites Iskandar Beg, *Ālam-āwā*, directly. Fażlī would surely have known of Iskandar Beg's death had he still been in Iran at that time.

<sup>101</sup> See Haneda, 83–5; Morton, 'Early years', 28–30; Abrahams, 11–22, and my 'Lost source', 264.

made in 1017/1608, we learn first that Paykar Beg (later Khān) was given the governorship of Barda' that year on the death of his uncle, Dādā Dhu'l-Fiqr̄ Igrīmī Dūrt, and that Muḥammad Beg, elder brother of the author, was made his vizier. Faẓlī himself, at that time aged 16, was taken into service as an accountant. Another brother, hitherto unknown, Mīrzā Khalīl, was made clerk of the *daftar-i avārajeh* (office of account books) of Iraq.<sup>102</sup> Evidently Faẓlī followed in Mīrzā Khalīl's footsteps, for when describing a visit to the Sham-i Ghazan near Tabriz in 1019/1610, Faẓlī says he was himself clerk of the *daftar-i avārajeh* of Iraq, while Mīrzā Khalīl was now *avārajeh-nivīs*; both were then in attendance on the Shah (see plate 5).<sup>103</sup> The same year, Mīrzā Khalīl was appointed *mustawfi* of the *qurchūs*, holding the post for ten years; he was later vizier of the royal seal (*muhr-i ashraf*). His death in 1033/late 1623 is reported, together with a chronogram, by the author.<sup>104</sup> Faẓlī's other brother, Muḥammad Beg, was appointed vizier of Nishapur in 1018/1609 and in 1026/1617 was in charge of an investigation of the accounts of the deposed vizier of Kashan, Muḥammad Zamān Beg.<sup>105</sup>

From another branch of the family, Mīrzā Hidāyat Najm-i Sānī is frequently referred to: in 1002/1594 he was involved in the welcome prepared for the Chinggisid (Uzbek) prince, Nūr Muḥammad Khān; in 1016/1608, he received permission to go on pilgrimage to Mecca and Mīr Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Sukhteh Khūzānī was made the financial agent for the crown lands in Isfahan. Mīrzā Hidāyat's son Mīrzā Rizā'ī was made *lashkar-nivīs* and his elder brother Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ became *dārūgheh-yi kull-i qūshkhāneh* (falconry) with a salary of 40 tumans. Maḥmūd Beg, brother of Hidāyat, had his *tuyūl* and salary increased, while another son, Muḥammad Taqī, was offered but declined enrolment in the Shah's entourage, preferring to devote

<sup>102</sup> Faẓlī, III, f. 240r.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 279v. The passage is crossed through. In the margin, he gives an account of Ghazan's *vaqfiyya*, ff. 279v–281r, citing both Rashīd al-Dīn and Vaṣṣāf, but containing additional information which merits further study. Faẓlī also gives the dimensions of the Ghazaniyya, namely 140 cubits high, with a 20-cubit circumference dome; cf. his measurements of Sultaniyya, Faẓlī, I, f. 147r, Morton, 'Early years', 30. For the *avārajeh-nivīs*, see Minorsky, *Tazkirat al-mulūk* (London: Luzac, 1943), 77–8.

<sup>104</sup> Faẓlī, III, ff. 14r (Mustawfi; seemingly not, however, in the text, see f. 287r–v); 417r (deposed); 443r (vizier of the seal); 478v–479r (death in AH 1033, after 'Abbās left for Iraq).

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 250v (where the word *faqīr* has been replaced by *rāqim*), 382v. Muḥammad Beg and Faẓlī were still in Georgia together in AH 1034, f. 507v.

himself to farming his estates. Thus, as Fażlī remarks, the descendants of Najm-i Sānī found favour; they were clearly still part of the upper levels of government.<sup>106</sup>

Faḫrī frequently refers to himself in connection with events in Georgia, where he was brought up, especially in the period 1025–34/1616–25 as vizier to Paykar Khān Igrīmī Dūrt, who for six years was governor of Kakhetian Georgia.<sup>107</sup>

Following the *débaçle* in Georgia and Paykar Khān's fall in 1034/1625, Faḫrī had returned to the *urdū* in hope of royal favour. In 1035/1625 he was made vizier to the new governor of Kirman, Ṭahmāsp-Qulī Khān Turkomān, who died not long afterwards in Kirind, in the course of 'Abbās's second Baghdad campaign. Faḫrī remained in the province under the following governor, Amīr Khān, though he was soon replaced as vizier.<sup>108</sup> Faḫrī's presence in Kirman at this time is confirmed by Mashīzī.<sup>109</sup> It is not at present clear what became of him next. The author refers to himself shortly after the death of 'Abbās, when he is ready to greet the new Shah in Isfahan and apparently in the service of Zaynal Khān (former ambassador to India and hero of the Baghdad campaigns).<sup>110</sup> As yet there is no certainty as to when or why Faḫrī left for India, but he evidently did not depart immediately, because he introduces his list of military and civilian officials with the information that under Shah Ṣafī, while the author was (still) in Isfahan, the numbers of *qūrçhūs* and *ghulāms* were increased by around 20,000.<sup>111</sup> This must have taken some time.

It is possible that Faḫrī's connection with Zaynal Khān was a critical factor in his decision to leave. In his account of Zaynal Khān's return from his mission to India in 1031/1622, Faḫrī records how Zaynal Khān brought with him a *qaṣīdeh* written by Bāqir Khān Najm-i Sānī (then in the service of the Emperor Jahāngīr), seeking

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 225v–226r; on ff. 327v–328r he mentions another member of the family, Ṭālib Khūzānī, who was the Shah's muezzin, and in AH 1023 was sent to Kartīl to proclaim Islam in the burial chamber of the Georgian kings.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 355v–356r, 358v, 373v, 374r, 380v, 414v–416v (the latter passage partly erased), 507v; cf. Abrahams, 16–20.

<sup>108</sup> Faḫrī, III, ff. 521r–v, 539r–540r. His chronology is rather confusing; the date he gives on f. 521r, Muḥarram 1034, must be 1035/October 1625. Cf. Abrahams, 21.

<sup>109</sup> Muḥammad Sa'īd Mashīzī, *Tazkireh-yi Ṣafāviyyeh*, ed. I. Bāstānī-Parīzī (Tihiran: Chāpkhāneh-yi Ḥaydar, 1369/1990), 184, 187.

<sup>110</sup> Faḫrī, III, f. 565r–v.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 572r. I am grateful to A.H. Morton for drawing this to my attention.

reunion with his father, Muṣṭafā Beg. Despite the latter's unwillingness to make the long journey, he was despatched with the Shah's permission to see his son.<sup>112</sup> According to Faḏlī, Zaynal Khān received great kindness from Bāqir Khān and doubtless spoke of his high rank at the Mughal court, which might have tempted the author to seek his fortune there.<sup>113</sup> As is already known, Faḏlī's son Najm al-Dīn Aḥmad, author of the *Tirāz al-akhbār*, married a daughter of Bāqir Khān in India.

### Conclusions

This brief review of the manuscript of the third volume of Faḏlī Beg's *Afzal al-Tavārikh* has I hope been sufficient to stress its interest and importance. As a work in progress it lends itself to a detailed analysis of the evolution of the text and the working methods of the author. This kind of study is seldom undertaken for mediaeval Persian chronicles; any such investigation will have to include the first two volumes of the work, which are interrelated at many points. The discovery of this missing volume allows a proper evaluation of Faḏlī's place in Safavid historiography and provides an important and largely independent check on the other narrative sources for the pivotal reign of Shah 'Abbās.

We have seen that the author, Faḏlī Khūzānī Iṣfahānī, was born in 1001/1593 and started work on his history at the age of 25, by which time he had already been in government service for nine years. His membership of a prominent bureaucratic family and his position at court make him intimately acquainted with Safavid administration. Despite the wealth of valuable information he provides that will undoubtedly serve to modify and enrich our knowledge of many aspects of the reign of Shah 'Abbās, notably affairs in the Caucasus,

<sup>112</sup> Faḏlī, III, f. 443v–444r. Faḏlī says Bāqir Khān left Iran in 1016/1607, rather later than is reported elsewhere; cf. Abrahams, 23–4. A younger son was kept behind as a hostage by the Shah.

<sup>113</sup> See Riazul Islam, *A calendar of documents on Indo-Persian relations (1500–1750)*, vol. 1 (Karachi: Institute of Central and West Asian Studies/Tihran: Iranian Cultural Foundation, 1979), 215, for Bāqir Khān's continuing contacts with Iran and also the Quṭbshāhs in Golconda, citing BL. (ex IO) ms. Ethé 1535 (see Ethé, *Catalogue*, 837). There are two letters to Zaynal Khān, ff. 354r–355v and two more to a subsequent Persian envoy, Muḥammad 'Alī Beg *ilchī*, ff. 356r, 363r. See also earlier, Faḏlī, III, f. 430v.

a preliminary acquaintance with his chronicle suggests that its most original and unique contribution will be to our understanding of provincial administration, the distribution of offices and networks of patronage and influence within the Safavid government system.

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و محاربات و مستوحاشات و تغییر تهذیبات و سایر توجیحات بوده باشد از حضرت بزرگوارترین خود بود  
 لقب جدید و ملا حظ سر پای کتاب نور باطنی آن بقیام نمایند و تجمل از صحت و حالات که  
 سنوات مذکور در ظاهر هر یک در کتابی با جمالی خواندن مفصل بوده باشد از مطالعین  
 بعضی حقایق مطلع شده و طلب را در باب رسیدن بجهان و تعالی توفیق تمام داد و یادگار از این  
 نوشته و ادبی سخن و فصلی از کتابی که در این روح الهی صفا یافتن بصورت روزگار زمانه بس و توفیق  
 سکون و صلح است و بیست و یک سال اول جلوس حضرت خلاف سپاه جلالت آبی شاه عباس الصفوی الهی  
 بعد از آنکه خاطر از جانب سلاطین ایام دولت سرگندرتان جمع شده و انجا جلوس بیزیت آن  
 ولایات ایران متفرق گشته و شخصی بذریعت خویش حکم فرمود از عظام و کلمات آن و اربابان آن  
 و کلیان مانند زنان و فاسد کرمان و توابع ایران که از زوی دریافت پای بوس طلال الهی داشته  
 از اطراف و کفند مالک جمع شده شرف پای بوس دریافتند و در ساعت سه شمع در روشن روح  
 مهمان چنداری و حکایتی که حسب ثقات و بی رونقی تا آن زمان معطل بود نموده و قانون حضرت  
 جنت دکان را دست و پا و عمل و اندیشه تغییر و تبدیل بسیاری در مهمات زمان سکینه شانی نمودند  
 و در آن روزگار خاصه شرفیجوی از نظر آنکه از سلطه مشرفان عثمانی و اوله سیر از محکم  
 و دیوانیان که شته بعضی که شایسته توجیه و الثقات دیده عیار بندگی و اخلاص ایشان از این  
 زود توجیه و الثقات مخصوص ساخته می که شفا اخلاص ایشان که عیار بود بر طرف نمود و در کار  
 سازی مفرغ از اسان و امداد مصطفی علیه قلی خان اوجی بیکر کسی شصت و هشت در آن ماه روز و شرف از اول  
 آنجا که آن روز یک در خدمت عمیر الله خان بر سر دار السلطنه بهرات استماع پیش حضرت  
 ظل الهی خدمت فخره جنت علیه قلی خان و سلاطین بهرات و شهند متوس و اربابان مخلصان بهرجو  
 فرجه آن فرستاد این زمانه ثقات متمایل میا شده آمدن میرزا احمد امین سینه صفاء دوم میران  
 بلا السلطنه و در آن زمانه شرف پابوس علیه شرف و تقبل آوردن علی بن ابی طالب و علی بن ابی طالب  
 قتل حضرت سادات ایران میر ابوالواهب و امداد و امداد حضرت ظل الهی که وقت تقویت حال آنرا رس

در این روزگار خاصه شرفیجوی از نظر آنکه از سلطه مشرفان عثمانی و اوله سیر از محکم  
 و دیوانیان که شته بعضی که شایسته توجیه و الثقات دیده عیار بندگی و اخلاص ایشان از این  
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 بلا السلطنه و در آن زمانه شرف پابوس علیه شرف و تقبل آوردن علی بن ابی طالب و علی بن ابی طالب  
 قتل حضرت سادات ایران میر ابوالواهب و امداد و امداد حضرت ظل الهی که وقت تقویت حال آنرا رس

1. Christ's ms, Dd. 5.6, f. 20r. The page starts with a few lines duplicated from the introduction to the index (f. 7r), but including Fazli's name, see line 5. This is immediately followed by the annal for the first year of 'Abbās's reign. Reproduced by kind permission of the Master and Fellows of Christ's College, Cambridge.

نیکبخت که سلطان احمد بادشاه روم رحلت نموده همان غافل را در او بر کرد سبب این جمیع بخت  
 سلطان مصطفی برادر او را که صوفی و شمس بود و چون او دستش خلاص و اعتقادش با مومن معصوم  
 بود بخت سلطنت روم نشانی نماندند با پشت که در کله آدن ایران بود در آن تاریخ در  
 استیلا بود در اجرت بهیچ سبب از دیار کمر نموده سلطان مصطفی را بعد از نگاه از سلطنت که  
 خود نیز را خبر بجای او نشاندند و خلیفه نموده سلطان عثمان اول در سلطان احمد را بخت فیض نشاند  
 نزار او خلافتش است که جمیع شکر نوب نموده خود عازم تصرف از باستان کرد در حضرت  
 شاه ترکه که از عثمان و حمزه فراده بود بعرض و توخت مشغولی نموده مشغول با هم بودند که از  
 طرف جمیع لشکر شود برابر آورده مانع از استیلا و مع ان نمانند و از هر طرف خود بر این  
 احدی گرفت و در ۲۲ سال بعد از جمیع خاطر که مشغول میشد و عفت کشند  
 بخاطر حضرت اعلی رسید که خاطر حضرت جملایک با شاه از استماع آدن سردار  
 روم و خاطر و قلعه اروان که انا عهد با این ایشان هدای نموده متصرف خواهد بود  
 جمیع خاطر ایشان بر سر حسن مساعد که از اولاد ویر عهد الوانیست و نشانی رسالت  
 خدمت آن کو الکل حالات بود با نام حجت نگاه نروان برادر خاطر که از بر تو  
 آفرینش جهان ایضم حجت و دوستی باین سبب که از خاین عالم بود فرستاد  
 که بر تو بر حالات و نظریه مقامات خاطر ایشان از استیلا ساخته خبر صحبت وجود  
 شریف حضرت اعلی را رساند و باین مضمون کتابت در قلم آورد و دست زایه را  
 با رعایت ایقن روانه کرد و ستان ساختند نقل کتابت حضرت  
 مصحوب بدست مساعد در حضرت جملایک که در این کتابت کرد  
 خود عا که بر ام ای خلعت و وفا باشد و مله نشانی که انجمن برای صدق و صفی کرد  
 نشانی در محفل قدس مجلس انس آن فروغ دو دمان که در کایه و جوان خانه  
 صاحب قایله نیکر و اندک هر چند هم مان معنوی که سر آورده خاطر را بنور حضور و دستمان

2. Fazlī, III, f. 375r, showing a change of hand, coinciding with a note of the date, AH 1026. The heading towards the foot of the page, announcing the transcription of a document, is in the author's hand.

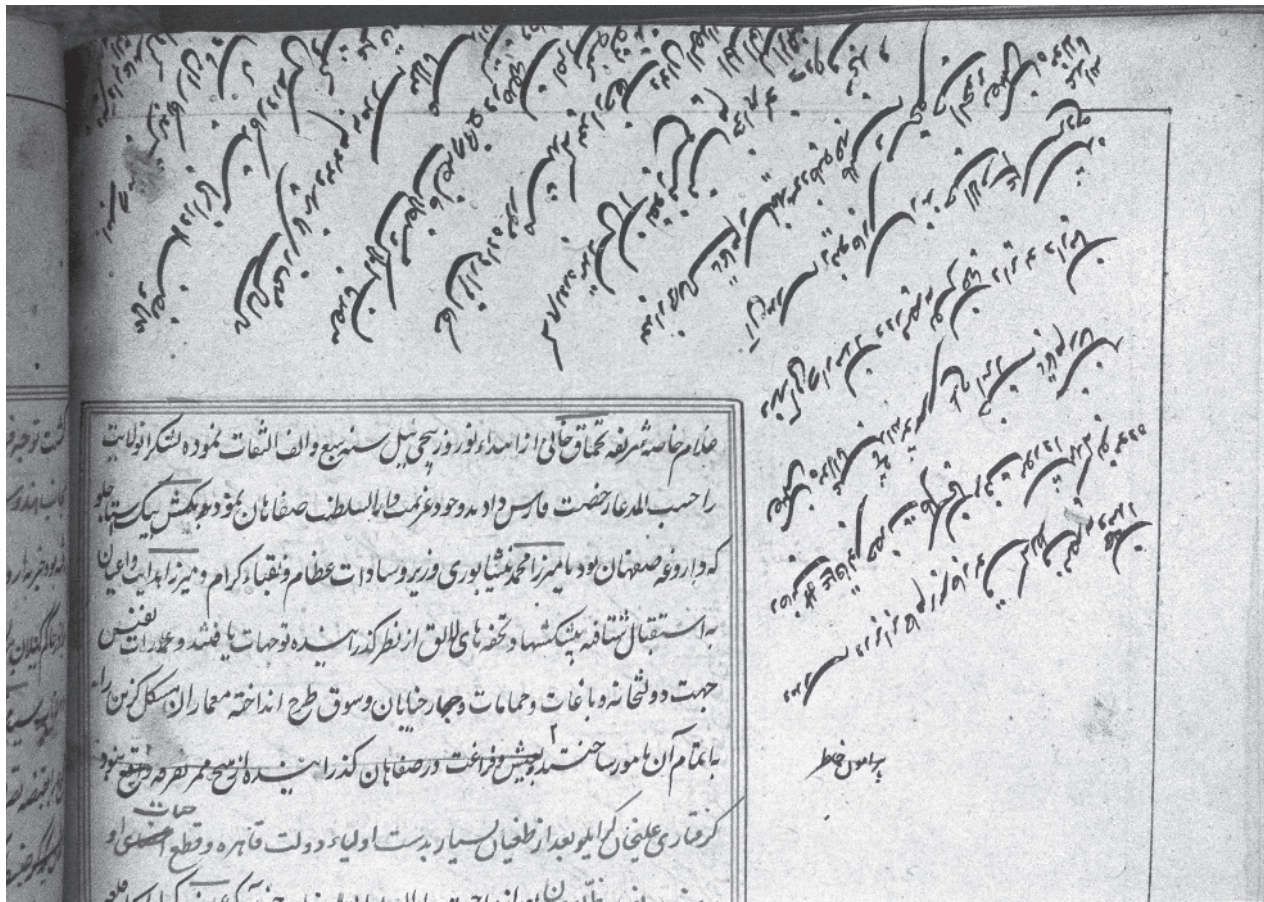
بفراغ بابل سپردار یکم بخت و بچین معادلت بادست او داد که بر سر دست  
 آسود و بود خوش بود و ز آقا و دیده اشغاب ابراه ایام بهار نهاده و در  
 میداوند  
 سلطان چهار بانش برنج حوت برکت چهار بایه چهار بکس  
 فرود و باغبان تورست چهار باغ جهان را از کلا و بر عین غیرت نکار  
 چنین ساخت و خود بزرگ نامیسه لباسی تنگ و کنگ در بر کرده و در میان  
 و اطراف با مین بپوشد کردی اغوا نهاده که چون بکس بشمارت شد و  
 بپوشد کردی بکوش بکوش لاله بکوش ارباب دوت در دو و اعلام حضرت  
 علی شاه شد و بولان بقا ملا و سر برده و با هم ملا و در آن کشتی ارم تمام بر کار و  
 و در بولان اغوا بکوش کشتی را در دریا تن ایام بهار و سر برده و فرود عیش  
 و عشرت بر عین اعلام کشت و در بولان تن ایام بهار و سر برده و فرود عیش  
 بود و بپوشد کردی بپوشد کردی بکوش بکوش لاله بکوش ارباب دوت در دو و اعلام حضرت

بعد از آنکه خورشید از درون درختان و درختان و درختان  
 و بپوشد کردی بپوشد کردی بکوش بکوش لاله بکوش ارباب دوت در دو و اعلام حضرت  
 علی شاه شد و بولان بقا ملا و سر برده و با هم ملا و در آن کشتی ارم تمام بر کار و  
 و در بولان اغوا بکوش کشتی را در دریا تن ایام بهار و سر برده و فرود عیش  
 و عشرت بر عین اعلام کشت و در بولان تن ایام بهار و سر برده و فرود عیش  
 بود و بپوشد کردی بپوشد کردی بکوش بکوش لاله بکوش ارباب دوت در دو و اعلام حضرت

میدادند  
 سلطان چهار بانش برنج حوت برکت چهار بایه چهار بکس  
 فرود و باغبان تورست چهار باغ جهان را از کلا و بر عین غیرت نکار  
 چنین ساخت و خود بزرگ نامیسه لباسی تنگ و کنگ در بر کرده و در میان  
 و اطراف با مین بپوشد کردی اغوا نهاده که چون بکس بشمارت شد و  
 بپوشد کردی بکوش بکوش لاله بکوش ارباب دوت در دو و اعلام حضرت  
 علی شاه شد و بولان بقا ملا و سر برده و با هم ملا و در آن کشتی ارم تمام بر کار و  
 و در بولان اغوا بکوش کشتی را در دریا تن ایام بهار و سر برده و فرود عیش  
 و عشرت بر عین اعلام کشت و در بولان تن ایام بهار و سر برده و فرود عیش  
 بود و بپوشد کردی بپوشد کردی بکوش بکوش لاله بکوش ارباب دوت در دو و اعلام حضرت

3. Fazli, III, ff. 419v-420r. The deleted passage at the bottom of f. 419v is repeated on f. 420r, but the text at the top of f. 420r has been excised.





4. Fazli, III, f. 109v, showing a marginal addition in Fazli's distinctive handwriting. The passage comes in the annal for AH 1006, and concerns the Shah's development of the *Naqsh-i Jahām* district in Isfahan. Note that the trimming of the ms. has cut through Fazli's script, and that the outer marginal lines have also been added later.

از وقت ایشان حج ساخته و نیز سعادت و اقبال از عقب لشکر فرود آمد  
 نیز بیکه توجه و لایق شکر کشیدند و از خدمت و امانت محمود قراجه را به حسن و غیر  
 حلیق بخدمت او بر بنویس بود و در خدمت بی بود چون حضرت امیر تاس اندازد که  
 نیز از متوجه بر نگشته ایلی را در او دست سرد از خدمت اعلیٰ آید و مستحق شکر است  
 از ملازمان و قلیان اردو که همه علف و آب بهید که سوا ای آن آری در نولات از  
 آبادانی نیست و لکن اسلام را استیجاب تمام باوردن مذکور است از اردو  
 میر و عدلک مفضل بود و در خدمت نیز ایلی از اقبل سائید بنای فرزند  
 و تنگ است از خدمت طلب نیز عظیم حکمت میر یاب در مقام جنگ و عدل و بیخیزد  
 بنیاد و مطلب است چون حرکت درین زمستان واقع شد و در سلطنت میر  
 بود و در حاشیه و بجان عقل و کاسته ساله را با حضرت اعلیٰ داده و حاجت نماید سردی انتت که هر روز نایند که گزندی  
 معروف از مصلحت معلوم با خود در دنیا از مشرف حال ایشان که سوا ای علف صحرا و بیمه پیشه آب تو قراجه یک گزندی  
 و قطع بهره و در کینت و ان و ادای اول سر که فوجی بر بحال آبادانی رود با آنچه معدود باشد تنه نماید و با طلی مذکور از اردو بود  
 و نام و در وضع ارباب شکر که از آن روز که ایلی است به علف قلیان همی روی رازنده گرفته و قریب سیصد بریده که ایلی است  
 و خلاف روز معارف و آنا در شیوه و فضا است که ایلی است به علف قلیان همی روی رازنده گرفته و قریب سیصد بریده که ایلی است  
 و در وقت و هفت عالمه نعت است که ایلی است به علف قلیان همی روی رازنده گرفته و قریب سیصد بریده که ایلی است  
 بنویس که در وقت و هفت عالمه نعت است که ایلی است به علف قلیان همی روی رازنده گرفته و قریب سیصد بریده که ایلی است  
 ظلم و انصاف برین در مقدم است که ایلی است به علف قلیان همی روی رازنده گرفته و قریب سیصد بریده که ایلی است  
 باس سلطنت و در فرستد که ایلی است به علف قلیان همی روی رازنده گرفته و قریب سیصد بریده که ایلی است  
 بجان و اباب البیضا مال همی روی رازنده گرفته و قریب سیصد بریده که ایلی است  
 جنب از شکر تحقیق و ادب است که ایلی است به علف قلیان همی روی رازنده گرفته و قریب سیصد بریده که ایلی است  
 محشود الیه من بعدانی که در ایلی است به علف قلیان همی روی رازنده گرفته و قریب سیصد بریده که ایلی است

5. Fazli, III, f. 279v, showing his account of the *vaqfiyya* of the Sham-i Ghazan, to be inserted just before a reference to himself and his brother, Mirzā Khalil, which has been crossed through. Note that the ruled margin round the text box has been clearly added after Fazli's marginal addition.

## SAFAVI IRAN SEEN THROUGH VENETIAN EYES\*

Anthony Welch

### *Introduction*

In August, 1671, Ambrosio Bembo, a nineteen-year-old Venetian nobleman, set out on a journey from Venice to educate himself and to keep away boredom. In his introduction to his *Travels and Journal*, composed later in life, he described his intent:

The world is a great book, which, when perused attentively, proffers teachings and delights with its variety. True, one must tolerate expense, discomfort, and danger, but the effort, if blessed by fortune, brings its reward. . . .

Bembo was a scion of two of Venice's most illustrious families: the Bembos had been prominent in Venice for generations and included the great sixteenth century cardinal, poet, and grammarian Pietro Bembo. His uncle Marco had been a distinguished military commander before his appointment as consul in Aleppo, and Orazio Bembo was consul in Cairo. Ambrosio's mother was a Cornaro, a family of equal renown. He was also related to the Morosini family who likewise supplied admirals and consuls to the Venetian state. Bembos, Cornaros, and Morosinis, like other leading families in Venice, were deeply involved in the politics and commerce of the eastern Mediterranean and were no strangers to the power and prestige of the Ottoman sultanate, on whose trade much of their own prosperity depended.

Ambrosio was born in 1652 and at the age of seventeen distinguished himself as a commander of army troops and as steersman of a naval galley in the unsuccessful defense of Candia (Iraklion) and the rest of Crete against the Ottoman empire.<sup>1</sup> In 1671 his uncle, Marco Bembo, was appointed Venetian consul in Aleppo, and Ambrosio

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\* For the preparation of this essay I gratefully acknowledge assistance from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the University of Victoria. To the James Ford Bell Library of the University of Minnesota I am in debt for drawing this manuscript to my attention.

<sup>1</sup> The war ended in defeat for Venice which withdrew all its forces from Crete in September, 1669.

decided to accompany him. They left on August 8. It was his original intent to stay in Aleppo for some months and return to Venice, but after more than a year there, he embarked on a trip that took him as far as western India. Following his return to Venice three years and two months later in October, 1674, he entered political and commercial life. He must have kept detailed notes of his great journey, for at some later point he composed his lengthy account of the trip.<sup>2</sup> Though Ambrosio was proud of his distinguished family, his *Travels and Journal* seldom refers to them, and he seems to have been an open and polite young man, conscious of his social position but not particularly given to haughtiness.

His manuscript is illustrated with forty-nine competent line drawings by a French artist, G.J. Grélot. Bembo met him in Isfahan on his return journey, and they travelled together back to Aleppo.<sup>3</sup> These drawings record buildings, people, ships and boats, cityscapes, and even implements. A few of the drawings illustrate Bembo's 1673 stay in India, prior to his journey in Iran: thus Grélot produced these

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<sup>2</sup> His book exists in manuscript and has never been published in any language. I am in the final stages of completing an edition with full English translation by Dr. Clara Bargellini, an introduction, and hundreds of footnotes. A few words about the manuscript's provenance are appropriate. There appear to have been two manuscript copies of Bembo's book. One passed into the possession of the Gradenigo family in Venice, where it was studied by Iacopo Morelli who privately printed some remarks about it in 1820. In his remarks Morelli noted that there were two copies of Bembo's manuscript, the one that he examined and a second in the possession of Abbé Celotti. This latter manuscript was examined by M.A. Langlés who praised it in a letter addressed to the Abbé that is now bound with the volume where he regretted that he not been able to consult it when he was preparing his own edition of Chardin's travels. I have no knowledge of the whereabouts of the Gradenigo volume. The Celotti manuscript left Paris in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, for its ornate, gold-stamped brown morocco binding is English of that date and bears the inscription 'Drawings by Grélot' on the spine. The manuscript's 316 pages are gilt-edged, ruled, and margined; they measure 38 × 27.5 centimeters. The text is written in thirty-two lines to the page, and the paper is fine and heavy, lightly brown in color. Marginal notes include dates of entries and subject indicators to aid the reader. The volume was purchased in 1964 by the James Ford Bell Library of the University of Minnesota.

<sup>3</sup> Guillaume Joseph Grélot was born about 1630 and lived in Constantinople, where he met the Anglo-French jeweller and traveller Jean Chardin. They set out together for Iran on July 17, 1671. In Isfahan in 1674 Grélot left Chardin's service in order to accompany Bembo back to Aleppo. After his return to Paris Grélot published in 1680 an important illustrated study of Constantinople, *Relation nouvelle d'un voyage de Constantinople*. Seven drawings that he completed while still in Chardin's employ were subsequently published in Chardin's *Journal du Voyage de Chardin en Perse et aux Indes Orientales* (Londres: Moses Pitt, 1686).

drawings not from his own observations but from Bembo's descriptions. Many of them bear signature and date, such as *G.I. Grelot delineavit 1674*. They are of diverse size. The majority are single sheets, but a number are double pages and a few, notably the views of the city of Isfahan and its great central quadrangle, are panoramas spread over four pages. Bembo's account is rich in detail and lively in exposition, and in this essay I will focus on his travels through Iran. As much as possible, I will let Bembo speak for himself.

### *Travels in Iran*

They travelled from Venice via Crete and Cyprus to Aleppo. He thoroughly enjoyed living the diplomatic life in Aleppo and stayed there for sixteen months. He got to know it very well and provides a detailed description of this great Syrian city, then under Ottoman Turkish rule. He gives the names, titles, ranks, and responsibilities of the city's principal officials and is particularly concerned to explain matters of protocol among the foreign emissaries and merchants. Keenly interested in the city's architecture, he notes that Aleppo has ten gates, which he names in both Arabic and Turkish; an impressive citadel; bathhouses and bazaars in great number; and 300 mosques. The history of the Great Mosque especially interested him.

Bembo remained in Aleppo until January 3, 1673, when he left with two Franciscans who were traveling to India. After an arduous journey across southern Turkey, they reached Diyarbakir in eastern Anatolia. Noting that overland travel is safer, but slower, Bembo elected to travel down the Tigris on a *kalak*, a river boat which he illustrates and describes in meticulous detail, as one would expect from a Venetian sailor:

We then began the journey in a convoy of three kaleks, barges held afloat by air-filled goatskins, tied with the heads up out of the water so that they could be easily inflated every evening. The sides of the kalek are of wood as are the kaleks and as high as one's waist. Also of wood is a big shed in the aft part, where all the luggage is placed. On top of it sit the crewmen who row backwards as on galliots, with two oars, one across from the others. . . . These kaleks go as far as Babylon and no farther. There they take them apart and sell the wood, which is expensive there. The goatskins are deflated and taken back to Diyarbakir to make new kaleks. They cannot take the kaleks back up the river because the water runs too quickly.

Baghdad was clearly one of the highpoints of his trip, and Grélot supplied the manuscript with a panorama of the city, while Bembo provided a detailed description:

It is surrounded by walls nine palms wide and 50 palms high. On the land side it has a moat almost two picche wide and three picche deep.<sup>4</sup> To go around it on the land side I took two and a half hours walking at a normal pace. It has five gates, four of which are on the land side, one of which is closed, and one on the river side. . . . there are many gardens with palms, lemon trees, orange trees, and rather good pomegranates. . . . All the houses are only one story high, and mostly they live in underground rooms because of the excessive heat. The streets are narrow and dirty, except those of the bazaars, which are many. Some are of wood and some of stone, vaulted and well-constructed. There are also well-constructed mosques with minarets that are quite beautiful covered with mailoica tiles. The most beautiful one is near the Capuchins' house, and it was made by the Persians.

Wherever possible during his travels in the Middle East, Iran, and India, Bembo stayed in Christian mission houses, which benefited from a close communications network and which served as hostels, post offices, and banks for travelling Europeans.

From Baghdad he proceeded to Basra and then through the Gulf to Bandar-i Kung in southern Iran, where he boarded a ship to India. He spent more than a year on the west coast of India in Bombay, Daman, Surat, and Goa. In general, this is the least interesting portion of his book: he traveled mostly by sea, recorded visits to officials, and did not venture into the interior.

In February, 1674, he sailed from India and reached Bandar-i Kong on May 19. After ten days there he set out with several companions overland to Lar, remarkable for its many cisterns, and then, by way of a number of small towns that he describes in some detail, to Shiraz, a city he much admired for its cleanliness and pleasant climate. He also praises its beautiful gardens and notes the handsome interiors of the houses:

The houses are low, and from the outside they seem to be poor, because they have earthen walls and no windows along the road. But inside they are of baked bricks and are similar in structure to those of Turkey and Europe. In addition, they are decorated and ornamented with various works in low relief on plaster which are colored and gilt. The beams too are sculptured and painted with much gold. Some also have the walls covered with porcelains.

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<sup>4</sup> A picche is two metres.

The city had about 40,000 Muslim households, but Bembo also noted households of other persuasions: Jews, Armenians, Nestorians, and other Christians. He resided in some comfort at the home of an Armenian merchant. He praises Shirazis for their love of the arts and learning, though he notes that their knowledge of the sciences was based on ancient authors rather than contemporary. Bembo appreciated Shiraz's good food:

Among all the bazaars the best organized was the bazaar of sweets. They make many of these, and they are of good quality, the equal of our Italian ones. I walked through the bazaar of foods, where they sell all sorts of cooked foods. . . . The bread is rather good and white. They make it in large flat cakes with fennel. The wine is the best in all of Persia. They make a lot of it. Even the present king drinks a lot of it, although it is strictly forbidden to his subjects.<sup>5</sup> All the countries provide themselves with wine for their armies here. They ship it to India. Thus the French, Dutch, English, and Portuguese have a license to buy what they need, as well as an agent who keeps it, and every country has a house where he lives; they keep it well furnished so that it also serves for the lodging of [members of] their company when they happen to be in that city. The Armenian Giovanni Belli had the commission for the Portuguese. At the proper time he takes the wine to [Bandar-i Kong] at his expense in cases of ten flasks, each one of which contains a pound and a quarter of wine. The superintendent pays him twenty-five abassi per case. He then sells it for double that price to the fleet, and the earnings are for him. However, when the Armenian brings him more, the superintendent is obliged to sell it at fifty abassi to anyone, and the earnings from that go to the Armenians.

The attention to detail in this passage is typical of Bembo's observations through the book. He admired Shirazi arts, notably glasswork and steel mirrors. He describes the broad avenue, a kilometre long, that led northwest from the city centre to the *Bāgh-i Shāh* (King's Garden) its palace half in ruins and its extensive gardens rented out by the king. Still further from the city was the *Bāgh-i Firdaus*, also described by Chardin. Bembo notes that its buildings were dilapidated, but its gardens were still productive. One of their products was a perfume that Bembo appreciated so much that he took some back to Venice.

In the company of Dutch, French, and English merchants, he left Shiraz on July 3 on the road to Isfahan and noted the ruined houses and palaces in the northern part of the city until he came to the Qu'rān Gate:

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<sup>5</sup> Shah Sulaymān (1666–1694).

The road ends between two mountains that rise up there like the sides of a gate. At the foot of the mountains there is a portal or great arch from which the whole street can be seen. On the mountains there are several houses with terraces toward the road. The Persians stay there to enjoy the fresh air in the evening, drinking coffee and smoking tobacco, and they enjoy that beautiful view of many surrounding gardens and of a stream that falls down the mountain behind that gate which always remains open. Through that gate one goes on the road to Isfahan.

On the second day they turned off the Isfahan road and reached Zarqān at midnight. 'I wanted to go there to see an ancient and very extraordinary ruin that is commonly called the palace of Darius.' Bembo gives a lengthy and detailed description of the great sacred complex of Persepolis, and Grélot supplied him with a reasonably accurate rendering of it:<sup>6</sup>

One first sees the walls of the marble foundations, three picche high. They follow in the same way on three sides—the western that is on the front, the southern, and the northern; the mountain is to the east. In the façade are two stairways to go up, one from the south and one from the north.<sup>7</sup> They end on a small square level area which is the width of the same stairs. At that point both stairways continue to climb in the opposite direction: the one that first faced south now faces north, and the other, vice versa. I think the height of these stairways was about fifty steps, but they are low (steps), about one-third of a palm. . . .

In the mountain face abutting the plain and in the middle of the natural crevices there are two structures at some distance from one another, . . . carved in low relief in the mountain itself. . . . various tombs that are commonly called the tombs of Darius. All around those mountains, above and below, one sees figures, niches, and tombs. He also visited the Achaemenid and Sasanian site of *Naqsh-i Rustām*:

There are some very ancient sculptures there called Naxū Rustan by the Persians, that is, sculptures or exploits of Rustan. They say that these sculptures represent the doings of a certain Rustan, a famous man among the Persians in ancient times. They tell fabulous things about him and attribute to him all sorts of deeds and ancient events

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<sup>6</sup> A much more informative rendering of the same view of Persepolis is published in Chardin, and it was presumably based on some of Gréot's sketches.

<sup>7</sup> Bembo is describing the only formal entrance to Persepolis, the terrace stairway in the northwest. Persepolis was the religious and political centre of Iran under the Achaemenid kings and was constructed over a period of more than two centuries from about 521 B.C. to about 330 B.C., when it was burned on the orders of Alexander of Macedon. Its several different buildings occupy a roughly rectangular site measuring approximately 270 m. by 450 m. and were built for the most part of a highly polished gray stone.



about which the truth is not known. When we arrived there, I saw those mountains sculptured all around with various figures. The stone was polished from top to bottom. On the outer level of the mountain, which is divided in large squares, one sees full relief figures of women on horseback, of women, of kings, and others. The figures wear clothing similar to those of Chailminar. However, their movements and gestures are different. They say that they represent the exploits and loves of the said Rustan. Farther up above these squares, where, even climbing with ropes, it would be difficult to get to, there are three façades like those described at Chailminar that cannot be considered to be anything other than tombs.<sup>8</sup>

His journey north from Shiraz was difficult. He got separated from his companions and struggled over poor roads. He did not meet up with the rest of the caravan until the town of Mayin. On July 14 they stopped for the day in *Yazd-i Khwāst*, whose remarkable towering houses impressed him: 'because of the narrowness of the place [it] has houses one of top of the other.' They must have stayed in the Safavi caravanserai which is still well preserved there. On July 16 they entered Qumisheh, and his description of its no longer extant ruins is particularly valuable:

It was, in effect, a city in ancient times. There are vestiges of many tombs in the form of towers where one sees many stone lions. There are also remains of many bazaars and caravanserais, of which ten still stand. I went to most of them . . . I found many kinds of fruit, particularly some very good melons. I saw many ruins of ancient houses and buildings.

In Mahyār on July 17 he stayed at the large Safavi caravanserai, constructed in the reign of Shah Ismā'īl I (1502–24) and extensively repaired during the reign of Shah Sulaymān (1666–1692).

But his most detailed information about Iran is centred on the city of Isfahan which he reached on July 18, 1674. He was immensely impressed by the approach to the city:

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<sup>8</sup> The Achaemenid necropolis of *Naqsh-i Rostam* is seven km from Persepolis. It contains four tombs (Darius II, Darius I, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes I) with cruciform façades, three facing north and one facing west. In front of the tomb of Artaxerxes I there is a large fire-temple which Bembo oddly does not mention. Bembo has mistakenly identified long hair and long, flowing garments with women; there are, however, no female figures on horseback. All but one of the relief sculptures are Sasanian (c. 224–651 A.D.), and, despite the name given to the site, the relief carvings do not show Rustam but instead historical kings: Bahrām IV (388–399 A.D.); Shapur I (241–272) defeating the Roman Emperor Valerian at the Battle of Edessa in 260 A.D.; Bahrām II (276–293); and the investiture of Ardashir I (224–241).

I entered a very great plain and saw Isfahan at a distance. It seems rather a delightful wood because of the multitude of trees that obstruct the view of the buildings, as can be seen in the drawing (figure 1). Before entering the city, I passed a large and very long street, similar to that of Shiraz. . . . Along its sides are the walls of the orchards, and along the road itself many trees are distributed in an orderly manner. Water flows on both sides and makes that passage delightful. At the end of this street I crossed a bridge that the Europeans called the 'Bridge of Shiraz. . . .'<sup>9</sup> It is all made of fine marble with twenty-seven small arches. . . . above the arches there is a very beautiful cornice of porcelain of various design in very fine work as can all be seen from the drawing.

Bembo went immediately to the Carmelite mission, which he describes as 'rather comfortable with a lower cloister with twelve rooms and with a good dormitory above. . . . There is a room that served as a printing shop. It was unique in those parts and had been introduced to please the shah 'Abbās who had wanted it.'<sup>10</sup> They gave him a printed book of the Four Gospels and an Arabic alphabet, but at present the press is all ruined.<sup>2</sup>

A few days later he met one of the most distinguished of 17th century scholars, Raphaël du Mans, who on commission to the French minister Colbert had already written a brilliant study of Iranian society.<sup>11</sup>

The Prior of the French Capuchins was Raffaele, a religious of much virtue, and a good mathematician for which he was greatly esteemed and venerated by the Persians who take much delight in that science. He discussed it with them since he had perfect knowledge of Persia. He had been in that city for many years.

The different religious orders supplied news of international events, and each order had its speciality:

<sup>9</sup> *Pul-i Khwāju* (33-arch Bridge).

<sup>10</sup> Shah 'Abbās I (1588-1629) ordered the construction of the great Safavi *may-dān* (quadrangle) in Isfahan and was an impressive patron of manuscripts and the portable luxury arts.

<sup>11</sup> Father Raphaël du Mans was one of the most learned Europeans to reside in Iran, and, unknown to Bembo or to any of the other travellers of the period, he had already composed one of the most useful studies on seventeenth century Iran. His *Estat de la Perse en 1660* [Farnborough: Gregg, 1969] was written at the request of Louis XIV's minister Colbert and remained a private document until 1890 when it was first published by Charles Schefer in Paris.

I was surprised at the differences in the news coming from Europe. The news comes through the Capuchin fathers, the Jesuits, and others, besides through individuals' letters. To the Augustinians and Carmelites comes all the news from the East Indies and from Portugal. The Carmelites also get news from Turkey which arrives due to their missions in those parts; they also get the reports and councils of Venice. . . . These things got communicated from one to another, and many of the Persians themselves, curious about happenings in Europe, go to interrogate those fathers in their convents. The fathers explain everything to them in Persian, and in return the Persians tell them what is new in the country. Thus, although late and with some alterations, European accounts reach Isfahan, as does news of all the world.

There were many Europeans in the city, among them merchants and artisans. Bembo met some French goldsmiths and watchmakers working for Shah Sulaymān, and they obviously profited by a special relationship:

They have their shops near the royal palace. They are much esteemed by the king and well treated. Besides giving them houses and money, he provides them with monthly provisions of every sort of food of the country. The provisions are very abundant, and he also gives them more for every new piece of work that they do. They are at liberty to work for other individuals, whom they charge considerably, when they are not doing work for the king.

He also met Jean Chardin who was travelling with a French merchant named Racine.<sup>12</sup> He noted that Chardin had plenty of money, knew Persian well, and had written a book about the coronation of Shah Sulaymān. Bembo didn't take to him and found him greedy and imperious, particularly in his treatment of M. Grélot, the artist whom Chardin had hired to illustrate his book. Taking pity on Grélot and seeing the advantage of having his own memoir illustrated, Bembo hired him away from Chardin. Bembo was immensely impressed by the size of Isfahan, by its architecture, and by its diversity.

This city is large in itself and also very big due to the three citadels or suburbs that are about a mile from the city and can really be called contiguous and united, because they continue the gardens of the city itself. . . . Besides the Persian natives of the city, there are many from subject countries, and there are 12,000 Indians, partly Moslems and

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<sup>12</sup> Jean Chardin's two books on Iran—*Le Couronnement de Soleiman Troisième* (Paris: Claude Barbin, 1671) and *Journal du Voyage de Chardin en Perse et aux Indes Orientales*—are among the most valuable sources for seventeenth century Iranian history.

partly Gentiles, all rich merchants . . . In addition to these [groups], Arabs and Turks from many places are engaged in business there. Also from Europe there are Muscovites, Poles, French, English, Portuguese, and Dutch. . . .

The houses are high and mostly built of earth, and the walls along the streets have no windows, except for the large palaces. Instead of [sloping] tiled [roofs], they have terraces which are comfortable and delightful. Much of the city can be seen from them, when the trees don't get in the way: there is an infinite number of very large trees. There are many buildings of good architecture, among which are the caravanserais, which are many, and three hundred baths and quantities of bazaars with large stone arches, arranged in good order. Some of them are open, and all are full of shops abundant in everything. Their main streets are long and beautiful to look at, but the other streets are terrible, since they are not only narrow but also full of refuse and sewage because the latrines of the houses are there . . .

Another day I went to see the *maydān* of the Shah. . . . This *maydān* is the King's Square, and it is the principal one in the whole city. For its size and beauty it surpasses many of the most beautiful in Europe. . . . Pietro della Valle, who measured it, says that it is 690 paces long and 230 paces wide. All around, it is surrounded by a building of equal arches in a double order, one above the other. The arches of the upper level have very beautiful openings with imaginative ornaments of the same material. The arches serve as dwelling places for merchants, and the lower arches as porticoes under which are bazaars with shops on one side and the other. . . . Near these porticoes runs a watercourse that surrounds the entire plaza. It always stays within its limits which are traced out in a straight line on all four sides of the plaza. It is crossed by many small bridges of stone in one piece. Between this stream and the porticoes there is a continuous row of very tall plane trees, planted equidistant from each other. About two-thirds of the way along one of the long sides there is a façade with a gate to the palace of the king, which is not too big in its perimeter, being a little more than a mile, including separate apartments and various gardens.<sup>13</sup> It makes a majestic sight, however, and is decorated with ornaments in porcelain and gold.<sup>14</sup> On top of the whole construction there is a very large hall or loggia, open on three sides, supported by diverse wooden columns, completely gilded and painted in colors. It can be enclosed with curtains, and in it the king gives public audiences to ambassadors and other people, and he

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<sup>13</sup> Bembo is referring to the *ʿAlī Qapū*, an elaborate structure on the *maydān*'s west side that served as both a public palace, fronting on the *maydān*, and a gatehouse to the private gardens and palace of the king that extended in a long rectangle to the west.

<sup>14</sup> The *ʿAlī Qapū*'s façade, like the *maydān* and the other buildings around it, was faced with polychrome ceramic tiles.

banquets there publicly. . . . On the other side of the plaza and facing the palace of the king there is a mosque with dome and façade in fine polychrome porcelain (figure 2).<sup>15</sup>

At both ends of the Square there is a beautiful fountain, and at the side that is closest to the palace there is the royal mosque with two minars decorated with porcelains (figure 3).<sup>16</sup> On the other side there is a large and majestic arch through which one passes to other bazaars (figure 4).<sup>17</sup> It has two loggias in which at sunset there is a concert of Persian instruments that can be heard throughout the whole *maydān*. Underneath those loggias is the mint or house where they cast coins. I went one morning to see the enclosure of the lions and the dogs, which are very fierce and of extraordinary size . . . In the same place there was a rhinoceros tied with a heavy chain on his feet. It is a very fierce and ugly animal, as can be seen in the drawing.<sup>18</sup> It is taller than a buffalo and twice as broad, and it has short, thick legs with three nails on each foot. In the head it is little different from a buffalo, but on its nose it has a horn similar to a sugar cake, with which it fights . . . Its skin is very thick and resists the shots from arquebusses. . . . It was given to the king by the Great Chan of the Tartars.

On the 28th I went to see a very beautiful apartment of the king that is called Babbulbul. It is to the left of the palace on a very beautiful broad street that leads to Giulfa. It joins the big palace on the *maydān* through its interior gardens.<sup>19</sup> This apartment or palace is square in plan, as can be seen from the drawing. It is open on three sides with arches and colonnades that are covered with sheets of Venetian mirrors. The archways lead out to the [surrounding] veranda. On each of these three sides there are two rooms; on the fourth side there are more rooms. All the rooms have doors from one to the other. Their

<sup>15</sup> The Shaykh Lutfallāh mosque was begun in 1601 and completed in 1628. It functioned as the Shah's private mosque.

<sup>16</sup> The *Masjid-i Imām* (the former Royal Mosque) was begun in 1612 and completed in 1638.

<sup>17</sup> The portal led into the royal bazaar, the largest of Isfahan's bazaars, that extended from the *Maydān-i Shāh* to the old *maydān* adjacent to Isfahan's great *jāmī* mosque.

<sup>18</sup> Grélot's indebtedness to Albrecht Dürer's print of a rhinoceros is almost total.

<sup>19</sup> The Nightingale's Gate. Bembo subsequently refers to it as the Palace of the Mirrors (*Āyīneh Khāneh*), the name that also appears in the illustration. According to Bembo's description, this palace was on the *Chahār Bāgh* avenue and thus to the west of the *Chihil Sutūn* palace. Since the *‘Alī Qapū* palace, fronting on the *maydān*, was the eastern gate to the walled, rectangular garden-palace *Chihil Sutūn* complex, the *Bāb-i Bulbūl* was likely the western gate, providing access from Isfahan's principal, ceremonial thoroughfare. Thus the shah could move from this public avenue through the *Bāb-i Bulbūl* into the private royal garden from there through the *‘Alī Qapū* into the public royal *maydān*. Somewhat further to the south of the *Bāb-i Bulbūl* on the *Chahār Bāgh* is the *Hasht Bihisht* palace, one of the best preserved of extant Safavi palaces. See D.N. Wilber, *Persian Gardens and Garden Pavilions* (Rutland VT: C.E. Tuttle, 1962), 115, for a different analysis of the Palace's location based on other sources.

walls and ceilings are covered with similar sheets [of Venetian mirrors], some big, some small, and all of the mirrors are enclosed by gilt borders and carefully arranged. The main hall in the centre of the palace has a gilt cupola . . . In the same central hall there are many fountains, including a very noble one in the middle. All the arches of this room can be closed from top to bottom by silk curtains. The [arch] in the centre of the fourth side has a silk curtain with many gold flowers. The upper story is as large as the lower and has the same arrangement of rooms, though the rooms on the sides also provide access to the balconies that look down into the central hall. All the rooms are gilt and mirrored and have some European paintings . . .

On going out of the city I entered the great road called Ciahar Bagh on which there is the Palace of the Mirrors described above. . . . In the middle of the avenue is a similar passageway, set with some flowerbeds that were full of dried grass then but which in springtime are full of flowers that must make the whole avenue much more delightful. On both sides of the street there is a little stone canal where water flows. . . .

The broad street ends in a beautiful bridge, commonly called the Bridge of Giulfa, because it goes there. . . . In the summer when the water is low, one can take walks there and, being protected from the sun, keep cool.

Bembo reports at length on food, customs, and clothing, and he was fascinated by the doctrinal differences amongst both the Muslim and Christian populations of Isfahan, as well as by the faith of contemporary Zoroastrians. Always interested in history, he provides a truncated history of the Safavi order and dynasty that he probably learned from Raphaël du Mans. He also describes at length the various Christian communities of New Julfa as well as the Zoroastrian community adjacent to it.<sup>20</sup>

Grélot was already working for him before they left Isfahan, and Bembo gives some information about the artist and his working methods:

Grillot was a very discreet young man of great goodness and modesty. In addition to his own French, he also understood many languages, like Latin, Spanish, literary Greek, Arabic, and Persian, if not perfectly, then at least well enough to be able to get along. During the trip he applied himself to everything with great amiability and without ulterior motives. Often he would have us enjoy very good food

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<sup>20</sup> Isfahan's Armenian community and many of the European missionaries and merchants lived across the Zayāndeh river from Isfahan in the smaller city of New Julfa, established by Shah 'Abbās as part of his expansion of Isfahan in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.

that he had prepared. Since he and I had still fresh in our memories some of the things we had seen, he made various drawings before we left Isfahan with the help of some sketches that he had, most particularly of the city and important places in it.

Nevertheless, despite months of living in Isfahan and becoming thoroughly acquainted with its architecture and despite having a number of preparatory sketches, Grélot produced drawings with some notable and very puzzling inaccuracies: the arches of the *maydān* are ogive, but the artist renders them as rounded; his drawings provide the *Masjid-i Imām* (former Royal Mosque) with Ottoman-style minarets rather than with Safavi minarets. Unlike the panoramic views of Aleppo and Baghdad, the four-page drawing of Isfahan has no legend. Apart from three bridges, none of the structures is clearly identifiable with the possible exception of the Mosque of the Imam across the river from the middle bridge. All of the minarets are Ottoman in style, and the domes lack the distinctive Safavi profile and instead resemble Ottoman domes. Neither the medieval *jāmi'* mosque nor the Safavi *maydān* is evident, and the overall impression is of woods and palaces.<sup>21</sup> From his remarks it would seem that Bembo approved these drawings, though his own powers of observation were keen and though the drawings were made when he and Grélot had the monuments 'still fresh' in their memories. Had Grélot's long residence in Constantinople so imprinted his memory that he could not or chose not to recognize the distinctiveness of what he saw in Isfahan? And why was Bembo, who was attentive to stylistic differences, not more attentive to these major errors?

The two men joined a large caravan that left Isfahan on September 22, on a route through Gulpāyagān toward Kirmanshah. On September 29 they stayed in a fine caravanserai in Missian in the foothills of the Zagros mountain range: Grélot's drawing shows a handsome Safavi building next to a walled garden (figure 5: here he makes the arches ogive, so that his errors in Isfahan are even more puzzling). A week later they were in Respe, an attractive town near Hamadan: 'we stopped in the town of Respe which is on a delightful hill. We rested there very comfortably in a caravanserai of the same name, which has very comfortable rooms for the winter. Because of its beauty, I had it drawn, as can be seen.' In the foreground of the drawing is

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<sup>21</sup> The illustrations to Chardin's 1711 edition (Amsterdam: chez Jean Louis de Lorme) are more accurate: the minars are Safavi minars, the arches are ogive.

a person, presumably Bembo, looking out over the neatly cultivated fields, the town and fortress, and the imposing caravanseraï.

Persepolis, *Naqsh-i Rostam*, and Qumisheh were not the only instances of his fascination with the physical remains of pre-Islamic Iran. Bembo lodged in a half-destroyed caravanseraï in Kangavar on October 7 and spent a day wandering around the 3rd-2nd century ruins: ‘. . . In the plain here is a great expanse, perhaps even greater than that of Persepolis, that is all covered with pieces of smooth columns, . . . many capitals of various types, . . . and a temple or some rich palace, not too different from that of [Persepolis].’

On October 10 his group stopped at Bisitun, and he admired the rock relief of Darius’ victory over Gaumata: ‘In a cavity of the mountain I observed some figures in relief not very different from those of [Persepolis]. . . . Nine figures of men are sculpted in low relief in a great composition. . . . Below all the figures are many letters, some of which I had copied by looking through a telescope.’ The drawings include Grélot’s rendering of the main scene as well as Bembo’s copy of the trilingual inscriptions.

A day later they were near *Ṭāq-i Bustān*, where they stayed four days. ‘I found many gardens, and at the foot of the mountain there is a spring that makes a nice pool, bounded by stones. Over it there is a stone bridge: it leads to the larger grotto.’

He was evidently fascinated by the rock carvings at *Ṭāq-i Bustān* and describes in great detail what he calls ‘the antiquities of Kirmanshah,’ since he could find no other name for them. He wonders why his predecessor Pietro della Valle<sup>22</sup> made no mention of them. Determined to provide an accurate description of what he obviously found to be remarkable works, he even purchased ladders from the nearby town, so that his description, several pages in length, as well as Grélot’s five drawings of the grottoes could be as accurate as possible.

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<sup>22</sup> Although he travelled on the same road as Bembo, della Valle also did not mention the pre-Islamic sites of Bisitun and Kangavar, which impressed Bembo so much. One of the greatest Italian travellers to the Near East, Pietro della Valle (1586–1652) travelled extensively in Turkey, Iran, and India from 1614–1626, when he returned to his native Rome. His travels were published in three volumes: *Turkey* (Roma: np, 1650), *Persia* (Roma: a spese di Biagio Diuersin, 1658), and *India* (Paris, 1663). Bembo had apparently read della Valle before he left Venice, for soon after his arrival in Shiraz he paid his respects to the sister of della Valle’s Iranian wife.



On October 15 they set out again and stopped that night twenty-six km southwest of Kirmanshah at Māhīdasht, one of the last of the many caravanserais he had admired so much in Iran:

The caravanserai called 'Maidast' was built near a stream and was one of the most comfortable and beautiful that I saw. Over the gate it has several beautiful rooms for the winter, and they have many shaded windows both on the inside and outside.

Ambrosio Bembo's trip was hardly over. His group joined a larger caravan from Hamadan and proceeded on steep and dangerous tracks through the Zagros mountains. His final stop in Safavi Iran was in the town of Sūmar, where an official checked the caravan and its goods before giving them permission to proceed into Ottoman territory. He was very sorry to leave Iran, 'where I had been courteously welcomed and treated with every civility, where I had found good lodging and abundant food at very good price everywhere, and where I had been safe from robbers and murderers, as well as exempt from tolls and fees, except for the very reasonable ones paid for merchandise.' The final hundred pages of the *Journal* cover the remaining journey to Baghdad and on to Aleppo, where on November 22 he met up with his uncle whose term as consul was over. On the 15th of April, 1674, they made their happy return to Venice. It is likely that he dictated his memoirs not long after he got back, and the manuscript is written in a fine hand, undoubtedly that of a professional scribe. In a legible but less ornate hand on the final two pages Bembo appends his two-page expense account, not because he feared being audited but because he wanted future travellers to know how much such a journey would cost.

*Bembo's travels as historical record*

The Venice that Ambrosio Bembo knew was a major Mediterranean power, struggling with the Ottomans for empire and control of trade. Its history during the seventeenth century is marked by notable failures, like the war of Candia, and by equally notable successes, like the campaigns in Dalmatia and in the Peloponnesos. If war characterized one part of the relationship between Venice and the Ottomans, peace, prosperity, and mutually beneficial commerce

defined another. With its Mediterranean maritime presence and its commercial links to western Europe, Venice was dependent upon the Ottoman empire's domination of the western terminus of overland trade routes from eastern and southern Asia and from eastern Africa. Ottoman armies or their surrogates controlled Anatolia, Syria, the Levant, Iraq, Arabia, and Egypt, while fleets of the Ottomans or their Arab allies patrolled the Red Sea, the Persian/Arabian Gulf, and the Arabian Sea. But the days of Ottoman and Arab supremacy over this vital and valuable trade link were numbered. While Vasco da Gama's navigation around Africa in 1498 did not engender an immediate commercial revolution, it did lead to the establishment of a string of Portuguese forts and trading settlements on the eastern coast of Africa; and Portuguese colonies like Sofala, Mozambique, Mombasa, and Malindi challenged long established Arab mercantile communities in Lamu and Kilwa. During the second half of the seventeenth century the Portuguese expansion was contested by the sultans of Oman who, supported by the Ottomans, also tried to dominate politics and commerce on the east African coast, for across the Arabian Sea was the west coast of India and, via the Maldiv Islands and Sri Lanka, the further routes to India, Southeast Asia, and China: the prize was the immensely lucrative control over the spice trade and many other resources and manufactures, like ceramics, silk, and textiles. The possible loss of Arab power over this commerce was a direct and potentially devastating threat to the Ottomans who depended upon the maritime route that made their lands the transit routes for goods. Thus Ottoman fleets operated in the Persian/Arabian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, and even the Indian Ocean to contest the expansion and consolidation of Portuguese power.

Bembo was well aware of this conflict and newer ones with other European powers, anxious to take over what the Portuguese had seized. The Dutch were among the most active, but in 1672, shortly before Bembo's visit, the British East India Company established a permanent British military and commercial presence in Bombay. Despite its Mediterranean naval power, Venice was not a player in this wider game: it did not have the resources or the population to support a significant role beyond the Mediterranean. The young Venetian traveller is recording a period of great political changes with long range implications, but it is time of transition in which Venice did not play a significant part. Bembo was an educated and enthusiastic observer, but he was not a profound or incisive thinker,

and like most individuals in a time of change, he was unaware that it was going on. He does not seem personally affected by or even aware of the enormous long-term damage to Venice's wealth and its position as middleman occasioned by the western European takeover of commerce and shipping in the Indian Ocean from Ottoman, Arab, and Indian merchants. While he knew that the sixteenth century loss of control in the Indian Ocean was perceived by the Ottomans as a threat, he does not see the impact that the Ottoman loss had on Venice, culturally tied to western Europe but closely linked with the Ottoman economy. What he is recording is the aftermath of sixteenth century western European victories, and the consolidation and expansion of their power in India and further east to the detriment not just of the Ottomans but also of Venice. In this sense he does not recognize that an era has ended and that he is one of the last of the great Venetian travellers, as Venice's role in world trade rapidly draws to a close.

As part of this era of change Christian missionaries and Christian merchants expanded their activities in the Safavi and Mughal states. Bembo accompanied Franciscans who were travelling to India, stayed with Capuchins and Carmelites in Iran and India, and observed the power of the Jesuits in Portuguese India. He also mentions Theatine Fathers, Dominicans, and Augustinians. Shah 'Abbās in Iran (1587–1629) had been notably friendly toward emissaires of Christian states whose aid he sought against the Ottomans, and he had encouraged the indigenous Christian Armenian community of Iran to serve as commercial intermediaries with European merchants. Prints by European artists including Dürer were admired in Iran and India, and illustrated Bibles were shown to both the Safavi Shah 'Abbās and the Mughal emperor Akbār (1556–1605), who discussed religious issues with visiting Jesuits and accepted a copy of the illustrated *Royal Polyglot Bible* of 1568–1573 printed by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp. These illustrations, along with others by European artists, exerted a substantial influence on the work of Safavi and Mughal artists. Christian missions also served other important roles. Some of their residents, like Père Raphaël du Mans, were trusted sources of information for governments at home, and were instrumental in the development of European academic expertise about Islamic societies. Mission houses served as post offices for travelling Europeans, and it was through their good offices that Bembo was sometimes able to use his letters of credit to get funds on his journey. They were also

hostels where visitors could find safe and somewhat familiar accommodation, speak their own language, get locally useful advice, and meet other Europeans. Without them it would not have been possible for so many adventurous Europeans to travel in Turkey, Iran, and India. Bembo's bitterly critical remarks about the Jesuits in Goa indicate that he recognized they were also instruments of European colonial expansion and exploitation, and his journal demonstrates in very tangible ways how important they were to colonialism.

Bembo was proud to have an artist who could illustrate his travels and was not shy about giving Grélot specific instructions. The caravansarai at Māhīdasht, for instance, was to be drawn to show the interior, while he worked with Grélot the whole day of October 13, 1674, to bring to a successful finish the drawings of *Ṭāq-i Bustān*. Given this close involvement, it is all the more astounding to look at the renderings of the central quadrangle of Isfahan with their Ottoman-style minars and rounded arches. They suggest that we should proceed with some caution in using the drawings as historical evidence. In his introduction to his own book on Constantinople, Grélot pointedly declares his abhorrence of plagiarism, but he was not above artistic pilfering, as his appropriation of Dürer's Rhinoceros demonstrates. He even goes so far as to inscribe it as "from life" (*ad vivum*), presumably to emphasize that he was really not copying Dürer after all. Still, there is much that is valuable and even unique. The Safavi palace of the *Āyineh Khāneh* (Palace of Mirrors) was destroyed in the nineteenth century, and Grélot presents us with the only known view of its interior. The caravansarai at Māhīdasht (Maidast) that impressed Bembo is now a police station, and the drawings of Bisitun and *Ṭāq-i Bustān* are the earliest European renderings. Though Chardin only cursorily refers to Persepolis, Grélot's drawings of Persepolis for Bembo are detailed and informative.

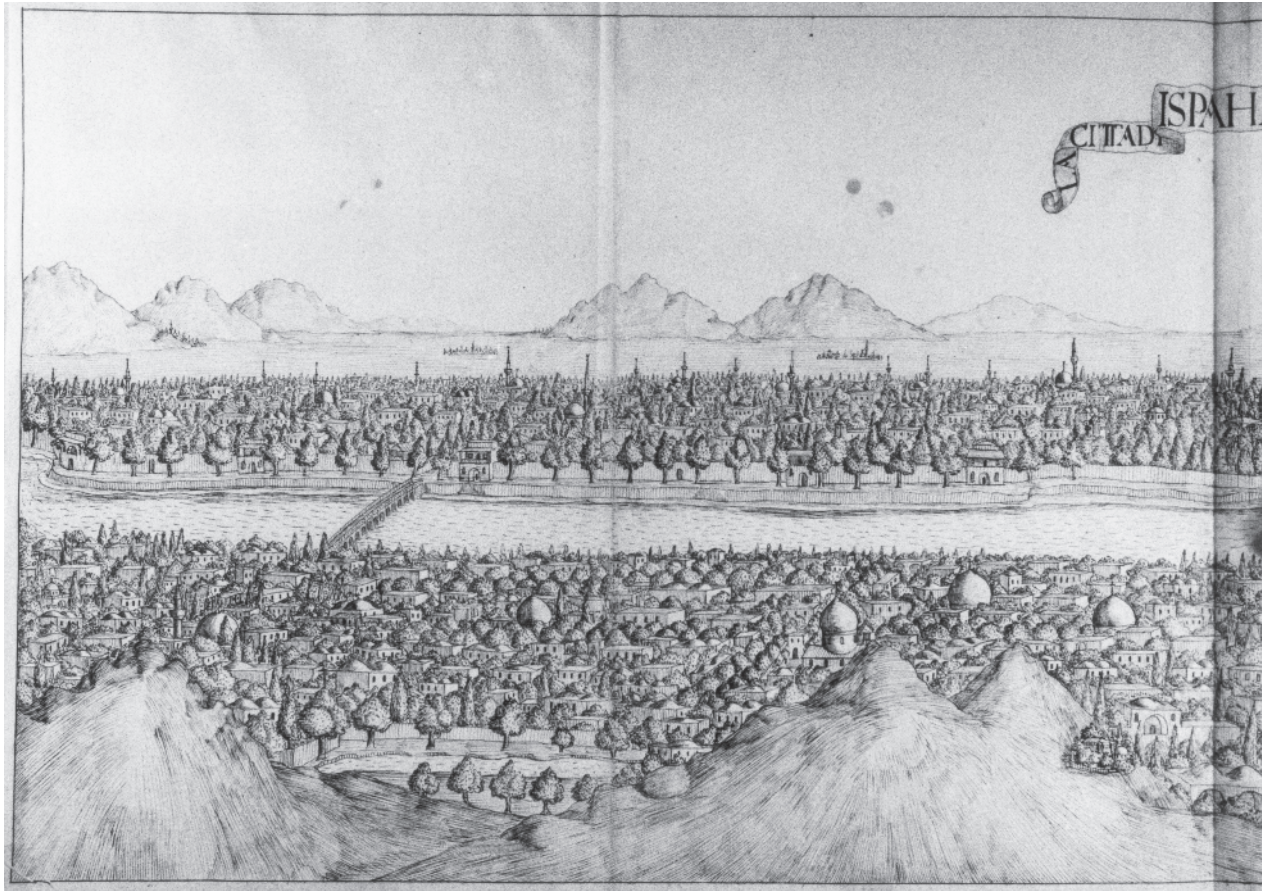
The fifty-one drawings (forty-nine by Grélot and two by another hand) are not works of great artistic finish or merit. Bembo was educated enough to know that, and Grélot was talented enough to share that view. The French artist's illustrations in Chardin's *Voyages* and in his own *Relation nouvelle* are far more distinctive and polished, presumably because they were designed for an educated book-buying public, and they reveal an artist who was thoroughly skilled in perspective, was capable of excellent, detailed renderings of architecture, and was accustomed to close observation of people and their dress. One presumes that his illustrations to Bembo's *Travels and*

*Journal* are more in the nature of sketches that would have been more deliberately worked had they been developed into copper plates for publication. But he clearly responded to the interests of his patron, who rarely devotes any of his text to descriptions of plant or animal life, so that Grélot's illustrations accordingly almost entirely focus on landscape, buildings, ships and rafts, rock reliefs, ruins, and costume.

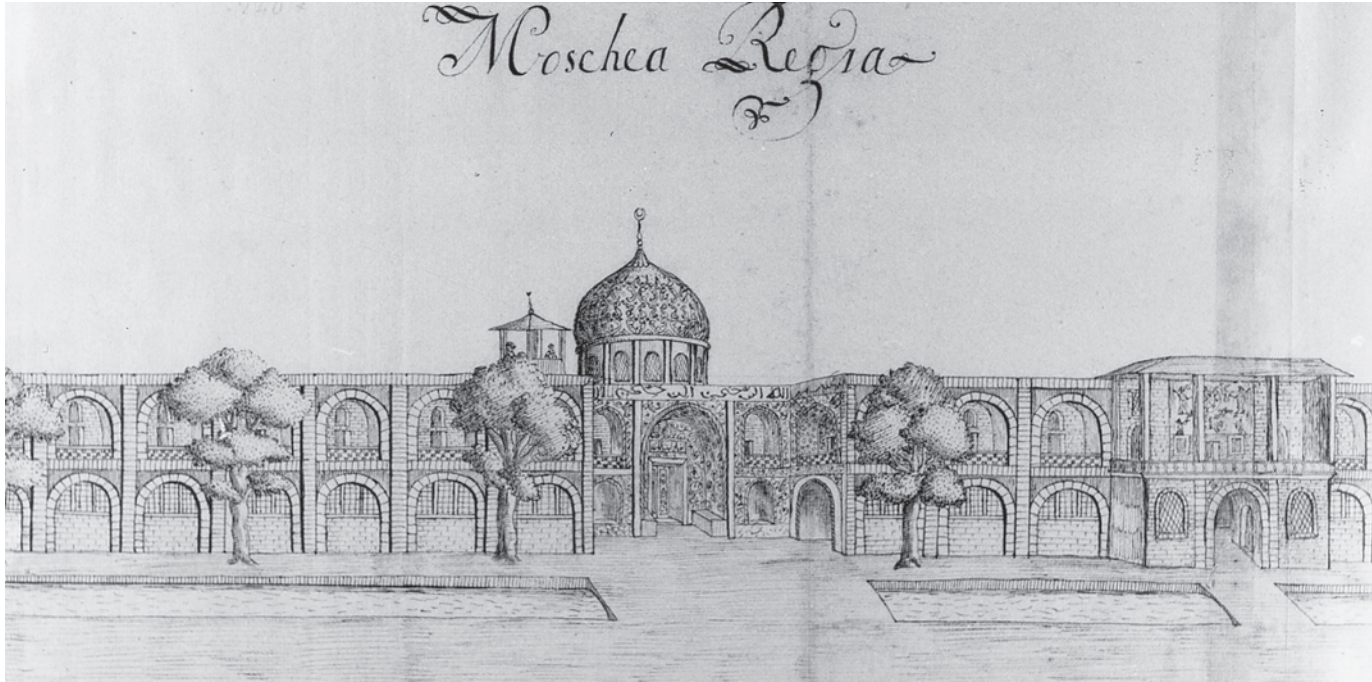
Since Grélot made a drawing of the Bembo villa for inclusion as a frontispiece to the *Travels and Journal*, it seems reasonable to assume that Ambrosio composed the book soon after his return to Venice in 1674, while Grélot was still in his service to supply illustrations, even of scenes and events, such as those in western India, where the artist had not been present. From his own remarks it seems that Ambrosio reread the *Viaggi* of Pietro della Valle before he started writing his own account, and he modestly indicated that he was writing for the edification of those who might some day want to make a similar trip: for that reason he appends a detailed expense account so that future travellers will know what sorts of money and equipment they will need. Knowing that other travel memoirs were published, he probably had the intention of seeing his own book in print, but he evidently did not pursue this ambition even though his family's wealth and status would have made a lavish publication well within his reach.

Bembo had a well-developed aesthetic sense that expressed itself in his admiration sometimes of landscape but more often of architecture, both monumental and utilitarian. In Shiraz, for instance, he remarked on the beauty of the principal mosque but described at greater length the appearance of houses and of the main bazaar. He was also aware of technical achievements, whether in the ships that he traveled on or in buildings or in utilitarian structures, like the great cisterns of western India. And he greatly esteemed the many solid and secure caravansarais available for travelers along Iran's main trade routes and compared them favorably to their meager counterparts in Ottoman Mesopotamia. His text is not as encyclopedic as Chardin or Kaempfer in its observations on Iran. Nor is it as scholarly as Père Raphaël du Mans. It lacks the intimate views of court life that appear in Chardin, Tavernier, and Thomas Herbert. Bembo was not a merchant, scholar, diplomat, or cleric. He did not come to convert or to sell, but simply to see and to learn as much as he could. He did not associate with royal courts, since he was not representing Venice in any official capacity, so his

book is not filled with the gossip and intrigues that enliven the writings of Chardin and Tavernier. Instead, we are shown through his words a humbler way of travel and are presented with the sorts of obstacles and frustrations that an unofficial traveler faced. He struggled with the importunities of petty officials and complained against their injustices, and he suffered cold and wet weather and meager or very bad food. His detailed expense account at the end of the volume makes abundantly clear how closely he had to watch his costs. He spent much of his time in European circles, doubtless for a greater sense of security so far from home and with so few resources. He was a brave young man with a high sense of adventure and curiosity who had set out on a long and risky journey, and he must have known at the outset that his odds of surviving it were not overwhelming. His book is as valuable a view of the network of Christian mission houses in the Near East and India as it is of the countries themselves, but most of all it is an appealing self-portrait of a bright, decent, remarkably tolerant, and thoroughly likable traveler who was a good observer and a lively writer. His trip was formative and deeply affected him, and it probably filled his conversation with anecdotes for the rest of his life.

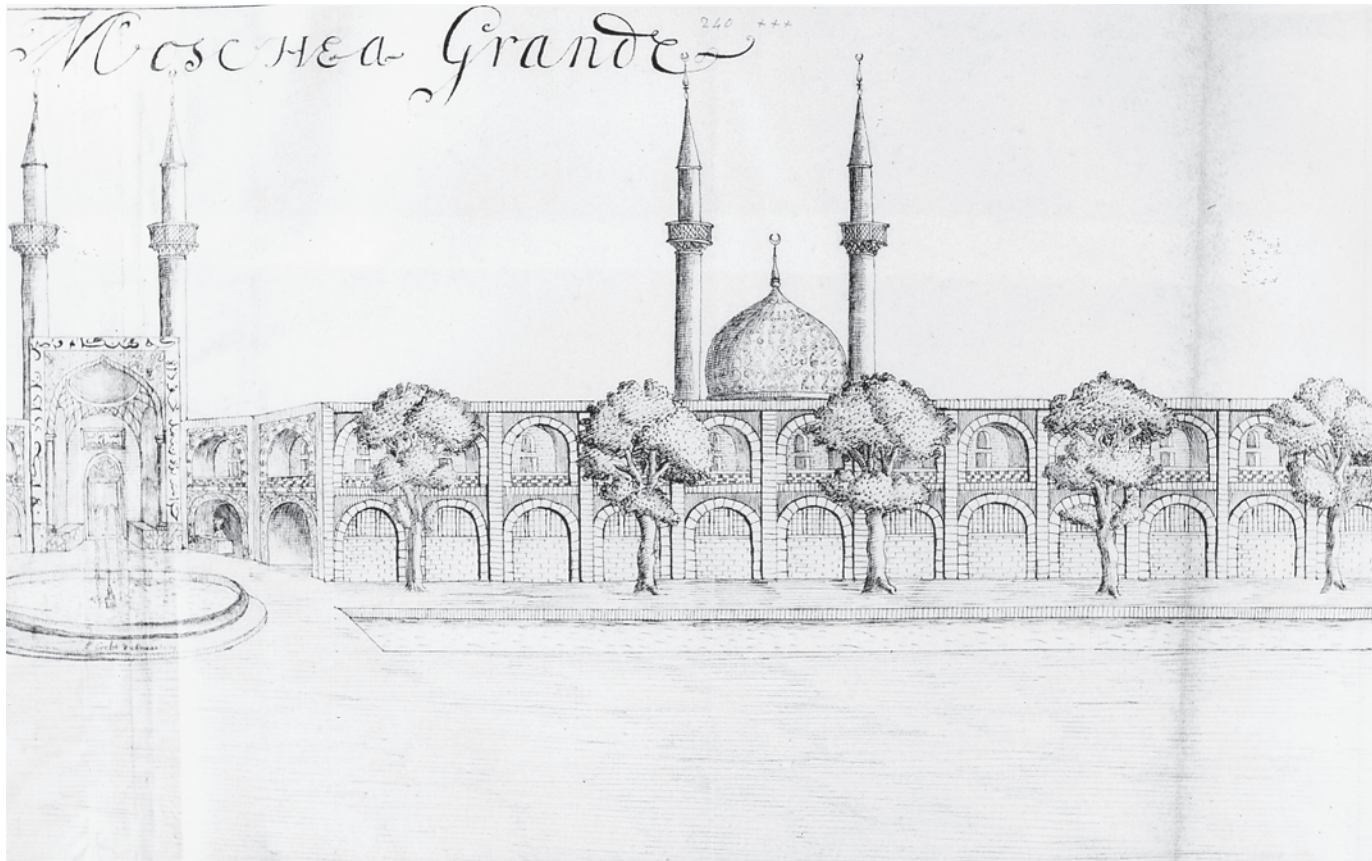


1. Ms. Page 234-235: Isfahan, panoramic view (2 pages of 4)



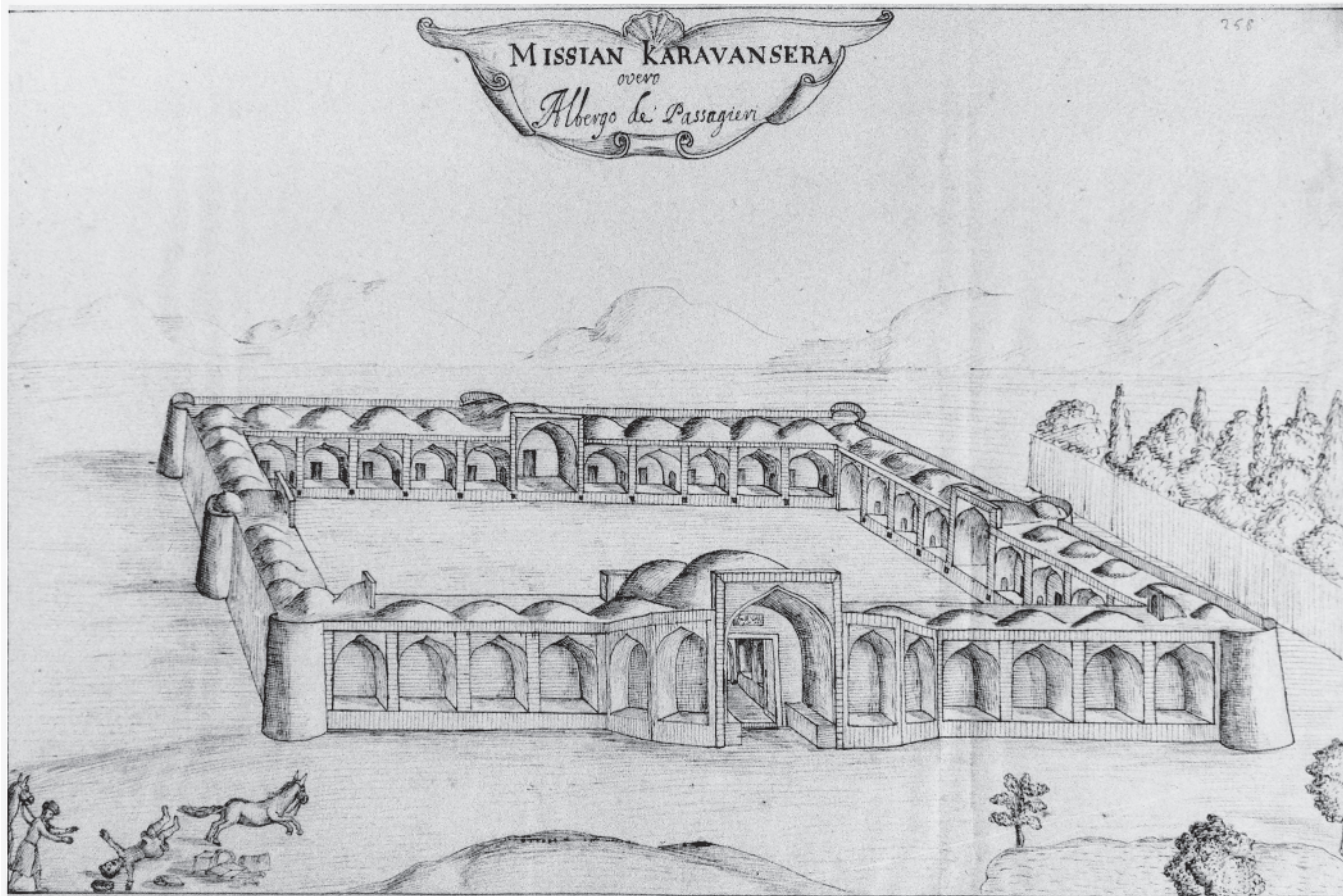
2. Ms. Page 240-241, #2: Shaikh Lutfallah Mosque





3. Ms. Page 240-241, #3: *Masjid-i Imām*





5. Ms. Page 258-259: Caravanserai at Missian

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PART THREE

CULTURE AND PATRONAGE IN THE SAFAVID PERIOD

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## THE ARDABĪL CARPETS IN CONTEXT

Sheila S. Blair

The matched pair known as the Ardabīl carpets represents the largest and most famous, though not the finest, work of the Safavid period. The two comprise a well-preserved carpet (fig. 1) acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London in 1893 (inv. no. 272-1893), and a patched one (fig. 2) presented by J. Paul Getty to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1953 (inv. no. 53.50.2).<sup>1</sup> Neither carpet is complete. The London carpet is bigger (it now measures 10.50 × 5.30 meters, or 34' 5" × 17' 5") than the Los Angeles carpet, which has been drastically shortened and lost its outer border (it now measures 7.30 × 4.10 meters, or 23" 11" × 13" 5").

Both carpets are knotted in wool on silk warps and wefts; three shoots of two-stranded silk follow each row of asymmetrical knots.<sup>2</sup> Both carpets show the same design. The field contains a central sunburst surrounded by sixteen pendants, with two mosque lamps hanging from the pendants on the longitudinal axis. Each corner of the field repeats a quarter of the central composition. Worked in ten colors—black, three blues, green, three reds, white, and yellow—these elements seem to float above a deep blue ground strewn with arabesques.

A cartouche at the top end of each carpet contains the opening distich of a *ghazal* by the fourteenth-century lyricist Ḥāfīz:

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<sup>1</sup> The basic publication of the Los Angeles carpet is Rexford Stead, *The Ardabīl Carpets* (Malibu: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1974). The most up-to-date information about the pair of carpets is summarized in Beattie's 1986 article in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (2:365-68). More recent articles include Annette Ittig, "Historian's Choice: The Victoria & Albert Museum's 'Ardabīl' Carpet", *Hali* 69 (1993), pp. 81-83; Jennifer Wearden, "The Ardabīl Carpet: The Early Repairs", *Hali* 80 (1995), pp. 102-7; and Donald King, "The Ardabīl Puzzle Unravelled", *Hali* 88 (1996), pp. 88-92.

<sup>2</sup> Stead (*Ardabīl Carpets*, 17-18) reported that the carpets differed in knot count, texture, and pile length. The London carpet has fewer knots per square centimeter (46 vs. 62, or 324 vs. 400 knots per square inch) and its pile is reportedly harsher, shorter, stronger and more densely packed than that of the Los Angeles one, which is described as silkier, softer and longer. It is essential to have the carpets side by side to compare the two and see whether Stead's observations are true.

*juz āstān-i tu-am dar jahān panāh-i nīst  
sar-i marā bi-juz īn dar havāleh-gāhī nīst.*

I have no refuge in the world other than thy threshold;  
My head has no resting place other than this doorway.<sup>3</sup>

The couplet is followed by the signature ‘*amal bandeh-yi dargāh maqṣūd-i kāshānī sana 946*, or “work of a servant of the shrine, Maqṣūd of Kāshān, in the year 946”, which corresponds to 1539–40.<sup>4</sup>

Since they were brought to the West in the late nineteenth century, these huge medallion carpets have been the subject of a continuing stream of publications, most of which deal with their history and their common name, the Ardabīl carpets. Both carpets were acquired in the late nineteenth century from the London firm of Vincent Robinson and Co. The London firm, in turn, was said to have acquired them from the Manchester firm of Ziegler and Co., which reported that the carpets had come from the shrine at Ardabīl in northwestern Iran. This was the shrine for the Sufi Shaykh Ṣafī

<sup>3</sup> Ḥāfīz, *Dīvān*, Muḥammad Riṣā Jalālī Nā’inī and Nāzīr Aḥmad, eds (Tihiran: Amir Kabir, 2535), no. 8, 47.

<sup>4</sup> The identity of Maqṣūd of Kāshān has engendered some discussion. He is clearly not the weaver, for such large carpets were not the work of a single person. Ittig (‘Historian’s Choice’) speculated that he was the one of great amirs of court, the *ishūk āqāsī-bāshū* (head of the masters of the threshold), but this is also unlikely. Such a person was usually a Qizilbāsh or Turkish amir, whereas the name Maqṣūd Kāshānī suggests an Iranian. Furthermore we know the name of Ṭahmāsp’s *ishūk āqāsī-bāshū*: Qarpūz Sulṭān, and we even have a portrait of him drawn by Shah Ṭahmāsp himself for Bahrām Mirzā’s album in the Topkapı Palace Library (H2154, fol. 1b, discussed and illustrated in Chahryar Adle, ‘Autopsia, in Absentia: Sur la date de l’introduction et de la constitution de l’Album de Bahrām Mirzā par Dust-Mohammad en 951/1544,’ *Studia Iranica* 19/2 (1990), 219–56.

Other possibilities include a vizier or head of a royal workshop (*buyūtāt*). Several are discussed in the 18th-century manual of Safavid administration, *Tazkīrāt al-Mulūk*, ed. and trans. by V. Minorsky as *Tadhkīrāt al-Mulūk; A Manual of Safavid Administration (circa 1137/1725)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943). We do not know how much of this administration was in place by the time of Ṭahmāsp.

Maqṣūd could have been a devotee of shrine who took Maqṣūd (literally, ‘intended’) as a *takhalluṣ* or pen name. Similarly, ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Mu’min b. Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Naṣr al-Dīn Muḥammad, the person responsible for the *Ṣavīh al-Milk*, the list of properties owned by the shrine drawn up on 1 Shawwal 977/9 March 1570, belonged to the Qivamī family of Shiraz and was probably an accountant or *mustawfī* whose father may have been an official at the shrine (A.H. Morton, ‘The Ardabīl Shrine in the Reign of Shah Ṭahmāsp’, *Iran* 13 (1974), 34.

Maqṣūd might also have been a scribe or artist working for the Safavid scriptorium. Many Kāshānīs were scribes or artists, and such a person would have appreciated the plays on words and puns of the verses. On this subject, see Sheila S. Blair, ‘Texts, Inscriptions and Safavid Carpets,’ *Iran and Iranian studies: essays in honor of Iraj Afshar*, K. Eslami, ed. (Princeton: Zagros Press, 1998), 137–47.



al-Dīn (d. 735/1334), the eponymous founder of the Safavid dynasty, which ruled Iran from 907–1135/1501 to 1732.

Despite the general acceptance of the name ‘Ardabīl carpets’, doubts about their provenance quickly arose. It was recognized that dealers often spread this kind of attribution to a famous place to enhance the pedigree of their wares and thus increase their sale value. Scholars added dissenting voices based on other evidence. Following a detailed survey of the shrine in 1969 and 1970, Martin Weaver noted that the London carpet was larger than most of the rooms at the shrine, such as the main prayer hall known as the *Dār al-Ḥuffāz* (8.9 × 5.8 m) the *Chīnī Khāneh* or Porcelain House (9.7 meters square).<sup>5</sup> Morton pointed out that the carpets were not recognizable in an inventory compiled by the superintendent (*mutavallī*) of the Ardabīl shrine in 1172/1759.<sup>6</sup>

These questions raised sufficient doubts that alternative provenances for the carpets were put forward. One was the shrine of Imam Riḏā at Mashhad in eastern Iran. It too had been restored in the Safavid period, and several rooms there were large enough to accommodate the two carpets. Beattie ended her 1986 review of the carpets’ history in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* on an equivocal note, concluding that valuable historical information had been distorted and lost in the tangled web of the carpet trade and that further speculation was fruitless.<sup>7</sup>

These doubts were repeated in later surveys and handbooks. I quote from only one, the Pelican History of Art volume published in 1994 by the prolific pair, Blair and Bloom. In describing the Ardabīl carpets, we said: ‘Nineteenth-century carpet traders reported that the carpets came from the shrine of Shaykh Ṣafī at Ardabīl, but their reports were notoriously inaccurate and the attribution is spurious.’<sup>8</sup> Further work shows that we were wrong.

Analyses of the carpets by scholars at the V&A in the 1990s suggested that the carpets themselves might add further information to

<sup>5</sup> Noted in Morton, ‘The Ardabīl Shrine,’ 31–32 and summarized in Martin Weaver, ‘The Ardabīl Puzzle,’ *Textile Museum Journal* 23 (1984), 43–51. Weaver did note (45) that the one building large enough to contain the carpets was the Jannat Saray, but this last part of his paragraph was often overlooked.

<sup>6</sup> A.H. Morton, ‘3. Carpets at Ardabīl in the 18th Century,’ 470–71 in May Beattie, Jenny Housego and A.H. Morton, ‘Vase-Technique Carpets and Kirman’, *Oriental Art* 23 (1977), 455–71.

<sup>7</sup> M. Beattie, ‘Ardabīl Carpet,’ *Elr*, 2: 365–68.

<sup>8</sup> Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250–1800* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 171.

the argument. Jennifer Wearden analyzed the design and repairs to the London carpet.<sup>9</sup> Donald King then matched this information with travellers' reports, arguing that the carpets were continuously at the Ardabīl shrine from the 1540s to the 1880s.<sup>10</sup> He noted that the two carpets, when laid side by side, would have formed a square some 10.67 meters on a side and would have fit perfectly within the Jannat Saray at Ardabīl.<sup>11</sup> To judge from the plan (fig. 3), this domed hall (no. 10 on plan) measures over 16 meters in diameter and can comfortably accommodate the two carpets side by side.<sup>12</sup> At some point both carpets were cut down at the bottom (the ends without the inscription), and thus entered in the 1759 inventory (and perhaps also in the eighteenth-century inventory cited by Morton) as rugs which are remnants of four large, tattered carpets, four pieces (*pārcheh*).<sup>13</sup> King also collected a series of nineteenth-century travellers who recorded the presence of the carpets at the shrine, notably two Englishmen who visited the shrine in 1843 and mentioned a carpet dated 946/1539–40 which lay on the floor of the lofty antechamber to the principal tombs.<sup>14</sup>

King's attribution of the Ardabīl carpets to the large hall known as the Jannat Saray at Ardabīl is thus logical, and by using the

<sup>9</sup> 'The Ardabīl Carpet.'

<sup>10</sup> 'The Ardabīl Puzzle Unravelling.'

<sup>11</sup> Weaver ('The Ardabīl Puzzle,' 45) had reported that the Ardabīl carpets were larger than the current dimensions of any room in the shrine, with the exception of the Jannat Saray.

<sup>12</sup> King also summarized his argument in a letter to the editors of *Hali* (next issue), accompanied by a new plan of the shrine in which he corrected the scale of the carpets as shown in the Jannat Saray.

<sup>13</sup> On Morton's list, section B Carpets and Rugs (*qālī va qālīcheh*), no. 8, in Beattie, Housego and Morton, 'Vase-Technique Carpets.'

<sup>14</sup> William Richard Holmes, *Sketches on the Shores of the Caspian* (London: Richard Bentley, 1845), 37 mentioned the remnants of a once magnificent carpet bearing a date of manufacture of some 300 years earlier. Holmes account is cited in Weaver, 'The Ardabīl Puzzle,' 49 and note 17; Beattie's article in the *Elr*, 2: 367; Ittig, 'Historian's Choice,' 82–83 and note 18; and King, 'The Ardabīl Puzzle Unravelling,' 91 and note 14.

Holmes' published account was corroborated by notes left by his travelling companion, Keith Edward Abbott, the British council in Tabrīz. He specifically mentioned the date, writing that 'In the apartment devoted to prayer there is a carpet bearing the date 946 of the Hijra woven in with the patterns—as it is now the 1259th year of that era the carpet must have been manufactured 313 lunar years ago.' Abbott's notes are in the Public Office in London (FO251/40), cited in Weaver, 'The Ardabīl Puzzle,' 49; Ittig, 'Historian's Choice,' 83 and note 19; and King, 'The Ardabīl Puzzle Unravelling,' 91 and note 14.

historical documentation about the shrine amassed by Morton,<sup>15</sup> McChesney,<sup>16</sup> Melville,<sup>17</sup> and others, we can reconstruct the history of the Ardabīl carpets within the evolution of the shrine specifically and Safavid politics and society in general.

Safavid work on the shrine had already begun during the reign of the dynasty's founder Ismā'īl (r. 907–931/1501–24) who visited the site at least three times. He went there in the spring of 905/1500 to seek the assistance of his ancestors before launching his bid to seize power. He was also there in 921/1515 and 930/1524. Ismā'īl's son and successor Ṭahmāsp (r. 1524–76) visited Ardabīl twice, first in 942/1535 and again the following summer.<sup>18</sup> The official reason, according to Ṭahmāsp's own memories, *Tazkireh-yi Shāh Ṭahmāsp*, was that he did so in response to a vision of 'Alī.<sup>19</sup>

Immediately after the second visit, land and properties were purchased on the site of the future Jannat Saray and adjacent buildings. The *Ṣarīḥ al-Milk* (para. Y.a-e), the list of properties owned by the shrine drawn up on 1 Shawwal 977/9 March 1570, records that the first land was acquired in Jumāda I 943/October–November 1536. It took six years to acquire all the land, for the last deed is dated 949/1542–43.<sup>20</sup>

Morton reported that work on the Jannat Saray was begun by Ṭahmāsp's mother as a tomb for Ismā'īl, but her plan was never completed, for she fell into disfavor with her son Ṭahmāsp and was exiled to Shiraz where she died in 947/1540.<sup>21</sup> Instead, Ismā'īl was buried in the tiny (2.4 × 2.65 m) building squeezed between the so-called Haram (no. 1 on plan), the cylindrical tower built for Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn (d. 735/1335) on the site of his khanaqah, and the square

<sup>15</sup> A.H. Morton, 'The Ardabīl Shrine in the Reign of Shah Ṭahmāsp,' *Iran* 12 (1974), 31–64 and 13 (1975), 39–58.

<sup>16</sup> Robert D. McChesney, 'Waqf and public policy: the waqfs of Shāh 'Abbās 1011–23/1602–14', *Asian and African Studies* 15 (1982), 165–90.

<sup>17</sup> Charles Melville, 'Shah 'Abbās and the Pilgrimage to Mashhad,' *Safavid Persia: The History and Politics of an Islamic Society*, ed. Charles Melville (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 191–230.

<sup>18</sup> Melville, 'Shah 'Abbās and the Pilgrimage to Mashhad,' 221, note 12, citing 'Abdī Beg.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, note 12.

<sup>20</sup> Morton, 'Ardabīl Shrine,' part 1, p. 43.

<sup>21</sup> Personal communication to Weaver, cited in Weaver, 'The Ardabīl Puzzle,' 43 and n. 7. Morton also reiterated the point in the discussion at the Safavid conference held in London in March, 1998.

tomb tower or Dome of the Princes adjacent to it on the east.<sup>22</sup> The tomb for Ismā'īl was evidently squeezed into the narrow site because of its proximity to those of his illustrious ancestors, and the connection to his forebears is emphasized by the form and decoration of his tomb, which echo that of Ṣafī.<sup>23</sup>

The huge Jannat Saray (no. 10 on plan) was obviously completed for some other purpose, most likely as the tomb for Ṭahmāsp himself. Morton already suggested as much on textual grounds,<sup>24</sup> and Robert Hillenbrand's architectural analysis of the Jannat Saray underscored its function as a tomb.<sup>25</sup> The single largest building on the site, it represented an unusually munificent effort on the part of the shah. In area, it is more than twenty times that of the tomb of Ismā'īl. Furthermore, it occupies a commanding position (fig. 4) at the east end of the great inner courtyard (no. 9 on plan).

The Jannat Saray also fits within the tradition of imperial octagonal mausolea. The first to survive, and one that would have been known to the Safavids who had their first capitals at Tabrīz and Qazvin, was the monumental tomb of the Mongol sultan Uljaytū (r. 703–15/1304–16) at Sultaniyya, 120 km. north-west of Qazvin en route to Tabrīz.<sup>26</sup> At Sultaniyya, the spacious two-story interior was opened with eight niches. At Ardabīl the architect worked to open the exterior as well, with deep external bays that invite entry into the building. This idea of opening up the octagon became a trend in Safavid funerary architecture, as at the tomb of Khvājeh Rabi' outside of Mashhad. Whereas as the tomb built for Ismā'īl looked back to local prototypes, the Jannat Saray was meant to connect its occupant with far grander royal precedents.

The medallion carpets bear the date 946/1539–40, so that by this time three years after the initial purchase of land, enough of the parcel was intact to commission the Jannat Saray and its furnish-

<sup>22</sup> Built for Ṣafī al-Dīn's eldest son, Muḥīyy al-Dīn, the square tomb tower is actually the actually earliest building on the site since the son died a decade before his father (in 724/1324–25).

<sup>23</sup> Robert Hillenbrand, 'The Tomb of Shah Ismā'īl,' Proceedings of a Conference on Safavid Art, London, 1998, to be published as part of the forthcoming volume edited by Sheila Canby.

<sup>24</sup> Morton, 'The Ardabīl Shrine,' part 2, 42–43.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Hillenbrand, 'Safavid Architecture,' *The Timurid and Safavid Periods*, vol. 6, Peter Jackson, ed., *Cambridge History of Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 771.

<sup>26</sup> Blair and Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250–1800*, 7–8, with references.

ings. The dimensions of the monumental tomb must have already been determined, so that it was possible to order two large medalion carpets to fit its interior space. The date on the carpets presumably represents the date of commissioning, not completion, and designing and weaving the carpets probably went on simultaneously with construction of the tomb. We have no idea how long it took to complete either project, but certainly a few years. The domed Jannat Saray was definitely finished by the date that the *Ṣarīḥ al-Milk* was drawn up (1 Shawwal 977/9 March 1570).

Whatever his intentions, Ṭahmāsp was not immediately buried at the shrine. Iskandar Beg, court chronicler of Shah ‘Abbās, gives details about the peregrinations of Ṭahmāsp’s body. In the confusion and rivalry following the shah’s death in the palace at Qazvin on 11 Safar 984/14 May 1576, he was hastily interred between the haram garden and the palace at a site called Yurt Shīrvānī.<sup>27</sup> Later, during the brief reign of his son Ismā‘īl II (1576–78), Ṭahmāsp’s body was transferred to Mashhad and buried in the grounds of the shrine of Imam Rizā.<sup>28</sup> Then, during the year of the Monkey, 1005/1596–97, Ṭahmāsp’s remains were again dug up and transferred to Isfahan, where Ṭahmāsp’s grandson ‘Abbās had them interred in the shrine of two descendants of the fourth imam ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Abidīn. This move coincides with ‘Abbās’ laying out of the *maydan* at Isfahan between 1590 and 1595, culminating in the transfer of the capital there.<sup>29</sup>

Ṭahmāsp’s bones did not remain in Isfahan for long, for Iskandar Beg adds that they were later moved to Ardabīl and reinterred somewhere within shrine complex.<sup>30</sup> Iskandar Beg does not give a date when the bones were moved to Ardabīl, but he included this information in his Book II, completed in 1025/1616, so it must have been before that date.

‘Abbās’ transfer of his grandfather’s bones to Ardabīl was part of his fluctuating interest in the dynastic shrine. ‘Abbās had visited the shrine at Ardabīl three times in the opening decade of his reign.

<sup>27</sup> Iskandar Beg, *History of Shah ‘Abbās*, trans. Roger Savory (Boulder: Westview Press, 1978), 205. Iskandar Beg later (286) implies that the burial was improperly hasty.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 324.

<sup>29</sup> Robert McChesney, ‘Four Sources on Shah ‘Abbās’s Building of Isfahan,’ *Muqarnas* 5 (1988), 103–34 and ‘Postscript to ‘Four Sources on Shah ‘Abbās’s Building of Isfahan’ *Muqarnas* 8 (1991), 137–8; Blair and Bloom, *Art and Architecture of Islam 1250–1800*, Chapter 13.

<sup>30</sup> Iskandar Beg, trans. Savory, 702–705.

These visits were made in the context of battles against the Ottomans in Azerbaijan, and Iskandar Beg describes two of them as pilgrimages to invoke the aid of ‘Abbās’s ancestors against the enemy.<sup>31</sup>

At the turn of the seventeenth–eighteenth centuries, however, ‘Abbās’s interests turned elsewhere, and he did not visit the Ardabīl shrine in the 9-year interval from May 1596 to May 1605 (1004–13). Not only was he involved with his new capital Isfahan, but his attentions were also directed eastward. The Uzbek capture of Mashhad in 997/1589 had struck a blow at Safavid prestige, for it seemed that the Safavids were unable to protect the bones of their ancestors. Iskandar Beg cites Uzbek desecration of the shrine as a reason for ‘Abbās’s removal of Ṭahmāsp’s bones to Isfahan in 1005/1596–97. To reestablish Safavid prestige, in 1010–1/1602 ‘Abbās mounted a major campaign against the Uzbeks at Balkh. In 1010/1601 he made an extraordinary pilgrimage on foot to Mashhad, followed the next year by extensive endowments to the shrine there.

The Balkh campaign, however, ended as a disaster, and in the beginning of the seventeenth century ‘Abbās transferred his attentions back to the west. He spent the four years from 1013/1604 to 1017/1608 in the northwest, mounting repeated military campaigns against the Ottoman general Jighāl-öghlū (Sinān Pāshā). In this period, ‘Abbās also visited the shrine at Ardabīl repeatedly: beginning in Muḥarram 1014/May 1605, he made six visits in the following six years.

As at Mashhad, ‘Abbās’s visits to Ardabīl were combined with major gifts and renovations to the shrine. The gifts were part of a major *waqf* endowment carried out between 1013–17/1604–8. The sources vary in their dates and descriptions of this endowment, but McChesney has ably sorted out the available information.<sup>32</sup> The bequests included the ruler’s household estates and personal property as well as tax revenues. The shrine at Ardabīl received jewelry, weapons, horses, sheep and goats in number beyond computation, but the parts that are best known (at least to art historians) are the manuscripts and porcelains.

The manuscripts comprised historical works, collected works of poets, and the works of Persian authors in general. In contrast, the manu-

<sup>31</sup> Melville, ‘Shah ‘Abbās and the Pilgrimage to Mashhad,’ p. 196, Table 1 catalogues ‘Abbās’s visits to Ardabīl and the contemporary sources for them.

<sup>32</sup> McChesney, ‘Waqf and public policy: the waqfs of Shāh ‘Abbās 1011–23/1602–14,’ 170–78. It is not clear whether there was one or more separate transactions, and the singular endowment has been used here for convenience.

scripts bequeathed to the shrine of Imam Rizā at Mashhad comprised library copies of the Qurʾān and scientific books in Arabic. The different endowments show the different esteem that the Safavids held for the two shrines, one dedicated to a member of the Prophet's line, and the other dedicated to a member of the Safavid family.

The endowment took a few years to execute. Several books given to Ardabīl and preserved in the shrine library and elsewhere have an handwritten note dated 1017/1608–09 as well as pages stamped with the *vaqf* seal of ʿAbbās dated to the same year.<sup>33</sup> Many other famous manuscripts and individual pages with a *vaqf* seal dated 1017/1608–09 were probably endowed to the shrine at the same time. They include the famous copy of Jāmī's *Haft Aurang* in the Freer Gallery (46.13), transcribed for Ṭahmāsp's nephew Ibrahim Mīrzā between 963 and 972 (1556–63).<sup>34</sup> The manuscript obviously passed from the prince to the Safavid royal library, and 54 of the 304 extant folios in the manuscript are stamped with the royal seal saying that it was made *vaqf* by ʿAbbās to the blessed and pure Safavid threshold (*vaqf āstāneh mutabarraka ṣafīyya ṣafāvīyya*) in 1017/1608–09.

Another manuscript that was apparently endowed to the shrine at this time is the celebrated copy of ʿAṭṭār's *Mantiq al-tayr* now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (63.210).<sup>35</sup> Transcribed by the master calligrapher Sulṭān ʿAlī Mashhadī for the Timurid sultan Ḥusayn Bayqara in 892/1487,<sup>36</sup> the manuscript was apparently left unfinished. It too passed to the Safavid royal library. Four paintings were added in ʿAbbās's time, and the manuscript was rebound. When it was endowed to the shrine, some of the page were stamped with the *vaqf* seal dated 1017/1608–9, and the word *vaqf* was written on the frontispiece and each of the eight paintings.

<sup>33</sup> Morton, 'The Ardabīl Shrine,' part 1, p. 35, note 31, for example, cites a copy of Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's *Majmaʿ al-tawārīkh* in the Iran Bastan Museum (No. 3723). The shrine library was plundered by the Russians in 1827, and many of the volumes were taken to the public library in St Petersburg.

<sup>34</sup> Marianna Shreve Simpson, *Sultan Ibrahim Mirza's Haft Aurang* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press in association with the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1997), 34–35.

<sup>35</sup> Marie Lukens Swietockowski, 'The Historical Background and Illustrative Character of the Metropolitan Museum's *Mantiq al-Tayr* of 1483, *Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Richard Ettinghausen, ed. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1972), 39–72.

<sup>36</sup> For the date, see Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani, 'Khwāje Mīrāk Naqqāsh,' *Journal Asiatique* 276 (1988), 104.

‘Abbās’s gift to the shrine at Ardabīl also included a huge collection of Chinese porcelain.<sup>37</sup> The original donation amounted to a staggering 1162 pieces, many of them very large. The collection included 58 celadons, 80 white wares, other monochromes and polychromes, but the most important are the 400-odd pieces of blue and white. Most pieces are inscribed with the dedicatory inscription neatly engraved into the glaze in a rectangular cartouche saying that ‘Abbās endowed it to the threshold of Shah Ṣafī (*bandeh-yi shāh-i vilāyat ‘Abbās vaqf bar āstāneh-yi shāh ṣafī namūd*).

To house the objects endowed to the shrine, ‘Abbās also ordered restorations to several of the buildings there. For the porcelains, ‘Abbās ordered the large octagonal building that had been constructed on the east side of the shrine in the fourteenth century rebuilt (fig. 5). Befitting its new function, it became known as the *Chīnī Khāneh*.<sup>38</sup> Jalāl al-Munajjim, chief astronomer at Shah ‘Abbās’s court, records that the porcelains were transferred to the shrine in Jumāda II 1020/September 1611.

‘Abbās also redid the *Dār al-Ḥuffāz* (no. 2 on plan), the large hall where the Qur’ān was read and books were stored. It too had been built in the fourteenth century when Ṣafī al-Dīn’s son and successor, Ṣadr al-Dīn, was chief Shaykh of the Safavi order. According to the *Tārīkh-i ‘Abbāsī*, in 1021/1612 ‘Abbās ordered changes to the southern side of the hall, next to the square tomb tower of Muḥiyī al-Dīn.<sup>39</sup> ‘Abbās had the raised platform known as *shāhnishīn* enlarged and new gold and silver fittings made for the doors and windows. He also had the interior of the hall redecorated with new gilding, painting and plasterwork. An inscription running around the hall and *shāhnishīn* with the date 1[0]37/1627–28 suggests a *terminus ad quem* for the work.

A third part of ‘Abbās’s renovations to the shrine centered on the Jannat Saray. These repairs are mentioned in the *Silsilat al-Nasab al-Ṣafaviyya*, a genealogy of the Safavid family from the time of Ṣafī onwards, written by Shaykh Ḥusayn Zāhidī whose father Shaykh ‘Abdal Zāhidī was appointed *mutavallī* of the shrine in Rabi‘ I 1009/September–October 1600. Water had penetrated the roof and

<sup>37</sup> John Alexander Pope, *Chinese Porcelains from the Ardebil Shrine* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1956); M. Medley ‘Ardabīl. IV. Ardabīl Collection of Chinese Porcelain,’ *Elr* 2: 364–65.

<sup>38</sup> Pope, *Chinese Porcelains*, 8–11; Morton, ‘Ardabīl Shrine,’ part 1, 56.

<sup>39</sup> Morton. ‘Ardabīl Shrine,’ part 1, 54–55 and note 124.



stained the walls black, and Shaykh ‘Abdal Zāhidī had the dome capped with bricks and mortar. To do so, he had a large scaffolding erected. At the same time, he had the interior whitewashed. His son Shaykh Ḥusayn adds that these were the first repairs made to the Jannat Saray, since the large size of the building had precluded setting up scaffolding before that point.<sup>40</sup>

The dome over the Jannat Saray may well have been damaged for some time, possibly during the repeated Safavid-Ottoman struggles in the area or more probably by one of the many earthquakes that repeatedly shake the area.<sup>41</sup> The water that had seeped through cracks in the dome and blackened the walls probably damaged the two carpets that Ṭahmāsp had ordered for the building, and at some point they were shortened. To judge from the area that is still intact in the London carpet, King estimated that about a meter and a half was cut off the bottom of the original 10.67-meter carpet, reducing it to some 9 meters in length. Assuming that the carpets were originally laid with the inscription facing upward near the doorway in the direction of the qibla, then the damaged end would have fallen on the north, the side where snow clings longest to the dome. As King noted,<sup>42</sup> the shortened carpet would then have fit the *Chīnī Khāneh* (9.7 meters square) and its shortened mate the *Dār al-Ḥuffāz* (8.9 × 5.8 meters), the other areas that ‘Abbās had renovated.

The period of ‘Abbās’s renovations to the Ardabīl shrine in the early seventeenth century is the most likely time when the two huge medallion carpets ordered by his grandfather Ṭahmāsp were shortened. This was the first time since Ṭahmāsp’s work at the shrine that substantial monies were spent there. According to Iskandar Beg, this was also the time that ‘Abbās had his grandfather’s bones moved back to Ardabīl, although the court chronicler coyly says that security prevents him from noting exactly where they were interred.

‘Abbās may have had symbolic as well as practical reasons for reusing the medallion carpets ordered by his grandfather. Ṭahmāsp seems to have become particularly important to his grandson ‘Abbās in the early seventeenth century. According to Jalāl al-Munajjim’s account

<sup>40</sup> Morton, ‘Ardabīl Shrine,’ part 1, 36 and part 2, 42.

<sup>41</sup> Charles Melville, ‘Historical Monuments and Earthquakes in Tabrīz,’ *Iran* 19 (1981), 163–64, for example, mentions a severe earthquake in the Tabrīz region in 957/1550, so that by the early sixteenth century the city had become ruinous and depopulated.

<sup>42</sup> King, ‘The Ardabīl Puzzle Unravelled,’ 90.

of the endowments made by ‘Abbās in 1013–17/1604–8, Ṭahmāsp was the recipient of the largest share of the spiritual rewards (*ṣavāb*) to the infallible Imams, the 1,549 *tūmāns* in revenue accruing from real estate at Qazvin, Kashan and Isfahan endowed to the Prophet.<sup>43</sup>

Ṭahmāsp is also named in the endowment inscriptions on several buildings endowed by ‘Abbās in the early seventeenth century. They include the now-destroyed Ribāṭ-i Khārgūshī at Yazd, endowed in 1023/1612,<sup>44</sup> and more importantly the largest building in ‘Abbās’s new capital, the Shah Mosque at Isfahan. In the spring of 1020/1611, ‘Abbās ordered work begun on the new congregational mosque there. The main portal facing the *maydān* was decorated with carpet panels of the same general design as that used for Ṭahmāsp’s carpets for Ardabil. The foundation inscription above, written by ‘Alī Rizā al-‘Abbāsī and dated 1025/1616–17, specifies that ‘Abbās built the mosque out of his personal monies and dedicated the rewards of the pious act to the soul of his grandfather Ṭahmāsp.<sup>45</sup>

McChesney showed that the written descriptions of ‘Abbās’s endowments made in 1013–17/1604–8 underscore the shah’s interest in his descent from his grandfather.<sup>46</sup> In different contexts, both Jalāl-i Munajjim and Valī Qūlī Shāmlū exclude rewards going to those members of the Safavid family who had acted treacherously toward Ṭahmāsp. Jalāl-i Munajjim simply distinguishes those who had acted treacherously toward Ṭahmāsp, but Valī Qūlī Shāmlū is more specific. He anathematizes Ismā‘īl II and Ṭahmāsp’s son Ḥaydar for their ‘treachery and outrageous actions’, the former presumably for murdering the other Safavid princes and the latter for his abortive attempt to seize the throne. Valī Qūlī Shāmlū also singles out the Safavids Ṣadr al-Dīn Khan and Shah Beg for ‘violating the sanctity’ (*bast*) of Shaykh Ṣafī. By anathematizing those forebears whom history judged as deviants from the Safavid course, ‘Abbās seems to have been promoting his direct line to his grandfather. In repairing and reusing the carpets ordered by his grandfather, ‘Abbās may well have wanted to underscore the same connection.

<sup>43</sup> McChesney, ‘Waqf and public policy,’ Table 1, no. 1. According to the version by Valī Qūlī Shāmlū, the benefits went to Shah ‘Abbās’s father, Sultan Muḥammad Khudābandeh and Ṭahmāsp received no specific benefits.

<sup>44</sup> McChesney, ‘Waqf and public policy,’ 167 and note 7, citing Iraj Afshar’s *Yādghīrhā-yi Yazd* (Tihiran: Anjoman-i Asār-i Millī, 1348–54), 1: 42–44.

<sup>45</sup> Luṭfallah Hunarfar, *Ganjīneh-yi āsār-i tārikhī-yi Isfahān* (Tihiran: Zībā, 1350), 429; McChesney, ‘Waqf and public policy,’ 178–81.

<sup>46</sup> McChesney, ‘Waqf and public policy,’ Table 1, nos 7–9 and 177 and 185–86.

McChesney showed how ‘Abbās was a master of public relations, consciously using *vaqf* as a political instrument to shore up his two main claims to legitimacy. By restoring the shrine of Imam Riżā at Mashhad, ‘Abbās championed the ‘Alid cause. By restoring the shrine at Ardabīl, ‘Abbās strengthened his family line. ‘Abbās’s gifts and renovations to the Ardabīl shrine were equally calculated for their value as public relations.

Reconstructing the history of the medallion carpets shows how the matched pair, originally ordered to fit a specific building, was adapted to meet the changing needs of the shrine at Ardabīl. More generally, this example confirms that dated objects were usually made for specific settings and that we are correct in seeking to explain the commissioning of fancy dated objects in relation to specific historical events. Endowing a set of fine carpets to a shrine became a standard form of gift giving in Safavid Iran, and we can apply the techniques and methodology used in studying the medallion carpets to other important carpets of the period.

In addition to the Ardabīl carpets, only a handful of carpets are known to be dated. One is a hunting carpet in the Poldi Pezzoli Museum in Milan, signed by Ghiyās al-Dīn Jāmī in the year 949 (1542–3).<sup>47</sup> It too must have been made for a specific event. It too must have been made for a specific audience, such as the one depicted in the painting showing the celebration of ‘Id. The painting has been detached from a celebrated manuscript containing the collected poems of Ḥāfiẓ, probably made for Ṭahmāsp and then given to his brother Sām Mīrzā.<sup>48</sup> Signed by the master Sulṭān Muḥammad, the painting, like the hunting carpet, is one of the handful of signed works in its genre from the period.

The other dated carpets to survive from the Safavid period are seven fragments from a set of three carpets with multiple medallions woven in the so-called vase technique.<sup>49</sup> The set, bought for the

<sup>47</sup> *Arts of Islam*, Catalogue of an exhibition held at the Hayward Gallery 8 April–4 July 1976 (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1976), no. 58. This is the year that Ṭahmāsp finished buying the land for the Jannat Saray. One possibility is that this carpet was also commissioned for use somewhere in the shrine, but its central design shows it was intended for audience, not for prayer.

<sup>48</sup> Once in the Cartier collection, this magnificent manuscript has recently been cut up and the pages dispersed. This page in the Art and History Trust Collection is now on loan to the Freer-Sackler Gallery. See Abolala Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts: Selections from the Art and History Trust Collection* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), no. 59.

<sup>49</sup> Housego, ‘2. Kirman and Mahan,’ in Beattie, Housego and Morton, ‘Vase-Technique Carpets and Kirman,’ 468–70.

imperial collections in Vienna by an Austrian diplomat who served in Tehran from 1888 to 1892, passed to the museum at Sarajevo, then part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Cartouches on the fragments are signed *'amal-i ustād mu'min ibn quṭb al-dīn māhānī* ('work of the master Mu'min b. Quṭb al-Dīn Māhānī'). The fragments bear two dates, one in figures 1047/1637–38 and the other a chronogram that has been read as 1056/1646–47 or 1066/1656–57.

One of the carpets has been reconstructed as a rectangle 8.16 by 3.03 meters, with a slight rectangular projection in the middle of one of the long sides. Based on the carpet's irregular shape, Housego was able to show that the carpet must have been woven to shape for the tomb chamber in the shrine for the Sufi Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn Nī'matallāh (d. 834/1431) at Mahan. The tomb chamber measures 8.33 m. square, with a corresponding rectangular projection along the sides. Begun shortly after his death, the shrine was enlarged and embellished by the Safavids and Qajars, particularly by Shah 'Abbās who had a *Dār al-Huffāz* and adjoining courtyard added to the shrine in 998/1589–90 and had the tomb chamber itself restored in 1010/1601.<sup>50</sup> These carpets were endowed to the shrine in the next generation, but to judge from their large size and quality, they must have been a royal or courtly gift, and by matching the date on them with the history of the shrine, we may be able to determine the context of their bestowal.

The Mahan carpets were woven to shape to fit around the cenotaph within the tomb chamber, but the Ardabīl carpets show that rectangular carpets, particularly those with dimensions in the ratio 1:2, were often laid side by side. This is the case with a pair of silk animal carpets also from the shrine at Ardabīl. As King noted,<sup>51</sup> along with the medallion carpets, several other carpets from the shrine passed through the hands of Vincent & Sons. They including a pair of silk animal carpets, one in the Metropolitan Museum (no. 10.61.2) and the other in the collection of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller. On stylistic grounds, the animal carpets are datable to the mid-sixteenth century and the period of Ṭahmāsp and are thus contemporary with the medallion carpets.

Like the medallion carpets, the animal carpets are listed in the 1759 inventory, and comparing the inventory to a modern catalogue

<sup>50</sup> Hillenbrand, 'Safavid Architecture,' 792–93. The shrine deserves a full monograph.

<sup>51</sup> King, 'The Ardabīl Puzzle Unravelling,' 91 and figs 3 and 4.

shows how we can begin to interpret the terminology dealing with carpets. The pair are described in the inventory as crimson (*qirmiz*) ground, with figures (*muşavvar*), decorated (*munaqqash*) border, white inner (*andarūn*) border, crimson outer (*bīrūn*) border, silk fringe, approximately (*takmīnan*) length: 4 *zar*<sup>52</sup>; width 2 *zar*<sup>52</sup>. The description is remarkably accurate and matches that given in the catalogue of Oriental carpets in the Metropolitan: wine red field with animals in combat; a border with intersecting floral scrolls; white inner and wine red outer guard band.<sup>53</sup> The most interesting variation is the dimensions: the 1:2 proportions are correct, but the modern measurements of 1.80 × 3.54 m. (5' 11" × 11' 6") yield a measurement for the eighteenth-century *zar*<sup>54</sup> (the equivalent of the *gaz*) of nearly 90 centimeters, considerably longer than the *gaz-i mukassar* calculated by Hinz as 63.13 cm.<sup>54</sup>

These examples show how fruitful it can be to match objects, texts, and inscriptions. Objects, like texts, are valuable historical documents that can help us reconstruct political and social settings. And texts, in turn, can help us explain the function and meaning of objects.

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<sup>52</sup> Morton in Beattie, Housego and Morton, 'Vase-Technique Carpets and Kirman,' 471, no. B1.

<sup>53</sup> M.S. Dimand and Jean Mailey, *Oriental Rugs in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1973), no. 11.

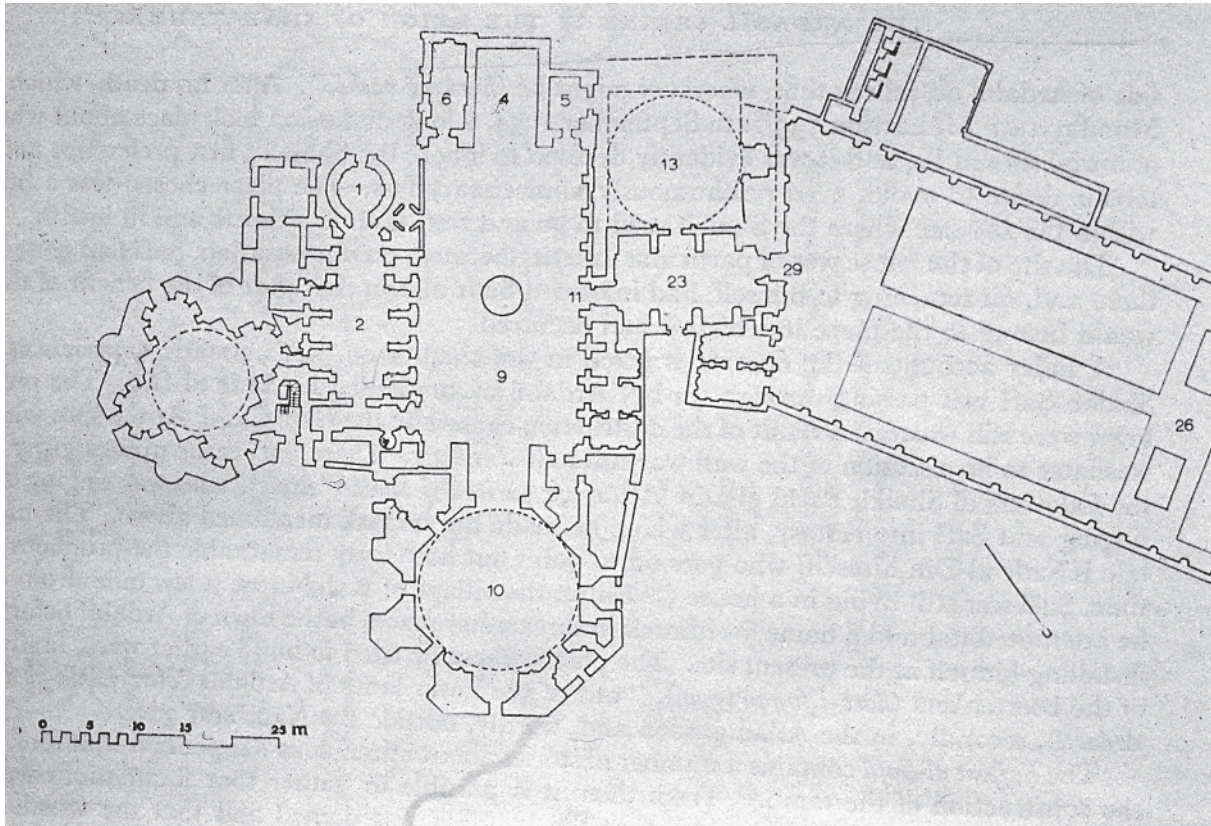
<sup>54</sup> Morton in Beattie, Housego and Morton, 'Vase-Technique Carpets and Kirman', 471, note 5, citing W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte*.



1. Medallion carpet dated 946/1539-40. Victoria and Albert Museum, London no. 272 1893



2. Medallion carpet dated 946/1539-40. Los Angeles County Museum of Art no. 53.50.2

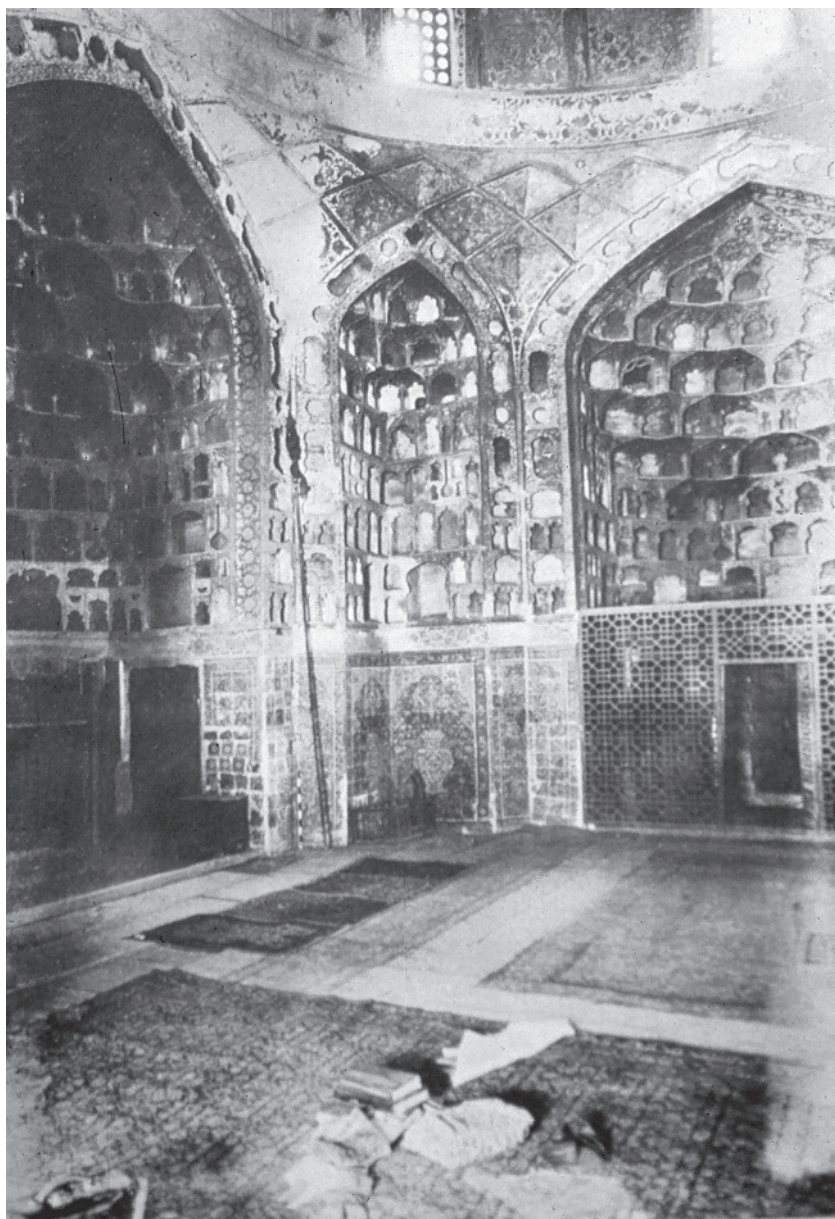


3. Plan of the shrine at Ardabil (after Morton, "The Ardabil Shrine in the Reign of Shah Tahmāsp", *Iran* 12 (1974), pp. 48-49)



4. View of the courtyard in the shrine at Ardabil, looking north to the Jannat Saray.





5. Interior of the Chīnī Khāneh at Ardabil (after Pope, *Chinese Porcelains from the Ardebil Shrine*, pl. 4)

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## SHAH ‘ABBĀS AND THE TRANSFER OF THE SAFAVID CAPITAL FROM QAZVIN TO ISFAHAN

Stephen P. Blake

While Isfahan had been the capital of Iran during the Saljuq period of Iranian history (eleventh-thirteenth centuries), it had taken a back seat to Tabrīz and Qazvin early in the Safavid period.<sup>1</sup> Thus Shah ‘Abbās’s transfer of the imperial seat from Qazvin (in the northwest) to Isfahan (in the center) soon after he ascended the throne represented a significant change in the political and economic geography of the Safavid Empire.

There is a consensus in the scholarly literature on the date of Shah ‘Abbās’s relocation of the capital. Most scholars have followed the lead of the famous seventeenth-century historian Iskandar Munshī, who wrote, ‘Therefore, in this year, 1006 AH [1597–98] the world-adorning thought [i.e., ‘Abbās] decided to make *dār al-saltānat-i Isfāhān* the imperial residence [*maqarr-i dawlat*] and to lay the foundations for great buildings.’<sup>2</sup>

While Iskandar Munshī devoted the remainder of this paragraph to a description of ‘Abbās’s construction of the Chahār Bāgh Avenue (Map 1, no. 137), the long pleasance linking the Dawlat Gate of the city (Map 1, no. 1) with the ‘Abbāsābād Chahār Bāgh (Map 1, no. 168), modern scholars have interpreted this passage as dating both the move from Qazvin to Isfahan and the founding of the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is a revised version of chapter two of my recent work, *Half the World: The Social Architecture of Safavid Isfahan, 1590–1722* (Costa Mesa, CA.: Mazda Publishers, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *Tārīkh-i ‘Ālam-ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī*, ed. Iraj Afshar, 2 vols (Tehran, 1344/1955), 1, 544; Iskandar Munshī, *Tārīkh-i ‘Ālam-ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī: History of Shah ‘Abbās the Great by Iskandar Beg Munshī*, trans. Roger M. Savory, 2 vols (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1978), 2, 724.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example: A. K. S. Lambton, *EI*, s.v. ‘Isfahan;’ A.D. Godard, ‘Isfahan,’ in *Asār-i Iran*, vol. 2, *Annales du Service Archeologique de l’Iran*, (Haarlem: Service Archeologique de l’Iran, 1937), 88; Laurence Lockhart, ‘Shah ‘Abbās’s Isfahan,’ in Arnold Toynbee, ed., *Cities of Destiny* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 210–25; H. Roemer, ‘The Safavid Period,’ in Jackson, Peter and Laurence Lockhart, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 6: The Timurid and Safavid Periods*

While a consensus exists on when and where, the first two questions concerning the transfer of the Safavid capital, there is no general agreement on the answer to the question why. Most scholars concur with Iskandar Munshī in giving prominence to the Zāyandeh Rūd and the fertility of the Isfahan oasis. Beyond that, however, their explanations diverge. Some offer geopolitical reasons, others economic, and still others the influence of the Qizilbash.<sup>4</sup>

To provide fresh answers to these questions requires a new hypothesis. The existing hypothesis, based on Iskandar Munshī's narrative, is inadequate. It does not allow a coherent and integrated interpretation of the evidence. Only a new thesis, fashioned from the twin histories of Isfahan and 'Abbās, can provide the context for a full and accurate analysis of the emperor's relocation of the capital.

In my view, the story of 'Abbās's transformation of the city from a provincial center into an imperial capital has two parts, each set in a different place and at a different time than has previously been posited. The first part begins in 999/1590 at the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat* (Map 1, no. 125), the second in 1011/1602 at the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* (Map 1, no. 14). In this story new answers are given to the three questions about the relocation: When? Shah 'Abbās transferred the Safavid capital in 999/1590, not in 1006/1597–98. In 1011/1602, however, the emperor switched the location of his headquarters in the city. Where? In 999/1590 those headquarters centered on the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*. Not until 1011/1602 did he decide to found a new urban core around the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān*. Why? This hypothesis links the two stages in Isfahan's evolution from a provincial center into an imperial capital with Shah 'Abbās's political and economic reforms.

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 6, 270; Roger Savory, *Iran under the Safavids* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1980), Chapter Four; Lutfallah Hunarfar,  *Ganjīneh-yi Āsār-i Tārīkh-i Isfahān*, 2d.ed. (Tehran: Saqafi Bookshop, 1350/1971–2), 479; Masashi Haneda, 'Maydan et Bagh: Reflexion à Propos de l'Urbanisme du Shah 'Abbās,' in Akira Haneda, ed., *Documents et Archives Provenant de l'Asie Central* (Kyoto: Association Franco-Japonaise de Études Orientales, 1990), 87–99; Michael Mazzaoui, 'From Tabrīz to Qazvin to Isfahan: Three Phases of Safavid History,' *ZDMG, Supplement* 3/1 (1977): 520–22; Rosemarie Quiring-Zoche, *Isfahan im 15. Und 16. Jahrhundert* (Freiburg: Klaus Schwarz Verlag: 1980), 106; H. Roemer, 'Das fruhsafawidische Isfahan als historische Forschungsaufgabe,' *ZDMG* 124 (1974): 320–23; and R.D. McChesney, 'Four Sources on Shah 'Abbās's Building of Isfahan,' *Muqarnas* 5 (1988), 116.

<sup>4</sup> Mazzaoui, 'From Tabrīz to Qazvin,' 521–22; H. Roemer, 'Das fruhsafawidische Isfahan,' 320–23.



*Isfahan before 'Abbās*

Up to the time of Shah 'Abbās the nucleus of Isfahan was the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*. The *Masjid-i Jāmi'* (Map 1, no. 135), founded in 156/772–73 by the early Arab conquerors and added to over the centuries, anchored the northwest corner of the *maydān*. The center of sixteenth-century Isfahan, this piazza contained bazaars, baths, caravanserais, palaces, coffeehouses, *madrasesh*s, and mosques. For two weeks during the summer of 915/1509 Shah Ismā'īl resided in Isfahan. He ordered the *maydān* widened to better accommodate polo, horse-racing, and *qabāq*.<sup>5</sup> In 918/1512–13 Mīrzā Shah Ḥusayn, the subordinate of the governor Durmish Khān Shāmlū, constructed the *Hārūn Vilāyat* (an *imāmzādeh* or tomb) on the southwestern side of the square.<sup>6</sup> In 928/1521–22 an unknown builder erected the *Masjid-i 'Alī*, the other monument that arose during the reign of Ismā'īl I.

Although the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat* was the core of Isfahan under Ismā'īl I, the Persian chroniclers mention events occurring in the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* (to the south) and in the Naqsh-i Jahān Garden (to the southwest). In the summer of 910/1504 Shah Ismā'īl captured Muḥammad Karra, a rebel from Yazd, and sent him to Isfahan. He was burned to death in an iron cage in the middle of the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān*.<sup>7</sup> Later that year the shah received the Ottoman ambassador in a newly constructed palace in the *Naqsh-i Jahān* Garden.<sup>8</sup> This is the first notice in the Safavid sources of the garden and square that were later to form the core of 'Abbās's new city. Although Ismā'īl must have returned to the city occasionally, none of the sources for his reign refers to the palace, the garden, or the *maydān* again. For Ismā'īl, the *Naqsh-i Jahān* area was simply a suburban retreat.

During the reign of Shah Ṭahmāsp (930–84/1524–76) pious notables repaired the *Masjid-i Jāmi'* and built several mosques near the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*,<sup>9</sup> but the emperor did not erect any build-

<sup>5</sup> Ghulam Sarwar, *History of Shah Ismail Safawi* (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, 1939), 50. A *qabāq* was a tall piece of wood that stood in the middle of the *maydān*. A golden apple or melon was set on top. Horsemen rode by and tried to hit the apple with an arrow. Those who succeeded kept the apple. Luṭfallāh Hunarfar, 'Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān-i Isfahan,' *Hunar va Mardum* 105 (1971): 9–10.

<sup>6</sup> Hunarfar, *Ganjīneh*, 360–69.

<sup>7</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 1, 31; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 1, 49.

<sup>8</sup> Sarwar, *Ismā'īl*, 50.

<sup>9</sup> Godard, 'Isfahan,' 172; Quiring-Zoche, *Isfahan*, 193–95.

ings in the city. Muḥammad Khudābandeh (985–95/1578–87) likewise showed no interest in Isfahan. Passing through the area in 985/1578, he and his household camped outside the city walls.<sup>10</sup>

*Isfahan under 'Abbās*

Shah 'Abbās ascended the throne in Qazvin in late 995/1587 as the nominee and pawn of his tutor, Murshid Qūlī Khān. The new emperor spent the first part of the following year subduing the rebellious Qizilbash tribesmen and in the summer of 996/1588 ordered his tutor assassinated.<sup>11</sup> Soon after, he journeyed to northeastern Iran to fight the Uzbeks and in the fall of 996/1588 suffered a disastrous defeat, losing the cities of Mashhad and Herat. 'Abbās spent the winter and early spring of 998–99/1590 in Isfahan, celebrating the New Year of 998/1590 there.<sup>12</sup> At this time his military weakness forced him to sign a humiliating treaty with the Ottomans, his ancient enemy to the northeast, confirming the loss of the Azarbayjan province and of Tabrīz, the original Safavid capital. A short while later, he journeyed to the nearby city of Yazd. During his sojourn there 'Abbās learned that several great amirs had entered the Tabarak Fortress (Map 1, no. 56) and had tried to entice his two brothers (Abū Ṭalib Mīrzā and Ṭahmāsp Mīrzā), whom he had put there for safekeeping, into spearheading a revolt. 'Abbās returned immediately and, to remove the threat, had his brothers blinded.<sup>13</sup> He remained in the Isfahan-Shiraz-Yazd area until the winter of 999/ December 1590.

Of 'Abbās's last several weeks in Isfahan, Naṭanzī, the author of *NA*, wrote:

When . . . ['Abbās ordered the] enriching and renovating [of] the buildings [*bar ma'mūrī va tajdīd-i 'imārāt*] of that paradisaical city . . . he ordered the creation of a *qayṣarīyyeh* building like the one that was in Tabrīz. He rebuilt the old bazaars [*bāzārḥā-yi qadīm*] and he laid the foundations

<sup>10</sup> Maḥmūd b. Hadāyat Allāh Afūshā'i Naṭanzī, *Nuqāvat al-Āsār*, ed. Iḥsān Isḥrāqī (Tehran: BTNK Press, 1350/1971), 63–64.

<sup>11</sup> Naṭanzī, *NA*, 331–35; Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 1, 399–401; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 576–78; Quiring-Zoche, *Isfahan*, 86.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of this trip, see Charles Melville, 'From Qars to Qandahar: The Itineraries of Shah 'Abbās I (995–1038/1587–1629),' in Jean Calmard, ed., *Études Safavides* (Paris and Tehran: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1993), 199–207.

<sup>13</sup> Naṭanzī, *NA*, 374–75.

of many shops and covered crossroads [*chahār sūqs*] and in a short time they were finished . . . Isfāhan became a capital city [*mišr-i jān*] so that Tabrīz, with its great beauty and decoration and its many beautiful people, was next to it an extremely contemptible village. For polo and horse racing he leveled the *maydān* and spread sand from the river on it so that it became like the colored mirror of the heavens. . . . In the middle of winter 999 [1590] they raised the banners for Qazvin.<sup>14</sup>

Naṭanzī here noted ‘Abbās’s work on the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*, not on the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān*. The words ‘renovating the buildings’ and ‘old bazaars’ only make sense in reference to the old *maydān*. Like Ismā‘īl I in 915/1509, ‘Abbās leveled and resanded the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat* for polo and horse-racing.<sup>15</sup>

In *RS*, Junābādī, another Safavid historian, devoted two chapters to ‘Abbās’s construction activities in Isfāhan.<sup>16</sup> Unlike Naṭanzī, Junābādī did not give a date in either the heading or the body of his first chapter.<sup>17</sup> A careful reading of the chapter, however, reveals that Junābādī joined a description of Murshid Qūlī Khān’s murder in 996/1588 with an account of ‘Abbās’s visit to Isfāhan in 998–99/1590. Evidence for this conclusion comes from two dates, 996 (1587–88) and 998 (1589–90), scrawled in the margins of the British Museum’s copy of the manuscript. These dates—written in pencil and in a different hand—appear at the end of the six-page passage covering these events and were probably added by the owner of the manuscript or by his librarian. Having mentioned Farḥād Beg (who died in 997/1589) and Yūlī Beg, another great amir who rebelled in early 998/1590,<sup>18</sup> Junābādī continued:

. . . *dār al-mulk* Isfāhan, because of its many canals of water, its capacity for being a city [*isti‘dād-i shahriyyat*], and its numberless population . . . and [because] the heaven-establishing Badshah had come [there], he made Isfāhan the capital [*Isfāhān-rā dār al-mulk gardānīd*]. He turned all of his high ambition to the designing [*tartīb*] and building [*ta‘mīr*]

<sup>14</sup> Naṭanzī, *NA*, 376–77. For McChesney’s translation, see ‘Four Sources,’ 106.

<sup>15</sup> McChesney misunderstood this passage, thinking it referred to the new *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān*. McChesney, ‘Four Sources,’ 114–15, 117. Quiring-Zoche, *Isfāhan*, 92–93, misinterpreted the passage in the same way.

<sup>16</sup> McChesney overlooked the first chapter in his initial article. Although he noticed it in a severely truncated page-and-a-half postscript three years later, he never properly evaluated its significance. McChesney, ‘Postscript to Four Sources on Shah ‘Abbās’s Building of Isfāhan,’ *Muqarnas* 8 (1991): 137–38.

<sup>17</sup> Mīrzā Beg b. Hasan Ḥusaynī Junābādī, ‘*Rawżāt al-Safawīyeh*,’ Persian Manuscript Collection, Or. 3388, British Library, London, 290a.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 290b–91a.



of that paradise-like city. First, . . . the enlarging of the *maydān* that was found in the front of the *imāmzādeh* [tomb] . . . of *Hārūn Vilāyat* . . . The Isfahanis laid out a wide large square *maydān*, of strong foundation, approximately 300 *jarībs* [on a side] . . . In the exact middle of the *maydān* a very high pole was [raised] for a game of *qabāq* [but] most of the time in that wide *maydān* the Bādshah . . . decorated that courtyard with the game of polo . . . and at other times celebrated there by drinking cups of wine.<sup>19</sup>

Although Junābādī does not date his passage, it is clear that he and Naṭanzī are describing the same imperial visit. The passage from Naṭanzī, dated 998–99/1590, verifies the accuracy of the dates in the margin of the British Museum manuscript. Junābādī's text, on the other hand, demonstrates that Naṭanzī was referring to the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*. More important, it shows that 'Abbās had decided at this early point in his reign, about three years after his accession, to make Isfahan *his* capital, the center of the new state he had just begun to create.<sup>20</sup>

While Jalāl al-Dīn, in his history, *TA*, describes the problems with Yūlī Beg and the incarceration of the royal brothers under the year 998/1589–90, he does not refer to the shift of the capital or to the renovation of the old *maydān*.<sup>21</sup> Yet under the year 1000 (1591–92) he writes: 'In the first part of Šafar of this year [mid-November 1591] he founded the *maydān* and bazaar of Isfahan and the *Qayṣariyyeh* [*zarh-i 'imārat-i maydān va bāzār Isfāhān va Qayṣariyyeh*].'<sup>22</sup>

As the passages from Naṭanzī and Junābādī make clear, Jalāl al-Dīn refers here to the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*.<sup>23</sup> Since the young astrologer did not join the imperial household until the latter part

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 291a.

<sup>20</sup> I differ markedly from McChesney in my translation and interpretation of this passage. McChesney writes that Junābādī, despite the clear evidence of the text, was mistaken and that his reference to the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat* must be taken to refer to the building of the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān*, an event that he describes some forty pages later. Furthermore, McChesney does not translate fully and accurately the first few sentences of the passage. He renders them: ' . . . since the *dār al-mulk*, Isfahan, on account of its abundant supply of water and the talents and numbers of its people, had come to bear the stamp of a paradisiacal place and [to be] the place for a sovereign of heavenly authority.' He leaves out one of the phrases about Isfahan's viability as a capital, its having all of the requirements of a city (*ista'dād-i shahrīyat*) and mistranslates the phrase about 'Abbās deciding to make the city his capital—(*Isfāhān-rā dār al-mulk gardānid*). McChesney, 'Postscript,' 137.

<sup>21</sup> Jalāl al-dīn Muḥammad Munajjim Yazdī, *Tārīkh-i 'Abbāsī*, 85–92.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>23</sup> McChesney thought this sentence referred to the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān*. 'Four Sources,' 114, 115, 117.

of 999/1591, he was not in Isfahan during 998–99/1590.<sup>24</sup> This, along with the difficulties associated with the multiple Safavid dating systems, probably explains the discrepancy between his date and those of the other two historians.<sup>25</sup>

Although Iskandar Munshī includes the stories of Yūlī Beg and the threat of rebellion by ‘Abbās’s brothers in his account of 998–99/1590, he says nothing about the move of the capital or the renovation of the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*; for him, as for Jalāl al-Dīn, these events took place before he entered the imperial household (in 1001/1592–93).<sup>26</sup>

Jean Chardin, unlike the four Safavid chroniclers, was not a contemporary of Shah ‘Abbās. However, the Frenchman lived in Isfahan for about five years during the 1070s/1660s and 1080s/1670s, read and spoke Persian, and had collected a good deal of information about the city.<sup>27</sup> Like Naṭanzī, Junābādī, and Jalāl al-Dīn, Chardin dated ‘Abbās’s shift of the Safavid capital to the initial years of his reign.<sup>28</sup>

From 998–99/1590 until 1005/1596–97 (when construction began on Chahār Bāgh Avenue), ‘Abbās’s activities in the city centered mostly on the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*. To commemorate his entry into the capital in the fall of 1002/1593 the emperor ordered Alpan Beg, a great amir, to collect 15,000 footsoldiers from the surrounding villages, dress them colorfully, and station them along the road that ran from the village of Dawlatābād to the Tuqchī Gate (Map 1, no. 5). Just as the shah was about to enter the gate a downpour hit, turning the city into a wallow of mud and mire. ‘Abbās called off the celebration and ordered the ceremony restaged. This time the shah directed that the footsoldiers be ‘gathered again and collected in the *maydān* [i.e., the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*] and [he] . . . ordered

<sup>24</sup> Yazdī, *TA*, 106.

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of Safavid dating systems, see G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville, *The Muslim and Christian Calendars* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 2; Ahmad Birashk, *A Comparative Calendar of the Iranian, Muslim Lunar, and Christian Eras for Three Thousand Years* (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Bibliotheca Persica, 1993), 23–24; Rīza ‘Abdallāhī, ‘Calendars II. Islamic Period,’ *Elr* 4, 668–74. For the difficulties involved in translating dates from one calendar to another, see Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 1, 379–80; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 547–48; and R.D. McChesney, ‘A Note on Iskandar Beg’s Chronology,’ *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 39 (1980), 53–63.

<sup>26</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 1, 454; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 628.

<sup>27</sup> I thank Masashi Haneda for this estimate.

<sup>28</sup> Jean Chardin, *Voyages du Chevalier Chardin, en Perse. . . .*, ed. L. Langles, 10 vols. (Paris: Le Normant, 1811), 2, 399–400.

that all of them form a line in the established order up to the next *maydān* in the *Bāgh-i Naqsh-i Jahān*.<sup>29</sup>

In the fall of 1004/1595 'Abbās returned to the capital. Now, since he had substantially completed the renovation and reconstruction of the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*, the emperor ordered a great celebration. The piazza was magnificently decorated: Artists painted the surrounding buildings; lamps, mounted on gigantic wheels, circled the area at night; and skilled workers laid out gardens containing small forts, each manned by a hundred Qizilbash dummies. In the mock battle that was the centerpiece of the celebration, fireworks were shot from one side of the square to the other. The show ended when the forts and their defenders exploded in flames.<sup>30</sup>

The next winter Shah 'Abbās was back again. While Jalāl al-Dīn dated the inception of the Chahār Bāgh Avenue, the first extensive construction project undertaken near the Naqsh-i Jahān Garden, to this year (1005/1596–97),<sup>31</sup> Iskandar Munshī had the event taking place in the following year:

Because up to this point *dār al-saltānat-i Qazvīn* had been established as the imperial residence [*maqarr-i daulat*] sometimes for pleasure the thought [of the Shah] turned to strolling and the joy of hunting in *dār al-saltānat-i Isfāhān*, which world travelers of knowledge and discrimination call, because of its great beauty, 'Half the World.'

They say Isfahan is 'Half the World'. By saying this, they only describe half of Isfahan.

... the special qualities of that paradisaical city, the aptness of its location and the water from the Zāyandeh Rūd ... having traveled to and settled in that noble city, his [Shah 'Abbās's] mind turned to the thought of planning and building that [city]. Therefore, in this year, 1006 [1597–98] the world-adorning thought decided to make *dār al-saltānat-i Isfāhān* the imperial residence [*maqarr-i daulat*] and to lay the foundation [*zarh*] for great buildings ... In the spring having [already] designed sublime buildings for the Naqsh-i Jahān, architects and engineers [*mī'mārān va muhandisān*] strove to bring them to completion. Among the gates of the city is a gate called the Daulat Gate [Map

<sup>29</sup> Naṭanzī, *NA*, 538–39.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 573–80. See also Junābādī, *RS*, 294b–95a and Yazdī, *TA*, 147. McChesney, 'Four Sources,' 114–15, 117, 120 thought this referred to the new rather than the old *maydān*.

<sup>31</sup> Yazdī, *TA*, 151.

1, no. 1] which was in the garden of the imperial harem [*ārām bāgh*] of Naqsh-i Jahān. From there to the edge of the Zāyandeh Rūd he ordered the construction of an avenue [*khiyābān*]. They laid the foundations of garden retreats [*chahār bāghs*] on both sides of the avenue and [built] a high structure at the entry way to each garden. The avenue was established from the [other or southern] bank of the river up to the foot of the mountain at the southern edge of the city.<sup>32</sup>

This is the basis for the scholarly view that ‘Abbās moved the Safavid capital from Qazvin to Isfahan in 1006/1597–98.<sup>33</sup> While Iskandar Munshī writes that ‘Abbās decided to make Isfahan ‘the eternal capital and to lay the foundations for great buildings,’ what he in fact describes is the construction of the Chahār Bāgh Avenue. He does not mention either the renovation of the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat* (which began in 999/1590) or the founding of the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* (which took place in 1011/1602).

Chahār Bāgh Avenue (Map 1, no. 137) was not the center of a new city. In 1006/1597–98 it was simply an extension of the suburban garden retreat begun in 910/1504 by Shah Ismā‘īl. Chahār Bāgh Avenue, the flanking mansions of the great amirs, the Allāhvardī Khān Bridge (Map 1, no. 11) over the Zāyandeh Rūd, and the ‘Abbāsābād (or Hazār Jarib) Chahār Bāgh (Map 1, no. 168) south of the river—these represented nothing more magnificent extensions of the original Naqsh-i Jahān garden retreat.

In 1007/1599, about a year after Chahār Bāgh Avenue was begun, the English traveler Anthony Sherley accompanied Shah ‘Abbās to Isfahan.<sup>34</sup> The emperor remained in the city for several months, celebrating the New Year of 1007/1599 there. The reports of the

<sup>32</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 1, 544–45. My translation differs from both Savory’s (2, 724–25) and McChesney’s (‘Four Sources,’ 110–11). I include some material that Savory omits, especially the poem. McChesney also leaves out the first line.

<sup>33</sup> Yazdī, *TA*, 162. Jalāl al-Dīn also reported that the emperor and the court came to Isfahan in Rajab of 1006/February 1598 in order to defend Isfahan and the nearby cities of Yazd and Kashan against the attacks by the Uzbegs. The relevant passage, which McChesney mistranslated, was:

... most of the imperial servants went to Isfahan and Isfahan became the dwelling place of sovereignty [*maqarr-i saltānat*] because of the Uzbek domination [or power] and because every day they came to plunder the districts of Yazd. They came and plundered the area around Kashān up to Aran and Bidgul (Yazdī, *TA*, 161).

McChesney took these lines to be a confirmation of Iskandar Munshī’s passage about the relocation of the capital from Qazvin to Isfahan in 1006/1597–98. He translated *maqarr-i saltānat* as capital. (‘Four Sources,’ 109) While the phrase can have that meaning, it is clear from the context that it refers to ‘Abbās and his court residing in Isfahan to order to protect it and the two nearby cities from Uzbek attacks.

<sup>34</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 570–71, 587; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 755, 774.

Sherley party reveal that the emperor's men had not made much progress on the Chahār Bāgh Avenue, and that they had not begun work on either the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* or the Imperial Palace. Abel Pincon, a member of Sherley's group, wrote, 'The town of Spahan is very large, but it has no fort nor any beautiful place.'<sup>35</sup> Sherley himself, describing the New Year's celebration in the Naqsh-i Jahān Garden, had nothing to say about an imperial palace, a new *maydān*, or the Chahār Bāgh Avenue.<sup>36</sup>

From 1005–6/1596–97, when 'Abbās started work on Chahār Bāgh Avenue, to 1011/1602, when he finally laid out the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* and transferred his headquarters in the city from the old to the new *maydān*, the emperor and the court shifted back and forth between the Naqsh-i Jahān garden retreat and the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*. After celebrating the New Year of 1007/1599 in the Naqsh-i Jahān Garden, he returned to the city to commemorate the beginning of 1009/1601. Dividing his celebrations, the emperor organized the usual festivities in the Naqsh-i Jahān Garden<sup>37</sup> but later staged a game of polo in the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*.<sup>38</sup>

Before 1011/1602–3 'Abbās's plans for his new capital seemed clear. The *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*—whose renovation and reconstruction he had begun in 999/1590 and had largely completed by 1004/1595—was to be the imperial center. The Naqsh-i Jahān area, which he had begun to expand in 1005–6/1596–97, was to continue as the suburban garden retreat it had been since the time of Ismā'īl I. By 1011/1602, however, all that had changed. According to Jalāl al-Dīn:

In this year 1011 [1602–3], certain construction projects were completed . . . Among these was a *maydān* at the entrance to the palace [*dar dār-i dawlatkhānehī*] and around it a great canal lined with lindens and willows . . . on Thursday, 27th of Jumada II 1011 [December 12, 1602 ], the people of the Hārūn Vilāyat *Maydān* bazaar [*ahl-i bāzār-i Maydān-i Hārūn vilāyat*] moved and come to this place [*mahall*] from the above place [*mahall*].<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> E. Denison Ross, ed., *Sir Anthony Sherley and His Persian Adventure* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1933), 158.

<sup>36</sup> Anthony Sherley, *Relation of Travels into Persia* (London, 1613; reprint ed. Norwood, N.J.: Walter Johnson, 1974), 120–21. See also Don Juan's account: G. Le Strange, ed. and trans., *Don Juan of Persia: A Shāh Catholic, 1560–1604* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1926), 39–40.

<sup>37</sup> Iskandar, *TAAA*, 2, 609–10; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 799.

<sup>38</sup> Yazdī, *TA*, 203.

<sup>39</sup> Yazdī, *TA*, 190a–b and *TA*, 236–237. McChesney ('Four Sources,' 114–15, 117–19) gives a muddled explanation of the relationship between these two *maydāns*.

Although Jalāl al-Dīn dates the founding of the new *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* and the relocation of the merchants and artisans from the old to the new *maydān*, he does not note why ‘Abbās so drastically changed his plans. Why did the emperor decide to shift the nucleus of the city from the *maydān* that he had just renovated and rebuilt—a piazza flanked by mosques (the *Masjid-i Jāmi‘*), *madrasas*, bathhouses, caravanserais, shops, a new *Qayṣariyya*, the Imperial Palace, the *Naqqār Khāneh* (Drum Room), and the Imāmzādeh Hārūn Vilāyat? Why did he decide to move from the political, economic, and religious center of the city to an undeveloped garden retreat district in the southwest?

Junābādī provides one part of the answer. Although the structure of his narrative makes it difficult to date specific incidents, the historian is exceptionally clear on motivation and causation. He has a knack for pushing aside the superfluous and uncovering the essence. In the first of his two chapters on ‘Abbās’s construction activities in Isfahan, he reports the emperor’s decision to move the Safavid capital from Qazvin to Isfahan and to renovate and rebuild the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*. From the evidence in that chapter and from Naṭanzī’s passage, it appears that Junābādī’s description is of the period 998–99/1590. Here, in the second of his two chapters on ‘Abbās the builder, Junābādī conflates the events of 998–1012/1590–1603 into one long passage, emphasizing the importance of his subject by including a date:

... when the Badshah of the world, Shah ‘Abbās Safavi, ... returned ... to *dār al-saltānat-i Isfāhān* ... this pleasant city became the imperial capital [*dār al-mulk shāhanshāhī*] ... it had every kind of skilled person [*istādād*] so that it became the place of the foundations of the heavenly throne of the *khilāfat*. Therefore, the auspicious heavenly order was given that the *sūqs* [covered bazaars], the old *maydān* [*maydān-i qadīm*], the caravanserais, and the previous bathhouses [*hammām-i sābiqeh*] of Isfahan, which had become narrow, crooked, and stuffy, should be given wideness, strength, and light and that great effort should be expended in making them pure, fresh, and very pleasant. When the owners of these *sūqs* and properties—for example, Mīrzā Muḥammad Amīn, the Naqīb of Isfahan, and Mīr Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad, nephew of Mīr Shujā‘ al-Dīn Maḥmūd, and others of the important men [*ayān*] of *dār al-saltānat-i Isfāhān*—became erroneously suspicious, they feared that the Badshah of the World wanted to take possession of their property. When their false idea became known to the Lord of the World, he took his hand from building and renovating the old *sūqs* and *maydāns*. He ordered that in the wide area that was located beyond the *Bāgh-i Naqsh-i Jahān* and the palace [*dawlathkhāneh*] ... a wide *maydān*

should be laid out with a dimension of 300 *jarībs*, . . . The skillful engineers [*muḥandisīn*] and talented masters [*Ustādān*] in the year 1012 [1603–4], at a well-chosen hour, [built] a rectangular *maydān* of the established area and . . . around that *maydān* was a four-sided bazaar [*chahār bāzārī*] containing shops, a cloth market [*bazzāz khān*], a caravanserai, hot baths . . . mosques and madrasas.<sup>40</sup>

This passage is a tour de force of the Safavid historian's art. Organizing his narrative around the shift of 'Abbās's headquarters from the old to the new *maydān*, Junābādī reported that some important property owners had become disturbed by 'Abbās's activities in the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*.<sup>41</sup> Since the emperor's project had been initiated in 999/1590, worked on over the succeeding years, and largely completed by 1004/1595, the fears of these men must have increased with time. By 1012/1602–03 (or 1011/1602, according to Jalāl al-Dīn), 'Abbās had decided to transfer his headquarters to the undeveloped square in front of the Naqsh-i Jahān Garden.<sup>42</sup>

The archaeological evidence confirms the accounts of both Jalāl al-Dīn and Junābādī. Construction on the domed mosque opposite the Imperial Palace, now called the Shaykh Luṭfallāh Mosque, began in 1011/1602 and was completed in 1028/1618–19. The Qaysariyyeh Bazaar (which Junābādī calls the *bazzāz khān* or cloth market) was laid out in 1011/1602, although its monumental gateway was not finished until 1026/1617–18. The preliminary stages of the five-story audience hall and entry gateway to the Imperial Palace, the '*Ālī Qāpū*, were completed between 1026–34/1617–24, and the foundations for the *Masjid-i Shāh* were laid in 1020/1611.

Shah 'Abbās visited Isfahan only twice between 1011/1602 and 1020/1611. In 1016/1607, after an absence of almost four years, he spent several days in the city.<sup>43</sup> The following year he returned and stayed for the winter, celebrating the New Year of 1017/1609 in the Naqsh-i Jahān Garden and holding a reception for the Uzbek Khān in the new *maydān*.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Junābādī, *RS*, 314a–15b. For McChesney's translation of this passage, see 'Four Sources,' 112–14.

<sup>41</sup> 'Four Sources,' 117–19, gives some useful background on these men.

<sup>42</sup> The French jeweler, Jean Baptista Tavernier, who visited the city several times in the 1070s/1660s, more than sixty years after the event, reported the tradition concerning the resistance of the local notables. Jean Baptista Tavernier, *The Six Voyages of John Baptista Tavernier*, trans. J. Phillips (London: Robert Littlebury, and Moses Pit, 1678), 151.

<sup>43</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 754–55; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 947.

<sup>44</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 776–81; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 973–77.

After founding the *Masjid-i Shāh* in 1020/1611, ‘Abbās’s architectural interests turned to the seaside province of Mazandaran. There he constructed an elaborate garden retreat called *Farahābād* (begun in 1020/1611–12).<sup>45</sup> Although the shah reigned for another eighteen years, he made only five brief visits to Isfāhan before his death: in 1022/1613,<sup>46</sup> 1024/1615,<sup>47</sup> 1028/1620,<sup>48</sup> 1030/1621,<sup>49</sup> and 1033/1624.<sup>50</sup>

### Conclusion

The consensus among modern scholars is that Shah ‘Abbās transferred the Safavid capital from Qazvin to the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* in 1006/1597–98. While a careful examination of the Persian and European sources suggests that this consensus is faulty, a complete understanding of ‘Abbās’s actions requires a new hypothesis. This hypothesis posits two stages in Isfahan’s transformation from a provincial center into an imperial capital and argues that ‘Abbās’s motivations can only be understood in the light of the political and economic reforms that he had just undertaken.

The present interpretation assumes the centrality of the *maydān* in Safavid urban life. The political, economic, and religious activities of the Safavid city revolved around this public square. Although other large medieval Islamic cities boasted piazzas—Cairo and Damascus, for example—<sup>51</sup> Safavid Iran witnessed the fullest development of the *maydān* as urban core. Tabrīz, the capital under Ismā‘īl I and Ṭahmāsp, featured a large central *maydān* (the *Maydān-i Šāhib al-Amr*) built by Uzun Ḥasan (857–83/1453–78), the Āq Quyūnlū ruler. Around it stood a mosque, a madrasa, and the governor’s palace. Nearby was the Qayşariyyeh market.<sup>52</sup> Qazvin, the Safavid capital from

<sup>45</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 849–51; Savory, trans., 2, *TAAA*, 1059–60.

<sup>46</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 861–62; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 1073.

<sup>47</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 886–87; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 1103.

<sup>48</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 948–50; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 1169–71.

<sup>49</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 957–58; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 1179.

<sup>50</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 1012–1013; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 1234.

<sup>51</sup> Oleg Grabar, ‘Cities and Citizens,’ in Bernard Lewis, ed., *The World of Islam* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 96–97; Oleg Grabar, ‘The Architecture of Power: Palaces, Citadels and Fortifications,’ in George Michell, ed., *Architecture of The Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), 71.

<sup>52</sup> Chardin, *Voyages*, 2, 326; Tavernier, *Six Voyages*, 21–22; Mahvash Aleml, ‘The Royal Gardens of the Safavid Period: Types and Models,’ in Attilio Petruccioli, ed. *Gardens in the Time of the Great Muslim Empires* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997), 72–96;



965/1557<sup>53</sup> until 999/1590, had as its nucleus a *Maydān-i Shāh*. This piazza held an entry gateway ('Alī Qāpū) to the Imperial Palace, a *mašjid-i jāmi'*, shops, coffeehouses, a *madrasa*, and the mansions of the great amirs.<sup>54</sup> *Maydāns* were also found in Tiflīs, capital of Gurjistān province;<sup>55</sup> Erivan, capital of Qarabāgh province;<sup>56</sup> Ardabīl, home of Shaykh Ṣafī, founder of the Safavid Sufi order;<sup>57</sup> Qum,<sup>58</sup> Kashan,<sup>59</sup> Kirman,<sup>60</sup> Shiraz;<sup>61</sup> Lar, a town near Bandar 'Abbās;<sup>62</sup> and Mashhad.<sup>63</sup>

As the hub of the Safavid city, the *maydān* held the principal religious structure: in the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat* the *Mašjid-i Jāmi'*, in the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* the *Mašjid-i Shāh*, in Ardabīl the tomb of Shaykh Ṣafī, in Qum the tomb of Fāṭimeh, wife of the Eighth Imam, in Qazvin and Shiraz the *Mašjid-i Shāh*, and in Tabrīz a congregational mosque. It was also the center of political life and held the

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Masashi Haneda, 'The Pastoral City and the Mausoleum City: Nomadic Rule and City Construction in the Eastern Islamic World,' in Sato Tsugitaka, ed. *Islamic Urbanism in Human History: Political Power and Social Networks* (London: Keagan Paul International, 1997), 142–70.

<sup>53</sup> Ehsan Echraqi, 'Le *Dar al-Saltana* de Qazvin, deuxième capital des Safavides,' in Charles Melville, ed. *Safavid Persia: The History and Politics of an Islamic Society* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 105–15.

<sup>54</sup> Chardin, *Voyages*, 2, 388–89. Chardin was mistaken about the relationship between the *maydāns* in Qazvin and Isfahan. Both of the public squares in Isfahan were reconstructed or laid out after the one in Qazvin. See also Pietro Della Valle, *The Pilgrim: The Travels of Padre Della Vale*, trans., abridged, and introduced by George Bull (London: Hutchinson, 1989), 173; Thomas Herbert, *Travels in Persia, 1627–29*, ed. William Foster (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1928), 202; Adam Olearius, *The Voyages and Travels and Travels of J. Albert Mandelslo into the East India*, trans., John Davies (London: J. Starkey and T. Basset, 1699), 189; Cornelius Le Bruyn, *Travels into Muscovy, Persia*, 2 vols (London: A. Bettesworth, et al., 1737), 2, 159; P.M. Kemp, trans. and ed., *Russian Travelers to India and Persia (1624–1798): Kotov, Ytremov, and Danibegov* (Delhi: Jiwan PraKashān, 1959), 14; Maria Szuppe, 'Palais et jardins: Le complexe royal des premiers safavides à Qazvin, milieu XVI<sup>e</sup>-début XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles,' *Res Orientales* 8 (1996): 143–77; Echraqi, 'Le *Dar al-Saltana* de Qazvin,' 105–15; Mahvash Alemi, 'The Royal Gardens of the Safavid Period,' 72–96.

<sup>55</sup> Chardin, *Voyages*, 2, 82.

<sup>56</sup> Chardin, *Voyages*, 2, 165.

<sup>57</sup> Tavernier, *Six Voyages*, 24; Le Bruyn, *Travels*, 1, 169; Olearius, *Voyages and Travels*, 178.

<sup>58</sup> Le Bruyn, *Travels*, 1, 177; Tavernier, *Six Voyages*, 28; Chardin, *Voyages*, 2, 416–55.

<sup>59</sup> Le Bruyn, 1, *Travels*, 178–79; Olearius, *Voyages and Travels*, 195; Chardin, *Voyages*, 2, 461; 3, 9; Alemi, 'The Royal Gardens of the Safavid Period,' 72–96.

<sup>60</sup> I. Bastani Parizi, 'A group of Monuments Built in Kerman by Ganj 'Alī Khān,' 6th International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, Oxford, 1972.

<sup>61</sup> Chardin, *Voyages*, 8, 414–22; Naṭanzī, *NA*, 364; John Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia*, 1672–81, ed. William Crooke, 3 vols (London: Hakluyt Society, 1912), 2, 217–18; Alemi, 'The Royal Gardens of the Safavid Period,' 72–96.

<sup>62</sup> Fryer, *New Account*, 2, 192–93; Chardin, *Voyages*, 8, 479–83.

<sup>63</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *TAAA*, 2, 598–99; Savory, trans., *TAAA*, 2, 787.

palace of the governor or emperor. As a cultural center, the piazza boasted coffeehouses, wine bars, and opium houses and was the site of polo matches, horse races, and games. An economic hub, the *maydān* contained shops, covered markets (*sūqs*), and, in capital cities, imperial markets (*qayṣariyyas*). The Qayṣariyyeh Bazaar in Tabrīz was the model for ‘Abbās’s new market in the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*, and the Qayṣariyyeh Bazaar off the new *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* was entered via a monumental gateway.

The first stage in ‘Abbās’s conversion of Isfahan from a provincial center into an imperial capital took place early in the young shah’s reign. Placed on the throne in 995/1587 and facing the aftermath of a decade of civil war among the Qizilbash tribesmen, ‘Abbās’s initial task was to wrest control of the state from the contending tribal amirs. In early 996/1588 the emperor executed several Qizilbash chieftains and in the summer he ordered the killing of his tutor, Murshid Qūlī Khān. At this time also he embarked on an ambitious program of political and economic reform. To strengthen the imperial household ‘Abbās recruited two new groups of cavalrymen (the *qurchīs* and *ghulāms*) who were personally loyal to him. To pay them he redistributed agricultural land from the domain of the tribal amirs (*mamālik*) to the domain of the imperial household (*khāṣṣeh*).

Although the groundwork for a revitalized state had been laid, the young emperor had to wait several years for his first success. In the fall of 996/1588 ‘Abbās traveled to the northeast, intending to recover Mashhad and Herat from the Uzbegs. But he suffered another defeat. This setback was particularly galling to him since Herat, one of the premier cities of Iran, had had a special significance for the ruling family—it had long been the administrative post assigned to the heir-apparent.<sup>64</sup> In early 998/February 1590 ‘Abbās arrived in Isfahan for the first time. Having strengthened the imperial household and subdued many of the refractory Qizilbash chieftains, he brought the rebellious governor of the city, Yūlī Beg, to heel. Soon after, however, he was forced to sign a humiliating treaty with the Ottomans—the Uzbeg threat requiring him to accept, for the time being, Ottoman control over Azarbayjan and Tabrīz. During this

<sup>64</sup> Audrey Burton, ‘The Fall of Herat to the Uzbegs in 1588,’ *Journal of Persian Studies* (1988): 119–23; Robert McChesney, ‘The Conquest of Herat 995–6/1587–8: Sources for the Study of Safavid/Qizilbash Shibanid/Uzbek Relations,’ in Jean Calmard, ed., *Études Safavides* (Paris and Teheran: Institut Francais de Recherche en Iran, 1993), 69–107.

sojourn in southern Iran he imprisoned and blinded his two brothers, who had threatened to lead another Qizilbash challenge to his authority. And in the late fall he defeated Ya'qūb Khān, the Qizilbash governor of Shiraz, and the last remaining threat to his rule. Ya'qūb Khān's death and 'Abbās's conquest of his stronghold, the fortress of Istakhr, marked the end of the Qizilbash insurrection which had begun twelve years earlier on the death of Shah Ṭahmāsp.

Ya'qūb Khān's defeat, ending almost three years of struggle and failure, marked a turning point in the histories of both Shah 'Abbās and the Safavid state. 'Abbās's victory over the Qizilbash chieftain inspired Naṭanzī to write his history.<sup>65</sup> It also inspired the emperor, in December 999/1590, about three years after his coronation, to move his capital to Isfahan, the center of which was the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*.<sup>66</sup> 'Abbās's transfer of the capital and his refurbishing of the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat* represented tentative gestures, embodying the emperor's resolve to reorganize his faltering state. At that time it was unclear whether his labors would be successful. His building efforts in 999/1590, reflecting his uncertainty, were limited primarily to renovation and reconstruction. He repaired the Imperial Palace and the *Naqqār Khāneh* but left the chief religious structure, the *Maṣjid-i Jāmi'*, entirely alone. The only new structure was the Qayṣariyyeh Bazaar (a comparatively insignificant building). 'Abbās's decision to limit his efforts to repair and reconstruction symbolized the precarious nature of the political reforms that he had just begun. Reorganizing the old state was a dangerous and ambiguous enterprise, limiting his construction efforts to renovation was only prudent.

Between 999/1590, when he first moved the center of his rule from Qazvin to the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*, and 1011/1602, when he laid out the new *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān*, 'Abbās made a good deal of progress in his program of political and economic reform. With the addition of the *qūrchī* and *ghulām* cavalymen to his household, he consolidated his dominance of the Qizilbash chieftains and their followers. The home front pacified, the shah turned his attention

<sup>65</sup> Sholeh Quinn, 'The Historiography of Safavid Prefaces,' in Charles Melville, ed. *Safavid Persia: The History and Politics of an Islamic Society* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 1–25.

<sup>66</sup> For a discussion of the ruler's movements see Charles Melville, 'From Qars to Qandahar: The Itineraries of Shah 'Abbās I (995–1038/1587–1629),' in Jean Calmard, ed., *Études Safavides* (Paris and Teheran: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1993), 195–224.

to the northeast. In 999/1591 he dispatched Farḥād Khān against the Uzbegs, and in 1002/1592 and 1003/1595 he took the field himself. All three attempts failed. In 1006/1598, however, the Uzbek ruler ‘Abdallāh II died and in the late fall 1007/1598 ‘Abbās finally recaptured Herat and Mashhad.<sup>67</sup> This victory over one of the regime’s two ancient enemies was the second sign (his defeat of Ya‘qūb Khān was the first) that ‘Abbās’s reforms might succeed.

The second stage in the evolution of Isfahan as Safavid capital began in 1011/1602. That year ‘Abbās laid out the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* and began work on the surrounding buildings. His construction in this piazza, unlike his efforts in the old *maydān*, comprised a virgin creation. The emperor laid out a public square in a largely undeveloped area of the city, and he and his men built brand-new structures on its perimeter: new bazaars, a new imperial palace, new mosques, new madrasas, new caravanserais, and the new Qayṣariyya Bazaar with its imposing new entry gateway.

Why did Shah ‘Abbās transfer his headquarters in Isfahan from the old *maydān* that he had just refurbished, the center of the Saljuq city, to an undeveloped area to the southwest, in front of the Naqsh-i Jahān garden retreat? Part of the answer has already been suggested. In his chronicle Junābādī related that ‘Abbās’s renovation of the old *maydān* had aroused the opposition of the economic and political elite of the old city. These men feared that he would confiscate their property and undermine their political power. In the context of his political and economic reorganization their fears were certainly justified. Although the principal thrust of his reforms was to strengthen the imperial household in order to subdue the Qizilbash tribal chieftains and to defeat the Uzbegs and Ottomans, the urban notables must have grown nervous at the sight of the emperor’s increasing might. ‘Abbās’s newly strengthened forces posed a major threat to their property and power.

But the other and more important reason for laying out a new *maydān* and constructing the nucleus of an entirely new city was to symbolize the success of the political and economic reforms that he had begun fourteen years earlier. By 1011/1602 it had become clear that ‘Abbās would survive and that his reformed state, led by a rich and powerful imperial household, would prosper. Nevertheless, soon after founding the *maydān* and beginning construction on the Shaykh

<sup>67</sup> Audrey Burton, ‘The Fall of Herat,’ 119–23.

Luṭfallāh Mosque and the Qayṣariyyeh Bazaar, 'Abbās left Isfahan for the northwest. Having reorganized the state and defeated the Uzbegs, it was time to take the field against the Ottomans—the second of his two ancient enemies. In a four-year campaign (1012–16/1603–07) 'Abbās defeated the Ottomans and recaptured Tabrīz, the most important city in northwestern Iran. The *Masjīd-i Shāh* with its massive gateway (begun 1020/1611), the *'Alī Qāpū* (1026–34/1617–24), and the gateway to the Qayṣariyyeh Bazaar (finished in 1026/1617–18)—all built after the defeat of the Ottomans—indicate that 'Abbās did not want to complete the new *maydān* until he was sure that he could defeat the stronger and more important of his two long-time enemies, recapture the last of his lost territory, and restore the Safavid state to its former size and strength.

Two other considerations support this interpretation of Isfahan's transformation. The first concerns the length of time Shah 'Abbās resided in the city. For 'Abbās the work of ruling demanded constant activity, and he seldom stayed anywhere for long. He moved on horseback from city to battleground to hunting preserve and back. Although his sojourns in Isfahan usually lasted several weeks, some were no longer than a few days. That the emperor's visits of 998–99/1590 and 1011–12/1603 were the longest of his reign (each about four months each) suggests the crucial significance of these two periods in the development of Isfahan as capital.

The second consideration revolves around the paintings on the Qayṣariyyeh Gateway. Begun sometime after the founding of the *Masjīd-i Shāh* in 1020/1611 and finished in 1026/1617–18, one year after completion of the opposite, matching gateway to the *Masjīd-i Shāh*, this entry gateway dominated the northern end of 'Abbās's new *maydān*. Of the scenes painted by Rīza 'Abbāsi and the other court painters two predominate: a representation of Shah 'Abbās's victory over the Uzbegs in 1007/1598; and a giant likeness of Sagittarius, the Archer, one of the twelve signs of the Zodiac.<sup>68</sup> The choice of these two subjects for the Gateway, constructed after Shah 'Abbās's victorious Ottoman campaign of 1012–16/1603–07, identifies the new *maydān* as a symbol of his political and economic reforms. The victory over the Uzbegs was his first major military success.

<sup>68</sup> In Iran, however, the Archer was half-man, half-tiger; not half-man, half-horse as in the West. Chardin, *Voyages*, 7, 356–57; 8, 141; Hunarfar, *Ganjāna*, 466; Le Bruyn, *Travels*, 195.

And by painting the Archer, the sign under which the new *maydān* was founded in 1011/1602, ‘Abbās asserted to the world that the new piazza represented the hub of the new capital of the state that he has just created.

In the light of this interpretative framework what can we say about Iskandar Munshī and the modern scholars who followed him? Why did the Safavid historian date the shift of the capital to 1006/1597–98? Although we can probably never fully understand the chronicler’s reasons, the following considerations may offer some insight. First, Iskandar Munshī did not join the imperial household until 1001/1592–93; he was not present in 999/1590 when ‘Abbās began his rejuvenation of the *Maydān-i Hārūn Vilāyat*. Second, several months after the founding of the *Maydān-i Naqsh-i Jahān* in 1011/1602, Shah ‘Abbās and the imperial court (including Iskandar Munshī) left for the four-year campaign against the Ottomans. Thus the historian missed the early building around the piazza—neither the Shaykh Luṭfallāh Mosque nor the Qayṣariyyeh Bazaar was finished by the time the court departed. Third, remembering the peripatetic habits of the early Safavid rulers, the concept of a stable, settled center of rule presided over by a sedentary monarch was foreign to Safavid experience. When we reconstruct the itinerary of a ruler like ‘Abbās it is clear that the meaning of *capital* in the peripatetic, quasi-nomadic world of late-sixteenth-century Iran was much different from its current meaning. Finally, according to a recent scholar, Iskandar Munshī appears to have been mistaken about the date of Shah Ṭahmāsp’s transfer of the Safavid capital from Tabrīz to Qazvin in the mid-sixteenth century. If he were wrong once (probably for some of these same reasons), why not again?<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Mazzaoui, ‘From Tabrīz to Isfahan,’ 517–19; Echraqi, ‘Le *Dar al-Saltana* de Qazvin,’ 105–15.

## THE SARCOPHAGUS OF SHAH ISMĀ'IL I AT ARDABĪL

Robert Hillenbrand

The focus of this paper is the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā'īl I, which is lodged in his extremely bijou mausoleum at the Ardabīl shrine in north-west Iran,<sup>1</sup> and can be dated soon after 930/1524. This splendid and unaccountably neglected work of art (pl. 1) is of special interest on several counts.

First, it reflects, to a degree unusual in woodwork, the dominant aesthetic of its time, an aesthetic which pervaded the visual backdrop of the early Safavid court and can be traced in several media, such as architecture, painting and perhaps especially metalwork.<sup>2</sup> Second, so far as the surviving evidence tells us, it incorporates major innovations for this kind of object, notably in its technicolour palette. Third, it has its own distinctive religious message proclaimed by its inscriptions and referring to Shah Ismā'īl himself. That last point is admittedly no more than an educated guess, for no historical inscription, apart from a craftsman's signature, has been found on the sarcophagus. But the building in which it is placed is indeed the mausoleum of Ismā'īl, so it seems reasonable to assume that the sarcophagus should also be his. I hope finally to suggest why its appearance is peculiarly appropriate to its time.

It is curious to note that early Safavid art in general, despite the high profile allotted to court painting, such as the royal *Shāhnāme* and *Khamseh* manuscripts, in modern scholarship, is not at all well known. This alone is enough to lend this particular sarcophagus considerable rarity value as a clue to the nature of the earliest Safavid art. But it is of greater interest still because of its surroundings. The fact that the Ardabīl shrine has preserved several silver-plated doors, carpets, felt floor coverings, woodwork, metal screens, steel standards and wall painting, all placed within something close to their original

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<sup>1</sup> On this mausoleum, see my article entitled 'The tomb of Shah Ismā'īl I, Ardabīl' in S.R. Canby (ed.), *Safavid Art & Architecture* (London: The British Museum Press, 2002), 3–8.

<sup>2</sup> See for example J.W. Allan, 'Silver-faced doors of Safavid Iran', *Iran* 33 (1995), 123–37.

setting, makes it nothing short of a time capsule by means of which one can take the measure of Safavid art, especially early Safavid art, and the aesthetic which it fostered. Here, and only here in all of Iran, the arts of the early Safavid period, from architecture to tombstones, are displayed side by side and medium by medium. As a result, the decorative arts can be appreciated to the full, subtly enhancing each other and almost bandying themes across the space of the shrine. There could be no better reminder that these works of art were deliberately complementary and are diminished if studied intensively in isolation.

There is a further danger here that the very uniqueness of this survival of early Safavid works of art at Ardabīl—and what remains there today is certainly much less than there was two centuries ago, before the Russians removed some of its choicest items to St Petersburg, ostensibly for safe keeping but in fact for good—leads to the danger of misinterpreting this material, and in particular concluding that it was unique to late medieval Iran. Any such finding would be badly mistaken. The evidence of Ilkhanid and even more of Timurid painting reveals that the ambience of courtly luxury which these images document so precisely depended on all sorts of luxury objects which have totally disappeared.

So much for the general context of the sarcophagus. But a brief digression on size is called for here. The mausoleum itself, as noted above, is bijou. It is worth dwelling on this dimension of scale for a moment. The total area of the tomb chamber is 6.4 square metres, while that of the sarcophagus is 2.1 square metres, that is, about a third of the entire space. Since it is set in the very middle of the room, its dimensions make it impossible for a visitor to walk around it in comfort, and at times there is barely enough room to squeeze through.<sup>3</sup> This adds illusionistically to its size. Indeed, it seems to fill all the room available—an effect not confined to the horizontal plane, for the very low vault ensures that the height of the sarcophagus (1.44 metres) is also the dominant vertical accent of the interior space. It is in two stages, raised plinth and superstructure, a design that has honorific associations: the shah, even in death, is above the level of the rest of mankind. By these various means, then, the dis-

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<sup>3</sup> This excessively cramped space greatly inhibits a close study of the entire object, and is exacerbated by the poor light in some areas; these factors combine to make a complete photographic survey impracticable.



advantages attendant on a cramped space are triumphantly overcome, and the shah receives a worthy memorial. His dead presence literally fills the room.

These facts have further implications. They suggest, first, that the sarcophagus was assembled within this very cramped space rather than being transported as an entity into the mausoleum. That, incidentally, turned out to be a blessing in disguise, for it ensured that the Russians were not able to make off with it when they pillaged the shrine so thoroughly in 1827.<sup>4</sup> Next, it is clear that the sarcophagus was not intended to serve any rite of circumambulation or *ziyārat*. Moreover, entrance to the chamber was barred by a gilded metal grille, so that for most visitors to the shrine in the Safavid period, as is the case today, the immediate impact of this sarcophagus within its technicolour blue and gold tiled setting would have been at a distance and as a whole. Today in fact the door is kept locked, so visitors to the shrine have to content themselves with the view they get through the grille. The resultant aura of inaccessibility, apartness and mystery which the sarcophagus projects to this day would have been all the stronger at a time when the memory of the shah's charisma was still fresh.

So much for the digression. It will be convenient to begin with a detailed description of the sarcophagus and of its decoration before moving on to its inscriptions, to the issue of its patronage, and to the aesthetic to which it belongs. This last subject will entail some discussion both of earlier woodwork and of related work in other media. It should be noted that vandals have been busy all over the sarcophagus, prising out ivory inscription panels—the most grievous loss of all—turquoise-coloured insets, border strips and interlace work.

First, then, a description of the sarcophagus. It is in two parts: a plinth measuring 2.03 m by 1.03 m on which is set the sarcophagus

<sup>4</sup> C.E. Bosworth, 'Ardabil. I. History of Ardabil', *Encyclopaedia Iranica* II/4 (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1986), 360; he notes the loss of many manuscripts. See too R.N. Frye, 'Ardabil', *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, EI<sup>2</sup>, 1: 626, with a mention of the removal of 'art objects'. In the previous century, the city was captured by the Ottomans in the course of their campaign in Azerbaijan (1137/1725); see S. Shaw, 'Iranian relations with the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', in P. Avery, G. Hambly and C. Melville (eds), *The Cambridge History of Iran. 7. From Nadir Shah to the Islamic Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 299. But it is not clear whether the shrine or its contents suffered as a result. Āqā Muḥammad Khān Qajar visited the shrine in 1206/1791. See G.R.G. Hambly, 'Agha Muhammad Khan and the establishment of the Qajar dynasty', *ibid.*, 122; but again it is uncertain whether he changed its aspect in any way.

proper, which measures 1.85 m by 0.90 m. The height of the plinth is 0.41 m while that of the sarcophagus proper is 1.03 m, including an overhang of 4 cm at the top. These measurements place it in between the largest sarcophagus of the shrine, that of Shaykh Šaḫī, and another sarcophagus dated 788/1386–7. The former has a plinth measuring 3.16 m (including a cornice of 1.5 cm on each side) by 1.31 m, with a height of 0.51 m, while the sarcophagus proper measures 2.96 m by 1.15 m with a height of 1.23 m.<sup>5</sup> The sarcophagus of 788/1386–7, encased in glass, measures approximately 2.08 m by 0.70 m, with a height of 0.67 m and a cornice on all sides with an overhang of 2 cm.

The design of the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā‘īl is consistent on all four sides. It has a tripartite layout, crowned on its vertical face by an upper inscription band carved in wood<sup>6</sup> and set in oblong hexagons formed by strips of ivory with regular turquoise-coloured studs. Between these long hexagons are equilateral hexagons subdivided into six triangles, each containing a sacred name. The very top of the sarcophagus, seen from above, reveals the same design as at the upper face of the sides, except that its centre bears a panel of *khatamkārī* design<sup>7</sup> measuring 1.47 m by 0.41 m. Here the ivory is not flat but rounded, which gives the whole an added three-dimensional effect. The next layer down comprises a narrower band filled with oblong panels containing inscriptions in ivory; these measure 20.3 by 4.4 cm and terminate at each end with a 5-pointed star. These panels alternate with 8-pointed stars containing interlace.

The bottom layer or plinth takes up by far the most room and comprises a continuous network of stars, rhomboids and polygons (of the type long familiar in *minbar* design), all filled with interlace. Finally, the plinth is treated more simply than the area above it. It has the same stellar polygonal network, but this is much shallower. The inner strips of the hexagons are varnished and are of light-

<sup>5</sup> Most of the sarcophagi at Ardabīl keep to the formula of plinth and sarcophagus.

<sup>6</sup> Said to be sandalwood. See M.E. Weaver, *Iran: Preliminary Study on the Conservation Problems of Five Iranian Monuments* (Paris: UNESCO, 1970) (= Weaver I), 52.

<sup>7</sup> For a brief history of this technique, see L. Honarfar, ‘Khatam-Kar’, in J. Gluck and S.H. Gluck (eds) and C. Penton (associate editor), *A Survey of Persian Handicraft* (Tehran: Survey of Persian Art under the auspices of Bank Melli Iran, 1977), 362–8. I am grateful to Dr Kjeld von Folsach for drawing my attention to this article. Honarfar cites Dawlatshah to the effect that the technique is first recorded in the late 14th century (*ibid.*, 362). For a detailed examination of the technique see H.E. Wulff, *The Traditional Crafts of Persia* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: The M.I.T. Press, 1966), 92–7. See also n. 59 below.

coloured wood. As for the hexagons themselves, they are smaller (18, 10 and 29 cm per side) so that there is less ivory. The colour scheme is also more muted, for both green and crimson accents are absent, let alone gold or silver thread. The borders of all the elements are plainer than those in the upper parts of the sarcophagus; indeed, the upper and lower borders are both entirely plain, with a dark brown veneer which is severely damaged in places. Nor does the plinth have any inscriptions. Thus the overall design establishes a clear hierarchy of the component parts.

This basic description cannot do justice to the range of colour effects and grace notes which all make their contribution to this spectacular ensemble. The treatment of borders on all three tiers of the sarcophagus is a case in point. Some are flat, some bevelled or curved; some plain, some intricate, and yet others given a staccato rhythm by insets; some monochrome, others with three colours. The colour turquoise—as distinct from the stone itself—is frequently used. The effect of these insets or studs (for some stand proud of the surrounding surface) is cumulative, and they testify to a firm grasp of the overall design as well as to a delight in exploiting the potential of very small-scale ornament. The borders are not the only area notable for the vivid interchange of colours, as is shown by the field between the two kinds of hexagons in the upper tier. This is taken up by two triangles whose upper and lower points respectively meet to create a spindle shape. The field of each of these triangles has three turquoise-coloured studs separated by six tiny ivory triangles, each comprising three lozenges, set against a black ground. This creates a light and colourful accent against the dominant sombre tonality of the wooden panels in this tier.

The infill throughout the sarcophagus tends to be inconsequential and dense, featuring tightly-woven arabesques with thin, spindly tendrils and three-leaved buds or five-leaved rosettes. With the art that conceals art, it effortlessly accommodates itself to the required space. In the main field of the sarcophagus, a rhomboidal hexagon with sides of 40 cm or 26 cm is the commonest form, but this is made to appear more varied by being placed at various angles. The wood is painted black<sup>8</sup> and has a bronze tone where the black has faded.

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<sup>8</sup> It is not ebony, though ebony was indeed used in Safavid woodwork. See K. von Folsach, *Art from the World of Islam in the David Collection* (Copenhagen: F. Hendricksens Eft., 2001), pl. 449.

As for the ivory plaques of the middle tier, these are sometimes of one colour, with ivory being employed for inscription and background alike and left in its natural colour, so that such panels have the effect of a broad bar of light, as against the standard effect of white script emerging from a dark ground. Yet in the latter case the ivory relief carving is given extra interest by being set against a background of crimson or green silk, to luscious chromatic effect. A third way of variegating these inscriptions has to do with the letters themselves, which are enriched by a central groove.<sup>9</sup> The script remains the same in each of these three styles of execution.

But perhaps the most impressive work is, as one would expect in such a hierarchical design, reserved for the topmost panel. Its inlay of ivory alternates with flattened spindle shapes in black-painted wood inlaid with a central turquoise roundel whose circumference is studded with twelve brass triangles whose high polish gives them a rich golden colour. Yet so small is the scale of these triangles that from even a foot away this feature simply looks like a green dot against a black ground. It is a sobering thought that the detail on this sarcophagus can be so fine that it requires a magnifying glass to appreciate its subtleties. The kinship with contemporary book painting in this regard is unmistakable.

Close examination of the lower and main tier reveals that slivers of black-painted wood flank strips of turquoise colour with splinters of ivory inlaid at a deeper level. Several levels are used, so that within a narrow compass there is a constant variation of depth. The smallest work is sewn together with black thread, originally covered with gold. The resultant contrast is not just one of colours but also of media and their associated textures—ivory, gold and silver thread, brass<sup>10</sup> and silk all enrich the basic material, namely wood.

Those panels where the background is unstained ivory have a distinctively different visual impact from that of the openwork panels. The framing strips of these panels are green and are probably, in view of their length, made of wood rather than bone stained that

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<sup>9</sup> This creates a strong sculptural effect, as seen in the doors of the Gūr-i Amīr. See A.U. Pope and P. Ackerman, eds, *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), pl. 1470, and in Qurʾans of the 8th/14th and 9th/15th centuries whose gold script is outlined in black or vice versa, sometimes on the same page; see D. James, *Qurʾans of the Mamluks* (London: Alexandria Press in association with Thames and Hudson, 1988), 86, fig. 53.

<sup>10</sup> This is also the material of the corner fittings.

colour. The inner borders of these ivory panels comprise thin strips in which turquoise-coloured studs alternate with six ivory dots. These form spindle shapes comprising two triangles, one pointing up, the other down, with their points touching. Outside these thin strip borders are thicker borders whose multiple elements—uneven hexagons and pentagons, spindle shapes and even hexagons containing a six-pointed star on a white ground with a central turquoise-coloured stud—are all carefully dovetailed. These shapes employ both openwork and marquetry techniques.

The central tier of the sarcophagus maintains a constant visual interest because the shapes of the polygonal stellar network which form its principal accent are themselves continually changing. Their infill is also varied. Sometimes it comprises arabesques, but sometimes it creates a thicket of leaves, tendrils and buds in high-relief ivory. Still further contrast is assured by the background, which is sometimes the plain white of ivory and sometimes crimson or occasionally green silk.

There is a tenacious oral tradition to the effect that the sarcophagus was a gift to Shah Ṭahmāsp from the Mughal emperor Humāyūn at a time (c. 1545) when he was a temporary refugee from his own country and living at the Safavid court by the grace and favour of the shah.<sup>11</sup> Several factors conspire to cast some doubts on this tale. First, the issue of *pietas*. It is implausible that the grave of Shah Ismā'īl would have lacked some suitable sarcophagus, especially in view of the veneration in which he was held. Although he died at a spot variously recorded by the chroniclers as Mangutay<sup>12</sup> and Sāyīn (Gadikī)<sup>13</sup> near Sarāb, he was not buried there. Instead, his corpse was transported to Ardabīl so that it could be laid to rest in the shrine of Shaykh Ṣafī.<sup>14</sup> This would not have been done without appropriate ceremony. Even though space was at a premium, room

<sup>11</sup> F. Sarre, *Denkmäler Persischer Baukunst* (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1910), 41; Weaver I, 52; see n. 17 below. A.H. Morton, 'The Ardabīl Shrine in the Reign of Shah Ṭahmāsp I', *Iran* XII (1974) (= Morton I), 48, n. 67, says 'the Indian story is to be regarded with scepticism'.

<sup>12</sup> For the reports of the sources on the place of Shah Ismā'īl's death, see S. Abrahams, *A Historiographical Study and Annotated Translation of Volume 2 of the Afzal al-Tavarikh by Fazlī Khuzani al-Isfahani* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1999), 222.

<sup>13</sup> M.K. Yusuf-Jamali, *The life and personality of Shah Ismail I (907–930/1489 (sic)–1524)* (Esfahan: Amir Kabir Publication, 1998), 352.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 352–3.

was found to squeeze his mausoleum into the most favoured location of all—right next to that of the *shaykh* himself. Given the tiny size of the shah's mausoleum, however—it has the smallest surface area of any royal Islamic mausoleum in Iran—it was all the more important that its interior, cramped as it was, should nevertheless be as splendid as possible. Otherwise the gesture of giving it such a favoured location would have fallen flat. A magnificent sarcophagus was the obvious solution, and one can hardly doubt that it was constructed as soon as possible after his death. The idea that the mausoleum should have lacked a sarcophagus for two decades after the shah's death—an implicit insult by Ṭahmāsp to the memory of his father—does not recommend itself at all. If, then, there was already a sarcophagus in place in 952/1545 it would have been a supremely tactless move on the part of the homeless emperor to make an offer to his royal host to replace the sarcophagus ordered by Ṭahmāsp with something better.

Secondly—and this is a related point—the presence of so many other medieval sarcophagi at the shrine for the *shaykh* and his descendants (at least seven sarcophagi of major art-historical interest), makes it all the more likely that the same method of honouring the illustrious dead was followed in the case of Shah Ismā'īl. Indeed, there are significant points of contact between the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā'īl and some of these other sarcophagi. They include the star-and-polygon network employed for all four sides,<sup>15</sup> the preference for inlay, the repeated use of a black and white colour scheme, and the deliberate contrast between various colours of wood. All this makes it still more probable that the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā'īl was constructed shortly after his death, if not before,<sup>16</sup> in accordance with the well-established tradition of this shrine.

Finally, Humāyūn was an exile, far from home, and in straitened political circumstances, with the accompanying threat of future financial hardship as an inescapable corollary. While it is known that he brought some of his treasures with him, notably jewels and manuscripts, a sarcophagus would scarcely have formed part of his portable treasury.<sup>17</sup> Nor is it likely that Humāyūn brought Indian woodworkers

<sup>15</sup> Weaver I, 136 and 138.

<sup>16</sup> Though the unexpectedly early death of Ismā'īl, when he was only 36 (Yusuf-Jamali, *Life and personality*, 1 and 352), argues against this.

<sup>17</sup> Yet this is exactly what is suggested by J. Morier, *Second journey through Persia*,

in his train. To have ordered the manufacture of the sarcophagus in Iran by Iranian artisans<sup>18</sup> would of course have been a possibility, but it would remove the Indian element from the traditional story and reduce Humāyūn to the person who paid for the work rather than the monarch who brought some of India's fabled splendour to Ardabīl. It would also have cost him dearly in ready cash—a commodity in short supply with him. This would be even more true if—as some scholars note<sup>19</sup>—Humāyūn also presented the sarcophagus of Shaykh Ṣafī. The fact that the cult of the *shaykh* had already flourished for so long in Ardabīl makes that latter story even more implausible. The most likely source of these legends is that, in the course of his attempts to persuade<sup>20</sup> Humāyūn to adopt Shī'ite beliefs, Tahmāsp took him to Ardabīl and that this double royal visit entered the folklore of the shrine, to be embroidered in later years. It may be that Humāyūn's gift of a Qur'an dated by colophon to 27 Jumada II 951/15 September 1544 marks this occasion.<sup>21</sup> That said, it is worth reflecting that the convergence of styles in the art of the three Muslim superpowers in the early 10th/16th century makes itself felt in the similarities between Iranian art, whether in luxury Qur'ans or metalwork, and the production of Lahore and the Deccan.<sup>22</sup> Thus there is a nugget of historical truth embedded in these legends.

I turn now to the religious inscriptions. These are of various kinds; there is room in this paper only to indicate the broad parameters of the detailed study that they deserve. Moreover, so many of the inscriptions have gone—the piecemeal assembly of the sarcophagus would have made it easier to prise out individual elements of the design—that it is an impossible task to reconstitute the original

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*Armenia and Asia Minor to Constantinople* (London: Longman, 1818), 253 (which Morton [‘Ardabīl Shrine: I’, 48, n. 67, quoting S. Ray, *Humayun in Persia* (Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society, 1948), 42] says is the earliest known reference to this tale) and by J.B. Fraser, *Travels and adventures in the Persian provinces on the southern banks of the Caspian sea* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1826), 297; the latter says of the sarcophagus that it is ‘said to have been brought from India’.

<sup>18</sup> Where the artists came from was perhaps not an issue.

<sup>19</sup> Sarre, 83; Weaver I, 50.

<sup>20</sup> Dr Sheila Canby, in a paper delivered at ‘Iran and the World in the Safavid Age’, University of London, September 2002, used the more appropriate word ‘extort’ in this connection.

<sup>21</sup> Canby, *ibid.* This manuscript, which is in the British Library, is the earliest dated Mughal Qur'an.

<sup>22</sup> These issues were discussed by Professor James Allan and Dr Sheila Canby in papers delivered at the conference mentioned in n. 20 above.

epigraphic programme. Nevertheless, enough survives to give a fair idea of the flavour of these inscriptions. The tiny cartouche—located at the short end of the sarcophagus which is furthest from the entrance to the tomb chamber—with a signature identifying the artist as Maqṣūd ‘Alī is the only historical material in these inscriptions.

Physically, the largest (and the most traditional) inscription is the *riq‘a* text in high-relief wood carving close to the top of the sarcophagus (pl. 2). The Qur’anic passages are from at least two suras—50 and 69—and are separated by hexagons that repeat holy names.<sup>23</sup> Much of the long inscription is continuous; but it is a task for the future to record its entire text and comment in detail on its calligraphy. The band includes Sura 50: 1–2 and Sura 69: 70, but the longest consecutive text is Sura 50: 21–25—‘Now we have removed from thee thy covering, and piercing is thy sight this day.<sup>24</sup> And (unto the evil-doer) his comrade saith: This is that which I have ready (as testimony). (And it is said:) Do ye twain hurl to hell each rebel ingrate, Hinderer of good, transgressor, doubter, Who setteth up another god with Allāh.’ The terrifying references here to the Last Judgment and to eternal punishment are unmistakable.

Pride of place, however, goes to the inscriptions executed in ivory (pl. 3). A *chahar ‘Alī* is found in one of the ivory eight-pointed stars which frame the large ivory inscribed panels.<sup>25</sup> Other ivory inscriptions consist of holy names repeated six times clockwise forming an interlace design in square Kufic: Allah, Muḥammad, ‘Alī. They are set in octagons of ivory against black wood and act as interstitial accents for the main inscriptions in ivory, which occupy elongated rectangular cartouches terminating at each end in the five points of an incomplete star. These are without doubt intended to be the main focus of interest in the sarcophagus; hence their prime setting, their high relief, and their bright white colour set off by the dark ground from which they emerge.

These ivory openwork panels also bear Qur’anic inscriptions, and here too there is a measure of continuity. Nevertheless, even in multiple quotations from the same suras (namely 73 and 76) there are several gaps. The texts include Suras 56: 17, 73: 1–4, 6–8 and 20 and

<sup>23</sup> These inscriptions are positively curvaceous, full of dynamism and energy.

<sup>24</sup> This is a verse beloved of Sufis and therefore appropriate for use in a Sufi shrine.

<sup>25</sup> In other cases these stars bear a lozenge with a superimposed saltire cross.



76:1, 3, 12–13,<sup>26</sup> 15–17, 22, 25–6 and 28–9. One group<sup>27</sup> refers to all-night prayer vigils: 'O thou wrapped up in thy raiment! Keep vigil the night long, save a little—A half thereof, or abate a little thereof. Or add (a little) thereto—and chant the Qur'an in measure'.<sup>28</sup> Others focus on God's creative power and on His showing man the way. But the bulk of them deal with the afterlife, promising 'a Garden and silk attire; Reclining therein upon couches, they will find there neither (heat of) a sun',<sup>29</sup> and elsewhere: 'Lo! This is a reward for you. Your endeavour [upon earth] hath found acceptance';<sup>30</sup> 'There wait on them immortal youths';<sup>31</sup> and the promise of '[Goblets] crystal clear, made of silver. They will determine the measure thereof. And they will be given to drink there [of a cup]'.<sup>32</sup> And later, from the same sura (v. 30), in the context of the statement that whoever wishes may choose a way to Allāh: 'Yet ye will not, unless Allāh willeth. Lo! Allah is Knower, Wise'.<sup>33</sup> The shadow of the next verse lies over these words; verse 31, of which the opening words are quoted, speaks of the painful doom awaiting evildoers. Most of these quotations, then, allude to the blessed life after death which awaits Shah Ismā'īl, but, as in the main inscription above, the threat of eternal punishment is implied.

Thus the Qur'anic inscriptions in ivory broadcast the double message of joy for believers and misery for unbelievers in the hereafter. The reason for this fine balance remains an open question: were these inscriptions aimed at the living viewer by way of warning and encouragement, or did they refer to Shah Ismā'īl himself, commending him to the mercy of Allah? Perhaps the ambiguity was intentional. At all events, the lengthy concentration on the joys and terrors of the afterlife go far beyond the standard 'Every soul shall

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<sup>26</sup> This plaque is in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore; I am grateful to Dr Barry Wood for this information and for a photograph of it. The last word of verse 12, *harīran*, is here mis-spelled *harīnan*.

<sup>27</sup> Qur'an 73: 1–4, 6–8 and 20.

<sup>28</sup> Qur'an 73: 1–4. See M. Pickthall, *The Meaning of The Glorious Koran. An Explanatory Translation* (London: George Allen and Unwin, repr. 1957), 616.

<sup>29</sup> Qur'an 76: 12–13; Pickthall, 624.

<sup>30</sup> Qur'an 76: 22; Pickthall, 624.

<sup>31</sup> Qur'an 56: 17; Pickthall, 561.

<sup>32</sup> Qur'an 76: 16–17. See A. Yusuf Ali, translation and commentary, *The meaning of the Glorious Qur'an II* (Cairo: Dar al-Kitab al-Masri, n.d.), 1658.

<sup>33</sup> Pickthall, 625.

taste of death<sup>34</sup> so common in funerary contexts.<sup>35</sup> It is a great pity that the disappearance of so many of the cartouches means that it is no longer possible to reconstitute the entire epigraphic programme, though some of the missing panels can be traced to the collections of the Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran<sup>36</sup> and the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.<sup>37</sup> In the odd case, only a few words remain.

It is now time to discuss the contemporary aesthetic. It is plain that in the early 10th/16th century there flourished an international Islamic princely style whose outstanding feature was a love of strong colour contrasts involving the use of different media and textures as well as extremely dense and small-scale vegetal ornament. It can be seen everywhere—from clothing to carpets, from fashion accessories to footwear. Naturally enough, there are differences between Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal work<sup>38</sup> in this vein, just as there are regional subsets in the style dubbed International Gothic; but the points of resemblance are more telling than the differences. Equally significant is the fact that some of these objects originated in one empire but were reworked in another, which is a further indication of how widespread the taste for such work was.<sup>39</sup> Unfortunately, the royal arts of the Safavid and Mughal empires have been scattered, and much has been lost.

Moreover, craftsmen migrated, voluntarily or otherwise,<sup>40</sup> from one empire to the other. Recent work by James Allan<sup>41</sup> has revealed a sea-change in the field of metalwork which is of direct relevance to the study of the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā‘īl. The rich collections of the Topkapı Saray in Istanbul house an unrivalled collection of the finest Iranian metalwork dating from the opening years of the

<sup>34</sup> Qur’an 21:35.

<sup>35</sup> Among Iranian examples one may cite tomb towers at Rasgat and Maragha. See E.C. Dodd and S. Khairallah, *The Image of the Word. A Study of Qur’anic Verses in Islamic Architecture* (Beirut: The American University of Beirut, 1981), II, 77.

<sup>36</sup> Accession numbers 20508–20512. For illustrations, see D. Jones and G. Michell, eds., *The Arts of Islam* (London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1976), 156, fig. 156.

<sup>37</sup> Accession number 71.580; erroneously attributed to 9th/15th-century Egypt. It measures 20.1 by 4.1 cm.

<sup>38</sup> See C. Köseoglu, *The Topkapı Saray Museum. The Treasury*, tr., expanded and ed. J.M. Rogers (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), pl. 65 (covered box).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pls. 65 and 77.

<sup>40</sup> Persian painters in Hindustan are only the best-known example of this process at the time.

<sup>41</sup> Presented in a paper delivered at the Safavid conference held in London in September 2002.

16th century, and Allan argues convincingly that these objects—belts, armbands, weapons, shields, flasks, jugs—and many of the artists who produced them, were taken to Istanbul by Sultan Selīm as booty after he had defeated Shah Ismā'īl at Chaldīrān in 920/1514. Once installed in the Ottoman capital, these Persian artists of course influenced the course of royal Ottoman metalwork. Other examples of their work have found their way into European collections, such as those in Stockholm and Vienna.<sup>42</sup> The catastrophe of Chaldīrān, Allan suggests, destroyed Tabrīz as a centre of metalworking in general—armourers, specialists in zinc and in brass inlay, and artists in cognate fields. A particular characteristic of these metal objects, many of them made of zinc,<sup>43</sup> is the delight in using colourful studs or insets in precious stones. And it is this metalwork which, of all early Safavid art, is—despite the difference in medium—closest in style and aesthetic to the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā'īl. That sarcophagus therefore has special value as one of the few survivals in Iran itself of an early Safavid aesthetic whose great masterpieces have in so many cases left the country.

Thus the most representative survivals of this taste are Ottoman, since Istanbul was never sacked and successive generations of sultans preserved luxury objects of all kinds in the Topkapı Saray. Daggers and tankards, belts and book-covers, put over an unmistakable message of extravagant wealth.<sup>44</sup> The promiscuous mingling of textures, media, colours and ornament (especially vegetal) in such objects creates quite distinct visual effects and is central to this aesthetic. Familiar motifs were transformed by variegating the colours, textures and materials in which they were executed, and by the fashion in early Safavid times for extremely dense and detailed ornament. The aim was to create a busy surface. In media ranging from glazed architectural

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<sup>42</sup> For Stockholm, see the wickerwork shield painted with such carpet motifs as a seated fox and a lion bringing down a bull, all against arabesque scrolls, and terminating in a steel boss inlaid with gold. The colour scheme of the wickerwork is indeed rich—white, yellow, grey and black against a red ground—and the contrast in texture between it and the steel boss is very effective. A dagger in the Museum für angewandte Kunst in Vienna (no. E 1 822) has a steel scabbard inlaid with gold, with a multi-foil cartouche termination at the hilt. I am grateful to Professor James Allan for sharing this material with me.

<sup>43</sup> See Köseoglu and Rogers, 200–1 and pls. 74 (dish), 75 (jug), 76 (flask) and 77 (covered jug).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pls. 32–3 (*yataghan*, scimitars and swords), 37 (parade helmet), 50 (hard-stone pot), 59 (penbox), 62 (footed cup), 78 and 81 (book-binding), 79 (reliquary-chest), 111 (box), 115 (belt) and 116 (armband).

tilework to carpet design and Qur'anic illumination,<sup>45</sup> the repetition of identical motifs in different colours makes an essentially simple design look far more complex than it actually is.<sup>46</sup> The fact that so many specialists in all sorts of media worked together in the royal *kitābkhāna*—for which 'design studio' might be a free but appropriate translation—fostered the spread of the more popular designs across media, on various scales and in unexpected colour combinations. All this led quite naturally to an increased interdependence of the visual arts. The Topkapi Saray Museum holds many examples of early Safavid luxury art which permit an assessment of how this fashion for mixing textures and colours was interpreted in Iran.<sup>47</sup>

This delight in mixed textures, and above all in colour, is equally characteristic of the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā'īl (pl. 4). Although made of wood, it contrives to hide that simple fact at almost every turn. Why? Because the craftsmen wanted to make it glisten with many colours—and wood is not a natural medium for lasting colour effects. The sarcophagus uses various tones of red and green silk as a backing<sup>48</sup> for openwork white ivory interlace. The effect is very close to that of Safavid steel plaques, where the bold, fat *riq'a* inscriptions stand out against spacious but thin scrolling arabesques. In such work the background is sometimes gilded,<sup>49</sup> which creates a luscious contrast with the silver colour of the inscription, and even the outline of the plaque itself can often be very close to that of the ivory plaques on the sarcophagus.<sup>50</sup> The colour contrast of these ivory plaques is

<sup>45</sup> There is no space in this paper to develop the connections between the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā'īl and early Safavid Qur'ans; for the latter, see Dzul Haimi b. Muhammad Zayn, *Qur'ans of the Safavid Period* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1998).

<sup>46</sup> C.G. Ellis, 'The system of multiple levels', in A.U. Pope and P. Ackerman, eds., *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present. XIV. New Studies 1938–1960. Proceedings, the IVth International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, Part A. April 24–May 3, 1960* (Tehran, London, New York and Tokyo: Asia Institute of Pahlavi University, 1967), 3172–83.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pls. 48 (gold-inlaid nephrite pot), 74 (dish), 75 (jug), 76 (flask), 77 (covered jug).

<sup>48</sup> This use of textiles as a foil for other materials occurs frequently in early Safavid metalwork. See *ibid.*, 206 and pls. 115 [belt] and 116 [armband], though it is also known in 10th/16th-century Ottoman art, for example bookbinding. See *ibid.*, pl. 78.

<sup>49</sup> Folsach, 328, pl. 526.

<sup>50</sup> Sotheby's. *Islamic Works of Art, Carpets and Textiles, 15–16 October 1985*, lot 218; Sotheby's. *Islamic Works of Art, Carpets and Textiles, 16 April 1986*, lots 181–3; Sotheby's. *Arts of the Islamic World. 16 October 2002*, 68–9, lot 62, with ample references to comparative material (the discussion mentions the shrine of Shah Ṭahmāsp, which prob-

constantly variegated by more ivory or bone stained black and green, often applied in tiny triangles in the marquetry technique. Longer strips are not glued onto the backing but sewn onto the underlying textile with silvered metal thread. Some of the inscriptions are of wood in high relief, but even here the letters themselves are stained black. In terms of colour alone, then, the craftsman disposes of white, black, yellow-brown, dark brown, silver, green, crimson and russet.<sup>51</sup>

The striking use of white against a dark ground is a basic principle of the entire design. In particular, the interstices of the geometric strapwork bring the whole composition to life, for they are ornamented with grace notes applied almost parsimoniously at key points in black and white marquetry work. Similar colour effects can be found in contemporary Anatolian carpets.<sup>52</sup> Tiny spots of green, presumably stained bone<sup>53</sup> rather than the turquoise mentioned in several sources,<sup>54</sup> add a further touch of luxury. The borders are marked by further clusters of marquetry in a sprightly dancing rhythm. All this means that the immediate visual impact of the sarcophagus is not that of a large and weighty block of carved dark brown wood, which after all is the basic impression given by most earlier sarcophagi, but of a light and fragile object, with a surface of shimmering white on which there floats a green mist. Its basic shape, then, like its skeletal design framework, are both thoroughly traditional; but these elements are transformed by an infusion of striking, indeed ethereal, colour harmonies of a kind not hitherto encountered in surviving Iranian woodworking.

Next, the question of innovation. This is bound up with the issue of colour. It is too early to define the role which polychromy played

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ably refers to the Ardabīl shrine, in which Shah Ṭahmāsp took such an interest). See, in general, J.W. Allan and B. Gilmour, *Persian Steel. The Tanavoli Collection. Oxford Studies in Islamic Art XV* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 264–81, 294–302.

<sup>51</sup> The mother-of-pearl used in some earlier woodworking at Ardabīl has, however, dropped out of fashion. It became characteristic of Ottoman woodworking. See, for example, Sotheby's, *Islamic Works of Art, Carpets and Textiles. 16–17 April 1985*, lot 137.

<sup>52</sup> Certain types of late 9th/15th-century Ushak carpets in which lobed lozenges of medallions in colours strikingly different from their background figure largely. See R. Pinner, 'Oriental Rug Design. Multiple and substrate designs in early Anatolian and east Mediterranean carpets', *Hali* 42 (1988), pls. 26–7.

<sup>53</sup> I am indebted to Dr Kjeld von Folsach for the suggestion that the material might well be camel-bone.

<sup>54</sup> For example, Morier, 253 (he also mentions tortoise-shell) and Dibaj, tr. Emamy, 113. I am told by Robert Skelton that turquoise, as a hardstone, would not lend itself to work on this tiny scale; and it is not used by workers in *khatankari*, which is the technique used here.

in medieval Iranian woodwork. But it is likely that in Iran, as elsewhere, wood was painted; portions of a probably Saljuq table recently acquired by the David Collection displays several bright colours, among them an intense cinnabar red.<sup>55</sup> The sarcophagus of Mīr Qavvām al-Dīn al-Mar‘ashī near Amul, dated 781/1379, has the letters of its inscription gilded and set against a dark blue ground.<sup>56</sup> A 9th/15th-century door from Kokand in the Metropolitan Museum of Art had a blue background while the main pattern was printed out in red, green, brown and gold. But only traces of these colours remain.<sup>57</sup> Denike’s work on the late 8th/14th-century door to the mosque of the Shāh-i Zinda indicates that its polychromy was constantly renewed.<sup>58</sup> So it would have been obvious enough that paint did not provide lasting colour, and thus medieval Islamic craftsmen developed other ways to create an enduring colour contrast. One was inlay; another was marquetry. In Islamic times this technique, already long familiar in the Mediterranean world and the ancient Near East, is recorded from the 8th century in Islamic Egypt.<sup>59</sup> It involves thin strips of material—such as wood, ivory, or bone—being glued together in prefabricated patterns, and sliced horizontally. This is clearly related to millefiori technique. The resulting tesserae are then glued onto a wooden backing. Desks and doors from Andalusia show that the Western Islamic emphasis on inlay had shifted by the 15th century to the use of long thin strips of white and black to create the main design and a much greater reliance on marquetry work for the infill.<sup>60</sup>

So much for the pan-Islamic picture. It is now time to look at earlier Iranian woodwork, first at Ardabīl itself—since this would have been the obvious source of inspiration—and then in a more general sense. The earlier funerary woodwork at Ardabīl proves conclusively that the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā‘īl belongs to a well-established tradition that flourished at Ardabīl itself, even though the name of at least one master shows that woodworkers from other areas were

<sup>55</sup> Folsach, pl. 427.

<sup>56</sup> L. Bronstein, ‘Decorative woodwork of the Islamic period’, *Survey*, 2622.

<sup>57</sup> *Idem*, 2623; M.S. Dimand, *A Handbook of Muhammadan Art* (New York: Hartsdale House, 1947), 121.

<sup>58</sup> B. Denike, ‘Quelques monuments de bois sculpté au Turkestan occidental’, *Ars Islamica* II (1935), 83 and fig. 12.

<sup>59</sup> For a colour illustration, see R. Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), 57. See also n. 7 above.

<sup>60</sup> J.D. Dodds, ed., *Al-Andalus. The Art of Islamic Spain* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 268–9, cat. 53 and 372–3, cat. 118.

active at the shrine (e.g. a wooden headboard signed ‘amal Ustād ‘Uthmān ibn Aḥmad al-Maraghī). Another specimen, in which the plinth dwarfs the sarcophagus proper, bears the remains of an inscription. . . . *Muḥammad, nawwara Allāh qabrhumā. Fī shahr Muḥarram san‘at thalatha wa khamsīn wa sab‘a mi‘at* (‘. . . Muḥammad, may God illumine the grave of the two of them. In the month of Muḥarram of the year 753’ [18 February–18 March, 1352] (see pl. 5). This has marquetry work in gold and black for the centrepieces and stars of the polygonal stellar networks which fill the panels of the plinth. Similar marquetry forms the decoration of the small sarcophagus itself. A third sarcophagus dated 788/1386–7, already mentioned briefly above, is somewhat more limited in its repertoire, confining its chromatic scale to light and dark brown and its carved ornament to dense interlace within horizontal, stellar or polygonal panels. Since the sarcophagi at the shrine include those of Shaykh Ṣadr al-Dīn Mūsā—the son of Shaykh Ṣafī himself—and of Mūsā’s grandson Shaykh Ibrahīm (d. 851/1447) and great-grandson Shaykh (or Sultan) Ḥaydar (d. 893/1488),<sup>61</sup> as well as those of Shaykh Ṣafī and Shah Ismā‘il, the time-span of this woodwork covers the full two centuries of the order’s rise to power. It represents easily the greatest challenge for future research by specialists in this field of Iranian art.

What of the woodwork of Iran in general in the immediately pre-Safavid period? The top-quality 9th/15th-century woodwork which survives can be divided into three major categories. The first is conservative to a fault. It favours long continuous inscription bands, and a framework of bold polygons and stellar motifs. The emphasis lies squarely on the principal design, and infill is demoted to a minor role.<sup>62</sup> The second category could scarcely be more different. It is known in both doors and boxes. Here the emphasis is on extremely small-scale, almost filigree work. The panels, which tend to be vertically oriented, are long and narrow. They feature a single continuous design rather than the repetition of a single motif. The artists

<sup>61</sup> M.E. Weaver, ‘Ardabīl iii. Monuments of Ardabīl’, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* II.4 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1986), 363.

<sup>62</sup> Survey, pls. 1465C and 1472; for a colour plate of the latter sarcophagus, see T. Lentz and G. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision. Timurid Art in the Fifteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1989), 207. For colour illustrations of such woodwork see also Sotheby’s, *Islamic Works of Art, Carpets and Textiles. 16 April 1986*, lot 110; Sotheby’s. *Islamic and Indian Art. Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures. 29–30 April 1992*, lot 89; Sotheby’s. *Islamic and Indian Art. 19 October 1995*, lot 75; Sotheby’s. *Islamic and Indian Art. 25 April 1996*, lot 67.

delight in the interplay of different levels of carving, and parallels with contemporary tilework readily suggest themselves.<sup>63</sup> The third type is the one most closely related to the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā'īl I. Its distinguishing characteristics are its strong colour sense and its use of marquetry. Very little of it survives. The prime example is furnished by a pair of leaves for a door at the Gūr-i Amīr.<sup>64</sup> Another instance can be found on a sandalwood box made for Ulūgh Beg.<sup>65</sup> A foretaste of this technique in Iran can be recognised in the marquetry using several kinds of wood, all of different tones of brown, on a Qur'an stand of 761/1360, though in that object the colour potential of the marquetry technique is exploited only timidly.<sup>66</sup> In the later 9th/15th century Josafa Barbaro saw in Tabrīz a sandalwood door with intarsia of gold wire and pearls,<sup>67</sup> which clearly had a richer palette than the examples cited so far.

And this is where the innovative quality of our sarcophagus may be recognised. For it is assuredly the outstanding, and also the earliest surviving, masterpiece of marquetry in Iranian woodworking. Admittedly, the evidence is badly skewed because almost all surviving work was made for a religious context—mosque or shrine doors or sarcophagi—whereas the many different kinds of woodworking depicted in pre-Safavid Iranian book painting tell quite another story. Unfortunately, all this secular woodworking made for the court has vanished. But the painted evidence suggests that the idiom employed for certain types of wood fittings in a courtly context—screens, doors, window-grilles, footstools, thrones—was much more daring in its use of colour than what survives in the religious sphere; that it made lavish use of marquetry; and that its overall designs favoured small-scale, rather finicky patterns.<sup>68</sup> The key question here is simple—can these painted images

<sup>63</sup> Survey, pls. 1467–9. Note that the door depicted on pl. 1468 has a small amount of ivory inlay. See Lentz and Lowry, figs. 68–9. An identical style was favoured for late Timurid tombstones. See *ibid.*, 209, fig. 70.

<sup>64</sup> Survey, pl. 1470.

<sup>65</sup> Lentz and Lowry, 339 and cat. 49; for colour plates, see 142 and 207.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 330 and cat. 9; for a colour plate, see 47.

<sup>67</sup> Bronstein, *Survey*, 2620, n. 2.

<sup>68</sup> F. Suleimanova, *Miniatures Illuminations of Nisami's 'Hamsah' (sic)* (Tashkent: Fan Publishers, 1985), pls. 8, 11 and 82; Lentz and Lowry, 220, cat. 147; 260, 286 and 294, cat. 146; 263, fig. 93; 267, cat. 147; 279, cat. 153; 281, cat. 155; A. Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts. Selections from the Art and History Trust Collection* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), 99, 104–5 and 176. These examples could easily be multiplied, and their cumulative testimony is overwhelming: high-quality woodworking was indeed transformed in the late Timurid period.



be taken as a reliable index of what contemporary woodwork of luxury type looked like? This is best answered by attempting to define their aims.

The artists painted this woodwork as part of the environment for the figural subjects which were, for them, the main focus of pictorial interest. For them, therefore, it was an incidental element of the composition, though the obsession with the accurate depiction of detail which so characterised late Timurid painting ensured that these painters would pay close attention to the rendering of even minor elements of the composition. That said, a note of caution should be sounded here. The artists who painted this woodwork were of course not striving after naturalism in any Western sense, and their handling of architecture shows well enough that they sometimes chose colours which are not to be found in any surviving monuments and probably had no basis in reality. Equally, then, the woodwork which they depict may contain some element of fantasy. Nevertheless, the miniature painters consistently make a distinction between the kind of woodwork used for screens and for window grilles—which is of openwork type using fairly simple polygonal geometric designs, exactly like the surviving woodwork which served these same purposes—and the much more technically complex kind used for doors, thrones, footstools and panels below balconies. This suggests that the painters were recording a distinction which applied to objects in actual use at the time, even if the individual patterns may not have been based on fact. Moreover, not only are the patterns shown precisely those best known in marquetry work, but their colours—white, black, green—are again the favoured ones in that technique. All this tends to suggest that, in the case of luxury woodwork at all events, the painters were reproducing objects before them with a high degree of accuracy.

The decision to execute a substantial amount of the sarcophagus in the marquetry technique made little difference to the overall design, since this followed the type of angular polygonal interlace which had for centuries been well-nigh canonical for sarcophagi. Doors, on the other hand, featured a much wider range of design types, notably those of curvilinear type. None of the marquetry doors in Timurid painting employ curvilinear motifs, which suggests that marquetry and curved designs were mutually exclusive. Thus the sarcophagus of Ismā'īl combines conservative design with innovative technique. This is in line with the general contemporary preference for experiment in colour rather than in design.

Time does not permit more than a brief allusion to the sarcophagus of Shaykh Ṣafī, which almost certainly dates from soon after his death on 12 Muharram 735/12 September 1334.<sup>69</sup> Here too the design is strongly conservative in its emphasis on polygonal networks; here too there is innovation, as in its numerous and varied metal-work fittings and the silver panel with cloisonné enamel decoration which records that Shaykh Ṣadr al-Dīn, Ṣafī's son, built the tomb;<sup>70</sup> and here too marquetry plays a part, though the tonality is reduced to silver and black (there is no green, though there are mother-of-pearl effects), and the marquetry work has to compete with densely drilled foliate carving as infill ornament.

Lastly, let me return to the use of marquetry, for it raises a wider question, namely the source of the idea of using it, and this has a bearing on my final point. To my knowledge, the earliest known surviving specimen from the Iranian world is the box of Ulūgh Beg, and this eastern connection is corroborated by a whole host of doors and thrones depicted in late Hirati painting. Earlier Herati painting, incidentally, suggests that the fashion for doors was plainer earlier in the century.<sup>71</sup> If, then, this was an *eastern* Iranian fashion, and an up-to-date one at that, what was it doing at Ardabīl? This contrast is made still more marked by the preference in the eastern Iranian world for small-scale curvilinear techniques in woodcarving,<sup>72</sup> whereas the sarcophagus of Shah Ismā'īl opts for the polygonal networks long standard in western Iran and Anatolia. Moreover, the comparative material in book painting suggests a Khurasani preference for *all-over* marquetry; and our sarcophagus falls far short of that.

Where do these remarks leave us? The obvious parallel for this abrupt juxtaposition of east and west is the mixture of *north-western* and *north-eastern* strands, of Turcoman and Timurid, in early Safavid painting. Recent research has shown that this commingling is not

<sup>69</sup> For this date, see Morton, 'Ardabīl Shrine', 47. Sadr al-Dīn himself died, aged nearly ninety, in 794/1391–2. See R.M. Savory, 'Ṣadr al-Dīn Ardabīlī', *EP*<sup>2</sup>, VIII: 753. So, in theory the sarcophagus could date from any time between 1334 and 1392; but a date not long after Ṣafī's death is the most likely one.

<sup>70</sup> Morton, 'Ardabīl Shrine', 47–8 and pl. IIa.

<sup>71</sup> A.T. Adamova, 'The Hermitage Museum Manuscript of Nizami's *Khamseh*, dated 835/1431', *Islamic Art V* (2001), figs. 17, 25 and 37 (though one should note fig. 39, which is much more elaborate, perhaps because it represents a foreign environment); B. Gray, *Persian Painting* (Geneva: Skira, 1961), 86–7.

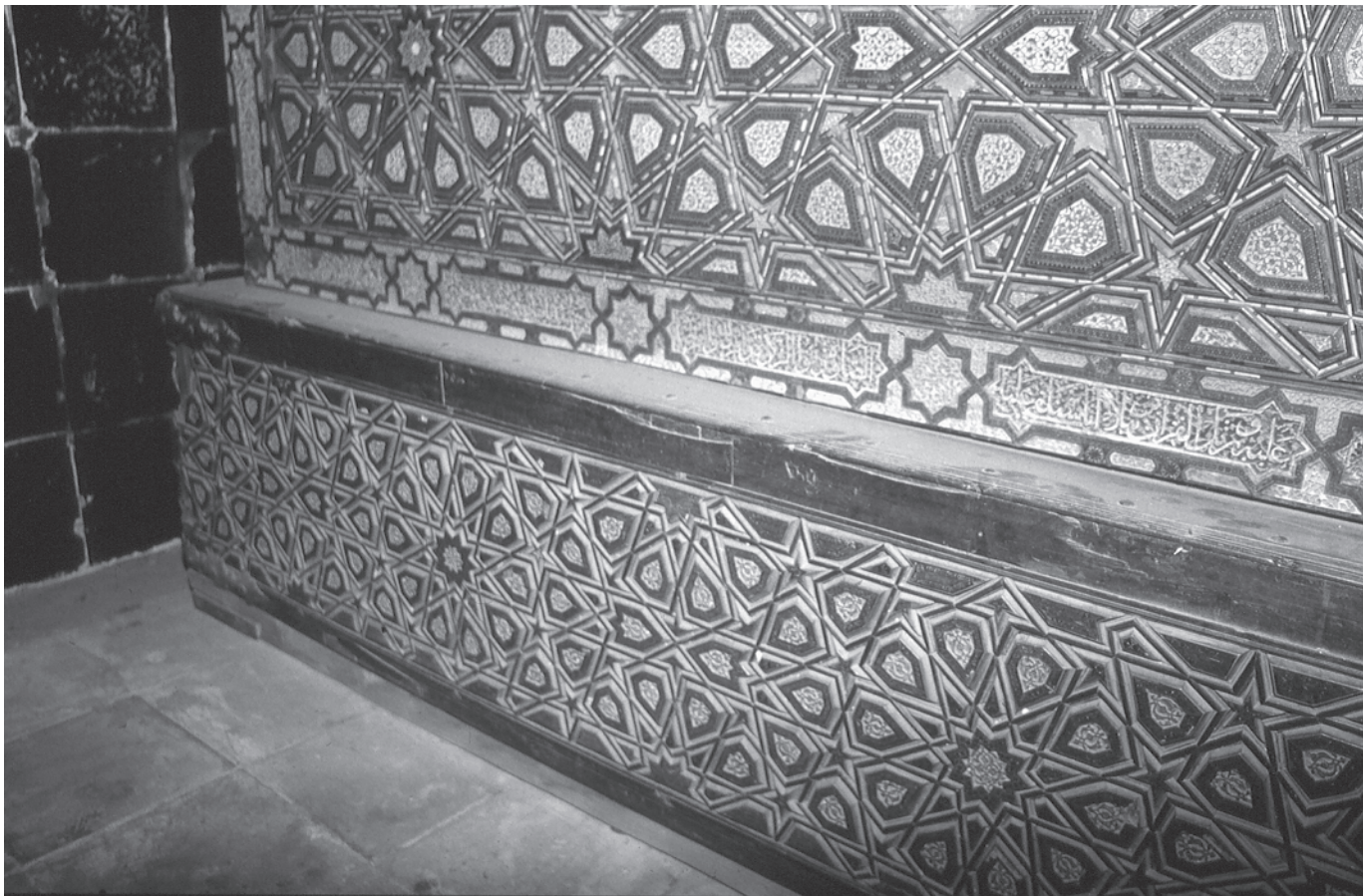
<sup>72</sup> This trend was already marked in the 14th century, as shown by the sarcophagus of Sayf al-Dīn Bakharzī; see Denike, figs 9–11.

quite as easily explained as Cary Welch has suggested, but the existence of those two strands in early Safavid painting,<sup>73</sup> and what may be termed their shotgun marriage, is indisputable. Whether the Maqṣūd 'Alī who signed<sup>74</sup> our sarcophagus was a Hirati is not known; but what matters is that the style of choice for a royal sarcophagus at this time was, it seems, *a combination of eastern and western Iranian modes*. And that has unmistakable political resonances. For it evokes, with extraordinary aptness—just as both style and content of Ṭahmāsp's *Shāhnāmeḥ* do—that decade and a half from 931/1524 when the young Shah Tahmāsp, himself raised in the east, was valiantly trying to maintain the territorial integrity of his eastern and western lands.

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<sup>73</sup> A theory aired at length in S.C. Welch and M.B. Dickson, *The Houghton Shjahnāmeḥ* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1981).

<sup>74</sup> On the eastern face: *'amal-i Ustād Maqṣūd 'Alī* (Weaver I, 113, quoting a translation made by M. Emamy of the discussion of Ardabil in I. Dībaj, *Rahnāma-yi Athar-i Tarikhi-yi Azarbaijan-i Sharqi* (Tabrīz, 1334/1955).



1. Ardabil, mausoleum of Shah Ismā'il I, sarcophagus: general view of two-tier layout.



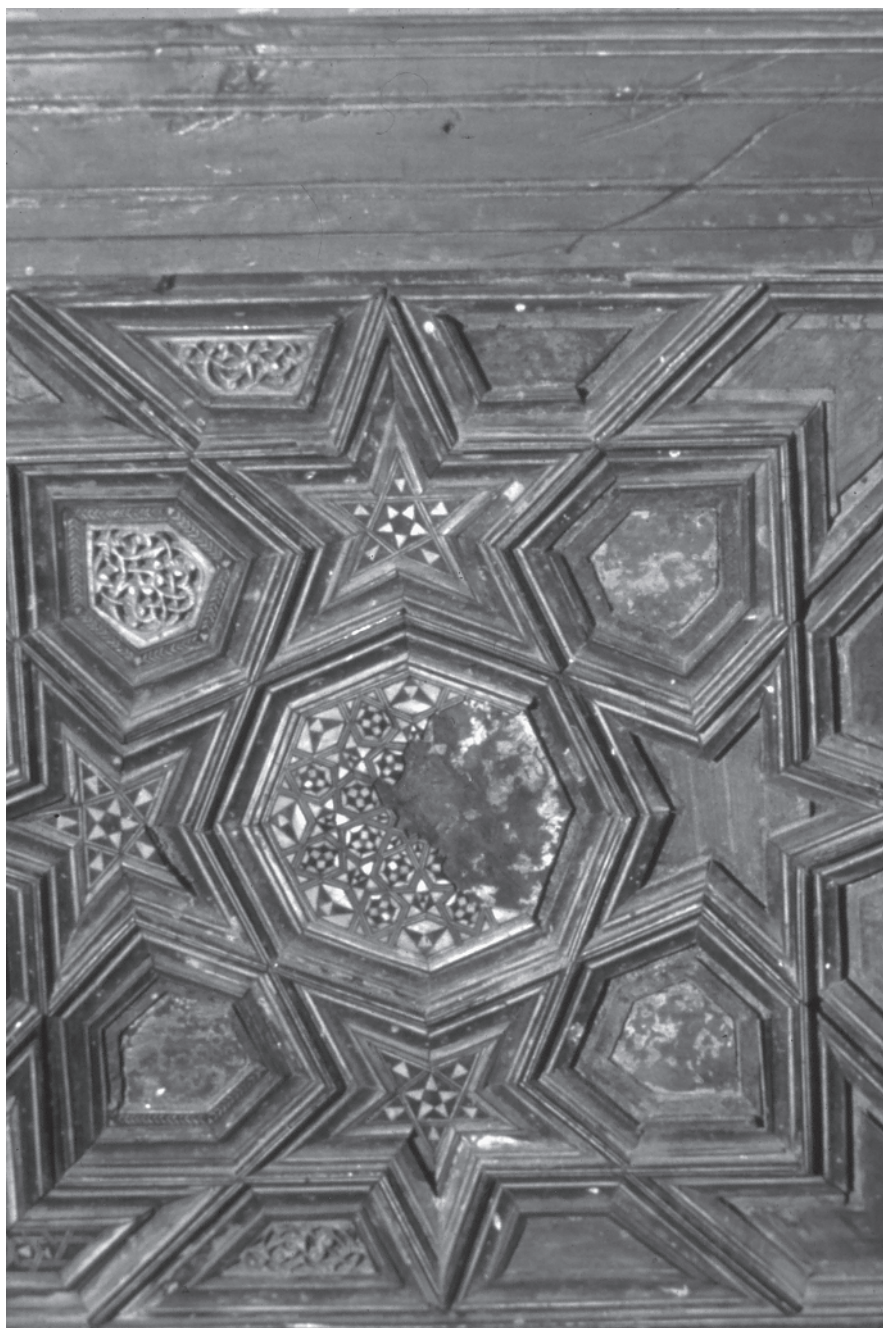
2. Ardabil, mausoleum of Shah Ismā'il I, sarcophagus: upper part of top tier with *riq'a* inscription in wood on a ground of the same material.



3. Ardabil, mausoleum of Shah Ismā'il I, sarcophagus: top tier showing part of an inscribed panel in ivory on a ground of the same material.



4. Ardabil, mausoleum of Shah Ismā'il I, sarcophagus: top tier with part of an inscription in ivory against a dark ground.



5. Ardabil, sarcophagus dated 753/1352: detail of plinth.



PART FOUR  
ART AND IDENTITIES

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## MUHAMMAD QĀSIM AND THE ISFAHAN SCHOOL OF PAINTING

A.T. Adamova

In my article written in 1991 I suggested a theory, largely hypothetical, which I hope will prove to be correct. Among the impressions of the well-known seal of Shah ‘Abbās I, inscribed with formula *bandeh-yi shāh-i vilāyat ‘Abbās*, met on many 16th–early 17th centuries miniatures and drawings, three different seals are distinguishable, which seem to have three different dates—995/1586–7, 996/1587–8, 1010/1601–2.<sup>1</sup> The seals evidently succeeded one another and may serve as criteria for dating: the miniatures impressed with the seal dated 995 could not be created later than 996 (the year of the introduction of a new seal), and those with date 996—later than 1010. Among the miniatures and drawings bearing the impressions of the seal dated 996 there were two miniatures with perfectly credible

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<sup>1</sup> For the most clear impression of the first seal see: E. Atil, *The Brush of the Masters. Drawings from Iran and India*. Washington, D.C. 1978, No.15; for the second, N.M. Titley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts. Catalogue and Subject Index of Paintings from Persia, India and Turkey in the British Library and British Museum*. London: British Museum Press, 1977, il. 41; for the third: *Bulletin de la Soc. Francaise de reproduction de peintures, 18e annee* (1934), 173 and pl. XXXVIII.

It is difficult to be sure of the last figure on the first two seals, which may be five and may be six, but these are undoubtedly two different seals: one rectangular with double border line, the second—with single border line, oblique in upper left corner. There are some grounds to suggest that these were the Shah’s personal ring-seals (small dimensions and form) and the impressions were done by the Shah himself: on the depictions of the handsome youths the seal is impressed under the feet of the model (perhaps to express admiration not only of the work but of the image as well), which a librarian (as I thought before) would not dare to do dealing with a seal bearing the monarch’s name. Perhaps the reasons for introducing new seals were political: ‘Abbās was proclaimed Shah in October 16, 1587, that is in 995 (Dec. 1586–Nov. 1587) and he was given insignia of power in October 1, 1588, that is in 996 (Dec. 1587–Oct. 1588) [R. Savory. *Iran under the Safavids*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, p. 75]. The third seal with date 1010/1601–2 could be introduced when Shah and Royal atelier really moved to the new capital Isfahan.

The 1991 article has been published as ‘On the Attribution of Persian Paintings and Drawings at the Time of Shah ‘Abbās I: Seals and Attributory Inscriptions’ in Robert Hillenbrand, ed., *Persian Painting from the Mongols to the Qajars* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 19–38.

attributory inscriptions ascribing them to Muḥammad Qāsim (*amal-i ustād Muḥammad Qāsim*).<sup>2</sup> The date 996/1587–88 pointed to the miniatures as having been created not later than 1010/1601–02, which corresponded with their style. It was the name of the artist that raised difficulties, because as is generally accepted, the artistic activity of Muḥammad Qāsim (one of the most famous masters of Isfahan school of painting) belonged to the middle and second half of the 17th century.

The most comprehensive study on Muḥammad Qāsim is in I. Stchoukine's book *Les peintures des manuscrits de Shah 'Abbās I à la fin des Safavis*, published in 1964. We meet there with two painters with this name, one working in the late 10th/16th century (Stchoukine suggested calling him Muḥammad Qāsim l'Ancient), the other in the second half of the 11th/17th century.<sup>3</sup> It is clear from Stchoukine's description that he had not seen the actual paintings of the older master and cites, after Martin and Sakisian, a few works with the dates from 1000s/1590s.<sup>4</sup> These works have never been published.

It would be natural to suggest that the two mentioned miniatures with Shah 'Abbās I's seal impressions are the works of Muḥammad Qāsim l'Ancient, but many features connect them with the Muḥammad Qāsim whose works are well known and who is regarded as an artist of the mid-second half of the 17th century.

Stchoukine's list of his works contains 23 single miniatures and drawings, of which 13 are signed, the others, together with four illustrated manuscripts, are attributed to this master.<sup>5</sup> Of signed works of Muḥammad Qāsim in Stchoukine's list only one had the date and even that is given in shortened form. It was the drawing *Chastisement of a Pupil*, acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1911,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Lowry, Beach 1988, No. 356, 306; Canby 1990, fig. 7, 77. See also lower notes 24 and 26.

<sup>3</sup> Stchoukine 1964, 53.

<sup>4</sup> Martin included Muḥammad Qāsim into his 'List of Painters' [Martin 1912, vol. I, 126], giving the time of his activity as 'about A.D. 1700', mentioning however among his works 'Lady in Red Cloak', signed and dated 1004/1595–6. Sakisian is responsible for introducing two artists with the same name: '... c'est à la seconde moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle qu'appartiennent également Mohammed Kassim, Mohammed 'Alī et Mohammed Zaman. Il exist toutefois un Mohammed Kassim el-Tabrīzī de la fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle' [Sakisian 1929, 143–4]. According to Sakisian [p. 144 n. 1] in Topkapı Saray Library Album 37092 there is a tinted drawing of a man in mongol hat, holding a mace, signed Muḥammad Qāsim Tabrīzī and dated 1590.

<sup>5</sup> Stchoukine 1964, 53–6.

<sup>6</sup> New York, MMA, Frederick C. Hewitt fund, 1911, 11.84.14; 24,5 × 15,9.

signed *‘raqam-i khuksar Muḥammad Qāsim’*. *Sana 114*. The date on this expressive drawing executed in calligraphic line, vivid, changing its thickness, Stchoukine read as 1104/1692–93, noting his disagreement with Schulz, who understood it as 1014/1605.<sup>7</sup> Stchoukine’s reading of this date was no doubt, at least partly, due to his major conception on the development of drawing and gradual change of character of line from thin and calm at the end of the 10th/16th century to vivid and dynamic from about 1019/1610. But the difference between the lines in opaque gouache miniature paintings and those in drawings (sometimes tinted with transparent water-colours) was not taken into consideration and, as I’ll try to prove, led to erroneous understanding of the date on the drawing and of the chronology of Muḥammad Qāsim’s works in general, which he placed between the fifth and the last decades of the seventeenth century. Stchoukine agreed with B.W. Robinson that the best miniatures in the famous 1058/1648 *Shāhnāmeḥ* from Windsor library were executed by Muḥammad Qāsim.<sup>8</sup> Thus these miniatures became the works of the early period of Muḥammad Qāsim’s career while the MMA drawing became one of his last works. As to the style of Muḥammad Qāsim’s works Stchoukine considered it to be an original interpretation of the style of Rizā ‘Abbāsī.<sup>9</sup> It is worth noting that Stchoukine calls Muḥammad Qāsim ‘ce grand artiste’, ‘un brillant dessinateur de figures humaines’, and describes his works as the most innovatory and original creations of the second half of the 11th/17th century.<sup>10</sup>

Stchoukine’s list of Muḥammad Qāsim’s works, when studied attentively, shows that many works signed by the master or attributed to him had been formerly ascribed to the early 11th/17th century (or even to the late 16th) by Blochet, Schulz, Binyon, Wilkinson, Gray and to the late 11th/17th century by Sakisian, Schroeder, Kuhnel. But after the appearance in 1964 of Stchoukine’s book the understanding of Muḥammad Qāsim as being a painter of the later

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Published: Schulz 1914, vol. II, pl. 166 and vol. I, 191–2; M.Dimand. ‘Dated Specimens of Muḥammadan Art’. In: *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, Vol. I, part 2, 1929, 231, fig. 10; Swietochowski, Babaie 1989, No. 34, 78–9.

<sup>7</sup> Sakisian and Dimand understood the date as 1114/1702–3 [Sakisian 1929, 144, note 2; Metropolitan Museum Studies, vol. I, part 2, 1929, 231, fig. 19].

<sup>8</sup> Stchoukine 1964, 148 and pls LX–LXII.

<sup>9</sup> Stchoukine 1964, 199–226.

<sup>10</sup> Stchoukine 1964, 214–5.

11th/17th century has been accepted by almost all the authors, who agreed that Muḥammad Qāsim, as well as Muḥammad ‘Alī and Muḥammad Yūsuf, were the followers of the style of Rizā ‘Abbāsī and that Muḥammad Qāsim was the most talented and imaginative of them. A. Welch writes: ‘Three of Rizā’s later seventeenth-century followers—Muḥammad Qāsim, Muḥammad Yūsuf, and Muḥammad ‘Alī—were celebrated drawftsmen, who developed in parallel directions, apparently during the reigns of Shah ‘Abbās II and Shah Sulayman. All ‘students of Rizā, they cultivated a mannered style based upon his innovations’.<sup>11</sup>

In 1975 a drawing hightened with gouache and gold showing Shah ‘Abbās I embracing his young page serving him wine was aquired by Louvre.<sup>12</sup> The verses inscribed along the right edge of the drawing end with the information that the work was done on Friday 24 Jumādī al-Sānī 1036 (March 12, 1627)<sup>13</sup> by Muḥammad Qāsim (*raqam-i kamān-i khuksar Muḥammad Qāsim muṣavvir*). The appearance of this dated work by Muḥammad Qāsim, not known to Stchoukine, somehow changed the scholars’ opinion on the chonology of this artist’s works but its real importance escaped the attention of the specialists.

Aḥmad Suhaylī Khvānsarī in 1975 dated Muḥammad Qāsim’s activity until the end of the reign of Shah ‘Abbās II (1058–1077/1648–1666) and suggested that the paintings in the *‘Alī Qapu* and *Chihil Sutun* might be his works.<sup>14</sup> He does not mention the drawing from the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

<sup>11</sup> A. Welch, *Shah ‘Abbās and the arts of Isfahan* (New York: The Asia Society, 1973), No. 60, 99–100.

<sup>12</sup> Louvre, MAO 494; 25,5 × 15 cm. Publications: Soustiel 1974 (2), N 24, 26–7; *La revue du Louvre et des musees de France*, 1975, No. 4, 278 and 1984, No. 1, p. 61; Suhaylī Khvānsarī 1975, il. 2 on p. 21; L’Islam dans les collections nationales, Paris, 1977, No. 249; M. Bernus-Taylor, *Les arts de l’islam*, Guide, (Paris: E. Grube and E. Sims, 1994), 133. ‘The representations of Shah ‘Abbās I’. In: *Studi in onore di Eugenio Galdieri*, Lugano 1995, No. 32, ill. IXa.

The oval seal inscribed with formula *Yā ‘Alī Adriknī*, impressed on the drawing is met on a few Persian and Indian miniatures of the 11th–12th/17th–18th centuries. See: Martin 1912, vol. II, pls. 154, 155, 166; Stchoukine 1964, pl. XXXV; B.W. Robinson, T. Falk and Sims E. *Persian and Mughal Art*. London 1976, No. 115, il. on 218; Christie’s, 12 October, 1978, lot 156.

<sup>13</sup> Aḥmad Suhaylī Khvānsarī reads the date on this drawing as 1029/1619–20 [Suhaylī Khvānsarī 1975, 25], Karīmzādeh Tabrīzī as 1032/1622–3 [Karīmzādeh Tabrīzī 1991, vol. III, 1061–7, No. 1123], all the other authors [see note 12]—as 1036/1627. 24 Jumādī al-Sānī falls on Friday only in 1036. Soustiel, Bernus-Taylor, Grube and Sims give as A.D. equivalent February 10, though Jumādī II in 1036 begins on February 17, thus A.D. date is Friday, March 12, 1627.

<sup>14</sup> Suhaylī Khvānsarī 1975.

The drawing *Chastisement of a pupil* appeared on the exhibition of Persian drawings in the MMA in 1989. M.L. Swietochowski and S. Babaie, the authors of the catalogue, wrote in entry for this drawing about the date: ‘. . . the equivalent if another digit is added, to 1104–05/1692–93, rather late in the long span of productivity of this artist’. They repeated the universal opinion that the style of Muḥammad Qāsim and of two other mid-seventeenth century artists, Muḥammad ‘Alī and Muḥammad Yūsuf, derived from the ‘at that time, innovative style of Rizā ‘Abbāsī’. In the catalogue the drawing received the date ‘the second half of the seventeenth century’;<sup>15</sup> the date 114 was thus rejected, somewhat illogically given that the date and the name of the artist were undoubtedly written by the same hand.

Karīmzādeh Tabrīzī<sup>16</sup> gives us a biography of Muḥammad Qāsim and presents list of his works. Unfortunately he does not mention the sources of his information and does not always say where he saw the paintings. He reads the date on the MMA drawing as 1014/1605, without mentioning other readings of the date. According to him the dated works of Muḥammad Qāsim belong to the period from 989/1581 until 1032/1622–3,<sup>17</sup> and he was born about 965/1557–8 and lived until about 1040/1630–1 (a miniature from the 1058/1648 Windsor *Shāhnāmeḥ* being included into the list of the artist’s works).

When we turn to the latest accounts of our artist we find him described as one of the leading exponents of the middle of the seventeenth century. In one of the recent books on Persian painting Sheila Canby writes: ‘Muḥammad Qāsim who also worked on the 1058/1648 *Shāhnāmeḥ* may have been somewhat younger than Muḥammad Yūsuf, for he developed distinctive style that derives from, but does not slavishly imitate, the work of Rizā’.<sup>18</sup>

Literary sources on Muḥammad Qāsim are confined to a brief information in *Qisṣās al-Khāqānī* by Valī Qūlī Shāmlū (British Museum Library, Add. 7656, f. 175a), who describes Muḥammad Qāsim Tabrīzī as a painter and a poet, and that he died and was buried in Isfahan

<sup>15</sup> Swietochowski, Babaie 1989, 78–9, No. 34.

<sup>16</sup> Karīmzādeh Tabrīzī 1990, vol. III, 1061–6.

<sup>17</sup> 989/1581—date on the drawing *Darwish* from Kelekian collection, which Schulz attributed to Muḥammad Qāsim [Schulz 1914, vol. I, 192]; 1032/1622–3—Karīmzādeh Tabrīzī’s reading of the date on Louvre *Shah ‘Abbās embracing his page*.

<sup>18</sup> Canby 1993, 106.

in a year given as 107. M. Farhād, citing this information, suggested that it means the year 107[0]/1659.<sup>19</sup> Taking into account the artist's *nisba* (see below), it seems to be highly probable that this is the artist we are speaking about. Another version of the date would be 1107/1695–6, more corresponding with Stchoukine's opinion on the chronology of Muḥammad Qāsim's career.

Thus the chief documents of Muḥammad Qāsim's artistic life are his works. In addition to the two already mentioned miniatures with the impressions of Shah 'Abbās I seal, placing them before 1601–2, the Louvre miniature *Shah 'Abbās embracing his young page*, dated 1037/1627, becomes a work of great significance, providing the foundation to be built upon. Muḥammad Qāsim who painted this miniature, representing such an intimate episode of Shah 'Abbās I's life, had to be a court painter of this monarch, especially near to him, enjoying his favour. As to the work itself it shows that in 1037/1627 its author reached his mature style. Moreover, many features show that the painter of this miniature is that very Muḥammad Qāsim who is mentioned in our attributory inscriptions on two miniatures with Shah 'Abbās I's seal impressions and who created the MMA drawing. For example, the thick-trunked tree with flat quadrangular stylized foliage occupying the upper part of the miniature, crossing the composition diagonally behind the figures, looks to be a favourite motif of this artist, present in almost all his known works. Facial types of the represented personages are very similar.

We may also note that the MMA drawing is not characteristic of Persian art of the late 11th/17th century, when Europeanized style became the prevailing stylistic trend in the Isfahan court school, which Muḥammad Qāsim, being a member of court atelier, could not avoid following. All this shows that we have to accept, following Schulz and Karīmzādeh Tabrīzī, the date 1[0]14/1605 for the drawing, especially because there is more room for a dot/zero between the first and second digits than between the second and third ones. Thus we are dealing with single artist Muḥammad Qāsim, who worked in the last decade of the 10th/16th century and the first half of the 11th/17th century. Muḥammad Qāsim becomes not a follower of Rizā 'Abbāsī (who died in 1045/1635), but his contemporary, that is a painter who worked at the same time, in the same style, but in an absolutely different manner.

<sup>19</sup> Treasures of Islam 1985, 119, note 4.



There are many other arguments in favour of putting back the period of Muḥammad Qāsim's activity. One of them is his *nisba* Tabrīzī, which is written on the drawing *An old man holding a book* (unpublished) from Topkapi Saray album H. 2140, f. 33a, signed *amila Muḥammad Qāsim Tabrīzī. Sanat 998* (1589–90). It appears also on the drawing *Four men sitting under a tree* from Krakov, signed *raqam-e Muḥammad Qāsim muṣavvir-i Tabrīzī*, published by S. Komornicki with the dating 'second half of the seventeenth century'<sup>20</sup> and on the miniature *Woman holding water-pipe*, inscribed *raqam-i kamūn-i kkuksar Muḥammad Qāsim Tabrīzī*, a work of about 1640–50.<sup>21</sup> It seems unlikely that two Muḥammad Qāsim's originating from Tabrīz would be working at the same period. Another argument is clothing: the personages on the miniatures with Muḥammad Qāsim signatures are never dressed according to the fashions of the second half of the 17th century. For example, we do not see in his miniatures the bulbous turbans of stripped material seen in miniatures from the 1660s. He also never depicted Shah 'Abbās II (1052–1077/1642–1666) or Sulaymān (1077–1106/1666–1694), during whose reigns he is considered to be working. Some other arguments for changing the chronology of Muḥammad Qāsim's career will be suggested in the course of the following discussion of his works.

The chronology of Muḥammad Qāsim's works is still rather difficult to determine. His artistic manner differs too much from the style we are accustomed to connect with the first decades of the 11th/17th century. The contours of his figures are never defined with fluid 'calligraphic' lines of varying thickness typical (as we thought) of early Isfahan school in general. His line is usually thicker and uninterrupted. His figures are larger in scale and more restraint.

Now it is possible only to establish several groups basing on a few firm dates we have at present: 999/1590 (the Topkapi Saray drawing), late 10th/16th century (the miniatures with the impressions of Shah 'Abbās I's seal), 1014/1605 (Metropolitan Museum of Art drawing), 1037/1627 (miniature from Louvre) and 1058/1648—the Windsor *Shāhnāme* illustrations.

<sup>20</sup> Krakov, Musee Czartoryski, coll. d'estampes XI.444, fol. 10. Published S. Komornicki. Museum Czartoryski. Krakov 1929, fig. 154.

<sup>21</sup> Treasures of Islam, 1985, No. 89.

*The early works of Muḥammad Qāsim (999–1014/1590–1605)*

The earliest of Muḥammad Qāsim's known works—*An old man holding a book* of 998/1589–90 (unpublished)—comes from Topkapi Saray album H. 2140,<sup>22</sup> which contains mainly specimens of calligraphy, paintings and drawings of the Qazvin and early Isfahan schools. This lightly tinted drawing showing an old man in a long-sleeved cloak is a work typical of the Qazvin school both in subject and in style. He is a familiar type of a literary man, leaning on his staff and holding a book in rich gilt binding as if going to present or to show it to someone outside the picture, on whom he focuses his gaze. His cloak is faintly tinted with greenish tone, the shawl is left uncoloured. The background consists of flowering bushes and 'chinese' clouds drawn in thin black line and faintly tinted with colours and gold. Absent the signature inscribed in gold below the figure there is nothing here by which to recognize the Muḥammad Qāsim we know.

The same is true for *Standing youth wearing a green robe* (Kuwait, al-Sabah collection), a miniature with fully coloured figure of a youth in voluminous turban and peculiar dress of Royal *chāvush* against flat background decorated with evenly distributed flowering bushes painted in gold.<sup>23</sup> The miniature is inscribed *amila Muḥammad Qāsim* (an old attribution by the same hand, as on the two above-mentioned miniatures, stumped with Shah 'Abbās I's seal) and has no date, but the impression of Shah 'Abbās I's seal dated 996/1587–88 gives the date 'not later than 1010–11/1601–2'.

These two miniatures are evidently the works of a very young artist who did his best to create works similar to the works of the great masters of that time. A few miniatures which also belong to the early period of Muḥammad Qāsim's activity give an idea about the painters whose style he followed. *Standing youth holding a small white cloth in his hands* (Washington D.C., Sackler Gallery), executed in a

<sup>22</sup> H. 2140, fol. 33r; 11,5 × 7,5; mounted on an album-leaf (32 × 21) with four bayts of poetry, the dark-brown borders decorated with drawings of flowers and foliage executed in gold.

<sup>23</sup> 15,2 × 7,6; published: Sotheby's, 29 April 1998, lot 62. The attribution of this miniature to mid 11th/17th century and erroneous identification of the seal impression as that of the seal of Shah 'Abbās II dated 1052/1642–3 in Sotheby's catalogue is due to traditional understanding of the chronology of Muḥammad Qāsim's works. For the word *chāvush* see R.W. Robinson's commentary in *Persian and Mughal Art*. (London: Colnaghi, 1976), 251.

manner, typical of the late 10th/16th century Qazvin style,<sup>24</sup> reveals a strong influence of Ṣadīqī Beg. One has only to compare this work with Ṣadīqī's miniature mounted on the same folio. Muḥammad Qāsim clearly follows Ṣadīqī in the posture, s-curve silhouette and treatment of the youth's figure, shown against the background with hilly landscape painted in gold. It is also close to early works of Rizā. B.W. Robinson has suggested that *Standing youth* may be by Rizā 'Abbāsī rather than Muḥammad Qāsim<sup>25</sup> To the right of the figure we notice a flowering clumb of iris, which may be called this master's trademark because this flower is depicted in almost all his works.

*Youth in a fur-lined coat* from Victoria and Albert Museum,<sup>26</sup> with sword at his girdle, as well as the preceding miniature, depicts a Royal attendant. In this miniature Muḥammad Qāsim clearly follows Sīyāvush in representing nature with high horizon and a large tree as a prominent landscape element,<sup>27</sup> he will use in all his future works. But the large-scale figure represented on the very foreground of the picture against rise of rocks and leafy tree in the background is a new type of representation of human figure in Persian painting. This miniature shows in greater degree the personal manner of Muḥammad Qāsim: his liking for carefully rendered many-layered rich clothing for his personages, a recognizable type of the face, which can be traced in his works, and his favourite tree, crossing diagonally the background. The motif of a male or female figure with rich coat gracefully slung over the shoulder will appear in his later works.

<sup>24</sup> Washington D.C., Sackler Galery, S. 86.0305; 16, 9 × 8,3; inscribed at lower right: *ustād Muḥammad Qāsim* and impressed with seal of Shah 'Abbās I; mounted on an album-page (39,7 × 27,6) with a painting inscribed to Ṣadīqī (bearing the same seal's impression) and calligraphy by Sultan 'Alī al-Mashhadi. Published: Lowry, Beach 1988, No. 356, 306 with attribution 'Qazvin (?), ca. 1590.'

<sup>25</sup> Lowry, Beach 1988, No. 356, 306.

<sup>26</sup> London, Victoria and Albert Museum, L. 6964–1980; 153 × 75; inscribed at lower right (Shah 'Abbās I librarian's note ?) *amal-i ustād Muḥammad Qāsim*, Shah 'Abbās I seal impression; set on an album-page (40,2 × 26,7) with a drawing by Rizā (bearing the same seal's impression) and calligraphy of Sultan 'Alī al-Mashhadi, surrounded by small cartouches containing Persian poetry, the margins with floral designs in gold; publications: Christie's, July 11, 1974, lot 18, pl. 7; Sotheby's, July 8, 1980, p. 99, pl. 98; Canby 1990, fig. 7, 77.

<sup>27</sup> See for example: A. Welch, *Artists for the Shah. Late Sixteenth Century Painting of the Imperial Court of Iran*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976), fig. 2 on 24 and fig. 7 on 34.

*Young woman smoking water-pipe* from TKS album H. 2137,<sup>28</sup> signed *raqam-e khuksar Muḥammad Qāsim*, was painted probably at late 10th/16th–early 11th/17th century. Her head-dress, as well as that of the young women on two following miniatures, is similar to that worn by woman in the above mentioned Ṣadīqī's miniature and looks to be characteristic of the late 10th–11th/16th–early 17th centuries. The background is painted in gold and still scarcely visible, with only a tree trunk tinted with pink. The clouds are still 'chinese' as if swept with wind. In *Young Woman holding a tambourine* (unpublished) also from album H. 2137,<sup>29</sup> signed with the same formula as on the preceding miniature, the landscape plays a more important role, mountains and rocks are tinted with reddish, there is a silver stream in the foreground with coloured rocks around it—a necessary element in his future works. We do not notice any attempts at modelling the faces in any of the works discussed. It is worth noting that there exists a mirror-reversed variation of the *Woman smoking water-pipe*, painted by *Mu'īn muṣavvir* in 1084/1673–4 (Topkapi Saray library, H. 2142, fol 12a) with face modelled according to the tendencies of the period.<sup>30</sup>

Apparently a somewhat later work *Young woman in European dress* (London, Victoria and Albert Museum),<sup>31</sup> signed *raqam-i kamtarīn Muḥammad Qāsim muṣavvir*, is of special interest because it shows the early stage of European influence in Isfahan painting when the subject-matter interested Persian artists more than style. The woman's 'European-style' dress, European glass goblet in her hand, little white dog by her feet—are just 'foreign' oddities which were becoming fashionable in Isfahan painting. Her eyes are turned to the spectator and she is posing holding a goblet in her raised right hand and long-necked bottle in her left—these are new stylistic features perhaps also due to European portraits, but understood not in the same way as in 1660–70s, in the times of Shaykh 'Abbāsī, Muḥammad Zamān and Jabbadar.

<sup>28</sup> Istanbul, Topkapi Saray library, H. 2137, fol. 21v; 17,3 × 11,6; set on album page 39 × 28,5; surrounded by small cartouches of Persian poetry, blue margins decorated with ornaments in gold. Published: Stchoukine 1971, 208, pl. VIII,3; Topkapi 1986, No. 124.

<sup>29</sup> Istanbul, Topkapi Saray Museum Library, H. 2137, fol. 15v; album page 39 × 28,5. References: Sakisian 1929, pp. 143–4; Stchoukine 1964, 56.

<sup>30</sup> Stchoukine 1964, pl. LXXVI.

<sup>31</sup> London, Victoria and Albert Museum, The Large Clive Album, I.S. 133 (50)—1964, fol.26a; 17,8 × 8,8; album page: 47,5 × 32. Published: Stchoukine 1964, pl. LXXVIII; reference: Robinson 1967, No. 89.

A beautiful tinted drawing from Khālilī collection in London (unpublished),<sup>32</sup> showing a young woman with a short veil (*rū-bandeh*) thrown back on her shawl, a tree and clouds painted in gold, is an interesting early (if not the earliest) specimen of bust portrait in Persian painting. The figure and background remain flat, but the tree gives depth to the picture and justifies the cutting of the figure. The signature (*mashaqahu Muḥammad Qāsim muṣavvir*) on the left-hand side fills the empty space. The human being represented so closely makes the personality much more important and demands concentration on the face itself. Muḥammad Qāsim, stressing girl's childish attractive image, persuades us that this is a true portrait drawn from reality.

*Between 1605–1627*

All the discussed works of Muḥammad Qāsim, although revealing his individual creative force in terms of their subject-matter, composition and the predominant means of artistic expression, are examples of a major trend in Persian painting of the late 10th–11th/16th–early 17th century. The drawing *Chastisement of a pupil* is more unusual. The subject itself is familiar: a scene of a pupil being punished with the bastinado is often represented in the manuscript illustrations as one of secondary episodes in multi figured compositions.<sup>33</sup> Represented here as an independent subject it is turned into a scene of everyday occurrence. What strikes us most of all in this drawing, and what makes it difficult to believe that this is a work of the very beginning of the 11th/17th century, is the energy and dynamism of the lines. Quick powerful strokes melt into one unit the figures of the participants and landscape elements. Everything is somewhat enlarged, exaggerated. This feature, which we notice also in a few other of Muḥammad Qāsim's drawings, where human figures and surrounding are rendered in large proportions, calls to mind R. Ettinghausen's observation of 'particularity for big forms' being one of the new tendencies of 11th/17th century art in Isfahan.<sup>34</sup> It

<sup>32</sup> London, Khalili collection, MSS 47; 10 × 5,5; in a late (Qajar ?) mounting

<sup>33</sup> One example of many is *A School Scene* attributable to Mīr Sayyid 'Alī, c. 1540: Lowry, Beach 1988, No. 412.

<sup>34</sup> R. Ettinghausen, 'Stylistic tendencies at the time of Shah 'Abbās' *Iranian Studies*, vol. VII, Nos 3–4, 1974, 598.

is only natural that new stylistic features and new pictorial elements appear in drawing earlier than in paintings. As seen in later works of Muḥammad Qāsim, this change in pictorial rendition evident in the drawing *Chastisement of a pupil*, executed in 1013/1605, become characteristic of his polychrome paintings of the 1030s/1620s to be completely applied in 1058/1648 *Shāhnāmeḥ* illustrations.

Another tendency we notice in this work is the introduction of rich landscape settings into individual drawings and paintings. Hilly landscapes painted in faint line and in gold in earlier works of Muḥammad Qāsim turn here into elaborately executed outdoor settings, with a great tree the thick trunk of which, as well as the hills, are rendered three-dimensionally.

Among the innovations seen in this drawing, which become standard in later works of Muḥammad Qāsim himself and many other artists, is the foreground rendered with tiny strokes or points, leaving 'reserved' flowering bushes, including irises. *Chastisement of a Pupil* of Muḥammad Qāsim, adding its large format (24,5 × 16), contains almost all the features of his future works.

The drawing *Standing page holding a tray with cups* (Paris, Bibl. Nationale, O.D. 41, fol. 33),<sup>35</sup> executed in Bagdad, inscribed at lower left *raqam-i Muḥammad Qāsim, shabīh-i Valī Tunjī (?)*, *fī dar al-salām Baghdād*, represents a youth offering one of the cups of coffee to somebody outside the picture. The shawl around his neck resembles a European collar. As in *Young woman in European dress* the style of this drawing has nothing to do with a new European artistic vision as in the second half of the 17th century. It is also worth noting that the images of Europeans become common in Persian painting after the late 1620s.<sup>36</sup>

*Standing youth holding a poem* from the Sadruddin Aga Khan collection,<sup>37</sup> shows a fully coloured figure against an ornamental landscape with 'chinese' clouds painted in gold, met only in the earliest works of Muḥammad Qāsim. This may be explained by the fact that here Muḥammad Qāsim evidently repeats an early work of Rizā—his

<sup>35</sup> Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, O.D. 41, fol. 33. Published: Martin II, pl. 165c; references: Schulz I, 192; Sakisian 1929, 143–4; Stehoukine 1964, 53.

<sup>36</sup> Canby 1996, 174. See also Cat. Nos. 118 and 122 for the same motive of a youth offering coffee, painted by Rizā-yi 'Abbāsī in 1629 and 1630.

<sup>37</sup> Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan collection, Ir.M. 91; 19,1 × 10,4; on an album-leaf (33,5 × 23,5), nast'aliq calligraphy of 'Alī al-Mashhadī dated 971/1563–4 on reverse. For publications see: Canby 1998, No. 52, 78, to which must be added: Suhaylī Khvānsarī 1975, il. 1 on 21; Karīmzādeh Tabrīzī 1991, il. 22 on 1508.

tinted drawing of a youth holding a page of lyrical verse ending with his signature *mashaqahu Riżā*.<sup>38</sup> On the miniature of MuḤammad Qāsim from the Aga Khan collection, exactly as on Riżā's drawing, two bayts of poetry, followed by painter's signature *kamtarīn bandigān dua-gū MuḤammad Qāsim muṣawwir*, are beautifully written on the folio in the hands of the youth. The verse contains a goodwish: may your wishes fullfill from three lips (Persian *lab*, which means: lips, also rim of a cup and bank of a stream), so: lips of the beloved (*lab-i yār*), bank of a stream (*lab-i jūr*), rim of a cup (*lab-i jān*). May you remain in this world so long that you pray on the grave of firmament (that is eternally, always). Within the context of Shāmlū's information about MuḤammad Qāsim being an accomplished poet it is likely that MuḤammad Qāsim not only painted the miniature, but also composed and inscribed its poetic verses. The same verse is inscribed on the right edge of *Shah 'Abbās embracing his page* from Louvre, dated 1037/1627.

The dating of the miniature from the Aga Khan collection is difficult. Binyon, Wilkinson, Gray ascribed it to early 11th/17th century, Stchoukine—to the second half of the 11th/17th century, A. Welch and Sh. Canby—to mid 11th/17th century.<sup>39</sup> In this work, as in the drawing *Standing page holding a tray with cups*, the lines are strong and uninterrupted, pose of the figure is more static with stressed verticality, in comparison with earlier MuḤammad Qāsim's works, demonstrating a new tendency in his manner. It is also worth noting that MuḤammad Qāsim's *Standing youth holding a poem* is two times bigger (19,1 × 10,4), than its prototype—Riżā's drawing (11,5 × 5,4).

*Boys birds nesting in a large tree watched by an old man* (British Museum), an unsigned drawing heightened with colours and gold, of excellent quality. It was B. Robinson who identified this work as 'style of MuḤammad Qāsim, mid 11th/17th century'.<sup>40</sup> This drawing possesses the artistic devices characteristic for MuḤammad Qāsim: rocks modelled with red strokes, foreground rendered in light green stippling technique. The blue sky is covered with clouds reserved in white and two thirds of the composition occupies a huge towering tree

<sup>38</sup> Canby 1996, Cat. 22, il. on 51.

<sup>39</sup> BWG, No. 294, p. 161; Stchoukine 1964, 55–6; A. Welch 1972–8, vol. III, 148; Canby 1998, No. 52, 78.

<sup>40</sup> London, The British Museum, 1964.6.13.02; 18,5 × 13; on late album folio (35 × 28) dated 1302/1884–5. Published: Robinson 1967, No. 80, pl. 32.

with twisted branches and roots as if inflamed. In my opinion, this drawing is Muḥammad Qāsim's work of the second or early third decade of the 17th century.

As in the case with *Chastisement of a pupil*, we find similar subject among manuscript illustrations. In one of the miniatures of the famous the 964–5/1556–65 Freer *Haft Aurang* of Jāmī as one little vignette in a complex outdoor scene among diverse actions represented we find boys stealing birds from a nest, passing them down from one to another, a bearded man with a staff standing nearby observing this scene.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps Muḥammad Qāsim's drawing is a quotation from a famous manuscript illustration, approached in a new, more 'realistic', way to give the impression of having been drawn from nature. Or it could be that a scene of everyday occurrence was introduced into the 10th/16th century manuscript and also became a subject for Muḥammad Qāsim's drawing. As the *Chastisement of a pupil*, this scene is also rendered with touch of humour and is full of many wonderfully observed details. This is one of the most impressive works of Muḥammad Qāsim.

*Picnic at night*, an unsigned line drawing enhanced with gouache and gold, from the British Museum,<sup>42</sup> was in 1928 ascribed by Arnold to Rizā 'Abbāsī;<sup>43</sup> Arnold considered the drawing to belong to the first third of the 11th/17th century (Rizā 'Abbāsī died in 1045/1635). Stchoukine expressed his disagreement with Arnold in respect of authorship, noting that this work differs cardinally from the works of Rizā 'Abbāsī and that it is very similar to Muḥammad Qāsim's paintings (especially the female figures on the foreground) that it may be with certainty accepted as his work<sup>44</sup> Thus the drawing moved to the second half of the 11th/17th century. R. Hillenbrand, in the catalogue of the Edinburgh exhibition of Persian painting in 1977, noticing some earlier 11th/17th century features and paying atten-

<sup>41</sup> *Sultan Ibrahim Mīrzā's Haft Awrang*. M.Sh. Simpson with contributions by M. Farhād. Washington D.C., 1997, 103, il. on 102.

<sup>42</sup> London, The British Museum, 1920.9.17.0275 (album Or. 1372, f. 23); 25,2 × 17,4; black oval seal with religious formula and date 1035/1625; mounted on album folio (41,8 × 26,6) (in album would be verso). This drawing seems to be left unfinished: the bottle in the middle of the composition, covered with whites, allows to see preparatory drawing of a female bust, left not overdrawn. Published: T.W. Arnold. *Painting in Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928) pl. LXIVb; Canby 1993, No. 67, 105–6, il. on 104; references: Stchoukine 1964, 54; Hillenbrand 1977, No. 158.

<sup>43</sup> T.W. Arnold. *Painting in Islam*, pl. LXIVb opp. 145.

<sup>44</sup> Stchoukine 1964, 54.



tion to a seal impression with date 1035/1625–26, gave a cautious dating ‘17th century’. He wrote: ‘The British Museum card catalogue entry on this painting attributes it to Muḥammad Qāsim and dates it c. 1675, but the seal on the painting (between the tree and the horizon) apparently gives the date 1035/1624. It might therefore be the best to leave the question of date open for the time being . . .’.<sup>45</sup> Sh. Canby also paid attention to the seal (she reads the date as 1025/1616), but traditionally gives for the drawing the date as ‘mid 17th century’.<sup>46</sup>

The work has many features of Muḥammad Qāsim’s manner. The foreground here, as in the scene of the punishment of a pupil, is rendered in pointilistic technique. We also notice Muḥammad Qāsim’s favourite motif of a youth in a coat slung over one shoulder. Female musicians in the foreground have typically Muḥammad Qāsim’s female facial types. The blue sky is covered with reserved white strips of European-like clouds.

In my opinion, the drawing was created ca. 1620–25. The night scene is still represented traditionally: only the firing torches and candles bespeak night time, the whole picture is shown as in day-time. There are no effects of shade and light, in contrast to the pictures of the second half of the 11th/17th century by Muḥammad Zamān or Jabbadar with source of light, with gradations in European way.

A youth feasting is evidently of royal rank. We may only suggest (though this supposition is quite difficult to prove) that he could represent prince Sam Mīrā, Shah ‘Abbās I’s grandson, declared by him his heir apparent. In 1629 a new Shah Ṣafī I (1039–1052/1629–1642) was 19 years old and the youth on the drawing looks to be 15–16. If so, it would give for the drawing the date about 1035/1625 (which, perhaps accidentally, coincides with the date on the seal), showing also that Muḥammad Qāsim had already been at court service, before creating *Shah ‘Abbās embracing his page* in 1627.

Some other works may be ascribed to the period between 1014/1605 and 1037/1627: a scene of two girls and an old woman visiting a hermit, signed *raqam-i kamūn-i Muḥammad Qāsim muṣavvir*;<sup>47</sup> an unsigned tinted drawing, repeating two figures of the same scene—sitting girl

<sup>45</sup> Hillenbrand 1977, pp. 69–70, no. 158.

<sup>46</sup> Canby 1993, No. 67 on 105.

<sup>47</sup> London, Victoria and Albert Museum, The Large Clive Album, fol. 43v; 16 × 24,5; album folio: 47,5 × 32. Published: Schulz 1914, II, pl. 170; Stchoukine 1964, pl. LXXI.

and old woman with queer long-chinned profile;<sup>48</sup> a drawing in black and red ink of a man holding an album,<sup>49</sup> all with vivid expressions on the faces of the participants.

To sum up the discussion of Muḥammad Qāsim's works of the considered period, it is worth remarking that multi-figured compositions occur seldom in single-page miniatures and drawings of the first quarter of the 11th/17th century. Among the works of Rizā 'Abbāsī there is only one multi-figured composition—famous diptych *A Convivial Party* from the Hermitage collection, dated 1021/1612 and even that could be originally a double-page frontispiece for a manuscript or an album.<sup>50</sup> It is usually described as a unique work in the Isfahan painting of early 11th/17th century, because all the described paintings and drawings by Muḥammad Qāsim have been considered to belong to mid-second half of the century.

#### *Between 1627–1648*

*Shah 'Abbās embracing his page* offering him a cap of vine is still executed in Muḥammad Qāsim's favourite technique—drawing in black ink heightened with gouache and gold. Beyond its documentary significance as one of a few securely dated works by this artist, this work is also one of his best creations showing him as a superb draughtsman. This is also one of a few life-time portraits of Shah 'Abbās I.<sup>51</sup>

*Youth Holding a Letter* (Muraqqa in Tehran)<sup>52</sup> is a full coloured miniature. The half figure of a youth in a wonderful velvet green robe, with the head turned to the left, is shown against a quiet landscape. Green pointilistic earth, only irises reserved in white, and blue

<sup>48</sup> London, Khalili collection, MSS 940; 13,3 × 8,2; Published: Christie's, October 20, lot 286.

<sup>49</sup> London, The British Museum, 1920.9.17.0278 (2); 10,9 × 8. The signature may be a later addition, but stylistically the drawing conforms the works of Muḥammad Qāsim. Published: Stchoukine 1964, pl. LXXXb; Swietochowski, Babaie 1989, fig 28 on 70; Canby 1993, il. 70, 106.

<sup>50</sup> A. Adamova, *Persian Painting and Drawing from the Hermitage collection*. (St. Petersburg: AO "Slaviia", 1996), No. 15 (208–211).

<sup>51</sup> Ernst J. Grube and Eleanor Sims. 'The Representations of Shah 'Abbās I. In: L'arco di fango che rubò la luce alle stelle: *Studi in onore Eugenio Galdieri*, (Savosa/Lugano: Edizioni Arte e moneta, 1995).

<sup>52</sup> Badry Atabai. *Fihrist-i muraqqa'at. Kitābkhāneh-yi saltānātī*, (Tehran: [Zibā], 1353/1974), il. opp. 300; Suhaylī Khvānsarī 1975, il. 22.

sky with white cumuli clouds touch each other heighten the effect of the figure. In this miniature we see the new appearance in Muḥammad Qāsim's works of fully colored lanscape behind the figure. The youth's face is still not modelled.

The youth is holding a folio inscribed with a text which appears to be a letter: Muḥammad Qāsim muṣavvīr (*bandeh-yi dā'ī*) addresses somebody he calls *khān-i 'azīm al-sha'n*, adding such titles as *sharīf*, *nawwāb*, *mustātab*, *muqaddas*. He writes that sending this portrait, which contains a petition (*'arīzeh*), he asks to consider him among his servants (he is evidently asking for an employment). There are some grounds to suggest that such an important person addressed with the titles and epithets pointing to his holy sanctified status is Khān 'Alī Shāh Qarajaghay Khān, ruler of Mashhad and supervisor of the Mashhad shrine. For him two manuscripts—the 1045/1635 *Farhād and Shīrīn* of Vahshī and the 1058/1648 Windsor *Shāhnāmeḥ*—were copied by Muḥammad Ḥakīm al-Ḥusaynī. All the miniatures of the first manuscript and 43 (of 148) in the second have been attributed by B.W. Robinson to Muḥammad Qāsim.<sup>53</sup> In this case *Youth holding a letter* clearly shows that some time after Shah 'Abbās I's death in 1039/1629 Muḥammad Qāsim was looking for another patron. And this very peculiar subject of a youth holding an inscribed folio, a seria of which has already been published,<sup>54</sup> becomes a very interesting separate problem, which deserves special study and presentation.

In *Standing Youth Holding Iris-flower*, inscribed *raqam-i kamīn-i Muḥammad Qāsim*,<sup>55</sup> foreground is rendered in pointilistic technique, but the background is a novation: all the elements—sky, rocks, trees—are painted in opaque gouache, as well as in the miniature *Standing woman holding a waterpipe*, signed *raqam-i kamīn-i khoksar Muḥammad Qāsim Tabrīzī*, undoubtedly one of the most significant works of Muḥammad Qāsim.<sup>56</sup> The figure dominates the landscape which, in its turn, is

<sup>53</sup> Robinson 1968, 133–140; See also: Stchoukine 1964, 148–151; Hillenbrand 1977, No. 212.

<sup>54</sup> E. Kuhnel. *Miniaturmalerei im islamischen Orient*. Berlin 1922, abb. 78; Christie's, October 8–10, 1991, lot 128; S.C. Welch. *Wonders of the Age*. (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1979), No. 72, 188; Abdolala Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), 289.

<sup>55</sup> 18,9 × 12,5. Published: Sotheby's, 11 April 1972, lot 16.

<sup>56</sup> 29 × 17. Published: Blochet. *Musulman Painting, XII–XVII Century*. London 1929, pl. CLXVII; Sotheby's, December 12–13, 1929, lot 257; Suhaylī Khvānsarī 1975, il. on 6; Sotheby's, April 16, 1984, lot 111; *Treasures of Islam* 1985, No. 89, 119.

represented as large and spacious in nature, the effect of the whole picture (now it can hardly be called miniature) heightened with its dimensions (29 × 17).

The woman, wearing a magnificent dress of gold brocade and a coat slung over one shoulder, is posed in a carefully studied posture on the bank of a silver stream. Her face is slightly modelled, her eyes are focused on the spectator (the device, already tried by Muḥammad Qāsim in his early work *Young woman in European dress*). Female bust on qalian is one more quotation from his early work *Young woman smoking water-pipe*. *Standing woman holding a water-pipe* has all the features of a parade portrait (even if it does not represent a definite person), one step to the portraits by Shaykh ‘Abbāsī and first oil-on-canvas pictures of the later 11th/17th century.

Speaking of Muḥammad Qāsim’s miniatures in the Windsor *Shāhnāmeḥ*, one of the most famous mid 11th/17th century manuscripts, scholars pay special attention to the dynamic, somewhat nervous, landscapes with sharp rocks, inflaming trees and whirling clouds. R. Hillenbrand writes: ‘The audacious colour harmonies of these luscious landscapes are not easy to parallel. In them a tradition of nature painting some three centuries old hovers on the brink of dissolution’.<sup>57</sup>

Discussing the works of Muḥammad Qāsim we traced how all these new features gradually appeared at first in his drawings and then, already mastered, in the miniatures. Landscape plays much more important role in the works of Muḥammad Qāsim than in the works of Rizā ‘Abbāsī. Even in the miniatures of 1030s–1040s/1620–30s Rizā ‘Abbāsī uses the background painted in gold. I do not contest the great contribution of Rizā in Iranian painting of the 11th/17th century. But his unique role is evidently somewhat exaggerated. There were other masters who enriched Isfahan painting with new ideas, subjects, pictorial devices. If we do not agree that Muḥammad Qāsim with his paintings participated in the development of Isfahan painting in the first half of the 11th/17th century, then the illustrations in 1058/1648 *Shāhnāmeḥ* and some other manuscripts of 1040s–1050s/1630–40s appear as if of nothing. Not a single element in these illustrations exists in the works of Rizā ‘Abbāsī.

Sheila Canby in her book on Rizā ‘Abbāsī noted that the late 1030s/1620s was a period when Rizā demonstrated an increasing

<sup>57</sup> Hillenbrand 1977, No. 212 (212).

interest in sumptuous textiles and began to use fabrics ornamented with various designs.<sup>58</sup> I do not mean so suggest that this novelty in Rizā's paintings was in imitation of Muḥammad Qāsim's style. But it seems that in 20–30s Muḥammad Qāsim's style corresponded to the aesthetic norms and tastes and his works represented the major trend in Persian painting in 20–40s.

Many unsigned paintings and drawings have been attributed to Muḥammad Qāsim and even more ascribed to mid-second half of the 11th/17th century because of their similarity to Muḥammad Qāsim's work; it beyond the scope of this article to deal with all this material. If perhaps not all but many of these go back to the first half of the century then the picture of the development of Persian painting in the 11th/17th century cardinaly changes. It is no more attributed to the personality of Rizā 'Abbāsī. The process becomes more convincing and more logical. Muḥammad Yūsuf and Muḥammad 'Alī, two other famous 11th/17th century masters, evidently finished their artistic career somewhere in 1070s/1660s. Painting in the second half of the 11th/17th century, at least court painting, becomes strongly affected by European art, the new stylistic mode dictated foreshortening, perspective and chiaroscuro. There is no place there for such a master as Muḥammad Qāsim.

To sum up, our Muḥammad Qāsim looks to be the artist mentioned in *Qiṣṣāṣ al-Khāqānī* by Valī Qulī Shāmlū, as having died in Isfahan in 1070/1659. Then, working already at the last decade of the 10th/16th century, he had to have been born no later than 983/1575 and he had a long life—about 85–90 years.

Focusing on the problems of chronology of Muḥammad Qāsim's works, this article almost did not address their pictorial program and meaning, leaving this for future research.

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<sup>58</sup> Canby 1996, 178.

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## ANOTHER CAREER FOR MĪRZĀ ‘ALĪ?

Barbara Brend

The tenth/sixteenth century, particularly the reign of Shah Ṭahmāsp, has left a gorgeous array of pictures of a courtly level; among these a few bear signatures or inscribed attributions which have formed a basis for accounts of the styles of individual artists. Historical and literary works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries assist with a modicum of information on the careers and qualities of artists of this period, but their remarks may be brief and vague, or the very identity of the artist referred to may be less than certain. Thus the picture of an artist’s achievements must be built on structures of visual comparisons, working from the most certain to the more speculative, and braced or limited by historical probabilities.

It is the intention of this paper to bring together works that bear the names of two artists, Mīrzā ‘Alī<sup>1</sup> and ‘Abd al-Ṣamad,<sup>2</sup> and to suggest that they are the oeuvre of one and the same individual. These artists—since they must first be considered as two—are far from being unknown, but a reciprocity between their careers lies in the fact that the later days of the first are uncertain, and similarly the earlier days of the second. Mīrzā ‘Alī’s name appears in the *Khamseh* of Niẓāmī, copied in Tabrīz for Shah Ṭahmāsp and dated 20 *dhu’l-ḥijja* 949/27 March 1543, now Or. 2265 in the British Library;<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> S.C. Welch, *Wonders of the Age: Masterpieces of Early Safavid Painting, 1501–1576*, (Cambridge, MA: Fogg Art Museum, 1979), Nos. 54, 59, Mīrzā ‘Alī; M.B. Dickson and S.C. Welch, *The Houghton Shahnama*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), vol. I, 129–53.

<sup>2</sup> R. Ettinghausen, ‘Abdu’ṣ-Ṣamad’, *Encyclopaedia of World Art*, I, (1959), 16–20; P. Chandra, *The Ṭūī-Nāma of The Cleveland Museum of Art* (. . .), (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1976), 22–26 and 171–73. Dickson & Welch, I, 192–200; P.P. Soucek, ‘Abd-al-Ṣamad Šīrāzī’, *Elr*, vol. I/2 (1985), 162–7; *idem*, ‘Persian Artists in Mughal India’, *Muqarnas*, IV (1987), 166–81, especially 169–75; R. Skelton, ‘Iranian Artists in the Service of Humayun’, in *Humayun’s Garden Party*, ed. S. Canby, (Bombay: Marg, 1994), 33–48; S.P. Verma, *Mughal Painters and their Works A Biographical Survey and Comprehensive Catalogue*, (Oxford and New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 40–46; S. Canby, ‘The Horses of ‘Abd us-Samad’, in *Mughal Masters: Further Studies*, ed. A.K. Das, (Mumbai: Marg, 1998), 14–29.

<sup>3</sup> Or. 2265 is widely published, especially: F.R. Martin, *The Miniature Paintings and*

beyond this his activity is not positively known. ‘Abd al-Šamad is one of the Safavid painters who became the foundation of the Mughal school in Kabul; for his Persian period, one painting seems datable before or during 951/1544–45;<sup>4</sup> prior to this his work is a matter of speculation. While Mīrzā ‘Alī’s career might be terminated by an early demise, it seems curious, given the prominence of ‘Abd al-Šamad under the Mughals, that he seems to arise almost from nowhere. In considering these artists I acknowledge an immense debt to the studies of Professor S.C. Welch, who has constructed an early and a later career for Mīrzā ‘Alī, and an early career for ‘Abd al-Šamad. Also to be acknowledged is an article by Professor P.P. Soucek on ‘Abd al-Šamad, where she remarks the striking similarity of some of his work to that of Mīrzā ‘Alī, though without identifying them as one.<sup>5</sup>

Welch notes mention of Mīrzā ‘Alī in three historical sources only: the treatise of Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad Yazdī contained in an album of 1556–57; the *Gulistān-i Hunar* of Qāzī Aḥmad of the early seventeenth century; and the *Mināqib-i Hunarvarān* of ‘Alī Afandī.<sup>6</sup> The first two taken together, inform us that Mīrzā ‘Alī was the son of Sulṭān Muḥammad, that he grew up in the library of Shah Ṭahmāsp, and that he was a distinguished painter. The third source, ‘Alī Afandī, claims to add the name of a pupil, Kamāl of Tabrīz.

To form a basis for comparison it will be necessary to review the attributions Welch makes to Mīrzā ‘Alī. However, the point of departure for the consideration of Mīrzā ‘Alī’s style must be the *Khamseh* Or. 2265. This is a crucial document for the identification of individual styles, since it contains eleven attributions to sixteenth-century masters, which, because of repetitions, yield the names of six artists. With the exception of one probable signature, the attributions are evidently not a part of the original scheme, since they may be quite

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*Painters of Persia, India and Turkey from the 8th to the 18th Century*, (repr. London: Holland Press, 1968), pls. 130–40; L. Binyon, *The Poems of Nizami*, (London: The Studio Limited, 1928); B.W. Robinson, *Persian Miniature Painting from collections in the British Isles*, (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1967), No. 39; N.M. Titley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts*, (London: British Museum, 1977), No. 315; Welch, 1979, Nos. 48–66.

<sup>4</sup> Dickson & Welch, I, 193. See Canby, 1998, fig. 3; D.J. Roxburgh, ‘Disorderly Conduct?: F.R. Martin and the Bahram Mirza Album’, *Muqarnas*, XV (1998), 32–57, fig. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Soucek, 1985, 162–63.

<sup>6</sup> Dickson & Welch, I, 129, and 248–9, nn. 1 and 3.



roughly written or oddly placed. However, where they can be checked against attributions on other pictures, they appear to agree, and they have generally been accepted.<sup>7</sup> Among the painters named, Mīr Muṣavvir and Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī, and Sulṭān Muḥammad and Mīrzā ‘Alī, are known to be fathers and sons, the other two artists being Āqā Mīrak and Muḏaffar ‘Alī. Both fathers are known to have been important in the workshop, and the pictures allocated to them bear this out. Mīr Muṣavvir signs the first picture, often a position of prestige, with the date 946/from May 1539; while Sulṭān Muḥammad, whose name appears on ‘Khusraw sees Shīrīn bathing’, has been credited by Welch with the celebrated ‘*Mīrāj*’.<sup>8</sup> Mīrzā ‘Alī’s pictures in the *Khamseh* are two.<sup>9</sup> An illustration standing in the place of ‘Shīrīn shown the portrait of Khusraw’ but identified by Welch as ‘Nūshāba shows Iskandar a portrait of himself’ (fig. 1) is exceptional in having its attribution incorporated in gold into the margin introduced at a renovation. The other, ‘Bārbad plays for Khusraw’ (fig. 2), has the attribution in a space intended for text. Both pictures show scenes in courtyards. Like the other illustrations to the *Khamseh*, they are elegant, colourful and intricate, but their special quality is a classically controlled energy, both calm and vibrant. Particular features are a strong sense of the architectonic—displayed especially in the careful attention to enclosing railings—and a lively interest in the subordinate characters. In the background, both pictures have paired cypresses, behind which is landscape, whose lower portion is dark green and contains a wandering stream with stones along its bank at rather regular intervals, while its upper portion is rimmed with undulating rock. A similar stream with similar and more extensive rock, and a comparable sense of three-dimensional space is seen in a drawing, ‘Baḥrām Gūr and the shepherd’, with half-obliterated attribution, which has been linked to the manuscript by Robinson and attributed to Mīrzā ‘Alī by Welch.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Recently A.S. Melikian-Chirvani, ‘Mir Sayyed Ali: Painter of the Past and Pioneer of the Future’, in *Mughal Masters*, 30–51, especially 44–47, attributes to Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī both pictures with attributions to Mīrzā ‘Alī.

<sup>8</sup> Binyon, 1928, pl. XIV; Welch, 1979, No. 63.

<sup>9</sup> Binyon, *ibid.*, pls. VI, XI; Welch, 1979, Nos., 54, 59; Dickson & Welch, I, figs. 179, 180.

<sup>10</sup> B.W. Robinson, *Persian Drawings from the 14th through the 19th century* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1965), pl. 39; Welch, 1979, No. 69.

Seeking for the oeuvre of Mīrzā ‘Alī from the period before the *Khamseh*, Welch attributes to him six pictures in the great *Shāhnāmeḥ* made for Shah Ṭahmāsp in the 1520s. In order of appearance these are: ‘The Ship of Shī‘ism’, ‘Rustam recovers Rakhsh’, ‘Planning of the Joust of twelve Rukhs’, ‘Gushtāsp slays the dragon’, ‘Nūshīrvān receives the ambassadors of Hind’, and ‘Bārbad plays for Khusraw’.<sup>11</sup> Of these the last two are the most clearly connected to the *Khamseh* pictures. There is an evident relationship between the composition of ‘Nūshīrvān receives the ambassadors’ and that of ‘Bārbad plays for Khusraw’ in the Niḏāmī, both having an *ayvān* on the right and a two-storeyed building on the left, and both conveying a sense of structure. For the other, the identity of subject in the *Shāhnāmeḥ* and *Khamseh* is suggestive, and the swaying figure of the musician, in the former ensconced in a tree, seems to confirm it. The treatment of clouds, in twisting Chinese forms and more naturalistic trails, also seems to indicate the hand of the son of the painter of the *Khamseh*’s ‘Mī‘rāj’. The ‘Bārbad plays’ of the *Shāhnāmeḥ* contains rock somewhat similar to that in ‘Baḥrām Gūr and the shepherd’ but a little more rounded and dappled in appearance. The two exploits, ‘Rustam recovers Rakhsh’ and ‘Gushtāsp slays the dragon’, are scenes of action whose connection to the *Khamseh* is less self-evident; however, both contain a stone-bordered stream,<sup>12</sup> and a profusion of dappled rock, so that to an extent their attribution may rely on ‘Bārbad plays’ of the *Shāhnāmeḥ*. These may find further confirmation later in this argument. The remaining two pictures, ‘The Ship of Shī‘ism’ and ‘Planning of the Joust of twelve Rukhs’, works of still elegance in which flat planes are laid one on another, seem to me difficult to relate to the style of Mīrzā ‘Alī in the *Khamseh*.<sup>13</sup>

Welch sees as work of Mīrzā ‘Alī and approximately contemporary with the *Khamseh* of 1543 two of the pictures added to a small fifteenth-century *Khamseh*, now Add. 25900 in the British Library.<sup>14</sup> ‘Iskandar and the sage’ is a well-balanced composition with the sage

<sup>11</sup> Dickson & Welch, I, 135.

<sup>12</sup> ‘Stone-bordered stream’ here intends a particular regularity in the distribution of stones of moderate size on either side of a stream.

<sup>13</sup> S.C. Welch, *A King’s Book of Kings*, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1972), 85; A. Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), 169. The *Shāhnāmeḥ* pictures resemble the work of Āqā Mīrak in the *Khamseh* Or. 2265, see Welch, 1979, Nos. 56–58.

<sup>14</sup> Dickson & Welch, I, 140, and figs. 197, 196.

in a cave on the right and a large *chīnar* on the left; in the centre are the elegant kneeling figures of Iskandar and a companion, below whom a stone-bordered stream runs through dark green grass, while attendants with a dappled horse wait in the foreground. The extensive rock round the sage's cave is to an extent dappled, but a division into separate lobes is more apparent. To judge from its balance and scenery, this may well be the work of Mīrzā 'Alī. It is, however, difficult to believe that 'Iskandar defeats the wild Russian' is by the same hand. The composition is confused, with the observers of the action too prominent; the background is treated in stylized hues of turquoise and lilac, with rock gently shaded as though in eroded slabs; and the subordinate figures are mannered rather than lively. The picture, perhaps the work of Muẓaffar 'Alī, anticipates the style of the *Haft Aurang* for Ibrāhīm Mīrzā.

Two sets of double pictures discussed by Welch have experienced the same fate of being added to other manuscripts, both now in St. Petersburg. As additions, they are not necessarily to be dated by the manuscript in which they are lodged. The double picture of a hunt is attached to a *Silsilat al-Ẓahab* of 956/1549.<sup>15</sup> On the right, under a canopy, a lithe young prince who has loosed his arrow from a kneeling position suggests a dating in the 1540s. To the left of the prince, deer and wild ass flee from huntsmen, mainly towards the left, through a dark green valley with a stone-bordered stream that is contained between rocky outcrops in the foreground and background. Among the background rocks, camels, seeming larger in scale than the middle-ground horses, progress towards the right. Subsidiary characters are lively. The main movement, on a rising line from right to left and through the rocky coomb, recalls both 'Baḥrām and the shepherd' and 'Gushtāsp kills the dragon': in consequence, the trio afford each other a degree of confirmation. The 'Hunt', then, might well be the work of Mīrzā 'Alī. The second double picture is attached to a *Lavā'ih* of 978/1570–71.<sup>16</sup> This shows

<sup>15</sup> B. Dorn, *Catalogue des manuscrits et xylographes de la Bibliothèque Impériale publique de St. Pétersbourg* (St. Petersburg: L'Académie Impériale des Sciences, 1852), No. CDXXXIV/434; Dickson & Welch, I, 140, where a dating in the later 1540s may be implied, and figs. 194–95; M.M. Ashrafi, *XVIIth-Century Miniatures illustrating Manuscript Copies of the Works of Jami from the USSR Collections*, (Moscow: Sovetskia Khudozhnik, 1966), 6–7.

<sup>16</sup> Dorn, No. CCLVI/256; Dickson & Welch, I, 249, n. 5; Ashrafi, 1966, 4–5.

a prince entertained in a courtyard: on the left an assemblage of courtiers; on the right, a version of Mīrzā 'Alī's 'Bārbad plays for Khusraw' of the Nizāmī. This is a simpler picture than that in the *Khamseh*, some challenging elements, such as the foreground railing, having been omitted. Though it is executed with care, various ineptitudes are apparent: the knee of man with a flask in the lower right has sunk too low, and the bowl with sugar-loaves before the prince has had to be stretched. The picture thus seems to be a pastiche, whether copied or from memory, perhaps made about the 1550s or 60s.

None of what seems to be Mīrzā 'Alī's work surveyed so far demonstrably postdates the *Khamseh* of 1543. However, if, as Welch believes, he contributed to the *Haft Aurang* made for Ibrāhīm Mīrzā between 1556 and 1565 he must have remained in Iran, and thus he could not be 'Abd al-Ṣamad. Welch attributes to him: 'A wise old man chides a foolish youth', 'A simple peasant entertains a salesman not to sell his donkey', 'A father advises his son', 'The Pīr rejects the gift of a duck', 'Salāmān and Absāl on the isle', and 'The ugly Abyssinian'.<sup>17</sup> In making his attributions, Welch argues that Mīrzā 'Alī's work changed considerably from the time of Ṭahmāsp's *Khamseh* to Ibrāhīm's *Haft Aurang* and, during the making of the latter, it changes reflecting the spirit of the times. The intellectual gives way to the sensuous, a heightened sensibility supersedes a clear vision of the world in realistic space, and forms once clearly defined become deliquescent; in particular, progressive change is to be observed in the portrayal of rock in which the crystalline tends to melt. While the metamorphoses so described tellingly evoke the style of the *Haft Aurang*, they pose problems in the matter of attributions to Mīrzā 'Alī, since they seem to disable the principal features on which such attributions might be made. Welch's judgements, therefore, are made on the basis of the treatment of various details, particularly water and cloud, and on the inclusion of various figure types. The manner of representing water that Welch sees as significant emphasises whorled lines, and is to be found in 'Old man chides a youth' and 'Salāmān and Absāl'; this may be referred to water in 'The ship of Shī'ism' and indeed Welch makes a more general comparison of

<sup>17</sup> Dickson & Welch, I, 141, 150, and figs. 199–204. The titles used here follow M.S. Simpson, *Sultan Ibrahim Mirza's Haft Aurang*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), 89, 98, 103, 152, 174, 188, all facing colour reproductions.

this and ‘Salāmān and Absāl’. But if we take leave to doubt Mīrzā ‘Alī’s authorship of ‘The Ship of Shī‘ism’, the argument is not advanced. For the second feature, the twisting clouds that appear in four of the six pictures are compared to those in ‘Bārbad plays’ of the *Shāhnāmeḥ*; however, these are a feature of the *Haft Aurang* in general, and indeed an example more similar to the *Shāhnāmeḥ* picture appears in another illustration, ‘Yūsuf tends his flock’, which Welch attributes to Muẓaffār ‘Alī.<sup>18</sup> Among figures, the inclusion of a fat-faced boy or of a pot-bellied personage do not seem very telling without further definition, since they are fairly common types. A little more distinctive are an old woman in ‘Peasant entertains a salesman not to sell’ and a bearded individual in ‘Father advises his son’ who approximate to figures in ‘Nūshīrvān receives the ambassadors’ though lacking their intensity. Similarly, the sage in his rocky cave in ‘Pīr rejects the gift’, follows much of the iconography of ‘Iskandar and the sage’ of the *Khamseh* Add. 25900, so that we may suppose that the artist knew that picture, or a tradition from it; but the figure lacks the intensity of that in the older picture. Not mentioned by Welch, the octagonal platform in ‘Father advises his son’ looks like an attempt to imitate Mīrzā ‘Alī’s architectonic effects, but is blatant rather than subtle. Thus it may be argued that in the *Haft Aurang*, rather than seeing the continuing work of Mīrzā ‘Alī, we see the work of artists who had made a very thorough study of his pictures. In a comparable way, the painter of another picture in the *Haft Aurang*, seen by Welch as Muẓaffār ‘Alī, shows in his ‘Depraved man berated by Satan’ considerable familiarity with pictures attributed to Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī, ‘Majnūn in Chains’ in the *Khamseh* of 1543, and the ‘Encampment’.<sup>19</sup> Borrowings from the former include: an internal horizon which descends to the left, use of gold ground, a tent in which a woman holds a child on her knee, a trio of children, a coat with vertical stripes of black and white, a cooking pot embraced by flames, a tree much bent to the right; from the ‘Encampment’ comes a woman who squats at a basin wringing washing. Since this tribute was paid to Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī after he had left for India, the same might be the case with Mīrzā ‘Alī.

<sup>18</sup> Dickson & Welch, I, fig. 221; Simpson, 1997, 131.

<sup>19</sup> Dickson & Welch, I, fig. 219; Simpson, 1997, 92. Compare, Binyon, 1928, pl. XII; Welch, 1979, Nos. 61, 67.

More in keeping with the tone of Mīrzā ‘Alī’s work in the *Khamseh* of 1543 is a picture, noted by Welch, of a prince resting while out hawking; mounted in an eighteenth-century *Mughal Album*, it is now in St. Petersburg.<sup>20</sup> On the right rises a *chīnar*, beneath which sits the prince accepting a pomegranate from a kneeling attendant. Hunt servants are disposed around, including one who holds a hawk extended into the left margin. The scene is full without losing clarity, and its activity is glad rather than febrile. The rock is in a rippling mode. The dating of this picture is an interesting question. Welch sees the prince as possibly Ibrāhīm Mīrzā and the picture as approximately contemporary with the *Haft Aurang*. The picture does indeed begin to show features that would be prominent about the 1560s or 70s: the *chīnar* has twisting branches and a split in the lower trunk, and the attendants have a suggestion of the wide feline face that was to come. On the other hand, it falls short of the full characteristics of the *Haft Aurang* and is free of its debilitated air, which would scarcely have been absent under Ibrāhīm. It is perhaps more probable that, rather than for Ibrāhīm, born in 1540, the picture was made for his father, Baḥrām Mīrzā, born in 1517. Baḥrām died on 19 Ramaẓān 956/11 October 1549, and the picture would perhaps be painted in the last or penultimate year of his life.<sup>21</sup> From it a style might develop that would produce another ‘Rest while hawking’, a double picture shared between the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in which the tree is yet more decayed and faces more feline, and also the numerous feline-faced single figures that have be fathered on to Mīrzā ‘Alī.<sup>22</sup> But if the style progresses it is not inevitable that the artist goes with it: it is here suggested that Mīrzā ‘Alī came in this style only to the point of the St. Petersburg ‘Rest while hawking’, and that others must have carried it on.

<sup>20</sup> Dorn, No. CDLXXXIX/489. Dickson & Welch, I, 153, and fig. 211; O.F. Akimushkin and A.A. Ivanov, *Persian Miniatures from the XIV–XVII Centuries*, (Moscow: nauka, 1968), pl. 46.

<sup>21</sup> Ḥasan Beg Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-Tavārikh*, ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā’ī (Tehran: Instishārāt-i Bābak, 1357 s/1979), 442, the prince was taken to Mashhad for burial.

<sup>22</sup> Welch, 1979, No. 85, ‘Hawking party’; Nos. 78, 82, 83, figures, perhaps by the same hand, who might be a follower of Mīrzā ‘Alī. Similarly, in Dickson & Welch, I, figs. 205–06; figs. 207, 208, 210, 212. There is not here space to discuss these subjects; nor other attributions, as in Robinson, 1967, No. 41, and Soudavar, 1992, 170–75.

‘Abd al-Ṣamad must now be considered. The outline of Humāyūn’s acquisition of Safavid painters is well known, though some details of time and place remain problematic. Humāyūn entered Iran to seek refuge with Shah Ṭahmāsp in the Spring of 1544; when eventually he approached the royal camp near Sulṭāniyeh, he was greeted by Sām Mīrzā and Baḥrām Mīrzā. For some months he was able to observe the life of Tabrīz. In the following year he regained a precarious footing in Kabul. In late 1546 or early 1547 Humāyūn sent a summons to Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī and ‘Abd al-Ṣamad to join him, but they did not arrive at Kabul until November 1549.<sup>23</sup> Later Mīr Muṣavvir followed them. The subsequent careers of the painters are relatively well documented. At first, Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī was held to be senior to ‘Abd al-Ṣamad, but the latter’s period under the Mughals was longer and more distinguished. It is perhaps as a tribute to this status that Abu’l-Faẓl’s *Akbarnāmeḥ* pays more attention to ‘Abd al-Ṣamad. He asserts that ‘Abd al-Ṣamad first entered Humāyūn’s service while the latter was in Iran, but that he was prevented by circumstances from joining him forthwith; these overtures appear to have taken place in Mashhad rather than in Tabrīz.<sup>24</sup>

With regard to ‘Abd al-Ṣamad’s career before this point, Persian references are, as Welch shows, doubtful.<sup>25</sup> In particular, there is a problem of conflicting *nisbas*. Sām Mīrzā, writing in 957/1550–51, has an ‘Abd al-Ṣamad, an artist who practised gilding and wrote verse and who is of Kashan; and Qāzī Aḥmad has an ‘Abd al-Ṣamad with similar talents but of Mashhad. Thus neither version quite agrees with the testimony of Abu’l-Faẓl, who records that ‘Abd al-Ṣamad is of Shiraz.<sup>26</sup> The question of the Shiraz *nisba* will be taken up later.

<sup>23</sup> The account of Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī and ‘Abd al-Ṣamad in Chandra, 1976, 18–26 and 171–73, is based primarily upon Abu’l-Faẓl’s *Akbarnāmeḥ* (*The Akbar Nama of Abu’l-Faẓl*, tr. H. Beveridge, I, Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1907) and the account of Bāyazīd Bayāt, *Tazkīre-i Humāyūn*, M. Hidāyat Husayn, ed., (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1941), 173. See also Dickson & Welch, I, 253, n. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Abu’l-Faẓl’s account (*Akbar Nama*, I, 443–6) meanders at this point between Tabrīz and Mashhad, and Dickson & Welch (I, 255, n. 8) opt for Tabrīz. However, the Persian text (*The Akbarnāmah by Abul Faẓl i Mubīrak-i ‘Allāmī*, I, Lucknow: 1877, Āqā Aḥmad ‘Alī and Maulawī ‘Abd-ur-Raḥīm, eds., 219–20) having twice referred to Tabrīz as *shahr*, then speaks of *madīna-i fāẓila*. Presumably Humāyūn was leaving at the time.

<sup>25</sup> Dickson & Welch, I, 255, n. 2. The *nisba* ‘Mashhadi’ teasingly invites a connection to the problem mentioned in the previous note.

<sup>26</sup> Abu’l-Faẓl, *The Ā’in-i Akbarī*, I (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1873), H. Blochmann, tr. (repr. Delhi: Naresh C. Jain, 1965), 114. See also note 44 below.

Welch has attributed to ‘Abd al-Ṣamad the penultimate illustration in Ṭahmāsp’s *Shāhnāmeḥ*, ‘Murder of Khusraw Parvīz’.<sup>27</sup> This is an unsatisfactory picture with features that suggest that its painter lacks experience. Some attempt is made to create a three-dimensional structure, but without complete success. The palace wall resembles a flat sheet of cardboard folded to form a toy theatre; a balcony in the upper left, whose canopy is seen to have three facets, points up the flatness of the rest rather than redeeming it. A change has occurred in the pigmentation of the brickwork, and, though this may have developed over centuries, it suggests that the painter is using a different mixture from the better painters in the manuscript who, for the most part, have avoided this problem. Rectangles of unadorned blue suggest that the picture was not finished and, while this in itself is not very significant, it is noticeable that the sky on the left looks unfortunately similar. The most fundamental flaw, however, lies in the planning of the picture—its composition and distribution of colour and detail—which induces the viewer’s eye to travel round the right-hand side, while almost ignoring the main action on the left. On the positive side, the subsidiary characters, many rendered in poses of sleep, are managed with a degree of competence. A point that may be related to a picture of ‘Abd al-Ṣamad’s Mughal period is the use of angels in the spandrels of an *ayvān*, but these are not exclusive. Another feature, found in the work of both Mīrzā ‘Alī and ‘Abd al-Ṣamad, but rather uncommon elsewhere, is the fact that one figure, the door-guard, has the tail of his robe looped round his sword. These factors, coupled with the attempt to indicate a three-dimensional structure, allow the possibility of some connection with the Mīrzā ‘Alī, perhaps that the picture is the work of a pupil of his. However, the painter’s talent does not seem to be on a par with that of ‘Abd al-Ṣamad when under Mughal patronage.

Very different in character is a picture from the known canon of ‘Abd al-Ṣamad, which Welch attributes to his Persian period about the time of the *Khamseh* of 1543. Bearing text from Sa‘dī’s *Gulistān*, it shows a dervish who while travelling feels impelled to rise early and emulate nature by praising God. The leaf is included in the *Muraqqa‘ Gulshan*, an album now in Tihiran, composed for the Mughal

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<sup>27</sup> Welch, 1972, 184–5; Welch, 1979, No. 39; Dickson & Welch, I, 192–93, and II, No. 260.



Jahāngīr about 1612.<sup>28</sup> The attribution, or perhaps signature, is contained in an ornamental cartouche.<sup>29</sup> Since the format of this inscription is not within the conventions of the narrative manuscript it must appertain to the making of an album, presumably of the *Muraqqa‘ Gulshan*. The attribution would thus be of the early seventeenth century, possibly postdating the death of ‘Abd al-Ṣamad; nevertheless, it would seem to have been well informed.

‘The dervish praising God’ offers grounds for comparison with some of the putative works of Mīrzā ‘Alī. On the right of the picture are grouped members of the caravan asleep, one sheltered by a tent. In the upper right above them is a tall outcrop of rippling rock. In the upper left is a chīnar with a crack in its lower trunk, and below it at the mid-left the bearded dervish, whose elbow just cuts the rulings. Behind him in the centre is a stream with stones along its edge. In the foreground are horses, and behind them a ridge of rock which partly conceals camels moving to the right. The manner of rock painting is more striated than that in ‘Rustam recovers Rakhsh’, but consonant with its dappled effect.<sup>30</sup> The ecstatic principal figure is closer in character to the tense and staring sage visited by Iskandar in the *Khamseh* Add. 25900, than is the latter’s limp equivalent in the *Haft Aurang*. The small declivity that the dervish has passed through can be seen as a minor version of the valley in the double-page ‘Hunt’, especially when it is recalled that the latter has a tented structure at its extreme right, and also a contra-flow of camels, albeit at the top of the page. In addition to recalling the ‘Hunt’ the fine rendering of the camels anticipates ‘Abd al-Ṣamad’s fierce version, made at the age of eighty-five, of a picture by Bihzād of two camels fighting.<sup>31</sup> Perhaps this model was already in ‘Abd

<sup>28</sup> The compilation of the *Muraqqa‘ Gulshan* must postdate 1020/1611–12, see A.S. Das, *Mughal Painting during Jahangir’s Time* (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1978), 125. For ‘Dervish praising God’: L. Binyon, J.V.S. Wilkinson, and B. Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pl. CV-A, 231; Dickson & Welch, I, fig. 250; Canby, 1998, fig. 2.

<sup>29</sup> The formula *bandeh-i-shikasta-raqam ‘Abd al-Ṣamad shīrīn-qalam* is discussed by Ettinghausen, 1959, 18; Verma, 1994, 42, 44; Dickson & Welch, I, 193. It may reflect Bihzād’s *qalam-i shikasta* on a picture of fighting camels, see note 31 below.

<sup>30</sup> Later rock is divided into small rounded segments; for example, M.C. Beach, *The Imperial Image* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery, 1981), 73; A. Okada, *Imperial Mughal Painters* D. Dusinberre, tr., (Paris: Flammarion, 1992), 64. Its regular alternation of light and shade maintains the rippling effect.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Abd al-Ṣamad transforms the model, whereas Nānhā in 1017/1608–9 copies more sedulously. BWG, LXXXVII-A, Bihzād; LXXXVII-B, Nānhā. ‘Abd al-Ṣamad,

al-Şamad's possession; however, that may be, his depictions of camels indicate a painter with an enduring interest in the representation of animals. Lastly, there is in 'The dervish praising God', as in 'Rest while hawking', a detailed rocky and sylvan scene with dominant *chinar* split in the lower trunk; and in both the eye is conducted from a static point on the right to an important transgression of the left-hand rulings. It seems probable that these two pictures are very close in date, and both show a filling of the composition which must have occurred about the mid- to late 1540s.

Welch also mentions a separate study, 'Horse and groom', which bears an attribution to 'Abd al-Şamad, and which, as Roxburgh has recently confirmed, is from the Baĥrām Mīrzā Album of 951/1544–5.<sup>32</sup> The image is spare and thus not readily to be compared with narrative subjects, but Welch places it in the 1530s. The attribution, is boldly written in gold and, as with that on 'Dervish praising God', was probably applied during the making of the album. The attribution demonstrates that 'Abd al-Şamad's name predates his Mughal period. Central and brashly written, it carries a stronger emphasis than the attributions to Bihzād of pictures mounted on the same folio, so that we may suspect some comment is intended.

The pictures discussed hitherto cover a range of possibilities for the oeuvre of Mīrzā 'Alī and of 'Abd al-Şamad under Safavid patronage. It is now time to compare the most securely attributed of Mīrzā 'Alī's works, the *Khamseh* Or. 2265 illustrations, with the earliest examples of 'Abd al-Şamad's work for Humāyūn. The two crucial early Mughal pieces are again in the *Muraqqa' Gulshan*. The one, 'Young Calligrapher and Musician', has been mounted above and blended with a picture of Majnūn—here omitted (fig. 3). It bears on the upper right an inscription with the painter's name, the date of New Year 958/1551, and the information that it was made in *nīm-rūz*, meaning in half a day, though a punning reference to Afghanistan may be included; a further inscription, on the calligrapher's tablet, shows that the picture was made at the royal behest.<sup>33</sup> The other

T. Falk, ed., *Treasures of Islam* (Geneva: Sotheby's/Philip Wilson Publishers, 1985) No. 121; Soucek, 1985, pl. VI; eadem, 1987, fig. 6.

<sup>32</sup> Dickson & Welch, I, 193. Canby, 1998, fig. 3. Roxburgh, 1998, fig. 11; 34–8.

<sup>33</sup> BWG, CV-B, 232; B. Gray and A. Godard, *Iran: Persian Miniatures—Imperial Library* (Paris: New York Graphic Society by arrangement with UNESCO, 1956), pl. XXIV; Dickson & Welch, I, 193; Skelton, 1994, fig. 1, and 36, including reference to B. Atabayi, *Fihrist-i muraqqa'āt-i kitābkhāneh va Sulṭānātī*, (Tehran: 1353 sh.), 351. See also Verma, 1994, 44.

example, ‘Presentation of a picture to Humāyūn by the young Akbar’ (fig. 4), in which the picture presented repeats the whole scene, is complex and, from the accompanying inscription, includes the work of assistants.<sup>34</sup> It might be datable between 962/1554 in Afghanistan and 964/1556 in India.<sup>35</sup> ‘Abd al-Ṣamad’s name, perhaps an autograph, appears on a portfolio in the centre, near a kneeling figure who is generally understood to be the painter himself. It is thus clear that the authorship of both pictures is secure, though the individuality of the style may be slightly affected by speed of execution in the one and teamwork in the other. In both pictures, the most obvious difference from Safavid painting is the use of the turban style invented by Humāyūn.<sup>36</sup>

The Mughal pictures are notionally representations of contemporary courtly scenes, however, it seems probable that they should be seen as epitomizing aspects of princely life rather than the record of particular events. Did two young men really exercise their talent in such a deserted spot? If Akbar presented a picture to Humāyūn, was this a matter of complete indifference to other members of the court? and did it literally coincide with the return of a group of hunters? This type of picture then is not so very different in character from the illustrations to a classic Persian narrative, dressed in an idealised version of the contemporary world. This being so, it is interesting to note the importance given in ‘Abd al-Ṣamad’s album pictures and Mīrzā ‘Alī’s illustrations to the *Khamseh* Or. 2265 to the themes of the arts of pen or brush, and to music. Regarding the former, there is evidence of both practical and philosophical preoccupations. Mīrzā ‘Alī’s Khusraw has a *davāt* in a niche behind him; a similar one occurs in the ‘Presentation’, near the kneeling figure thought to be ‘Abd al-Ṣamad, while that artist’s young calligrapher has a grander penbox with internal ink-pot. The young calligrapher also has a small portfolio for his work, like that bearing ‘Abd al-Ṣamad’s name in the ‘Presentation’. Mīrzā ‘Alī in ‘Iskandar shown the portrait of himself’ is also conscious of the demands of conservation, since he has

<sup>34</sup> BWG, pl. CIV-B and 147–8, No. 230; A.U. Pope and P. Ackerman, *A Survey of Persian Art*, (rpr. SOPA, Personally Oriented, Ltd. and Maxwell Aley Literary Associates, 1981), X, 912; H. Elgood, ‘Who painted Princes of the House of Timur?’, in Canby (ed.), 1994, 10–32, pl. 8.

<sup>35</sup> Mr. Ṣāqib Bāburī suggested in an essay, January, 1998, that the presence of cheetah and peacock indicate a dating after the return to India. The inclusion of the artist may also be an Indian trait.

<sup>36</sup> Beveridge, *Akbar Nama*, I, 648–9.

included an attendant who holds a large portfolio which evidently usually contains the portrait. At a more thematic level, it seems probable that Iskandar-surprised-to-be-shown-the-portrait-of-himself lingers in the artist's mind when he creates the picture of Humāyūn, who contemplates himself reproduced *ad infinitum*. Meanwhile, the inclusion of the artist's self-portrait in the Mughal picture adds a potential further layer of meaning, perhaps carrying the implication that his fame will live on through his painting. These are dazzling new departures in Islamic painting.

In the question of music, the presence of the Bārbad in the *Khamseh* picture of Khusraw entertained is of course given. Mīrzā 'Alī here chooses to place him centrally, swaying over his lute. It may be recalled that it is chiefly the figure of Bārbad and other details, rather than the composition, that suggests that Mīrzā 'Alī painted this subject in the *Shāhnāmeḥ*. If this is indeed the case, it supports the view of Mīrzā 'Alī as a painter to who reflects on past work but does not reproduce it unchanged. In the 'Presentation' we seem to have a case of such reference and rearrangement. A swaying lutanist who, like Bārbad of the *Khamseh*, is accompanied by a young tambourist has been moved to a position in the upper left; but, as though an after-image had remained, there is still a musician at ground level together with an older tambourine man. In addition, it may also be suggested that the Bārbad of the *Shāhnāmeḥ*, as a tree-dweller, prefigures Humāyūn on his platform.

When Mīrzā 'Alī's *Khamseh* pictures were considered together, and joined by 'Nūshīrvān receives the ambassadors' from the *Shāhnāmeḥ*, their most salient characteristic appeared to be a sense of the architectonic. This is also strong in the 'Presentation'. All these four have areas of ground marked out as space by railings or low wall, in each case with a rising diagonal on the left. Khusraw and Nūshīrvān are installed in similar *ayvāns* on the right, while the left of both pictures is furnished with a two-storey building whose upper level is embellished with a gallery protect by an over-hanging roof. In the *Shāhnāmeḥ* this unit displays three facets, in the *Khamseh* two; between this structure and the royal *ayvān* we glimpse a *chīnar*. In the 'Presentation' similar features appear in a different arrangement. The princely *ayvān* has moved to the left and become secondary, a unit of the two-storey building; the upper storey is now rendered as a hexagon, with four (or five) facets visible, and the *chīnar* has slipped into the vacant space on the right—developing a presence similar

to the stately tree in 'Rest while hawking'. The *chīnar* supports a platform with surrounding parapet whose six facets are indicated. A parapet also flanks the catwalk that intersects a facet of the gallery of the lefthand building and connects it to the tree-house on the right. Thus it is made clear that tree and building are linked in space, and also that the gallery of the lefthand building surrounds its unseen rear. A further spatial reference is made by the service stairway below the catwalk, which evidently leads to the upper storey of the building; and in detail, the steps of the stairway are shown as having a credible tread, riser and side facet, though not of course in perspective.

A particular feature that intensifies the three-dimensional effect in the *Khamseh* pictures—while displaying the virtuosity of the artist—is the open-work grille. In both a complex geometric scheme is used for the front boundary of the courtyard: in 'Iskandar shown the portrait' it is emphasised by subsidiary conversations conducted over it; in 'Bārbad plays for Khusraw' it is shown as partly screening the pool, a daring departure since this item is usually sacrosanct. Mīrzā 'Alī had probably acquired the technique for open-work grilles from his father, since the two examples in Ṭahmāsp's *Shāhnāmeḥ* are in pictures that Welch attributes to Sulṭān Muḥammad.<sup>37</sup> 'Abd al-Ṣamad's 'Presentation' shows a similar vision to that in the *Khamseh* pictures. He is at pains to introduce a grille which is not strictly necessary, his tour de force being to place a door of open-work in front of his three-dimensional stairway; for added emphasis the foot of the stairway is glimpsed unscreened through the open foreground doorway.

In addition to these habits of mind, spatial vision, and technique, it may be suggested that the work of Mīrzā 'Alī and 'Abd al-Ṣamad is linked by habits of composition in colour distribution. Clear in 'Nūshīrvān receives the ambassadors', and 'Bārbad plays' of the *Khamseh*, is an isosceles triangle of patches of red with its base near the righthand rulings and apex near the left; a similar pattern can be made out, though less distinctly, in 'Khusraw shown the portrait' and the 'Presentation'. The effect of these colour patches is to carry the eye from the right to the left and back again—an effect like that achieved by the interruption of the left rulings in 'The dervish praises God', and 'Rest while hawking'. Another coincidence of colour and

<sup>37</sup> Dickson & Welch, II, Nos. 53, 61.

position that seems significant concerns attendant figures in 'Bārbad plays' of the *Khamseh* and the 'Presentation'. In the both courtyards, near the *ayvān*, stand slant-shouldered young men, in a blue gown, frogged and patterned with gold. Both have hands extended to the right; the one holds a yellow coat, while the other, who reaches for a tray, stands in front of a man in yellow.

A further point of interest attaches to the blue-robed attendant of the Mughal picture, since he has, hanging from his belt two knives. This is also true of the attendant with the portfolio in 'Iskandar shown the portrait', and—so far as I can make out—of the young calligrapher of the 'Abd al-Ṣamad's picture of 1551. In the *Shāhnāmeḥ* this feature occurs only in 'Nūshīrvān receives the ambassadors', 'Bārbad plays for Khusraw', and in a picture that Welch attributes to Sulṭān Muḥammad.<sup>38</sup>

There are also a number of similarities in the portrayal of figures. As in the *Khamseh* pictures, so in the 'Presentation', subsidiary characters are animated; in particular, several pairs are engaged in their own conversations. Among the principals, Humāyūn extends his hand to a picture much in the manner of Iskandar, but his posture, figure and face are more like those of the distinguished bearded courtier, presumably Buzurg Umīd, who sits on a carpet to the right in 'Bārbad plays' of the *Khamseh*. The rather broader bearded face of Iskandar corresponds instead to that of the door-guard in the 'Presentation'. Another instance is the similarity between the plump profile face of a courtier in the lower left of 'Iskandar shown the portrait' and the presumed self-portrait of 'Abd al-Ṣamad. Further, the courtier in the *Khamseh* has the end of his robe tucked into his belt, exposing white lining and cradling his sword, as has the door-guard in 'Abd al-Ṣamad's picture. This last motif, mentioned above in connection with 'Murder of Khusraw Parvīz', is not exclusive to these pictures, but it is not very common; its use can perhaps be seen as an example, in little scale, of Mīrzā 'Alī's feeling for the three-dimensional.

Some other details of decoration and paraphernalia may be mentioned. Two points in the 'Presentation' class it with the work of Mīrzā 'Alī, but also of other of the more careful painters in the *Shāhnāmeḥ*. These are the use in the upper portion of the back railing

<sup>38</sup> Dickson & Welch, II, No. 37.

of eight-point stars, rather than plain squares, and in the greenish ground tiles of a motif, here a hexagon, rather than a plain rectangle. Though 'Bārbad plays' has the plain rectangular tile it also has a dark grey dado to the *pīshṭāq* with geometric pattern, while the 'Presentation' has a black dado in this position, and a foreground tiled with grey in a geometric pattern. Where 'Bārbad plays' has dragons in the *ayvān* spandrels, the 'Presentation' has angels—in which, as indicated above, it resembles 'Murder of Khusraw Parvīz'. Among objects, the *davāt* has already been mentioned. Also of interest are a golden *mashraba* in a niche in the upper unit of 'Bārbad plays' and in the *ayvān* of the 'Presentation'. More significant, however, is the presence, in a niche in the *ayvān* in the *Khamseh* and by the *mashraba* in the Mughal scene, of an hourglass. The hourglass appears here, I believe, for the first time in Persian painting, so that its immediate introduction into a Mughal picture seems highly significant.<sup>39</sup>

Fewer animals appear in Mīrzā 'Alī's pictures in the *Khamseh* than in the 'Presentation'. Nevertheless, in 'Iskandar shown the portrait' a duck in the pool, portrayed with more than conventional care as having an elegant neck and energetically paddling feet, may perhaps be compared with the peacock in the 'Presentation' whose neck has also been given an elegant undulation. In the 'Presentation' it is the theme of the hunt that prevails, and here the *Khamseh* pictures offer no comparison for the two dead ducks and the deer that droop realistically in the hands of hunt-servants, nor for the eager cheetah. However, the rounded form of a powerful dappled-grey horse that paws the ground as it waits, compares with one in 'Iskandar shown the picture', though its position in the composition of the 'Presentation' corresponds rather to that of the brown horse in 'Rest while hawking'.<sup>40</sup>

Landscape also is limited in the *Khamseh* pictures but, as discussed, the rippling rock, which is a minor feature in them, is more prominent in other pictures attributable to Mīrzā 'Alī. In 'Calligrapher

<sup>39</sup> At the Third International Round Table on Safavid Persia Dr. Paul Losensky mentioned reference to an hourglass in 'Abdī Beyk's *Jannat-i 'Adn*. Perhaps one such was a prized possession of Shah Ṭahmāsp. In the seventeenth century Bichitr was to paint Jahāngīr on an hourglass-throne, see Beach, 1981, 79. It seems possible that, in addition to its significance in the symbolism of time, the hourglass was seen as an appurtenance of princes.

<sup>40</sup> The horses with Arab head in the 'Presentation' correspond to the Bahrām Mīrzā Album picture, see Canby, 1998, figs. 3 and 4; a heavier type, figs. 6–8, is closer to those of 'Nūshīrvān and the ambassadors'.

and musician' there is a trace of this, though speed has left it sketchy; however, it is much in evidence in later work by 'Abd al-Šamad in India. The rock-bordered stream is also present in the 959/1551 picture. A feature shared by both *Khamseh* pictures and both Mughal, however, is the paired cypresses.<sup>41</sup> A further point may be significant, though the state of reproductions available means that it is a little uncertain. It appears that in the background of the 'Presentation' plants are chiefly rendered in yellow against a ground of dark green. This is not a feature of the *Khamseh* pictures, but may perhaps be traceable to a mode which appears to have been used on occasion by Mīrzā 'Alī's father Sulṭān Muḥammad.<sup>42</sup>

As a postscript to the evidence of the sixteenth century, mention must be made of an intriguing picture from the first years of the seventeenth century, when the future Jahāngīr held court as Salīm. When the Persian painter Rizā wishes to portray his patron in princely splendour, he does so with a rather close version of Mīrzā 'Alī's 'Bārbad plays for Khusraw' of the *Khamseh*.<sup>43</sup> This evokes the question: did Rizā bring the design with him from Iran or did he find it already in the Mughal stock, brought in by 'Abd al-Šamad?

There is then strong visual evidence to link Mīrzā 'Alī and 'Abd al-Šamad, both in habits of composition and details of treatment. Are there any insuperable obstacles to seeing the pair as one? There is, of course, the problem of the differing names. An explanation of this might be that a new life required a new name—or a new part of a name, since 'Abd al-Šamad, 'Slave of the Eternal', has rather the character of a *laqab*. Perhaps having failed to detach himself from the studio of Shah Ṭahmāsp—or the tutelage of his father—when invited by Humāyūn 962/1544, the painter made an effortful breach shortly after, joined Baḥrām Mīrzā, and found a new name necessary.

What of the filial relationship and the problem of *nisbas*: could 'Abd al-Šamad of Shiraz be the son of Sulṭān Muḥammad of Iraq? The assertion of various scholars that the father of 'Abd al-Šamad was Khvājeh Niẓām al-Mulk vizier of Shah Shuja' of Shiraz rests on a doubtful basis. The text from which this derives, appears to be

<sup>41</sup> Paired cypresses, perhaps intended to convey the order of the royal demesne, are favoured in Ṭahmāsp's *Shāhnāmeḥ* in pictures that Welch attributes to Sulṭān Muḥammad, for example Dickson & Welch, II, No. 16.

<sup>42</sup> Compare Welch, 1979, No. 2.

<sup>43</sup> BWG, pl. CIV-A; a comparison with CIV-B, the 'Presentation', is implied.



the eighteenth-century *Ma'āsir al-Umarā* of Shāh-Navāz Khān, which employs the word *jadd*, grandfather or ancestor.<sup>44</sup> It therefore seems probable that the author is asserting that 'Abd al-Ṣamad was descended from a vizier of the Muẓaffarīd Shah Shuja', who ruled in Shiraz from 765–785/1364–84. Though Sulṭān Muḥammad's *nisba* is recorded as 'Irāqī it is possible that this acknowledges his employment under the Safavids, rather than his family origin; traits in pictures which may be his early work show a relationship to the 'Commercial Turkman style' of Shiraz.<sup>45</sup> Thus 'Abd al-Ṣamad's *nisba* might have been selected to claim the prestige of the Persian tradition, without giving too much weight to his Safavid service.

Finally, there is the question of another member of Sulṭān Muḥammad's family to consider: the painter Muḥammadī, active in the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>46</sup> He is claimed by 'Alī Afandī to be the son and pupil of Sulṭān Muḥammad, and said by Iskandar Munshī to be from Hirat. However, Kühnel, asserted that Muḥammadī was the son of Mīrẓā 'Alī, and Bahari has recently confirmed this by reference to a note on a painting.<sup>47</sup> Bahari suggests that Mīrẓā 'Alī spent some time in Hirat with Bihzād, and that Muḥammadī was born then.<sup>48</sup> An alternative would be that Muḥammadī was born as Mīrẓā 'Alī was making his way towards India. If Mīrẓā 'Alī then

<sup>44</sup> Persian text: *The Maasir ul-Umara by Nawāb Samsāmud-Daula Shah Nawāz Khan*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥīm and Mīrẓā 'Alī Ashraf (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1888–91), II, 625. The version 'father' is found in Blochmann's translation of *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, I, 554–5. Ettinghausen, 1959, 17, mistakenly attributes the information to Abu'l-Faẓl himself, but Blochmann makes it clear (320–21, n. 3) that, to a list of notables, he is adding information from other works, in particular *Ma'āsir al-Umarā*; cf. the Persian text: *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, ed. Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, vol. I, Lucknow, 1869, 287. If 'Abd al-Ṣamad was indeed the source of the information he was not alone in vaunting a Muẓaffarīd connection: the Persian painter Malik Qāsim claimed descent from Shah Shuja' himself, see M.M. Haq, 'Persian painters, illuminators, and calligraphers, etc. in the 16th century A.D.', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, NS. 28, 1932, 239–49, especially 241.

<sup>45</sup> Welch, 1979, No. 43, notes the use of Irāqī. However, Qāzī Aḥmad, *Calligraphers and Painters* (...), tr. V. Minorsky, tr., (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art Occasional Papers, 1959) has 'of Tabriz'. It seems probable that Sulṭān Muḥammad was trained in a Shiraz style, see B. Brend, 'Jamāl va Jalāl: a link between two epochs' in the forthcoming publication of a symposium, *Safavid Art and Architecture*, held at the British Museum, 1998, S. Canby, ed. (London: British Museum, 2002).

<sup>46</sup> I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits Safavids de 1502 à 1587* (Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1959), 41–2. See also B.W. Robinson, 'Muḥammadī and the Khurāsān Style', *Iran*, XXX, 1992, 17–29.

<sup>47</sup> E. Bahari, *Bihzād: Master of Persian Painting*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 177.

<sup>48</sup> Bahari, *ibid.*, 190, and 261, n. 7.

preferred not to take the child on with him, but had him conveyed back to his grandfather, who then brought him up, 'Alī Afandī's error over Muḥammadi's precise parentage would be easily explained.

From the above, two possibilities emerge. One is that 'Abd al-Şamad, a painter with no marked personal style, is able to absorb profound lessons in vision and technique from Mīrzā 'Alī, perhaps also acquiring from him a stock of model drawings, that he then moves to India and blossoms in his new environment. The other is that Mīrzā 'Alī changes his name in the process of leaving the royal studio, that he may perhaps find temporary patronage with Baḥrām Mīrzā or in Mashhad, and that he then leaves for India in the company of his contemporary Mīr Sayyid 'Alī. The second solution seems to me the more probable.



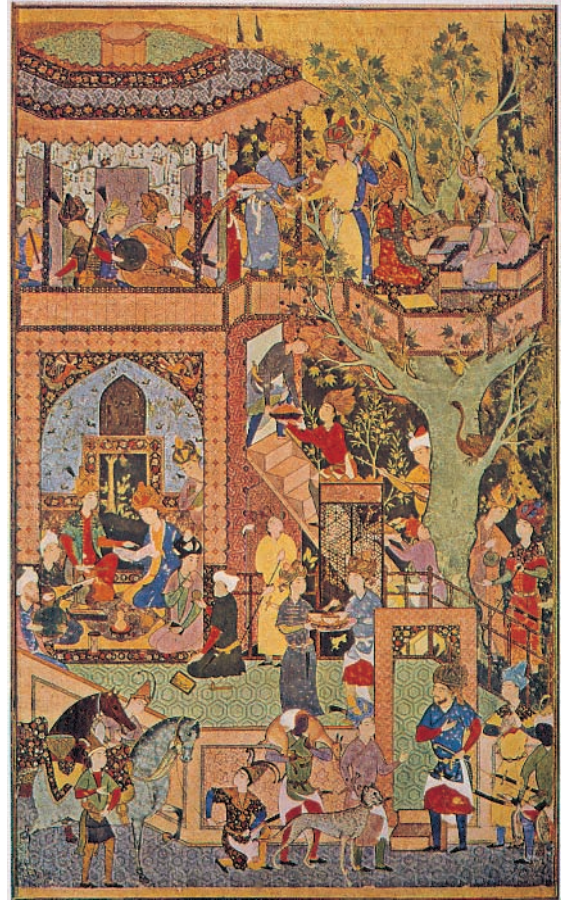
1. Nūshāba shows Iskandar a portrait of himself. *Khamseh* of Nizāmī, Or. 2265, 48b, British Library. By permission of the British Library.



2. Bārbad plays for Khusrau. *Khamseh* of Nizāmī, Or. 2265, 77b, British Library. By permission of the British Library.



3. Young calligrapher and musician. *Muraqqa' Gulshan*, Gulistan Palace Library, Tehran.



4. Presentation of a picture to Humāyūn. *Muraqqa' Gulshan*, Gulistan Palace Library, Tehran.

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EPIC IMAGES REVISITED:  
AN ILKHANID LEGACY IN EARLY SAFAVID PAINTING

Jonathan M. Bloom

One of the finest works preserved in the Topkapı Palace Library in Istanbul is a sumptuous copy of Nizāmī's *Khamseh* (H. 762) commissioned by the Timurid prince Abu'l-Qāsim Bābur (r. 853–61/1449–57) from the well-known calligrapher Azhar Tabrīzī (fl. 833–77/1430–72). An unusual lengthy colophon records the complex and bizarre history of this manuscript's production: It was unfinished at the prince's death, and after the Qarāqayūnlū ruler Jahānshāh (r. 841–72/1438–67) sacked Hirat a year later, the manuscript passed to Jahānshāh's rebellious son Pīr Būdak (d. 871/1467); it then went to the Āqqayūnlū ruler Khālīl Sulṭān (r. 882–3/1478), who commissioned the calligrapher 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Khvārazmī, known as Anīsī (fl. 844–99/1440–93), to finish copying the text and two artists, Shaykhī (fl. 880–887/1475–82) and Darvīsh Muḥammad, to illustrate it. Still unfinished at Khālīl Sulṭān's death, the manuscript passed to his brother Sultan Ya'qūb (r. 1478–90), who died before the work was completed. It finally passed to Shah Ismā'īl I (r. 907–30/1501–24), founder of the Safavid dynasty, under whose patronage more illustrations were added; even so, a few of the paintings remain unfinished.<sup>1</sup>

The manuscript, measuring approximately 20 by 30 cm, now contains nineteen illustrations on over 300 folios. Some sixty years ago, an Istanbul dealer offered three of the manuscript's illustrated pages, representing the 'Mī'rāj,' 'Shīrīn at Khusraw's Palace,' and the 'Suicide of Shīrīn,' to the American collector Hagop Kevorkian, who declined

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<sup>1</sup> For the Nizāmī manuscript, see Ivan Stchoukine, 'Les Peintures Turcomanes et Safavies d'une *Khamseh* de Nizāmī, Achevée à Tabrīz en 886/1481,' *Arts Asiatiques* 44 (1966): 1–16; Ivan Stchoukine, *Les Peintures des Manuscrits de la 'Khamseh' de Nizāmī au Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi d'Istanbul* (Paris, 1977), 70–81; Filiz Çagman and Zeren Tanmıd, *The Topkapı Sarayı Museum: The Albums and Illustrated Manuscripts*, ed, expand & trans J.M. Rogers (Boston: Little, Brown, 1986), 113. The amusing and detailed colophon has been translated by Wheeler M. Thackston, *A Century of Princes: Sources on Timurid History and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1989), 333–34.

to buy them. They then passed through several hands to the Koffler-Trüniger collection at Lucerne before Edmund de Unger bought them for the Keir Collection, where they remain.<sup>2</sup> The twenty-two paintings fall into two distinct stylistic groups, which can be attributed to different periods in the manuscript's peripatetic history: eleven paintings were done under Āqquyūnlū patronage and eleven others, most easily recognized by the presence of figures wearing the distinctive turban wrapped around a tall red cap, were added after 1501 under the Safavids.

All of the images are of high quality, but two of the three Keir pictures are particularly striking. The 'Mī'rāj', which was the first painting in the manuscript and illustrates Nizāmī's poem *Makhzān al-Aṣrār*, shows the Prophet's mystical night-journey to heaven above the Ka'ba in Mecca. The sky is lapis-blue and filled with swirling gold clouds among which innumerable angels frolic. One group looks down through a hole in the clouds at Muḥammad, whose face has been rubbed out, mounted on Buraq.

The 'Suicide of Shīrīn' [fig. 1] illustrates the denouement of one of the most famous love stories in Persian literature. Shirūyeh, Khusraw's son from a previous marriage, imprisoned the ill-fated couple, Khusraw and Shīrīn. One night when both were asleep an assassin stabbed Khusraw in the liver. Shīrīn was awakened by the stream of blood to find her lover dead. Joined by her servants, she lamented over the body. She eventually consented to wed the evil Shirūyeh but asked to bid farewell to Khusraw alone in the vault before the wedding. Instead, she drew a dagger from her robes and stabbed herself in the liver.

The Keir Collection painting appears to be one of the paintings added to the manuscript under Shah Ismā'īl's patronage, for the courtiers in the foreground wear the distinctive Safavid turban, with the cloth wrapped around a tall red felt cap. As the painting shares many stylistic details with the representation of the Mī'rāj, the 'Suicide of Shīrīn' has been dated to ca. 910/1505, the date inscribed on a small building in the lower left of the 'Mī'rāj.' The 'Suicide of Shīrīn' might also be somewhat earlier, if the figures were given distinctive

<sup>2</sup> Keir collection, nos. III.207–209. See B.W. Robinson, *Islamic Painting and the Arts of the Book*, Catalogue of the Keir Collection (London: Faber & Faber, 1976), 178–79 and color pls 19–21.



Safavid turbans to lend the painting a more ‘contemporary’ look: it is impossible to tell from the reproduction.<sup>3</sup>

Eleven other representations of Shīrīn’s suicide are known, of which seven are earlier.<sup>4</sup> The related scene depicting ‘Shīrīn Mourning over Khusraw’ is also depicted in illustrated manuscripts of the *Khamseh*,<sup>5</sup> and both scenes are depicted in a *Khamseh* manuscript now in St. Petersburg which was copied at Hirat in 1481, and presumably illustrated at that time.<sup>6</sup> In the Keir picture, however, both scenes have been conflated and elaborated in the manner of a grand operatic pageant. At the center of the composition, the dead Shīrīn lies prostrate over Khusraw’s corpse, which has been placed on a catafalque surrounded by candles and furniture bearing the dead king’s regalia. Dozens of wailing women, who cry out and pull their hair, surround the dead couple. Other female attendants look down from upper windows in the palace, represented by the rear and sides of the tripartite composition, while Shirūyeh’s aborted marriage procession waits outside, represented by the foreground. The brilliant blue sky above the domes of the palace is filled with herons and

<sup>3</sup> Robinson, *Islamic Painting and the Arts of the Book*, 178, curiously reports that the Safavid turbans on the ‘Mi‘rāj’ have been partly painted out, which seems to make no sense.

<sup>4</sup> L.N. Dodkhudoeva, *Poemi Nizāmī v Srednevekovoi Miniaturnoi Zhivopisi [The Poems of Nizāmī in Medieval Miniature Painting]* (Moscow, 1985), 169, no. 114 lists seven earlier representations of the scene: 1. Keir Collection, III.27, folio 147v (14th century); 2. St. Petersburg, Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library, Dorn 338, folio 92 (dated 886/1481); 3. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, Hazine 787, folio 105 (dated 899/1494); 4. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, Hazine 759, folio 103 (dated 900/1495); 5. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, Hazine 778, folio 115 (dated 900/1495); 6. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, Hazine 767, folio 114 (end of the 15th century); 7. London, British Library, Elliot 192, folio 97 (dated 907/1501).

The scene was not illustrated in the manuscripts of Nizāmī’s *Khamseh* considered by Priscilla Parsons Soucek, ‘Illustrated Manuscripts of Nizāmī’s *Khamseh*: 1386–1482,’ Ph.D. Diss. (New York University: Institute of Fine Arts, 1971). A related subject which bears investigation is the theme of mourning over Iskandar’s bier, depicted in several unpublished paintings from late 15th-century manuscripts listed by Norah M. Titley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts: Catalogue and Subject Index of Paintings from Persia, India and Turkey in the British Library and the British Museum* (London: British Library, 1977), s.v. ‘Mourning.’

<sup>5</sup> Dodkhudoeva, *Poemi Nizāmī*, 168, no. 112: 1) Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, *Anthology*, P. 124, folio 86 (dated 838–40/1535–6); 2) St. Petersburg, Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library, Dorn 338, folio 91 (dated 886/1481); 3) Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, Hazine 771, folio 113 (dated 895/1489).

<sup>6</sup> St. Petersburg, Saltykov-Schedrin State Public Library, no. 338 (dated 886/1481–2), fols. 91 and 92; see Olympiade Galerkina, ‘On Some Miniatures Attributed to Bihzād from Leningrad Collections,’ *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970): 122–38.

other birds amidst cloud-bands, a feature that Robinson also found on folio 21b, 'Hūshang slays the Black Dīv,' in the *Shāhnāmeḥ* made for Ṭahmāsp a generation later.<sup>7</sup>

The most striking feature of the image, however, is the dramatic sense of clear, unobstructed and unified space, so that the viewer is made to feel like one of the palace attendants looking down into the vault from an upper story. This depiction of space distinguishes this painting from other images in the manuscript, which use more traditional means of spatial representation. In the image of 'Iskandar Conversing with a Shepherd,'<sup>8</sup> for example, the building occupies the left half of the image and is enveloped by landscape on the right and above. Depicted like a folding screen, the building pushes the actors towards the viewer, but otherwise the sense of space is unconvincing and flat. Similarly in the depictions of 'Baḥrām Gūr in the White Pavilion'<sup>9</sup> and 'Baḥrām Gūr in the Yellow Pavilion'<sup>10</sup> architectural and landscape space are distinct. While each is convincing in itself, they have little or no relation to each other.

The unusual depiction of interior space in the 'Suicide of Shīrīn' is quite foreign to the mainstream tradition of Persian manuscript painting. Indeed, the closest visual parallels are to images from the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ*, painted some 170 years earlier, whose unusual spatial devices were not repeated in Persian manuscript painting of the intervening years. A comparison of the 'Suicide of Shīrīn' with the 'Bier of Iskandar' (Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC), one of the most striking images from the Ilkhanid manuscript, shows many similarities, from the general tripartite composition and circular arrangement of mourners around the bier to the specific gestures of the keening women and details such as the hanging brass lamps. The similarities are too numerous to be coincidental and suggest that the artist of the 'Suicide of Shīrīn' had seen the unusual representation of the 'Bier of Iskandar' in the Mongol manuscript.

Other paintings from the Istanbul *Khamseh* have details that seem to be loose interpretations of Mongol images. The architecture fram-

<sup>7</sup> Martin B. Dickson and Stuart Cary Welch, *The Houghton Shahnama* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

<sup>8</sup> Folio 283r, illustrated in Stchoukine, 'Peintures Turcomanes,' pl. VII.

<sup>9</sup> Folio 196r; illustrated in Stchoukine, 'Peintures Turcomanes,' pl. VI.

<sup>10</sup> Folio 177v, illustrated in Stchoukine, *Khamseh*, pl. XLVib.

ing the subsidiary vignette in the lower left of the representation of Iskandar Conversing with the Shepherd,' for example, resembles the architecture in the Mongol representation of 'Baḥrām Gūr in a Peasant's House.'<sup>11</sup> Both the shepherd and the peasant wear distinctive striped garments, meant to suggest the wearer's humble origins. The unusual depiction of figures seen through balcony railings and grilles also characterizes several images from the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ*.<sup>12</sup> The shutters partially opened to reveal a landscape beyond appear, for example, in the image of 'Isfandiyār Approaching Gushtāsp' in Settignano,<sup>13</sup> and the modeled arabesque between the shutters recalls that in the spandrels over the throne in the representation of 'Iskandar Enthroned' in Paris.<sup>14</sup> Some of these architectural features also appear in a related fourteenth-century manuscript that is known to have later been in the Safavid royal library, a copy of *Kalīleh va Dimneh* whose illustrations were mounted in an album prepared for Shah Ṭahmāsp between 1533 and 1538, but the deep architectural space of the Keir Collection 'Suicide of Shīrīn' appears unique to the Great Mongol, or 'Demotte,' *Shāhnāmeḥ*.<sup>15</sup>

The nature and history of this manuscript is itself somewhat obscure. In 1980 Oleg Grabar and Sheila Blair proposed that the 58 known paintings originally belonged to a manuscript of some 280 unusually large (written surface 41 × 29 cm) folios with some 120 illustrations.<sup>16</sup> Using ideological and historical arguments, they attributed the manuscript to the patronage of the vizier Ghīyās al-Dīn, the son of Rashīd al-Dīn, in Tabrīz between November 1335, when Ghīyās al-Dīn organized the appointment of Arpa as sultan, and the vizier's death on May 3, 1336. These dates hardly allow enough time for

<sup>11</sup> Montreal, McGill University Library, on loan to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; Oleg Grabar and Sheila Blair, *Epic Images and Contemporary History: The Illustrations of the Great Mongol Shah-Nama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), no. 50.

<sup>12</sup> Grabar and Blair, *Epic Images*, nos 15, 28, 54, 55, and 58.

<sup>13</sup> I Tatti, Berenson Collection; Grabar and Blair, *Epic Images*, no. 17.

<sup>14</sup> Louvre Inv. 7096; Grabar and Blair, *Epic Images*, no. 28.

<sup>15</sup> Istanbul, University Library, F 1422. Jill Sanchia Cowen, *Kalila Wa Dimna: An Animal Allegory of the Mongol Court* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). The illustrations are undoubtedly of the fourteenth century, although the precise date is a matter of some dispute. The manuscript shares many stylistic details with the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ*, but Cowen's attribution of the *Kalīleh va Dimneh* manuscript to the same patron Ghīyās al-Dīn is unlikely. See most recently Ernst J. Grube, 'Prologomena for a Corpus Publication of Illustrated *Kalila wa Dimna* Manuscripts,' *Islamic Art* 4 (1990–91): 301–482.

<sup>16</sup> Grabar and Blair, *Epic Images*.

the conception, preparation and execution of such a large project, so a broader range of 1328, when Ghīyās al-Dīn became vizier, and 1336 seems more likely. Further work by Blair allowed her to refine her reconstruction of the original manuscript.<sup>17</sup> She confirmed that the manuscript had originally comprised between 280 and 300 folios but showed that it had been bound in two volumes.<sup>18</sup> Instead of the 120 illustrations originally proposed, she concluded that the manuscript must have had an astounding 190 illustrations.

Antoine Sevruguin, an Armenian photographer who worked in Tabrīz and Tihran at the turn of the twentieth century, photographed the manuscript as a bound book open to the page showing 'Bahram Gūr Hunting with Azada.'<sup>19</sup> Sevruguin's photograph suggests that when he photographed it, the manuscript was either in Tabrīz or, more likely, in the Qajar imperial library in Tihran. From there it passed to the Paris art-market, where it came to be known after the French dealer, Georges Demotte, who doctored and sold paintings from it to individual collectors.

The history of the Great Mongol *Shāhnāme* between its creation in the fourteenth century and its reappearance in the nineteenth is still a matter of conjecture. Other Ilkhanid manuscripts passed to the Timurids and Mughals. The Arabic copy of Rashīd al-Dīn's *Compendium of Chronicles*, for example, which was produced in 713–4/1314–5 at the Rab'ī Rashīdī at Tabrīz, passed first to the Timurid

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<sup>17</sup> Sheila S. Blair, 'On the Track of the 'Demotte' *Shāhnāma* Manuscript,' in *Les Manuscrits du Moyen-Orient: Essais de Codicologie et de Paléographie*, edited by François Déroche (Istanbul/Paris: Institut Français d'Etudes Anatoliennes d'Istanbul/Bibliothèque Nationale, 1989), 125–31.

<sup>18</sup> Folio 142 of the reconstructed manuscript, now in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Suppl. Pers. 1946. The text corresponds to E.E. Bertels et al., eds., *Shahnameh* (Moscow: Nauk, 1960–71), 6: 216.

<sup>19</sup> The photograph, now in the archives of the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, was discovered by Glenn Lowry, Curator of Near Eastern Art. The painting is now in Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Art Museums, 1957.173. Sevruguin's career can be traced from 1878, when he translated a treatise on photography for Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh in Tabrīz, until about 1920, when he ran a shop in Tihran. For Sevruguin, in addition to Irāj Afshār, 'Some Remarks on the Early History of Photography in Iran,' in *Qajar Iran: Political, Social and Cultural Change 1800–1925*, edited by Edmund Bosworth and Carole Hillenbrand (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1983), 272, see also L.A. Ferydoun Barjesteh van Waalwijk van Doorn and Gillian M. Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Sevruguin's Iran: Late Nineteenth-Century Photographs of Iran from the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, the Netherlands* (Tehran/Rotterdam: Barjesteh Zaman, 1999); Frederick N. Bohrer, *Sevruguin and the Persian Image: Photographs of Iran, 1870–1930* (Washington, D.C.: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, 1999).

court at Hirat and then to the Mughal court in India.<sup>20</sup> Other Timurid manuscripts, such as the *Shāhnāmeḥ* made for Muḥammad Jūkī<sup>21</sup> and the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* made for Sultan Ḥusayn Mīrzā,<sup>22</sup> also passed to the Mughal court where they were used as models for manuscript painting.

In contrast, there is no evidence that the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ* ever left Iran, either for India or for the Ottoman empire. It is possible, however, that several paintings were removed from the manuscript in the late fifteenth century and incorporated in the Istanbul album, Topkapi Palace Library H. 2153, thought to have been prepared for Ya‘qūb Beg, the Āqquyūnlū Turkoman ruler of Tabrīz who once owned the *Khamseh* and had pictures added to it. If this hypothesis is correct, then the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ* must have been available for dismemberment—and possibly copying—as early as Sultan Ya‘qūb’s reign in Tabrīz.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, however

<sup>20</sup> For the reconstruction of the manuscript, see Sheila S. Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashīd al-Dīn’s Illustrated History of the World* (London: The Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1995).

<sup>21</sup> London, Royal Asiatic Society, MS. Morley 239. Unsigned and undated, it has been dated ca. 1444 and attributed to the patronage of Muhammad Jūkī on the basis of a banner in one of the paintings. J.V.S. Wilkinson, *The Shah-Namah of Firdawsi: The Book of the Persian Kings. With 24 Illustrations from a Fifteenth-Century Persian Manuscript in the Possession of the Royal Asiatic Society*, with an introduction by Laurence Binyon (London: Oxford University Press, 1931) and B.W. Robinson, ‘The Shahnama of Muḥammad Jūkī,’ in *The Royal Asiatic Society: Its History and Treasures*, eds Stuart Simonds and Simon Digby (Leiden: Brill, 1979). More recently see Eleanor Sims, ‘The Illustrated Manuscripts of Firdawsi’s *Shahnama* Commissioned by Princes of the House of Tīmūr,’ *Ars Orientalis* 22 (1992): 43–68.

<sup>22</sup> Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University, Milton S. Eisenhower Library, John Work Garrett Collection. See Eleanor Sims, *The Garrett Manuscript of the Ẓafar-Name: A Study in Fifteenth-Century Timurid Patronage*, Ph. D. dissertation (New York: New York University, Institute of Fine Arts, 1973) and Eleanor Sims, ‘Sultan Husayn Bayqara’s *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* and Its Miniatures,’ in *Sixth International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, Oxford, September 11–16, 1972* (Tehran, 1976), 299–311. For color reproductions see Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Tīmūr and the Princely Vision* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), no. 147 and Ebadollah Bahari, *Bihzād, Master of Persian Painting*, with a foreword by Annemarie Schimmel (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 1996), no. 11. Paintings in the *Ẓafarnāmeḥ* bear attributions by the Mughal emperor Jahangir, for which see Michael Brand and Glenn D. Lowry, *Akbar’s India: Art from the Mughal City of Victory* (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1985), 91, 150–51.

<sup>23</sup> This was first proposed by Grabar and Blair, *Epic Images*, 39–40. See also Abolala Soudavar, ‘The Saga of Abu-Sa‘id Bahador Khan. The Abu-Sa‘idnama,’ in *The Court of the Il-Khans 1290–1340*, The Barakat Trust Conference on Islamic Art and History, St. John’s College, Oxford, Saturday 28 May 1994, Julian Raby and Teresa Fitzherbert, eds, *Oxford Studies in Islamic Art*, vol. 12 (Oxford: Oxford

the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ* manuscript must not have been available to the Safavid chronicler Dūst Muḥammad in 951/1544 when he prepared his album of painting and calligraphy for Baḥrām Mīrzā, brother to Shah Ṭahmāsp. Dūst Muḥammad characteristically removed sample paintings from whatever manuscripts he had at hand to represent the artists he discussed in his album.

Therefore, in the absence of any written or visual evidence that the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ* went either to Hirat or India, one must imagine that it remained in Tabrīz. From the later fourteenth century until its restoration in the nineteenth, the manuscript probably remained relatively unknown in some library, except for a brief moment in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century when Āq-quyūnlū and Safavid artists and patrons briefly ‘rediscovered’ it. Other examples of visual quotation of Ilkhanid paintings in early Safavid paintings support this hypothesis, but artists might have seen any one of several Ilkhanid manuscripts—or even fragments of manuscripts, that remained in Iran. That they were familiar with the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ* itself is reinforced by the new format, unusual size, and magnificence of early Safavid manuscripts of the *Shāhnāmeḥ*.

In the fourteenth century the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ* and the related ‘small’ *Shāhnāmeḥs* each had some two hundred illustrations.<sup>24</sup> In the fifteenth century, the number of illustrations in royal *Shāhnāmeḥ* manuscripts dropped to several dozen in one volume: the copy made for Baysungūr in 833/1430 has twenty-one; that for Ibrahīm Sulṭān made ca. 838/1435 has forty-seven, and that made for Muḥammad Jūkī has thirty-three.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, provincial *Shāhnāmeḥ* manuscripts emphasized quantity over quality: the Dunimarle *Shāhnāmeḥ* of 1446

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University Press for the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford, 1996), figs 13, 30 and 45.

<sup>24</sup> In contrast, the provincial *Shāhnāmeḥs* attributed to Injū patronage in south-west Iran have fewer. That in Istanbul (Topkapı Palace Library, Hazine 1479, dated 731/1330) has 89 illustrations, while that in St. Petersburg (Saltykov-Shchedrin Public Library, Dorn 329, dated 733/1333) has 52. The dispersed Stephens *Shāhnāmeḥ*, which has an owner’s note dated 753/1352 but may have been made earlier, had 108 illustrations and a double-page frontispiece. See Marianna Shreve Simpson, *The Illustration of an Epic: The Earliest Shahnama Manuscripts* (New York and London: Garland, 1979), 12.

<sup>25</sup> The first is in Tihiran, Gulistan Palace Library. In the Ibrahīm Sulṭān manuscript (Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Ouseley Add. 176), four are double-page compositions and five are tinted drawings, which brings the number more in line with the others. See also Sims, ‘Illustrated Manuscripts.’

was planned with 153 paintings, of which only 80 were completed, and an exceptional two-volume manuscript copied for Sultan 'Alī Mīrzā of Gilan in 899/1493–4, known as the 'Big Head *Shāhnāmeḥ*,' originally had some 350 illustrations on relatively small pages.<sup>26</sup>

Under the early Safavids, however, manuscripts of the *Shāhnāmeḥ* again become popular. Although many artists in the royal scriptorium had come from Sultan Ḥusayn's scriptorium at Hirat, no royal *Shāhnāmeḥ* manuscripts had been produced under his patronage there.<sup>27</sup> In the second decade of the sixteenth century, a few years after the images to the Istanbul *Khamseh* were painted, the first Safavid shah, Ismā'īl I (r. 907–30/1501–24), planned a grand manuscript of which only four of its images were preserved into the twentieth century.<sup>28</sup> The illustrations are close in style to those added by Safavid artists to the Istanbul *Khamseh* and also have figures wearing the distinctive Safavid turban, so the manuscript can be attributed to the second decade of the sixteenth century. The one surviving page from this manuscript is somewhat larger (32 × 21 cm) than those of the 'Big Head' *Shāhnāmeḥ*, but the extraordinarily complex composition and the vibrant color show that this manuscript was conceived with far more sophistication than were the relatively simple 'Big Head' images. The four images known from the manuscript all belong to the Rostam cycle, and while it is impossible to reconstruct the number and rate of illustrations from this small sample, it is tempting to imagine that many of the stories were illustrated as heavily as that of Rostam and that the manuscript was thus intended to have a large number of

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<sup>26</sup> The volume in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art in Istanbul (MS 1978) has 202 paintings, while that in the Istanbul University Library (Yıldız 7954/310) has 109. About forty other images were removed from the first volume. The written surface of each page is 23 × 15 cm. See Robinson, *Islamic Painting and the Arts of the Book*, 160–62.

<sup>27</sup> Robert Hillenbrand, 'The Iconography of the *Shah-Nama-yi Shahi*,' in *Safavid Persia: The History and Politics of an Islamic Society*, edited by Charles Melville, Pembroke Papers, vol. 4 (London, New York: I.B. Tauris in association with the Centre of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge, 1996), 56.

<sup>28</sup> Of the four images, one is known only by title, two others in Leipzig were destroyed during World War II, and the fourth, depicting 'The Sleeping Rostam,' one of the most striking images in Persian manuscript painting, is preserved in London (British Museum, 1949–12–11–023); color illustration in Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam, 1250–1800*, The Pelican History of Art (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), pl. 208. See B.W. Robinson, 'Origin and Date of Three Famous *Shāhnāmeḥ* Illustrations,' *Ars Orientalis* 1 (1954): 105–12.

illustrations. The manuscript's large scale may have been the reason that it was never completed, and the intercolumnar rulings were never added to the images.

The most splendid copy of the *Shāhnāmeḥ* ever produced in Iran was made for Ismā'īl's son Ṭahmāsp (r. 930–984/1524–76), perhaps as a gift from father to son.<sup>29</sup> The manuscript comprised 759 folios measuring 47 × 32 cm with a ruled surface of 27 × 18 cm and containing 258 illustrations, many of which spill beyond the written surface into the margins. In a paper presented to the Second Roundtable on Safavid Studies, Robert Hillenbrand argued that the fifteenth-century decline and subsequent Safavid revival of the royal *Shāhnāmeḥ* manuscript could be explained by cost, as few patrons were able to afford the cost of a lavishly-illustrated *Shāhnāmeḥ* manuscript.<sup>30</sup>

While the cost of a manuscript should never be ignored, cost alone does not explain the change in taste. As Hillenbrand himself noted, the closest parallel to the idea of the Safavid manuscript was the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ* of two centuries earlier, but this is not just a historical accident. Had Sulṭān Ḥusayn Mīrzā, for example, wanted to commission a magnificent *Shāhnāmeḥ* manuscript in Hīrat, he surely could have afforded one. But he could not have known of the Ilkhanid model, which remained in far-off Tabrīz, and so any copy he might have commissioned would have been modeled on those he knew which had fewer illustrations. Once the Safavids established their capital at Tabrīz, however, Safavid artists and patrons were able to see the Mongol manuscript which Āqquyūnlū artists may have already 'rediscovered.' The Safavids could have also been inspired by this manuscript to revive the idea of a large-format, two-volume, lavishly-illustrated copy of the *Shāhnāmeḥ*. Not only does the Ṭahmāsp *Shāhnāmeḥ* return to the monumental scale of the Mongol manuscript, but its 258 illustrations significantly surpass the model.

As in the Istanbul *Khamseh*, close scrutiny reveals possible, but minor, quotations from fourteenth-century illustrations, such as the keening figures in the rear windows on folio 49v depicting the 'Lamentation of Farīdūn.' Otherwise, by the late 920s/1520s the artists of the royal scriptorium had already assimilated any lessons to be learned from Ilkhanid illustrated manuscripts and incorporated these motifs into their standard repertory of pictorial devices.

<sup>29</sup> Dickson and Welch, *The Houghton Shahnama*, and Hillenbrand, 'Iconography.'

<sup>30</sup> Hillenbrand, 'Iconography,' 57.

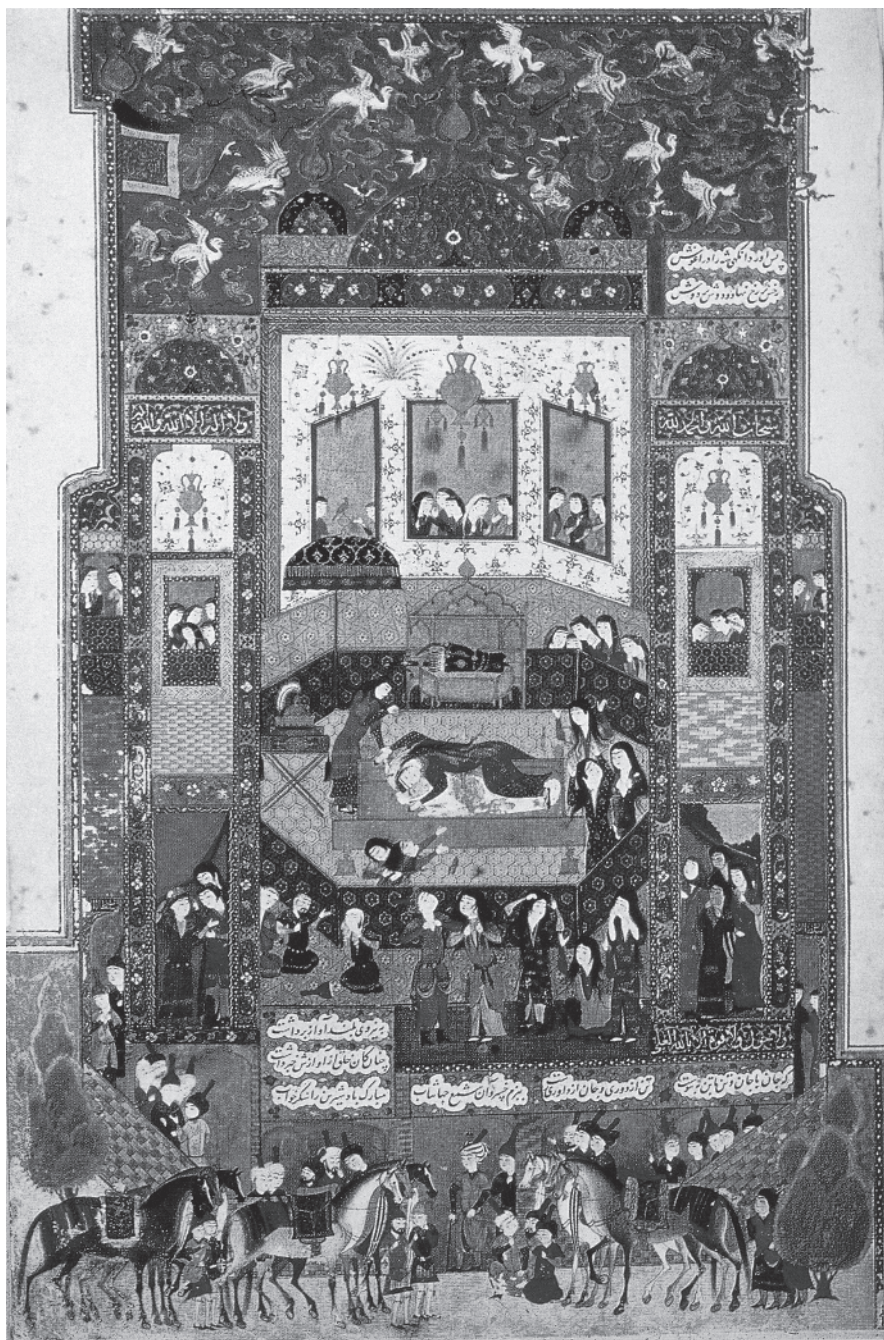


The Safavid patron, however, did have a lesson to learn from the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ*, for the royal Safavid copy of the epic may have been designed to express dynastic aspirations and serve a public, propagandistic, and rhetorical function much in the manner Grabar and Blair hypothesized for the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ*. While scholars have just begun to work out the iconography of the Safavid manuscript,<sup>31</sup> perusal of the illustrations suggests that the ones in the beginning of the manuscript were given more importance and attention than those at the end. It is not difficult to draw parallels between ‘Ardashīr Receiving Gulnār’ in his chamber or young prince ‘Hūshang at the Court of Gayūmars’ with the young Shah Ṭahmāsp.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, the emphasis on the cycle of the good king Farīdūn, who defeated the evil king Zāhhak and restored the Iranian monarchy, seems appropriate to the early years of Safavid rule. Although the Great Mongol *Shāhnāmeḥ* had only limited visual impact on the course of later Persian manuscript painting, its ‘rediscovery’ at the Safavid court in Tabrīz at the beginning of the sixteenth century seems to have reinvigorated the idea of large-format, heavily illustrated royal copies of the *Shāhnāmeḥ* as a vehicle for the metaphoric expression of contemporary concerns.

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<sup>31</sup> Hillenbrand, ‘Iconography.’

<sup>32</sup> Dickson suggested that that date on the painting of Ardashīr and Gulnār marks the coming of age of Shah Ṭahmāsp. See Stuart Cary Welch, *Wonders of the Age: Masterpieces of Early Safavid Painting, 1501–1576*, with contributions by Sheila R. Canby and Nora Titley (Cambridge, MA: Fogg Art Museum, 1979), 96.



1. The *Suicide of Shīrīn*, illustration from a copy of Nizāmī's *Kamseh*. Richmond, Surrey, Keir Collection, III. 209 (After Robinson, *Islamic Painting*, pl. 21).

PART FIVE

CULTURE, ECONOMY AND POLITICS IN  
PERIPHERIES AND CENTRES

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## THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY SCHOOL OF BUKHARA PAINTING AND THE ARTS OF THE BOOK

E. Bahari

The territory of Mavaraunnahr had a special place in Timur's empire. After conquering Iran, he made Samarqand his capital and dispatched many of the ablest artists, builders and scholars there who were responsible for some of the most glorious buildings in the region. He also established a *kitābkhāneh* (Library-book production atelier) with fine books from the conquered territories and calligraphers and artists employed in production of books. However, Timur did not reside in Samarqand for long and his time was taken with his numerous campaigns in Iran, Ottoman territories, India, etc. After Timur's death in 807/1405 the dispute between his sons and nephews resulted in eventually his son Shāhrukh establishing himself as the major heir to Timur, ruling the territories of Iran with his capital in Hirat. He appointed his son Ulugh Beg to rule Mavaraunnahr from its capital Samarqand. Ulugh Beg was much interested in astronomy and established a planetarium staffed by the ablest astronomers of the time who produced the well-known books on the subject. Bukhara which also was an important city in Mavaraunnahr was not a major city as regards the patronage of the art of the book. Under Shahrukh and his sons Baysungūr, Ibrāhīm Sulṭān, and Muḥammad Jūkī, Hirat, Tabrīz and Shiraz became the important centres for the arts of the book, with Hirat as the major and the most important centre, where the arts reached its zenith in late ninth/fifteenth century under Sultan Ḥusayn Bayqara. The school of Bihzād in Hirat dominated the arts of the book in the Timurid territory and, indeed, in almost all the Islamic lands of the period. With the death of Sultan Ḥusayn Mīrzā in 912/1506, the newly established Safavids in Iran and the Shaybānids in Mavaraunnahr laid claim to Hirat which was first occupied by Muḥammad Shaybeg Khān (913–916/1507–10) who was defeated by Shah Ismā'īl and put to death in 916/1510. For many years following, the Shaybānids repeatedly attacked Hirat without success.

Muḥammad Shaybeg Khān, who considered himself the true heir to the Timurid territory defeated the last Timurid ruler of Hirat

Badi'uzzamān Mīrzā, the son of Sultan Ḥusayn in 913/1507 and occupied Hirat. He boasted literary and artistic appreciation, but he was more of a conceit than a true patron of the arts. A portrait of him painted by the celebrated Bihzād shows him seated with a book and pen case set before him.<sup>1</sup>

The Shaybānids, who date to 832/1428 with their first ruler Abu'l-Khayr b. Dawlat Shaykh, made their capital at Samarqand. After Shaybeg Khān several of the Shaybānid amirs aspired to rule Hirat with 'Ubaydallāh Uzbek laying siege to that city several times. The latter, in one of his more successful attacks in 934/1527–28, occupied Hirat for a short period and dispatched some of the ablest artists of Hirat to Bukhara before being defeated and pushed out of Hirat by Shah Ṭahmāsp Safavid. As a result Bukhara became the important artistic centre of the Shaybānid Uzbek rulers replacing Samarqand as their capital in 947/1540.

There must have been some activity in the production of books and paintings in Samarqand while Timur was alive as some of the able artists from the Jalā'irīd courts and other centres were sent there by Timur. However, no definite authenticated material from that period in Samarqand is established to date. Some have attributed the very large Qur'ān, some pages of which survive, and now known as Baysungūr Qur'ān pages, to Umar Aqta producing it for Timur in Samarqand,<sup>2</sup> but there is no definite evidence for this. It appears that the artists at Samarqand went to other centres such as Hirat, Tabrīz and Shiraz after the death of Timur. The most notable activity in Samarqand after Timur was the production of some excellent manuscripts on astronomy and sciences, with occasional decorated literary books being produced by artists temporarily living in Samarqand. Some of these are transcribed by master calligraphers such as 'Abdallāh Tabbakh from Hirat who is considered one of the great masters of Naskh, Rayhani and Thulth scripts.

We have no evidence of a *kitābkhāneh* activity or painting in Bukhara before the sixteenth century. In the sixteenth century, the Shaybānid Uzbeks encouraged book production which started initially at Samarqand with some material produced by second rate artists or other

<sup>1</sup> E. Bahari, *Bihzād, Master of Persian Painting*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 172, plate 103.

<sup>2</sup> A. Soudavar, *The Art of the Persian Courts*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), 59–60.

visiting artists. These were active up to around 936/1529 at the court of Kildi Muḥammad at Samarqand, and later went to the court of ‘Ubaydallāh Khān in Bukhara. In fact, ‘Ubaydallāh Khān was instrumental in establishing the Bukhara school of painting.

Let us now consider how the Bukhara school of painting came about, the artists responsible for this, and their patrons. As mentioned earlier, the Shaybānids considered themselves the true heirs of the Timurids and laid claim to the territories ruled by the last of the Timurids, Sultan Ḥusayn Mīrzā and Badiuzzamān Mīrzā. Muḥammad Shaybeg Khān, who occupied Hirat during 913–16/1507–10, may have encouraged some of the Hirat artists to go to Samarqand but, as he was defeated and killed by Shah Ismā‘īl in 916/1510, he would not have effected any transfer of the *kitābkhāneh* from Hirat to the Transoxus. After the ousting of the Shaybānids from Hirat, some of the artists of Sunni faith may have emigrated willingly from Hirat due to the Safavid strict Shī‘ī doctrine being somewhat hostile to the Sunnis, mostly because both of their rival powers, the Ottoman and the Shaybānids were Sunnis. In fact, there were some factual or malicious accusations against some notable Sunni residents of Hirat during the early Safavid rule with significant bloodshed. The Uzbeks were very sensitive to this and solicited help from the Ottomans in overthrowing the Safavids from Khurasan.<sup>3</sup> The Uzbeks repeatedly attacked Hirat, mostly to no avail, but in one of their more successful sieges under ‘Ubaydallāh Khān in 935/1528, they managed to capture the city. The young Safavid ruling prince Sām Mīrzā and his *laleh* and governor of Hirat, Ḥusayn Khān Shāmlū, had to flee Hirat taking with them all the treasures of the *kitābkhāneh*, the artists, etc. Although the Uzbeks were driven out of Hirat shortly thereafter and suffered a severe defeat by Shah Ṭahmāsp’s army in the battle of Jām, ‘Ubaydallāh Khān had managed to send some able artists of the *kitābkhāneh* to Bukhara. Among these were the renowned ‘Shaykh Zādeh’ Maḥmūd Muzahhib, the able pupil of the master Bihzād, Mullā Yūsuf and the famous calligrapher Mīr ‘Alī Hirāvī. If some of the artists went to Bukhara willingly, perhaps because they were Sunnis, we know from Mīr ‘Alī’s own writing that he did not like Bukhara. He was a Shī‘ī, as can be deduced from his name.

<sup>3</sup> G. Hazai, *Einführung in die Persische Palaographie*, (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1977).

Telling evidence for this is four lines of poems composed and finely written by Mīr ‘Alī (now in the Album of Shah Ismā‘īl), preserved in Topkapı Museum Library in Istanbul). This reads:

I was bent over for a life time like a harp (practicing calligraphy) until  
my calligraphy reached this stage.

I am desired by all the kings of the world  
But in Bukhara I suffer grievously for my livelihood.

I am burning inside from sorrow what can I do  
There is no way out for me from this city.

This catastrophe is the result of my skill in calligraphy  
Alas my calligraphy has become the chain around my ankles.

Signed: The poor Mīr ‘Alī (cut out by Sangī ‘Alī Badakhshī).

I have fully explained in my book on Bihzād<sup>4</sup> that contrary to previous assertions, the Hirat *kitābkhāneh* and all the artists remained in Hirat after the Safavid conquest and only were forced to move to Tabrīz as a result of ‘Ubaydallāh Khān’s capture of the city in 935/1528. I have also proved convincingly in that book that Shaykh Zādeh and Maḥmūd Muzahhib are one and the same artist, with Shaykh Zādeh being an honorific title given to Maḥmūd. This artist never signed himself Shaykh Zādeh, which would have been conceited, but rather Maḥmūd Muzahhib. He was one of the ablest pupils of Bihzād as confirmed by the Turkish art historian, Muṣṭafa ‘Alī, in *Manāqib-i-Honarvarān* written in 995/1586, who names him as the eastern (Khurasan) pupil of Bihzād (with Āqā Mīrak as his western pupil).

These Hirati artists taken to Bukhara were solely responsible for establishing the sixteenth century Bukhara school of painting. Prior to this the material produced in the Transoxus is somewhat provincial and does not compare with the polished standards of Hirat under the Timurids and Safavids. Of these, the most important are the *Shaybānīnāmeḥ* of Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ dated 916/1510 produced for the ruler Muḥammad Shaybeg Khān with somewhat second rate illustrations (Now in the National Bibliothek Vienna, cod. Mixt 188—illustrated by Ashrafī<sup>5</sup> and Assar’s *Mihr-va-Mushtarī* produced in 959/

<sup>4</sup> Bahari, 179–88.

<sup>5</sup> M.M. Ashrafī-Aynī, ‘The School of Bukhara to c. 1550’, in B. Gray, et al., *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia*, (Serinda: UNESCO; Boulder, Colo.: Shambhala Publications, 1979), 249–72.



1523 now with the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, No. 32.5/7<sup>6</sup> which may have been painted by some Hirati artists going to Mava-raunnahr.

However, after 937/1530 we see a sudden blossoming of the art of the book in Bukhara with some superbly illustrated manuscripts being produced up to around 978/1570.

There is no doubt that this transformation came about with the arrival of the Hirati artists brought to Bukhara by ‘Ubaydallāh Khān. Of these, the master calligrapher Mīr ‘Alī and the superb painter Maḥmūd Muzahhib were pivotal in the establishment of the Bukhara school; they had a hand, jointly or separately, in all the most exquisite manuscripts produced in Bukhara.

Maḥmūd, like his master Bihzād, was a fine painter as well as a skilled illuminator and calligrapher. It appears that before he achieved fame as a painter, he was more known as an illuminator (Muzahhib) and that is why he signs himself Maḥmūd Muzahhib and only occasionally as Maḥmūd Muṣavvir (painter).

Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥaydār Dughlat<sup>7</sup> considered the illumination of Shaykh Maḥmūd superior to that of the famous late 9th/15th century illuminator Yari Muzahhib. Bayānī<sup>8</sup> (1967, P 894 No. 1337), lists Maḥmūd as a skilled calligrapher of the sixteenth century, skilled in all the scripts specially in *Ḥalī* and *Khafī nasta’līq* script, and lists some of his signed work—which in one case is clearly signed Maḥmūd Muzahhib al-Hirāvī 951 (1544). A specimen of his calligraphy is reproduced in *Islamic Calligraphy* (1988) signed Maḥmūd Muzahhib and dated 961/1554. The artist also states that it was copied from his master Mīr ‘Alī. In fact, the genuine Maḥmūd’s signature on his paintings are written in a fine *Khafī* (small) *nasta’līq* script.

Maḥmūd very much follows Bihzād’s Timurid Hirat style with only minor variation of costumes to accord with the taste of his Uzbek patrons. In fact, in some cases it is difficult to distinguish his work from Bihzād’s Timurid style. The other artists collaborating with Maḥmūd include Mullā Yūsuf Hirāvī who was working under Bihzād in Hirat, ‘Abdallāh a pupil of Maḥmūd, Shaykhem b. Mullā

<sup>6</sup> Ashrafi-Aynī, 262, plates LXXI–LXXII.

<sup>7</sup> M.M. Ḥaydār Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, as cited in D. Ross, ‘Hirat School of Painters, T.W. Arnold’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, V/iv (1930),

<sup>8</sup> M. Bayānī, *Ahwāl va Asār-i Khūshnūwīsān*, (Tehran: University of Tehran, 1967), 894.

Yūsuf who have signed some of their work in illustrations to manuscripts containing Maḥmūd's work, which will be described later.

The Shaybānid Uzbek rulers emulated the Timurid patronage of the art of the book and established an important *kitābkhāneh* in Bukhara employing many calligraphers, painters and illuminators. The noteworthy patrons of this art were: 'Ubaydallāh Khān who was in Bukhara as early as 918/1512 and ruled from 940–946/1534–1539; 'Abd al-'Azīz (947–957/1540–1550); Yār Muḥammad (957–965/1550–1557) and 'Abdallāh (965/991/1557–1583), whose names appear on some of the illustrations in the manuscripts of their time. Ḥajjī Muḥammad and Sulṭān Mīrak Kitābdār were two well-known heads of the *Kitābkhāneh* with the latter being skilled in calligraphy and painting. Dughlat says with some exaggeration that in the reign of 'Ubaydallāh Khān, Bukhara became a centre of arts and literature rivalling that of Sultan Ḥusayn Mīrzā's period in Hīrat.<sup>9</sup>

Apart from the famous Mīr 'Alī other noteworthy calligraphers of the Bukhara *kitābkhāneh* were Mīr Ḥusayn Sahvī, Mīr Ḥusayn Kulangī, and 'Alī Riżā Kātib as well as Mīrak Kitābdār mentioned earlier.

The books most favoured by the Uzbek rulers were Sa'dī's *Gulistān* and *Bustān*; Jāmī's *Bahāristān*, *Tuhfat al-Ahrār*, etc.; Nizāmī's *Makhzan al-Asrār*; Hātifī's *Haft Manzar*; and some other Sufi writers such as in the Anthology *Rawzāt al Muḥibbīn* in the Salar Jung Museum, Haydarabad, India.

Before listing the Bukhara works, it will be useful to describe some of the Hīrat works of Maḥmūd Muzahhib and Mīr 'Alī before they were taken to Bukhara, in order to show the continuity of their style. There are a good number of works calligraphed by Mīr. 'Alī in Hīrat prior to 936/1529 as enumerated by Bayānī.<sup>10</sup> I have also argued that the first part of the famous Shah Ṭahmāsp's *Shāhnāmeḥ* was transcribed by Mīr 'Alī in Hīrat before the transfer of the artists to Tabrīz where the second half was transcribed by a distinctly different hand.<sup>11</sup> Among the Hīrat work of Maḥmūd Muzahhib (Shaykh Zādih) produced under the supervision of Bihzād, the following are representative:

<sup>9</sup> Dughlat, *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Bayānī, 493–516.

<sup>11</sup> Bahari, 191–2.

1. *Baḥrām in the Yellow Pavilion* f213r of a Niẓāmī in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, N.Y., dated 932/1525—ref. No. 1913 (13.228.7) (Fig. 1) where the artist has incorporated his name in a line of poetry inscribed above the *Ayvān* (archway)

*I have heard it is inscribed on this golden domed building which reads: the outcome of all the work is praiseworthy (Maḥmūd)*’ which could be interpreted to mean all of this is the work of Maḥmūd. The painting is exquisite and finely drawn, and as will be observed very much in the style of Maḥmūd Muzahhib at Bukhara. Prince Sam Mīrzā is depicted as Baḥrām in this illustration.

2. *Khusraw and Shīrīn Wedded* f104v of the same manuscript. This can also be confidently attributed to Maḥmūd Muzahhib (Shaykh Zādih) working in Hirat under the direction of Bihzād. The design, layout and execution of this illustration is very close to those of Maḥmūd produced at Bukhara, down to the oblique lines of the text on top and the long inscription above the freize of the building which end with the date Rajab 931/April 1525.
3. *The Battle of Iskandar and Dārā* (Fig. 2) f279r from the same manuscript. This finely illustrated battle scene attributed to Shaykh Zādih Maḥmūd is modelled on the same subject painted by Bihzād in 896/1490; (Fig. 68, P.128, Bihzād).<sup>12</sup>

It must be mentioned here that the inscription ‘Amal-i-Shaykh Zādeh’ in the illustration ‘A Moving Sermon’ f177r from the ex Cartier Ḥāfiẓ manuscript now in Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University Art Museum (718.1983) which has formed the major (if not the only) source of the study of this artist by many previous writers on the subject<sup>13</sup> is not considered genuine. Although the illustration is in the Hirat style of Shaykh Zādeh, it has been fully argued that in fact this is stuck on the Ḥāfiẓ page later and there are many reasons to consider the signature not to be genuine.<sup>14</sup> In fact, Shaykh Zādih Maḥmūd Muzahhib never signed himself Shaykh Zādih but only Maḥmūd or Maḥmūd Muzahhib and then in a fine *nasta’liq*

<sup>12</sup> Bahari, 128, fig. 68.

<sup>13</sup> S.C. Welch, *Persian Painting*, (New York: Brazziller, 1976); *idem*, *Wonders of the Age*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, 1979), 124–5.

<sup>14</sup> Bahari, 246–7, 254.

script, which will be described later. This leads us to the next illustration of a Frontispiece to the *Haft Manẓar* of 944/1537–38 of the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington (56.14) which carries an elaborate inscription running along the top and bottom indicating ex libris of Sultan ‘Abd’ul-‘Azīz with the last line at the bottom of the left hand illustration stating it is painted by Shaykh Zādih. This inscription does not accord with the usual practice of artist signature. It is in bold decorated script and must have been written by others, probably Mīr ‘Alī who has transcribed this *Haft Manẓar*. In fact, below the left hand illustration is again inscribed ‘Shaykh Zādih Muṣavvir’ in a small script. However, the illustrations are fully in Maḥmūd’s style who has not signed them himself. This frontispiece illustration does not belong to the text of *Haft Manẓar* as it carries lines of poetry from Hafiz. However, the manuscript has other illustrations by Maḥmūd such as Fig. 3 which bears a dedication to Sultan Abdūl ‘Azīz and is very much in the artist’s Hirati style.

As can be seen from the above and the Bukhara illustrations of Maḥmūd described below, his style is not only somewhat dynamic and carefully composed, but also very decorative incorporating fine illuminations and elegant scripts within the illustrations on the buildings, etc., as befits an artist skilled in all these arts. His style was closely followed by his able pupils ‘Abdallāh, Mullā Yūsuf and Shaykhim.

A delightful result of collaboration between Mīr ‘Alī and Maḥmūd Muzahhib is an exquisite album each page of which carries a line of poetry written in an excellent bold *nasta’liq* script flanked by two finely painted seated princes, and set within an illuminated background. The colophon page of this is in the Fogg Art Museum Boston dated 941/1535. R.W. Ferrier, *The Arts of Persia*, Yale Univ. Press, 1989, Figs. 15 & 17 p. 35.

Another fine and interesting work is the Paris Bibliotheque National’s *Tuḥfat al Aḥrar* of Jāmī (Supp. Perse 1416). The text was written by the celebrated Sultān ‘Alī al-Mashhadi in 905/1499 in Hirat. It has a double page frontispiece and a double page finispiece, executed in Bukhara C.1538. Folio 81r is clearly signed by Maḥmūd on the tambourine held by a musician which reads: ‘Suvvarahu al-Abd Maḥmūd Muzahhib’ which exactly copies the style of signature of his Hirat master Bihzād. A very interesting point about this manuscript is the inscription by the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahān, on the colophon page f79v in 1037/1627–8 which reads: ‘*Tuḥfat al Aḥrar* of Jāmī,

written by Sultan ‘Alī with illustrations by Shaykh Zādeh. . . .’ which supports what was said earlier that Maḥmūd Muzahhib was known as Shaykh Zādih.

The Lisbon Gulbenkian Foundation *Bustān* of Sa‘dī LA177 is another masterpiece of Bukhara school transcribed by Mīr ‘Alī in 949/1542 and illustrated by Maḥmūd and his pupil ‘Abdallāh. Regrettably, this fine manuscript suffered severe damage in recent floods. This is fully described by Gray<sup>15</sup> and illustrated by Gray and Ashrafi.<sup>16</sup> The book has finely illuminated borders with library dedication of Abd’l-‘Azīz Bahādur. Some of the illustrations also have dedication to Abd’l-‘Azīz dated 955/1548. Another *Tuḥfat al-Aḥrār* of Jāmī in the Sackler Gallery, Washington DC. No. S86.0046 has a fine double page frontispiece signed by Maḥmūd Muzahhib.<sup>17</sup>

Sa‘dī’s *Gulistān* transcribed by Mīr ‘Alī in 950/1543 now in the Paris Bibliothèque National, Supp. Perse 1958 carries a fine illustration of a wrestling contest (Fig. 4) which can be attributed to Maḥmūd.<sup>18</sup> It is from the story where a pupil of the royal champion wrestler boasts that he knows all the various holds in wrestling and can compete with anyone even his teacher. The king puts this claim to the test and the old master who had kept just one important hold up his sleeve for such an eventuality floors the young pupil to the admiration of the king. This illustration became a favourite of the Bukhara court and was repeated for other Uzbek rulers. Even the Indian Emperor Akbar had one painted for him by Shaykhem, the son of Mullā Yūsuf on f30 of a *Gulistān* of Sa‘dī now in the British Library Or.5302, in 975/1568.<sup>19</sup>

The *Makhzān al-Asrār* of Niẓāmī in the Bibliothèque National Supp. Perse 985 written in 944/1538 by Mīr ‘Alī under the librarian Mīrak has some fine illustrations made for Sultan Abdul ‘Azīz. The book has been in the library of Indian Emperor Shāh Jahān. The double page illustration on ff 40v–41R is a fine rendering of an episode in the book when Sultan Sanjar, on an outing with his retinue, is petitioned by an old woman complaining about the harsh and

<sup>15</sup> B. Gray, *Oriental Islamic Art, Collection of Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation*, (Lisbon: Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, 1963), no. 123 illustrated.

<sup>16</sup> Ashrafi, 248, 266–7, 269.

<sup>17</sup> G.D. Lowry and M.C. Beach, *An Annotated and Illustrated Checklist of the Veer Collection* (Seattle/London: University of Washington Press, 1988), P 152.

<sup>18</sup> F. Richard, *Splendeurs Persanes*, (Paris: Bibliothèque National, 1997).

<sup>19</sup> J.P. Losty, *The Art of the Book in India*, (London: British Library, 1982), Plate XIX.

unjustifiable treatments she gets from the Sultan's police and tax collectors. This is a fine double page composition signed and dated 'Amal-i-Maḥmūd Muzahhib 952' (1545). This has many of the characteristics of Bihzād school in Hirat but regrettably all the faces have been repainted to the Mughal Indian taste, most probably by the artist Muḥsin as indicated on the other illustration in the book on f34R 'King Nushirawan at the Ruined Palace'.<sup>20</sup>

A very fine anthology titled 'Rauzat al Muḥibbīn' in the Salar Jung Museum Library, Hayderabad, India (6A) A.Nm.1611 is transcribed by Mīr 'Alī in 956/1549 for Sulṭān Abd al-'Azīz. It consists of three mystical poems by different poets and has ten superb double page illustrations of which three are signed by Maḥmūd Muzahhib (ff 71v-72R,88v), two by 'Abdallāh and two by Shaykhem who has signed himself Shaykhem ibn Mullā Yūsuf al-Hirāvī'. We have it from Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥaydār Dughlat that Mullā Yūsuf was a pupil of Bihzād.<sup>21</sup> Some of the other illustrations are most probably by same artists working under the supervision of Maḥmūd. All are reproduced by Muḥammad Ashraf's catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum Library.<sup>22</sup> The double page illustrations on ff 1v-2R is almost the same in composition and style as the illustration in the Freer *Haft Manzar* described above. Regrettably, the Salar Jung Museum declined to supply photographs, mentioning their own intention to write about this important book. However, a somewhat inaccurate article in the *Arts & The Islamic World*, volume 1, No. 4, winter 1983/4 by M.S. Randhawa reproduces some of the illustrations in colour.

Another illustrated superb manuscript is the Mīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī's *Liṣān-al-Ṭayīr* (after the famous Sufi poet Attar's (1145-1221) *Mantiq-al-Ṭayīr*) in Turkish now in the Bib. Nat. Paris, Supp. Turc. 996. It has six illustrations, with a superb one on f20 depicting Shaykh Sanān's deep emotion for the love of the Christian maiden (Fig. 5). The Sufis assembled in this finely decorated building are astonished at the event. The Christian maiden is depicted peering down from an upstairs room above the fire place shooting up flames, which is also symbolic of the fire of love. Along the top frieze there is a long

<sup>20</sup> Ashrafi-Aynī, 255, 265.

<sup>21</sup> Dughlat, *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> M. Ashraf, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Salar Jung Museum Library*, (Hyderabad: Salar Jung Museum, 1975), 7-23, with illustrations.

dedicatory inscription in white on blue ground to Sultan Yār Muḥammad Khān (957–964/1550–57) ending with the date 960/1553 at Bukhara. This exquisite illustration has all the hallmark of Maḥmūd Muzahhib.

‘Shaykh Zādih’ Maḥmūd Muzahhib was an able portraitist and many of his illustrations contain the Sultan or other notables. He also painted individual portraits such as the one of Mīr ‘Alī Shīr Navā’ī signed by him now in the Mashhad Shrine Library.<sup>23</sup> The illustration of lovers in individual album leaves or within books are good evidence of this.

After the passing away of Mīr ‘Alī (the dates of which are variously given as between 951–957/1544–1550) other calligraphers such as Mīr Ḥusayn al-Ḥusaynī (Kulangi) and ‘Alī Rizā Kātib collaborated with Maḥmūd Muzahhib and other painters in producing more fine manuscripts. A characteristic of most of these produced in Bukhara is the illuminated borders which are decorated in gold floral designs with separately designed cartouches, often in different colours, on three sides of each page.

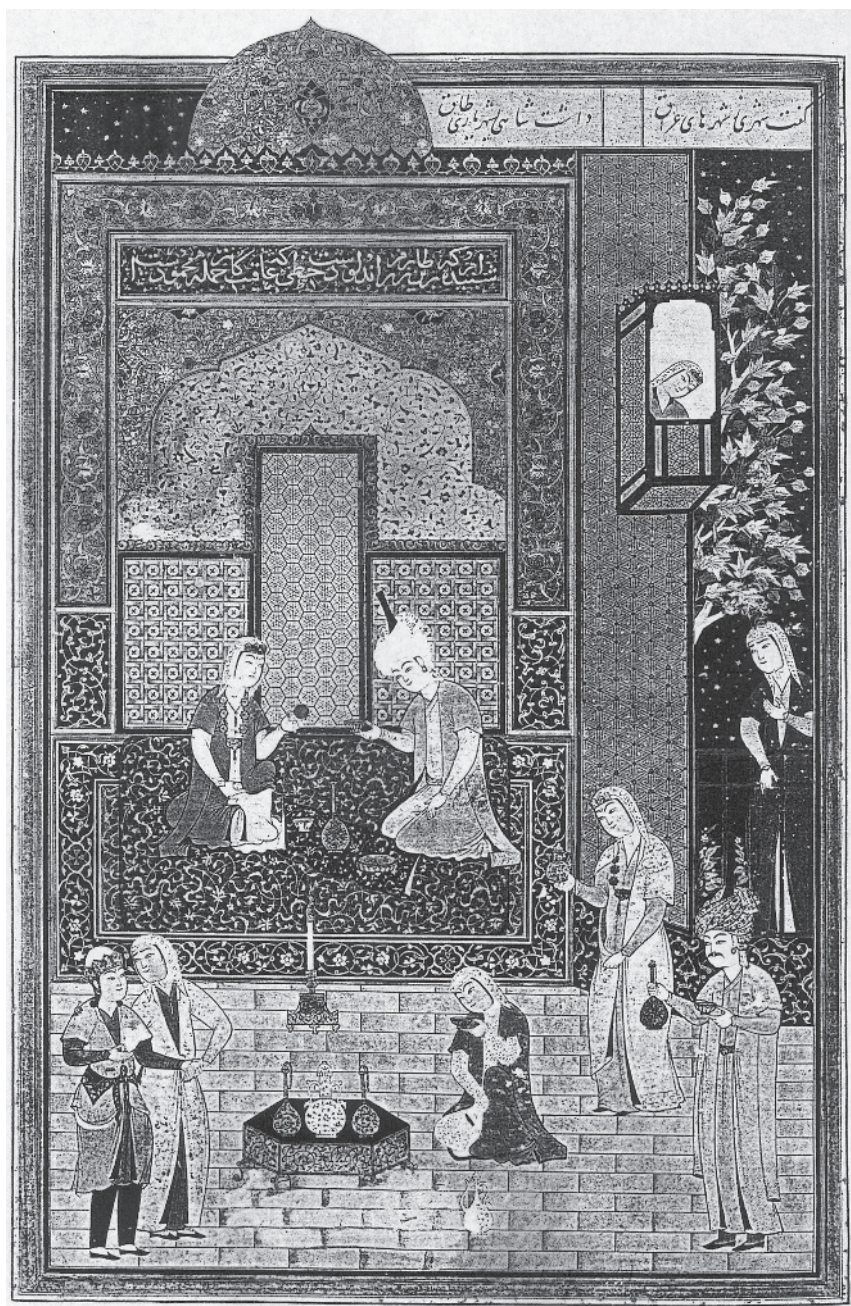
After the death of Maḥmūd sometime after 968/1560, the Bukhara atelier continued with the participation of his pupils ‘Abdallāh and Shaykhem, but with the decline of the Shaybānid Uzbek rulers and without the injection of new blood, the Bukhara school declined sharply with only second rate material produced during the later part of the sixteenth century.

The Bukhara school of painting had a significant influence on Indian Mughal painting. With dynastic Timurid affinity between the two centres the Mughals who also were sunnis, patronised Bukhara artists as witnessed by the *Gulistān* manuscript with illustration by Shaykhem produced for emperor Akbar described above.

The Mughals had a particular liking for the calligraphy of Mīr ‘Alī which adorns most of the exquisite royal albums produced for Akbar, Jahāngīr and Shah Jahān. There is some evidence that some of the Bukhara artists went to India to serve the Mughals at the end of sixteenth century and early seventeenth century.

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<sup>23</sup> Bahari, 37, fig. 12.

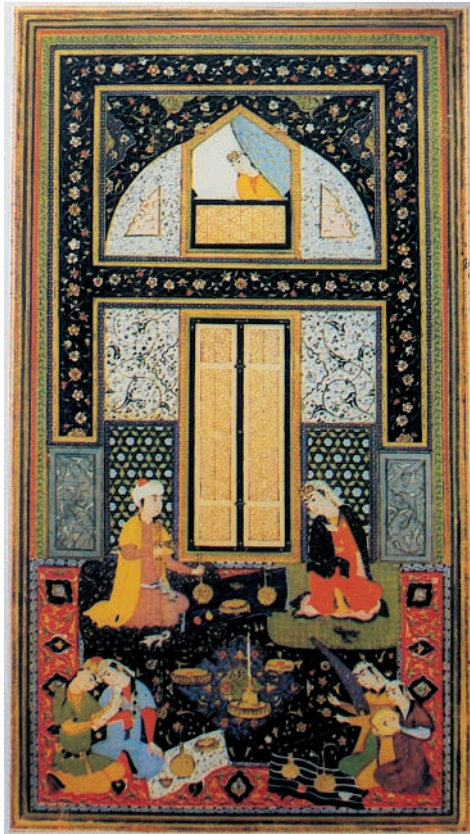


1. *Bahrām in the Yellow Pavilion*. From a *Khamseh* of Nizāmī C. 1525, f 213R. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1913 (13.228.7)





2. *The Battle of Iskandar and Darā*. From a *Khamseh* of Nizāmī C. 1525, f 279R. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1913 (13.228.7)



3. *Bahrām and a Princess*. Shaykh Zādeh Mahmūd, from a *Haft Manẓar* of Hatifi. Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC no. 56.14, f 76R



4. *Wrestling Contest*. *Gulistān* of Sa'di, Bib. Nat. Supp. Perse 1958, f 20V, C. 1543



5. *Shaykh San'an faints with love at the sight of the Christian maiden*. From a *Liṣān al-Tayr* of Mir 'Alī Shir Nava'i, Bib. Nat. Paris Supp. Turc 996 f 20, dated 960 (1553) at Bukhara.

## THE SAFAVID MINT OF HUVAYZEH: THE NUMISMATIC EVIDENCE\*

Rudi Matthee

### *Introduction*

Like coinage from all lands and periods insufficiently covered by written documentation, Safavid coinage can serve as a helpful auxiliary source of information on questions of politics and economics. Insofar as everything stamped on them is designed to convey meaning—from their material appearance to their inscriptions and the language they use—coins are second to no other sources in their ability to shed light on how power projects its legitimacy, how rulers wish to see themselves portrayed. In almost any political system without a unified currency, that is, almost anywhere before the nineteenth century, coins also have much to say about the relationship between the center and the periphery, involving matters of centralization and local autonomy.

The relationship between central and provincial power is an acute though understudied question for the Safavid state. It is easy to be misled by the formidable ideological power emanating from Isfahan (or, earlier, Tabrīz and Qazvin, respectively) and to mistake the theory and ideal of a unified state for the reality of a fragile balance

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of power between the capital and the outlying areas. Safavid ideology, centering on a divinely invested shah and the mobilizing capacity of Shīʿī Islam, did represent a strong galvanizing force, though more so in the sixteenth century than in the second half of the regime's life span. Reality, however, never conformed to the ideal, and even a cursory reading of the Safavid chronicles with their endless narratives of royal campaigns organized to put down mostly internal rebellions shows how the royal army, after a triumphant return to the capital, often just had time to celebrate its victory in battle before being forced to set out on yet another campaign in a different part of the country. A centrifugal pull and its outcome, frequent instability, were the combined function of the heterogeneity of Iran's population in terms of ethnicity, language, religion and life style—few areas in the Middle East had such a high percentage of tribal pastoral people—the country's geophysical conditions, and a primitive technology of power. All premodern states were affected by some of these handicaps, but Iran, with its extreme linguistic and ethnic diversity, harsh climate, extensive and fearsome deserts, and formidable mountains, suffered disproportionately.

This study considers one aspect of the power dynamic between Isfahan, the center in the seventeenth century, and the periphery, *in casu* the town and region of Ḥuvayzeh in Khuzistan, the southwestern part of the country. Court chronicles provide many clues to the nature and degree of autonomy enjoyed by Iran's Arab-speaking population in that region, and the information they offer will not be ignored in the discussion that follows. The drawbacks of these biased sources written at and from the center are obvious, however, and the coinage of the region is here marshaled as visual evidence for the contention that the Mushaʿshaʿ rulers of Ḥuvayzeh retained a measure of autonomy in their dealings with Isfahan even after their region became incorporated into the Safavid realm. As a study of the mint of Ḥuvayzeh charts unknown territory in that it cannot build upon any previously published research, the following discussion, which includes the publication of a number of Ḥuvayzeh coins, will be largely numismatic in nature. It is in fact my principal aim to chart the development of the coinage of Ḥuvayzeh from the period of Shah ʿAbbās I to that of Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn (995–1135/1587–1722), and to consider its place within the overall Safavid coinage. The coinage in question involves the two-*shāhī* coin, generally known as *muḥammadī* or *maḥmūdī*, the only one Ḥuvayzeh produced for the

duration of the eleventh/seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup> By integrating numismatic questions into the study of historical change, this study brings underused source material to bear that can help illuminate aspects of regional history that would otherwise remain obscure.

### I. *Ḥuwayzeh: Geography and Politics*

Ḥuwayzeh, which is a diminutive of Ḥawīza, is situated in the Arabic-speaking Iranian province of Khuzistan, the old—and modern—name of the region the southern part of which became known as ‘Arabistān under Shah ‘Abbās.<sup>2</sup> The town sits in the western part of the swampy lowlands that are wedged in between the Shaṭṭ al-‘Arab, the waterway that separates the modern countries of Iran and Iraq and in the seventeenth century marked the border between Safavid and Ottoman territory, and the Karūn River. The Ḥuwayzeh region lies on the edge of the great marshes formed by the estuary of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Flat, hot and unhealthy, ‘Arabistān until the modern era had little to recommend itself. The area around Dizfūl engaged in grain cultivation, and sugar cane had traditionally been grown in the area as well,<sup>3</sup> but otherwise the region’s intrinsic

<sup>1</sup> The history of the Safavid *maḥmūdī* is unclear. Common knowledge has it that the *maḥmūdī* originated with Shah Muḥammad Khudābandeh, taking its name, *muḥammadī*, from him. This belief possibly goes back to an observation of Olearius to that effect. See Adam Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung der muscovitischen und persischen Reyse*, ed. Dieter Lohmeier (Schleswig: Johan Holwein, 1656; facsimile edn., Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1971), 560. In reality things are a good deal more complicated. Two-shahi coins had predominated already under Shah Ṭahmāsb I (930–984/1524–1576), and were the normal denomination during the short reign of Shah Ismā‘īl II (984–985/1576–1577). *Muḥammadīs* were also struck in India, more specifically in Gujarat, where they may have been in existence from the reign of Bahādūr Shāh (1526–36). See Shahpurshah Hormasji Hodivala, *Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics* (Bombay: The Numismatic Society of India, 1923; repr. 1976), 115–30.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Arabistān initially only comprised the southern part of the old province of Khuzistan and, more specifically, the region around Ḥuwayzeh. Under Nādir Shāh the area was extended to the north and came to include Shūstar and Dizfūl. Only Rizā Shāh abolished the term in 1923 and reintroduced the name Khuzistan for the entire province. See W. Caskel, ‘Die Wali’s van Huwezeh,’ *Islamica* 6 (1934): 416; and, for a general discussion of the history of Khuzistan, Svat Soucek, ‘Arabistān or Khuzistan,’ *Iranian Studies* 17 (1984): 195–214.

<sup>3</sup> See Mir ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Khān Shūsharī, *Tuḥfat al-‘alam va zayl al-tuḥfat*, ed. S. Muvahhid (Tehran: Gulshān, 1363sh./1984), 26; and Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies*, ed. Sir William Foster, 2 vols., new edn. (London, The Argonaut Press, 1930), 1:58.

economic value was limited before the discovery of oil at the turn of the twentieth century. More important than its agricultural position seems to have been 'Arabistān's commercial significance, which the region derived from its location in the vicinity of the port town of Basra, the Ottoman outlet to the Persian Gulf and the entrepôt for trade between the Indian Ocean and the Fertile Crescent via the fluvial route formed by the two waterways. What gave the region its greatest value, however, was its geopolitical position. Ever since the occupation of southern Iraq by the Ottomans in the mid-sixteenth century, 'Arabistān had always served as a buffer between the Turks and the Iranians, contested by both even if generally (loosely) controlled by the latter.

Precious little provided a natural link between 'Arabistān and the rest of Safavid Iran. Its geographical and linguistic position vis-à-vis Iran gave the region a distinctly ambiguous status within the Safavid realm. Cut off from the central regions of Iran by the formidable Zagros mountain range, the region lay outside the central Iranian plateau and was continually exposed to invaders coming from the western lowlands. If its geographical isolation rendered permanent Safavid control elusive, the tribal character of most of the local population further compounded the problem. Among the region's semi-nomadic peoples were the Banū Ka'b around Dawraq (modern Shādīgān) in the south, the Muntafiq in the Jazira across the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab, and the Āl Naṣar in the northern area around Shūshtar and Dizfūl. Since the sixteenth century the region had gradually become arabicized, the result of Arabic-speaking tribes moving in from Mesopotamia. Indeed, the very appellation 'Arabistān seems to have been conferred on the region in deference to this process. The Banu Ka'b, for instance, settled east of the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab in great numbers under Afrāsiyāb, the autonomous ruler of Basra who thus secured a fighting force on his eastern border.<sup>4</sup> Inhabiting the middle, around the town of Ḥuvayzeh, were the Musha'sha', a tribe that over time transformed itself into an eponymous urban-based dynasty. The Musha'sha' dynasty had come to power in the ninth/fifteenth century, when the territory held by its founder, Sayyid Muḥammad ibn Falāḥ, included the more northerly-situated area of Luristan (Lūr-i

<sup>4</sup> Sayyid Aḥmad Kasravī, *Tarīkh-i pansad sālah-i Khūzistān*, 2nd edn. (Tehran: Intishārāt-i khājū, 1362sh./1983), 130.

kuchik) as well as the mountainous territory of the Bakhtiyari tribal confederation, and for some time extended all the way to Baghdad. Fervently Shī'ī, the Musha'sha' claimed to be descendants of the seventh Shī'ī Imam Mūsā al-Kāzīm. Sayyid Muḥammad ibn Falāh was their Mahdī, and Ḥuwayzeh was their capital.

The end of full independence for the Musha'sha' came with the rise of the Safavid dynasty in Iran at the turn of the tenth/sixteenth century. 'Arabistān was incorporated into the Safavid realm during the reign of Shah Ismā'īl I (907–30/1501–24). Having captured Baghdad in 914/1508–09, Ismā'īl learned that the ruler of Ḥuwayzeh, Mīr Sulṭān Muḥsin, had died and been succeeded by his son, Sulṭān Fayyāḍ. The Safavid chroniclers put the campaign that followed in the context of the Ismā'īli variant of Shī'ism that formed the basis of the Musha'sha' belief system. Clearly viewing the Musha'sha' creed as a challenge to the Twelver Shī'ism current in Tabrīz, the Safavid capital, and propagated throughout the land, they emphasize its extremism and point up the outrageousness of a new ruler adopting a divine aura for himself and the bazaars and mosques of Ḥuwayzeh being filled with chants of 'no fasting, no prayer, no hajj, and no *zakāt*,' as the direct cause of Shah Ismā'īl's decision to move against Ḥuwayzeh. In the battle that ensued between the army of the shah and the Bedouin forces of al-Fayyāḍ, the latter was killed. Ḥuwayzeh and its environs fell to the Safavids and a Safavid *amīr* was appointed as governor.<sup>5</sup>

Safavid rule remained weak, to be sure, and the Musha'sha' over time retained control over Ḥuwayzeh. Loosely dependent on the Safavids, they were very much in charge of their own affairs and during the tumultuous reign of Shah Khudābandeh even briefly seem to have fallen under Ottoman control.<sup>6</sup> This situation did not fundamentally change under the reign of Shah 'Abbās I, who in his

<sup>5</sup> See Ghīyās al-Dīn b. Himām al-dīn al-Ḥusaynī, *Habīb al-siyar*, ed. Muḥammad Dabīr Siyāqī, 4 vols., 3d edn. (Tehran: Khayyām, 1362sh./1983), 4:497–98; Anon., *Ālam-ara-yi Ṣafawī*, ed. Yad Allāh Shukrī, 2nd edn. (Tehran: Ittilā'āt, 1363sh./1984), 135–38; Muḥammad Yūsuf Valah Isfāhānī, *Khuld-i Bavān (Irān dar ruzgār-i Ṣafawīyān)*, ed. Mīr Ḥāshim Muḥaddīth (Tehran: Intishārāt-i adabī va tarīkhī-yi mauqūfāt-i duktur Maḥmūd Afshār Yazdī, 1372sh./1993), 173–74; and Mīrza Bayg Junābādī, *Rawzat al-Ṣafawīyih*, ed. Ghulāmriza Ṭabāṭabā'ī Majd (Tehran: Intishārāt-i adabī va tarīkhī-yi mauqūfāt-i duktur Maḥmūd Afshār Yazdī, 1378sh./1999), 215–18.

<sup>6</sup> W. Caskel, 'Ein Mahdi des 15. Jahrhunderts. Sajjid Muḥammad Ibn Falah und seine Nachkommen,' *Islamica* 3 (1931): 80–81.

drive to bring Iran's outlying areas under his control made accommodations with the Musha'sha' rather than being able to end their virtual autonomy. The ruler of Ḥuvayzeh at this time, Sayyid Mubārak b. Muṭāllib, commanded the Musha'sha' from 998/1589 to 1025/1616. Between 999/1591 and 1003/1594 he took Dawraq, Dizfūl and Shūshtar, all nominally under Safavid rule, and in 1004/1595 he further expanded his realm by invading and occupying the Jazā'ir, the marshes north of Basra, where, in the name of Shah 'Abbās I, he took control of a number of the fortresses located at a short distance from Basra itself.<sup>7</sup> So great was his power that on old maps the territory he ruled is given as 'the country of Barachan [Mubārak Khan], an appellation that was still used in 1652, a generation after his death.'<sup>8</sup> Following a great deal of unrest in 'Arabistān, culminating in a conflict between Sayyid Mubārak and his son Amir Badr al-Dīn, who had been appointed governor of Dizful, Shah 'Abbās in 1003/1594–5 sent an army headed by his grand vizier, Ḥātim Beg Urdūbādī, and the governor of Fars, Farḥād Khān, to the province. Sayyid Mubārak was thus forced formally to submit to Safavid authority, but the Safavids, fearing Ottoman interference if they treated him too harshly, allowed him to hold on to his previous conquests, including the Jazīra region.<sup>9</sup> The extent of continued Musha'sha' autonomy was revealed two years later, when Sayyid Mubārak sheltered a band of rebellious Afshār who had taken refuge with him after being defeated by Mahdī Qūlī Khān Shamlū, the governor of Shūshtar. Rather than sending Mahdī Qūlī Khān on a punitive expedition against Ḥuvayzeh, the shah ordered him to make accommodations with Sayyid Mubārak, not wishing to 'make a confirmed enemy of him,' as Iskandar Munshi puts it.<sup>10</sup> The same

<sup>7</sup> Mullā Jallāl al-dīn Munājġim, *Tarīkh-i 'Abbāsī ya ruznāmah-i Mullā Jalāl* (Tehran: Vahīd, 1366/1987), 286; 'Alī Shakīr 'Alī, *Tarīkh al-'Irāq fī 'ahd al-'Uthmānī 1638–1750 m. Dirāsah fī ahwālīhi al-siyāsīyah* (Baghdad: Maktabat 30 Tamuz, 1984), 127.

<sup>8</sup> Roberto Gulbenkian, 'Relações político-religiosas entre os Portugueses e os mandeus da baixa Mesopotâmia e do Cuzistão ne primeira metade do século XVII,' in *idem, Estudos Históricos, II, Relações entre Portugal, Irão e Médio Oriente* (Lisbon: Academia portuguesa da história, 1995): 325–420 (382).

<sup>9</sup> Iskandar Beg Munshī, *History of Shah 'Abbās the Great (Tarīkh-i 'Ālamārā-yi 'Abbāsī)*, ed. and trans. Roger M. Savory, 3 vols. paginated as one (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1978), 675–77; and Maḥmūd b. Hidāyat Allāh Afushtā'ī Naṭanzī, *Naqavāt al-asār fī zīkr al-akhyār*, 2nd edn. (Tehran: Shirkat-i intishārāt-i 'ilmī va farhangī, 1373sh./1994), 546ff.

<sup>10</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *History of Shah 'Abbās*, 700–01.



autonomy in later years allowed Sayyid Mubārak to conduct a rather independent foreign policy. Between 1605 and 1611 he thus solicited Portuguese naval support in his struggle against the Ottoman overlords of Basra, and in this context even sent his own ambassadors to Goa.<sup>11</sup>

What did change is that under Shah ‘Abbās the ‘loose dependence’ of the Musha‘sha‘ on the Safavids gave way to a more formalized relationship. The Musha‘sha‘ gained semi-autonomous status, with their ruler acquiring the title of *valī* a governor similar to a vassal, who recognized the overlordship of the Safavids, paid tribute, and was held to supply troops on command. Unlike regular governors, however, *valīs* were in charge of their own administrative apparatus, managed their own vassal relations, were in control of their own budgets, and maintained their own militias, in all of which the shah rarely intervened.<sup>12</sup>

The death of Sayyid Mubārak in 1025/1616–17 ushered in a period of renewed tribal unrest in which the Musha‘sha‘ again openly defied Safavid rule. Shah ‘Abbās first appointed the deceased ruler’s son, Sayyid Nāṣir, who had been reared at the Safavid court and who was related to the shah by marriage, as his successor. Sayyid Nāṣir, however, died within a year, poisoned, it seems, by his cousin Sayyid Rashīd, who thus managed to become the new ruler of Ḥuvayzeh.<sup>13</sup> When Sayyid Rashīd was killed in a tribal battle in 1029/1619–20, it was the turn of Sayyid Maṣṣūr, Sayyid Mubārak’s younger brother, to become the new *valī* of Ḥuvayzeh.<sup>14</sup> Though Sayyid Maṣṣūr had long lived in Safavid territory, relations between him and the shah became strained as soon as he was appointed as ruler of Ḥuvayzeh. Wishing to enhance his autonomy, he established close relations with the local ruler of Basra, Afrāsiyāb, who acknowledged Ottoman authority only in name. Relations with Isfahan further deteriorated when Sayyid Maṣṣūr defied a royal order to join

<sup>11</sup> Gulbenkian, ‘Relações político-religiosas,’ 361–71.

<sup>12</sup> T.S. Kuteliia, *Gruziiā i sefevidskii Iran (po dannym numizmatiki)*, (Tiflis: Metsniereba, 1979), 30.

<sup>13</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *History of Shah ‘Abbās*, 1130, 1146–47; and Pietro della Valle, *Viaggi di Pietro della Valle il pellegrino*, ed. G. Gancia, 2 vols. (Brighton: G. Gancia, 1843), 2:339. Also see Muḥammad ‘Alī Raṅjbar, ‘Musha‘sha‘iyyān. Māhiyat-i fikrī, ijtimā‘ī va farayānd-i taḥāvulāt-i tarikhī tā payān-i dawrah-i Ṣafavī’ (Ph.D. dissertation, Dānishgāh-i Tarbiyat-i Mudarris, 1379sh./2000), 312–13.

<sup>14</sup> Iskandar Munshī, *History of Shah ‘Abbās*, 1173, 1180.

the Safavid campaign against Baghdad. When Manṣūr ignored repeated summons to appear at court Della Valle has him state that ‘if the sciah was king of Persia, himself was king of Hhaveiza, and that he did not value him’—the shah sent Imām Qūlī Khān to Ḥuvayzeh with the order either to capture or kill the rebellious valī. Imam Qūlī Khān, taking with him Sayyid Mubārak’s son, Muḥammad, a protégé of his who had grown up at the Safavid court, in early 1625 arrived before Ḥuvayzeh. Faced with the possibility that the people of the town would side with the shah and accept Muḥammad as their new ruler, Manṣūr fled to Basra, where he was cordially received and given a piece of land. The inhabitants of Ḥuvayzeh welcomed Muḥammad but, Della Valle adds, implying a continued modicum of bargaining power, insisted that no Qizilbash troops would enter their town.<sup>15</sup>

From that time until the end of Safavid rule, Ḥuvayzeh formally remained subordinate to the authority of Isfahan. As a symbol of this status, the Musha‘sha‘ ruler annually sent nine horses to Isfahan as a *pīshkīsh*.<sup>16</sup> Internecine strife intermittently flared up in the region, with various members of the Musha‘sha‘ fighting for supremacy, and no ruler of Ḥuvayzeh managed to end the endemic tribal unrest that plagued the region.<sup>17</sup> Basic power relations remained the same, however. While rule continued to be hereditary within the house of Musha‘sha‘, the shah would formally invest the *valī* with power and, through a policy of divide and conquer, keep the region under a modicum of control.<sup>18</sup>

## II. *Ḥuvayzeh and Its Coinage: Types and Styles*

The *vilāyat* of ‘Arabistān over time knew various degrees of dependence and autonomy, the nature and quality of which were largely

<sup>15</sup> Pietro della Valle, *The Travels of Sign. Pietro della Valle A Noble Roman, into East India and Arabia Deserta* (London: J. Macock, 1665), 248–49. Iskandar Munshī, who tells the story until 1033/1624, claims that Sayyid Manṣūr did join the shah on his Baghdad campaign and only became defiant afterwards.

<sup>16</sup> Ranjbar, ‘Musha‘sha‘iyan,’ 315.

<sup>17</sup> For such fighting under Shah Ṣafī I, see Iskandar Beg Turkaman Munshī and Valah Isfahani, *Ẓayl-i Tarīkh-i ‘alam-ara-yi ‘Abbāsī*, ed. Suhaylī Khwānsarī (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī-yi Islāmiyah, 1317sh./1938), 152–53 and 157–58.

<sup>18</sup> For examples, see Ranjbar, ‘Musha‘sha‘iyan,’ 315 ff.; and Jasim Hasan Shubbār, *Tarīkh al-Musha‘sha‘iyan wa tarājim ‘alayhim* (Najaf, 1385h.q./1965), 102 ff.

predicated upon the strength or weakness of the central government in the Safavid capital.<sup>19</sup> The coinage of Huvayzeh can be said to reflect the political vicissitudes of ‘Arabistān under the Musha‘sha‘. Huvayzeh was an active mint already in the Jalā’irid period (736–835/1335–1432), when a number of mints operated in the Persian Gulf region.<sup>20</sup> Even under the Timurids (771–late 9th/1370–late 15th c.), when the number of mints in the area had dropped off, Huvayzeh continued to be an active mint, as is evidenced in several silver *dinārs* and *tankas* included in the collection of the ANS.<sup>21</sup> The growing influence of the Safavid state over Musha‘sha‘ territory even before Shah Isma‘il turned his attention toward Huvayzeh is reflected in Musha‘sha‘ coins from either Shūshtar or Dizfūl, two towns in the area that featured mints, which date from the year 914/1508–09. The so-called millsail pattern on the obverse of the shown specimen (no. 1) shows a marked similarity with the contemporaneous *shāhī* coin from the reign of Shah Ismā‘il I. This pattern can already be found on some late Āqquyūnlū coins, which probably were the inspiration for Safavid coins of the same design.



1. ANS 1959.235.5, AR, 914, 4.61 gr.

<sup>19</sup> See the excellent overview of Musha‘sha‘ history by Paul Luft, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edn., vol. 7 (Leiden, 1993), 672–75.

<sup>20</sup> See Nicholas M Lowick, ‘Trade Patterns in the Persian Gulf in the Light of Recent Coin Evidence,’ in Dickran K. Kouymjian, ed., *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles* (Beirut: American University in Beirut Press, 1974), 324.

<sup>21</sup> For the Huvayzeh mint in the Jalā’irid period, see H.L. Rabino di Borgomale, ‘Coins of the Jala’ir, Kara Koyunlu, Musha‘sha‘, and Ak Koyunlu Dynasties,’ *Numismatic Chronicle*, 6th ser., 10 (1950): 94–139. For the Jala’irid period, the ANS has one specimen, no. 1917.215.1735, 1,76 gr., reign of Shaykh Aḥmad (736–757/1335–56), while for the Timurid period the collection contains two specimens, ANS 0000.999.10009, n.d., 6,05 gr., reign of Timur (771–790/1370–1405), and ANS 0000.999.10010, n.d., 5,00 gr., reign of Shāhrukh (807–850/1405–1447).

The above Musha‘sha‘ coin bears Safavid influence but was still struck under autonomous Musha‘sha‘ patronage. A single Ḥuvayzeh *maḥmūdī* (two-*shāhī*) coin, found in the holdings of the University of Kharkov in Ukraine, has been attributed to the reign of Shah Khudābandeh (r. 985–995/1578–88), or more precisely the year 991/1582.<sup>22</sup> If properly interpreted, this coin would be of great significance. Pending its publication the attribution must remain unreliable, however, so that there is as yet no good reason to revise the accepted wisdom that the emission of *maḥmūdīs* from the Ḥuvayzeh mint struck in the name of the Safavid shahs began during the reign of Shah ‘Abbās I. As far as confirmed extant specimens are concerned, the coinage was first issued in 996–98/1588–90, or before the supposed re-establishment of Safavid rule in ‘Arabistān by Shah ‘Abbās I. This fact suggests that the political disruption which marked the first years of Shah ‘Abbās’s rule did not prompt the region to foreswear its acknowledgment of Safavid sovereignty.

The Ḥuvayzeh mint continued to strike coins on a regular basis until the end of Shah Sulaymān’s reign (1077–1105/1667–94). Under his successor, Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn (r. 1105–35/1694–1722), the mint ceased operation. The Dutchman Cornelis de Bruyn, who visited Iran in 1703–04, claimed that the Ḥuvayzeh coins, which at that time were still circulating in abundance, had all been ‘stampt under the ancient kings.’<sup>23</sup> In reality, Ḥuvayzeh coins continued to be struck, albeit in small quantities, judging by the handful of coins that are known to exist from the early to middle reign of Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn. One is from 1108/1696–97,<sup>24</sup> one has unconvincingly been attributed to 1110/1698–99,<sup>25</sup> while the last confirmed Ḥuvayzeh coin dates from 1132/1719–20, very near the end of Safavid rule in Iran.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> See P. Scherzl, *Opisanie medalei i monet . . . kharkovskogo universiteta III, Vostochniia monet* (Kharkov, 1912), no. 6966; ref. in E. von Zambaur, *Die Münzprägungen des Islams* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1968), 109.

<sup>23</sup> Cornelis de Bruyn, *Reizen over Mosковиë, over Perzië en Indië*, 2nd edn (Amsterdam: Goeree, 1714), 175–76; English trans., *Travels into Muscovy, Persia and Parts of the East Indies* (London: Printed for J. Warcus, 1759), 312–13.

<sup>24</sup> Tüb. ID8B1

<sup>25</sup> BM 1983–7–8–12.

<sup>26</sup> This coin, published here as no. 24, is part of the collection of Dr Stan Goron. Its inclusion here corrects and updates the information in my previously published ‘Mint Consolidation and the Worsening of the Late Safavid Coinage: The Mint of Ḥuvayzeh,’ *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* (2001): 505–39, where I followed the information given in Markov, 717, nos. 182 and 189 concerning two Ḥuvayzeh *maḥmūdīs* from 1116/1704–05 and 1121/1709–10, respectively. I am indebted to Dr Goron for alerting me to the existence of this coin.

To judge from the extant specimens, virtually all coins issuing from the mint of Ḥuvayzeh were silver. A copper specimen in the ANS collection (no. 2), and two additional ones in the Tübingen collection, one dated 1231 (93–18–107) and one without date (JA7 E5), prove that the mint produced copper coinage as well, but the rarity of surviving coppers suggests that copper was not struck in great quantities. In keeping with the practice of all of Iran's mints in the period from about 1015 to 1129/1606 to 1718, the Ḥuvayzeh mint did not strike any gold coins.<sup>27</sup>



2. ANS 1917.215.3043. AE, n.d., 1.75 gr.

Following an examination of the relevant literature, I have established a corpus of 281 Ḥuvayzeh coins, spanning the period from 991 to 1132/1583 to 1719–20, that is, from the approximate beginning to the presumed end of the issuance of Safavid coins from the mint of Ḥuvayzeh. All of the coins involved are two-*shāhī* (*maḥmūdī* or *Muḥammadī*) pieces, which was the exclusive silver denomination struck at Ḥuvayzeh and, indeed, the most common denomination of the entire region of ‘Arabistān. Due perhaps to the absence of a universally accepted copper coinage in the area, the *maḥmūdī* of Ḥuvayzeh in the seventeenth century became an extremely popular coin used as low-value trading currency throughout the Persian Gulf, replacing the *lānī*, which had earlier served the same purpose.<sup>28</sup> The *shāhī* represented fifty dinars, or 1/200th of one *tūmān*, which was the Iranian money of account. The *maḥmūdī* was therefore valued at 1/100th of one *tūmān*. Aside from the specimens in the ANS collection, this corpus includes coins from the collections in Tübingen, Germany, the British Museum in London, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the Hermitage collection in St. Petersburg, as well as the

<sup>27</sup> See Stephen Album, *A Checklist of Islamic Coins*, 2nd edn. (Santa Rosa: The Author, 1998), 128–30.

<sup>28</sup> Michael Broome, *A Handbook List of Islamic Coins* (London: Seaby, 1985), 172.

Museum of Azerbaijan in Tabrīz, in addition to a few specimens from dealers' catalogues and a number of coins from the private collections of Steven Album and Stan Goron. The analysis and findings in this paper derive from this corpus.

As noted in the introduction, the primary question with which I approached the corpus was that of the degree of autonomy of the Ḥuvayzeh mint from the central mint in Isfahan. 'Arabistān was a part of the Safavid state that enjoyed a wide degree of autonomy, yet ultimately the area fell under the jurisdiction of Isfahan. The local ruler, the *valī*, administered his own realm, collected taxes, managed his own budget, and was in charge of the defense of his territory.<sup>29</sup> It was, however, the Safavid shah who appointed him. Moreover, he could be, and frequently was, recalled by the Safavid ruler, who occasionally sent Musha'sha' rulers into exile in Khurasan in the extreme northeast. As was seen earlier, and following Safavid practice, the sons of *valīs* were also often kept in Isfahan and grew up at the royal court. Like most regular governors, the Musha'sha' *valī* also kept a representative, *nā'ib*, in the Safavid capital.<sup>30</sup>

The theory and practice of minting in Ḥuvayzeh seems to reflect this admixture between autonomy and subordination. Russian numismatists, the only ones who have examined the Safavid monetary situation in any detail—albeit not for the southern part of the country—are divided over the nature and degree of local autonomy with respect to minting. Focusing on the situation in the north, some have argued that the rulers of a minting center such as Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, which was similar to 'Arabistān in being a *vilāyat*, did not have the right to mint autonomously, and that the coins struck by the mints of Georgia only differed from the ones issued by any other Safavid mint by the name of the mint stamped on them. Others, by contrast, insist that the Tiflis mint was independent and served the interests of Georgia. A useful distinction made by one Russian or, rather, Georgian, scholar, T.S. Kuteliia, in light of this controversy is that between jurisdiction and political legitimacy, on the one hand, and economic reality, on the other. Kuteliia

<sup>29</sup> See N.V. Pigulevskaia, A.Iu. Yakubovskii, I.P. Petrushevskii, L.V. Stroeva, A.M. Belenitskii, *Istoriia Irana s drevneishikh vremen do kontsa XVII veka* (Leningrad: Iz. Leningradskogo Universiteta, 1958), 295.

<sup>30</sup> Ranjbar, 'Musha'sha'īyan,' 311 ff.; and Shubbār, *Tarīkh al-Musha'sha'yīn*, 154, 159.

argues that from a juridical perspective the Tiflis mint was an Iranian or a Safavid one which acted in tandem with developments elsewhere as far as types and weight standards are concerned. Economically speaking, however, things were different, according to Kuteliia. The shah did send instructions regarding new images and the dies, too, had to come from the capital, but he did not or perhaps could not interfere directly in the actual management of the mint.<sup>31</sup> The money issued by the mint of Tiflis, for instance, was used for the local population rather than for the local Qizilbash garrison, and profits accruing from the Georgian mints are said to have benefited the local valī.<sup>32</sup>

Ҳувayzeh, like Georgia a *vilāyat*, in all likelihood found itself in a similar position vis-à-vis the Safavid central authority. From information in a local chronicle it is clear that it was the shah who granted—and who could revoke—the minting right of the valī of Khuzistan.<sup>33</sup> The coinage of Ҳувayzeh, furthermore, falls squarely within the overall Safavid coinage. It was struck in the name of the shah and it follows central Safavid patterns in its royal inscriptions. In terms of weight standards, too, a topic that I have treated in a separate article, this appears to be the case.<sup>34</sup> The diameter of the

<sup>31</sup> Kuteliia, *Gruziia i sefevidskii Iran*, 26–27. That the dies were sent from the capital is indicated in Muḥammad Ibrāhīm b. Zayn al-‘Abidīn Naṣirī, *Dastūr-i shahriyārān (sālḥā-yi 1105 tā 1110 h.q. pādishāhī-yi Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusayn Ṣafavī)* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i adabī va Tarīkhī-yi mauqūfāt-i duktur Mzḥmud Afshār Yazdī, 1373sh./1994), 118. Franz Caspar Schillinger, who visited the Caucasus at the turn of the eighteenth century, had this to say about the relationship between the shah and the governor of Georgia as regards minting: ‘He [the shah] gives orders to strike a certain number of coins, copper, silver, or gold, of different value. He allowed the ruler of southern Georgia, who resides in Tiflis and who is tributary to him, the Persian shah, to strike coins as he has done in the past, though the name of the shah has to appear on one side of such coins.’ See Père Franz Caspar Schillinger, *Persianische und Ost-Indianische Reis, welche Frantz Caspar Schillinger mit P. Wilhelm Weber und P. Wilhelm Mayr durch das Türkische Gebiet im Jahr 1699 angefangen, und 1702 volendet* (Nuremberg: Johann Christoph Lochner, 1707), 217–18. Chardin notes how, during his stay in Erevan, the capital of Armenia, a representative of the central Safavid mint was visiting the local mint. This suggests that the central government supervised regional mints, though perhaps not those of the vilāyats, quite closely. See Jean Chardin, *Voyages du chevalier Chardin en Perse, et autres lieux de l’Orient*, ed. L. Langlès, 10 vols and atlas (Paris: Le Normant, 1810–11), 2:195

<sup>32</sup> Kuteliia, *Gruziia i sefevidskii Iran*, 29–30.

<sup>33</sup> See Kasravī, *Tarīkh-i pānsad sālah-i Khūzistān*, 87, citing al-Sayyid ‘Abd Allāh, *Tarīkh al-Mushāshāyīn*.

<sup>34</sup> See Matthee, ‘Mint Consolidation.’

Ḥuvayzeh *maḥmūdī*, finally, which is generally 17 to 20 mm, matches that of two-*shāhī* pieces struck elsewhere in Safavid territory.

On the other hand, the Ḥuvayzeh coinage is sufficiently particular to be classified separately and to be analyzed in its own right. This is so not only because within the broad Safavid context its appearance stands out in various respects, but also because textual information singles it out as a regional coinage with certain peculiarities.

Throughout the period in which they were issued, Ḥuvayzeh coins show what may be termed diversity within unity. The broad trends of the overall Safavid coinage are reflected in the development of the Ḥuvayzeh coinage, which, nevertheless, exhibits distinctive qualities. One of these is the exclusive striking of two-*shāhī* coins, which is peculiar to all of ‘Arabistān. With the exception of Dawraq, Dizfūl and Shūshtar, from which a limited number of four-*shāhī* coins (*‘Abbāsīs*), survive, all coins from the ‘Arabistān mints are two-*shāhīs* or *maḥmūdīs*. In terms of layout and visual form—the design and the arrangement of the inscriptions—and calligraphy, too, the Ḥuvayzeh coins betray a local Khuzistani source.

Otherwise the conformity with Safavid patterns is manifest from the oldest published specimen, which is undated but which in its type (A) conforms to that of Safavid coins in the years 996–98/1588–90, in the early reign of Shah ‘Abbās I.



3. Type A: Tüb IC3C4, AR, n.d., 4.63 gr.

*Obverse:*<sup>35</sup> The obverse has the formula *‘Abbās bandeh-i shāh-i vilāyat*, each of the four words written below the next in a quasi-reverse order (*vilāyat*, *‘Abbās*, *shah bandeh*), with the mint name Ḥuvayzeh underneath. The entire legend is framed by a vertical line on either side. The calligraphy of both sides is rather fine.

<sup>35</sup> I have chosen to consider the side with royal information the obverse and the side with the pious formula the reverse. For an explanation and justification of this usage, see Album, *A Checklist of Islamic Coins*, 11.



*Reverse:* The reverse has the *shahāda*, *Lā ilā ila Allāh/Muḥammad nabī Alaāh* (rather than *rasūl Allāh*, not just in this specimen, but in all early Ḥuvayzeh coins), followed by the Shīʿī formula *ʿAlī valī Allāh*. The central design is enclosed within a pointed quatrefoil. The margin contains the names of the Imams (only those of Ḥusayn and Jaʿfar being legible).

The next type (B) was struck as of 1005, when a new weight standard was introduced. The year 1005 was apparently a ‘frozen’ year,’ the only one to appear on coins from Ḥuvayzeh, and the most frequent to be stamped on coins from ʿArabistān in general for at least a decade. This type introduced changes in the layout and legend as well. On the obverse, the main difference is what would become the principal feature of the coinage of ʿArabistān, the central circle or, alternatively, the central cartouche, within which the mint name, *Ḥuvayzeh*, is set (broken into two parts written from bottom to top). Underneath the mint name, the *ba* of *ḍarb* (Pers. *zarb*) or *ḍurība* appears. The *dad* and the *ra* as well as the formula *ʿAbbās bandeh-i shāh-i vilāyat* appear in the margin in or around the circle. The year typically is shown in the margin at the top of the field or within the circle. In this the Ḥuvayzeh coinage strays from overall Safavid pattern, which moves away from the circular legend. Ḥuvayzeh is not alone in this, for all mints in the southwestern part of Iran continue the circular type that had been common in Safavid coins until the late sixteenth century.

The reverse changes too, though less drastically. The *shahāda* differs from that of type A in the slightly bolder lettering resulting in a less fine calligraphy. With some type B coins we observe a more ‘horizontal’ layout across the field of the reverse and a more pronounced separation of the three tiers, the first one containing *lā ilāh ilā Allāh*, the second *Muḥammad nabī Allāh*, and the third *ʿAlī valī Allāh*. The type conforms to that of the same period for other Iranian mints, while the style is congruent with the period as well.

Good examples of type B are nos. 4, 5, and 6.



4. Type B: ANS 1922.216.758, AR, 1005, 3.819 gr.

*Obverse:* The mint name is written within a central cartouche, in two parts, from bottom to top. The *ba* of *duriba* appears within the cartouche as well, underneath the mint name, whereas the *dad* and the *ra* appear in the lower margin. Part of the formula *‘Abbās bandeh-i shah-i vilāyat* is visible in the margin around the cartouche. The date, 1005, appears at the top of the field.

*Reverse:* The field is separated into three tiers. The first one, *lā ilāh ilā allāh*, is separated from *nabī Allāh* by *Muḥammad*, with a drawn-out extension between the *ha* and the second *mīm*, while the part of *valī Allāh* in the third tier is separated from *nabī Allāh ‘Alī* by an extension of the *va* of *‘Alī*. The names of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn appear in the lower right-hand margin.



5. Tüb. IC3 C5, AR, 1005, 3.86 gr.

*Obverse:* As in no. 4, except that the cartouche is replaced by the outline of a circle.

*Reverse:* As in no. 4.



6. Tüb. IC3 C6, AR, n.d., 3.93 gr.

*Obverse:* As in no. 5, except that the circle is even more pronounced.

*Reverse:* As in no. 4.

The reign of Shah Ṣafī I (1038–52/1629–42), while witnessing a continuation of the general style, inaugurated a new type (C). The obverse continues the trend of the circle enclosing the mint name. On the reverse, the layout definitively becomes circular. Whereas

formerly the full *shahāda* appeared across the field in horizontal panels, beginning with type C the ‘*Alī valī Allāh*’ portion of the declaration tends to occur in a clearly marked circle, thus highlighting the Shī‘ī doctrine so emphatically adhered to by the Musha‘sha‘ rulers. The ‘non-Shī‘ī’ *lā ilāh ilā Allāh* portion of the *shahāda*, by contrast, moves from a horizontal position across the reverse to a circular position in the margin.

No dated specimens of this type exist. The following two may serve as examples:



7. Type C: ANS 1938.148.345, AR, n.d., 3.63 gr.

*Obverse:* As in type B. The main difference is in the marginal legend, which, in keeping with the general Safavid coinage under Shah Ṣafī, runs: *ḥast az jān ghulām-i Shāh Ṣafī*.<sup>36</sup>

*Reverse:* As in type B, the central circle contains the Shī‘ī invocation ‘*Alī valī Allāh*’.

Type C also prominently displays a knotted ornament in the margin, executed as an extension of the *ya* of *valī*, and reminiscent of the *tamgha* used by Turcoman rulers from the Timurid to the Āq-quyūnlū dynasties and also found on some coins of Isma‘īl I and Ṭahmāsp I.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> For the successive Safavid legends, see M.A. Dobrynin, ‘Stikotvornye legendy na monetakh Sefevidov,’ *Epigrafika Vostoka* 8 (1952): 63–76; Hushang Farahbakhsh, *Rāhnāmā-yi sikkahā-yi zarbī (chakishī)-yi Irān āz sal 900 tā 1296 hijrī qamarī (1500–1879) milādī* (Berlin: The Author, 1354sh./1975); and Album, *A Checklist of Islamic Coins*, 125–30.

<sup>37</sup> See H.L. Rabino di Borgomale, *Album of Coins, Medals, and Seals of the Shahs of Iran (1500–1941)* (Oxford: At the University Press, 1951), 31; and *idem*, ‘Coins of the Jalā‘ir,’ 125.



8. ANS 1959.165.369, AR, n.d., 3.60 gr.

*Obverse:* As in no. 7.

*Reverse:* As in no. 7.

These two specimens also clearly show that the development toward a bold epigraphy culminated in Shah Şafî's coinage. Russian numismatists have tried to see in the bold and allegedly less refined epigraphy of Safavid coins beginning in the second half of Shah 'Abbās I's reign an expression of the economic problems which supposedly began to plague the Safavid state in this period.<sup>38</sup> But, as these two undated specimens from the reign of Shah Şafî I show, bold does not necessarily mean crude and careless.

The same specimens also represent one of the few die links so far found in Huvayzeh coins. Both concern obverse links. An interesting aspect of finding die links on Huvayzeh maḥmūdīs from the period of Şafî I is the relative rarity of the coins for the later reign of Shah 'Abbās I and the entire reign of Shah Şafî I, at least compared to the abundant production under Shah Sulaymān. The discovery of a die link may point to a rather limited production for this period. If true, the reasons are not altogether clear. As all of 'Arabistān produced few coins in the same period, there is possibly a connection with the tribal unrest and the power struggle between the various contenders from among the Musha'sha' following the death of Sayyid Mubārak in 1025/1616–17.<sup>39</sup> The general silver scarcity that struck Iran at this point, exemplified by the closing of numerous mints in Safavid as well as Ottoman territory in the course of the eleventh/seventeenth century, cannot be excluded either, even though its long-term effect, a greatly diminished output of Safavid coins as of the

<sup>38</sup> Markov, p. 712; A.M. Radzhabli, 'Iz istorii monetnogo dela v sefevidskom gosudarstve,' *Trudy Muzeia Istorii Azerbaidzhana* 4 (1961): 54.

<sup>39</sup> For this unrest and the struggle over control of 'Arabistān, see Turkman Munshī and Muvarrikh, *Ẓayl-i Tārīkh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*, 152–53 and 156–57; and Luft, 'Musha'sha'.

1070s/1660s, runs counter to a simultaneous increase in production in Ҳувayzeh.<sup>40</sup>

The BM specimen below, finally, shows a variant in the *shahāda*—*Muḥammad rasūl Allāh* as opposed to *Muḥammad nabī Allāh*—that is not found in the period of Shah ‘Abbās I but becomes more common under his successors, when both variants appear concurrently on the Ҳувayzeh coinage.



9. BM 89.11.3.30, AR, n.d., 3.58 gr.

*Obverse:* As in nos. 7 and 8.

*Reverse:* The ‘Shī‘ī’ *shahāda* in the central circle. The second part of the marginal *shahāda* has *Muḥammad rasūl Allāh* instead of *Muḥammad nabī Allāh*. The knotted ornament figures prominently in the margin.

Shah Ṣafī I in 1052/1642 was succeeded by his son Shah ‘Abbās II. During the reign of the latter ruler (1052–77/1642–66) Ҳувayzeh coins become abundant compared to the previous period. The Ҳувayzeh *maḥmūdī* in fact would become the most widely circulating commercial coin in the entire Persian Gulf basin beginning in this period. This is possibly related to an upsurge in prosperity in Khuzistan, a development mentioned in the *Tazkīreh-i Shūstar* as being related to the peace accord that the Ottomans and the Safavids signed in 1049/1639 and that included a proviso guaranteeing unimpeded trade between the two territories.<sup>41</sup> Two types were successively issued.

<sup>40</sup> For the closing of Safavid mints as of the 1640s, and in particular the role of the Ҳувayzeh coinage in this development, see Matthee, ‘Mint Consolidation.’ For the closing of Ottoman mints during the reign of Sulṭān Murad IV (1623–40), see Şevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 145.

<sup>41</sup> Sayyid ‘Abdallāh bin Nūr ad-Dīn bin Ni‘matullāh al-Ḥusaynī al-Shūshṭarī, *Tazkīreh-i Shūshṭar*, ed. Khan Bahadur Maula Bakhsh (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1924), 47–48.

These correspond to two different weight standards. From 1052 to 1054 the weight standard for the silver coinage was 2,000 *nukhūd* (seeds) or 384 grams, for the *tūmān*, which represented 10,000 *dinārs*, whereas in the period from 1054 to the end of ‘Abbās II’s rule a standard of 1,925 *nukhūd* (369.6 grams) was applied.<sup>42</sup> The following specimens illustrate the first type, D:



10. Type D: Tüb. 91–1–110, AR, 1054, 3.62 gr.

*Obverse:* The central circle with the mint name and the *ba* of *duriba* continues. The date appears inside the circle. The marginal legend, ‘Abbās [*bandeh-i*] *shāh-i* [*vilāyat*], is only legible in part. The date is located in the margin as well. No fixed place can be observed for the date in the coins from the period of Shah ‘Abbās II, some appearing in the margin, as here, or in various locations within the circle.

*Reverse:* The circular *shahāda* continues, with the marginal *Muhammad rasūl Allāh* that had made its appearance under Shah Ṣafī I.

The legend for the period 1052–54 is legible almost in its entirety on an undated specimen:



11. Tüb. 92–17–28, AR, n.d., 3.65 gr.

<sup>42</sup> See Album, *Checklist*. This new weight standard was also observed by the English and Dutch Company agents. See William Foster, ed., *The English Factories in India, 1646–1650* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1914), 123; and *Algemeen Rijks Archief* (Dutch National Archives, The Hague), VOC 1170, Verburgh, Gamron to Batavia, 15 May 1648, fol. 738.

*Obverse:* Central circle with *Ҳuwayzeh* and the *ba*, but without a date. Marginal legend: *‘Abbās bandeh-i shāh-i vilāyat*. The calligraphy of Ҳuwayzeh coins struck under Shah ‘Abbās II recaptures in part that of the early reign of his great-grandfather, ‘Abbās I, in that it is finer than what had become customary under Shah Ṣafī I.

*Reverse:* The full *‘Shīrī shahāda, Lā ilāh ilā Allāh/Muhammad rasūl Allāh/‘Alī valī [Allāh]*, occurs around the central *‘Alī valī Allāh*. The knotted ornament is visible in the margin, but its location is no longer an extension of the *ya* of *‘Alī*.

During the reign of Shah ‘Abbās II a change in the calligraphy becomes visible in the Ҳuwayzeh coinage as well. Whereas under his predecessors the *nashī* (upright) script had been customary, the calligraphy in Shah ‘Abbās II’s early reign tends toward the *nasta‘līq* (flowing or cursive) variant. In this the Ҳuwayzeh *maḥmūdī* conforms to the general Safavid coinage. An example of this is the following undated coin from the 1052–54 period:



12. Tüb. ID1B3, AR, n.d., 3.81 gr.

*Obverse:* As in no. 11.

*Reverse:* As in no. 11.

The type that was launched in 1054 (E) distinguishes itself from its predecessor, the *‘vilāyat* type, mainly in a modified legend on the reverse. Examples of this development are two specimens from 1066/1656 and 1064/1654, respectively:



13. Type E: Tüb. ID1A5, AR, 1066, 3.45 gr.

*Obverse:* The obverse bears the (partially visible) couplet [*Bih gayti sikkah*] *sāhibqirānī/zad az tawfiq-i [haqq ‘Abbās-i sanī]*. The remainder is as in no. 10, except that the date appears within the circle inside the curvature of the *ba*, as will be common for coins struck under the next ruler, Shah Sulaymān.

*Reverse:* As in nos. 11 and 12.



14. ANS 1922.216.876, AR, 1064, 3.42gr. (holed)

*Obverse:* As in no. 13.

*Reverse:* As in no. 13.

The few extant Ḥuwayzeh coins struck in the short period in which Shah Sulaymān reigned as Shah Ṣafī II (1077–79/1666–67) underscore the validity of the ‘diversity within unity’ model in that they continue to reflect the specificity of the Ḥuwayzeh coinage while conforming to the general Iranian type for this period. Type F is illustrated by no. 15, which is the only extant specimen known to me, aside from the one published in *Tab.*, p. 191, and one, bearing the date 1078, in the private collection of Dr Stan Goron.



15. Type F Tüb. ID4E3, AR, (10)77, 3.53 gr.

*Obverse:* The central circle with the mint name, and the *ba*, which embraces the date. The marginal legend *Bih-gayti ba’d Shāh ‘Abbās-i sanī/Ṣafī zad sikkah-i sāhibqirānī*, which was the standard couplet for the brief reign of Ṣafī II, is only legible in fragmentary form.

*Reverse:* The central circle with the ‘Shī‘ī’ *shahāda*, surrounded by the regular *shahāda*.



In 1079/1667 Şafī II was recrowned as Shah Sulaymān. With this recoronation a new type in the Safavid coinage, G, appeared. The H̄uvayzeh coins reflect this new type, with the caveat that little of the marginal legend that indicates the ruler is legible on most of the coins from this period. Most characteristic in H̄uvayzeh coins from the period of Shah Sulaymān is the change in style. The bold epigraphy of the Şafī I period reappears, albeit in a less ‘finished’ and refined form. With the passage of time, the boldness becomes more pronounced. The general appearance of the coins tends to be irregular and the execution is often crude. Many are off-center. This apparent shoddiness is exacerbated by the fact that many H̄uvayzeh coins from the Sulaymān period are extremely worn, to the point where their legend is often barely legible—a sign that they passed through many hands and were in use for long periods of time. Also characteristic of the *maḥmūdī* in this period is that the date, whenever it is given, invariably appears in the curvature of the *ba*, which is set inside the central circle. The *shahāda* comes in both the *nabī Allāh* and the *rasūl Allāh* variant. The knotted ornament also appears on the obverse in many cases, with a seemingly random location in the margin. Examples are:



16. Type G: ANS 1938.148.344, AR, 1085, 3.37 gr.

*Obverse:* A central circle containing the mint name, with the *ba* enclosing the date underneath. The marginal legend runs *Bandeh-i shāh-i vilāyat [Sulaymān]*.

*Reverse:* A central circle containing the ‘Shī‘ī’ portion of the *shahāda*, with *nabī Allāh* in the marginal *shahāda*.



17. Tüb. ID5A5, AR, 1084, 3.61 gr.

*Obverse:* Circular legend with the mint name, the *ba*, and the date.  
*Marginal legend:* *Bandeh-i shah-i vilāyat Sulay[man]*.

*Reverse:* The 'Shī'ī' portion of the shahāda in a central circle, surrounded by the marginal legend, which is composed of the 'non-Shī'ī' part of the shahāda. The knotted ornament is pronounced.

Another obverse die link concerns nos. 18 and 19, struck during the reign of Shah Sulaymān.



18. ANS 1938.148.341, AR, n.d., 3.63gr.

*Obverse:* As in no. 16.

*Reverse:* As in no. 16.



19. ANS 1938.148.276, AR, n.d., 3.57 gr. (holed)

*Obverse:* As in no. 16.

*Reverse:* As in no. 16.

Both are undated, yet, given their style, they are clearly from the Sulaymān period. It is tempting to see in the decorative inverted V's two eights, suggesting the year 1088, under which year they have indeed been catalogued. The year 1088 is doubtful, however. A comparison with specimens that are incontrovertibly from 1088, such as nos. 20 and 21, creates the impression that decorations rather than dates are involved here.



20. ANS 1938.148.336, AR, 1088, 3.40 gr.

*Obverse:* As in no. 16.

*Reverse:* As in no. 16.



21. Tüb. ID5B4, AR, 1088, 3.32 gr.

*Obverse:* As in no. 16.

*Reverse:* As in no. 16.

A late example of the Ҳuwayzeh *maḥmūdī* is no. 23.



22. BM1983-7-8-12, AR, 1110?, 3.02 gr.

*Obverse:* A counterstamp with the word *ra'ij*, 'current'; otherwise effaced and illegible. The year 1110 in retrograde.

*Reverse:* The central circle with the 'Shīrī' portion of the *shahāda*. The same *ra'ij* counterstamp occurs.

The same type continued until the end of the Ҳuwayzeh coinage, as is clear from the last specimen whose dating is beyond dispute, no. 24.



23. Goron coll., AR, 1132, 3.3 gr.

*Obverse:* As in no. 16.

*Reverse:* As in no. 16.

### *Conclusion*

Throughout the Islamic world, the minting of coins has traditionally been considered a symbol of sovereignty, so much so in fact that the first thing a regional ruler keen on proclaiming his independence from the capital would do was to strike his own currency. The rulers of Ḥuvayzeh in the Safavid period never went so far as to declare full autonomy from the central state by minting their own currency. They did not have to, for as *valīs* they had considerable autonomy within the system. They were tributary to the Safavid state, and each year they were made to send gifts to Isfahan as a token of their fealty. *Valīs* were also expected to supply troops for Safavid campaigns. But otherwise they enjoyed considerable autonomy. This included a large measure of jurisdiction over the mint they supervised and whose income they enjoyed.

The coinage issued in Ḥuvayzeh in the eleventh/seventeenth century reflects the position of the region's *valīs* in representing diversity within unity. It conforms to Safavid patterns in terms of legends, but unmistakably appears as a regional coinage in terms of layout, style, and calligraphy. W. Caskel's statement that, from the time of Shah Isma'īl's 914/1508–09 campaign against it, Khuzistan adhered to 'orthodox Twelver Shī'ism,' needs to be qualified.<sup>43</sup> If their coinage is any guidance, the Musha'sha' continued to exhibit distinct characteristics, which included a more emphatic celebration of their belief in the centrality of 'Alī in the Shī'ī pantheon.

<sup>43</sup> Caskel, 'Ein Mahdi des 15. Jahrhunderts,' 76.

*Abbreviations*

ANS	American Numismatic Society, New York
BM	British Museum, London
Markov	Hermitage, St. Petersburg, in A. Markov, <i>Inventarniy katalog' musul'manskikh' monet'</i> (St. Petersburg, 1896).
Poole	R.S. Poole, <i>A Catalogue of Coins of the Shahs of Persia in the British Museum</i> (London, 1877).
Tab.	Museum of Tabrīz (Azerbaijān), in Sayyid Jamāl Turābī Ṭabāṭabā'ī, <i>Sikkahā-yi shāhān-i Islāmī-yi Irān</i> (Tehran, 1350/1971).
Tüb.	Tübingen University Numismatic Collection

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PART SIX

THE SPIRITUAL REALM:  
MOVEMENTS, MANUSCRIPTS, MEDICINE AND MONEY

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## AFTER THE MESSIAH: THE NŪRBAKHSHIYYEH IN LATE TIMURID AND EARLY SAFAVID TIMES

Shahzad Bashir

The rise of the Safavid ruling house in the beginning of the tenth/sixteenth century was the culmination of a process in which an influential Sufi order transformed itself into a political movement. The order's increasing militarization during the latter half of the ninth/fifteenth century correlates with its leaders' tendency towards an exaggerated cult of personality, and the order's rapid popularization among Turkoman tribespeople active as *ghāzīs* in the Caucasus and Asia Minor. From a broader vantage point, the order's eminently successful mixing of religion and politics was part of a larger vogue in messianic and millenarian ideas in the Islamic East during the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup> While a number of recent studies have greatly advanced our understanding of the Safavid order's mutation,<sup>2</sup> the general character of the fifteenth century as a messianic age has received relatively less attention. Studies on the origins of the Safavids contain brief mentions of the other orders and movements that were a part of the tumultuous religious scene in the fifteenth century. However, they do not dwell on such movements' particular historical circumstances and characteristics.

In this paper, I wish to focus on the Nūrbakhshiyeh, a Mahdist movement which arose and matured slightly ahead of the Safavids in the fifteenth century. Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh (d. 869/1464), the movement's eponymous founder, put forth a claim of being the

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<sup>1</sup> For an overall review of such activity see B.S. Amoretti, 'Religion under the Timurids and the Safavids,' in *Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. P. Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 6:610–23, and Shahzad Bashir, *Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions: The Nūrbakhshīya Between Medieval and Modern Islam* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, forthcoming 2003).

<sup>2</sup> See particularly: Jean Aubin, 'L'avènement des Safavides reconsidéré,' *Moyen Orient & Océan Indien* 5 (1988), 1–130; A.H. Morton, 'The Early Years of Shah Isma'īl in the *Afdal al-tawārikh* and Elsewhere,' in *Safavid Persia*, ed. Charles Melville (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 27–51; Said Amir Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Michel Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Safavids: Sī'ism, Šūfism and the Gulāt* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1972).

Mahdi in 826/1423 and was able to attract an appreciable following in various parts of Iran and Central Asia. Unlike the Safavids, however, Nūrbakhsh held a fatalistic vision of the Mahdi's inevitable worldly triumph and did not advocate a resort to arms for the vindication of his claim.<sup>3</sup> My specific aim in the present paper is to trace the trajectory of the Nūrbakhshīyyeh approximately between 1450–1550, the period during which the Safavids also rose to power and consolidated their empire. Nūrbakhshī and Safavid histories overlap most consequentially in the form of a conflict at the end of this period, but the development of the Nūrbakhshīyyeh is itself a significant part of Iranian religious history in late Timurid and early Safavid times.

In thematic terms, the discussion in this paper has to do with an Islamic messianic movement's attempt to deal with both the death of the messiah and a radical change in the religious landscape of its context. The Nūrbakhshīyyeh naturally underwent a crisis at the moment of the Mahdi's death and was forced to evolve new understandings of his designation and their impending mission. The change of political and religious circumstances following the success of Ismā'īl I further impacted the activity of the movement's adherents, leading eventually to its complete demise as a distinctive religious viewpoint in Iran. The mechanics of both these processes are visible in this review of Nūrbakhshī history over the century-long period 1450–1550.

### *The Mahdi and His Death*

Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh was born in Qā'īn, Qūhistān, in 1392 and went to Hirat as a young man to fulfill an aptitude for learning and

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<sup>3</sup> Nūrbakhsh's vision of his personal claim is articulated in his work *Risālat al-hudā* which I have edited in my dissertation based upon two manuscripts in Istanbul (Esad Efendi 3702, fols. 85b–108a, and Fatih 5367, fols. 101a–139a, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi). His fatalism is evident in the belief that he would automatically acquire worldly dominion at the age of 80 since his horoscope indicates that his total lifespan is to be 88 years and, according to prophetic tradition, the Mahdi will die after ruling for about 7, 8 or 9 years (*Risālat al-hudā*, part 1, section 32, in Bashir, 'Between Mysticism and Messianism: The Life and Thought of Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh (d. 1464)', Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1997, 290–1).

scholarship.<sup>4</sup> Here he was inducted into the circle of Khvājah Ishāq Khuttalānī (d. 826/1423), the leading master in the Kubravī Sufi order at the time. The Nūrbakhshīyeh began as a movement in Khuttalān when Nūrbakhsh proclaimed himself Mahdī in 826/1423 with at least passive support from Khvāja Ishāq. Nūrbakhsh's assertions divided the local Kubravī community into his followers and detractors, resulting eventually in the division of Kubravī legacy into the Nūrbakhshīyeh and Zahabiyya sub-orders.<sup>5</sup> The governor of Khuttalān construed the messianic claim as a local revolt against Timurid hegemony and captured the principals in the affair after a brief skirmish. Subsequently, the elderly Khvājah Ishāq was adjudged to be the main culprit and was put to death, while Nūrbakhsh himself was freed after a six-month imprisonment. The authorities had resolved that he was a mere pawn whose vanity Khvājah Ishāq had manipulated for the sake of furthering his own political interests. After his release, Nūrbakhsh spent the next twenty three years in Luristān, Kurdistān and Gīlān, moving frequently in order to both spread his message and avoid Timurid persecution. The death of Nūrbakhsh's arch-foe Mīrzā Shāhrukh in 850/1447 allowed Nūrbakhsh to settle in Sulighān, a village near Ray, where he managed a *khān-qāh* for approximately the last seventeen (850–868/1447–64) years of his life.

The Nūrbakhshīyeh stabilized as a movement under Nūrbakhsh himself after the establishment of a permanent Sufi community around 853/1450. Nūrbakhsh's own works as well as later sources reporting on his successors make it clear that he persisted in his Mahdist claim until his death. However, during the stay in Sulighān, he concerned himself mainly with the instruction of disciples in the Kubravī-Nūrbakhshī *ṭarīqa*, leaving the messianic expectation to be fulfilled at its due time.<sup>6</sup> At his death, his following consisted of people from

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed biography of Nūrbakhsh see Bashir, *Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions* (forthcoming).

<sup>5</sup> For a review of the division of the Kubraviyya see also Devin DeWeese, 'The Eclipse of the Kubraviyah in Central Asia,' *Iranian Studies*, 21, no. 1–2 (1988): 59–83.

<sup>6</sup> An indication of this to be found in his correspondence with two Timurid rulers, 'Alā al-Dawleh and Abū'l-Qāsim Bābur, where he provides spiritual advice without reference to his personal claims. His letter to 'Alā al-Dauleh is extant (Ja'far Ṣadaqiyanlū, *Ahvāl va āsar-i Sayyid Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh Uwāysī Qūhīstānī* [Tehran, n.p., 1972], 78–82), while the correspondence with Bābur can be inferred from the ruler's reply which bears royal seals ('Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā'ī, ed., *Asnād va makātibāt-i tāvīkhī-yi Irān* [Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjūmeh va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1962], 297–8). In

all the different regions he had inhabited for extended periods (i.e. Luristan, Kurdistan, Gilan, Ray). Elegies written at this time extol him as both the great teacher of the community and the Mahdī,<sup>7</sup> and his grave has remained a place of pilgrimage for Nūrbakhshīs from the fifteenth century to the present. Nūrbakhsh's prominent students had started to disperse to other localities within his lifetime so that, close to the time of his death, Nūrbakhshī Shaykhs presided over khānqāhs in Cairo and Baghdad,<sup>8</sup> as well as at least Hamadan, Shiraz, Tabrīz, Ṭāliqān and Sulighān in Iran.<sup>9</sup> Besides these places, indirect evidence suggests that Nūrbakhshīs were present in other parts of Iran, in the area around the western shores of the Caspian Sea, and in Central Asia and the Ottoman empire.

Nūrbakhshīs' response to the founder's death reflected his status in between the Mahdī and a particularly important Sufi Shaykh in a long line of distinguished Kubravī masters. Those who emphasized the Sufi side of his accomplishments included Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā Lāhījī (d. 912/1506–7), author of the celebrated *Mafātīḥ al-ʿijāz fī sharḥ-i Gulshan-i rāz*. Lāhījī's work *Asrār al-shuhūd*, which includes a moving account of his first meeting with Nūrbakhsh and was written within the master's lifetime,<sup>10</sup> addresses Nūrbakhsh as the Mahdī on two occasions, although the usage is qualified in both instances (*mahdī-yi dawrān* and *mahdī va hādī*).<sup>11</sup> In

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contrast, Nūrbakhsh's earlier letter to Shāhrukh (written around 845/1442–3) is hostile towards the ruler and explicitly proclaims himself the Mahdī (cf. Ṣadaqiānlū, *Aḥwāl va āsār*, 73–7).

<sup>7</sup> Muḥammad 'Alī Kashmīrī, *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, MS. 'Awn 'Alī Shāh, Baltistān (Pakistan), 72–77. This very rare work on Nūrbakhshī history survives only in manuscripts in Baltistān and Kashmir. My references here are to pages in the photocopy of a complete manuscript (copied 1052/1642) belonging to the late pīr of Nūrbakhshīs in Khaplū, Baltistān. I am grateful to Ghulām Ḥasan Suhrawardī Nūrbakhshī of Khaplū for very graciously providing me with a copy of his own photocopy of this manuscript. A summary Urdu translation of this work has now been published in Baltistān (*Tuḥfa-yi Kashmīr*, tr. Muḥammad Riḍā Akhūndzāda [Khaplū: Barāt Library, 1997]).

<sup>8</sup> Kashmīrī, *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, 15–16, 30–2; Nūrbakhsh, *Risālat al-hudā*, part 2, section 131.

<sup>9</sup> Ḥāfiẓ Ḥusayn Ibn al-Karbalā'ī, *Rawḍāt al-jinān va jannāt al-janān*, ed. Ja'far Sulṭān al-Qurrā'ī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjūmah va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1970), 1:110, 396–7; 'Alī (Muḥibbī?), *Silsila-nāmeḥ*, MS. Persian 39, fols. 44a–47a, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; Nādir Mīrẓā, *Tārīkh va juḡhrāfiyā-yi dār al-salṭana Tabrīz*, ed. Ghulām Riḍā Tabātabā'ī Majd (Tabrīz: Intishārāt-i Sutūdeh, 1994), 281–2.

<sup>10</sup> Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Lāhījī, *Asrār al-shuhūd*, ed. 'Alī Āl-i Dāwūd (Tehran: Mū'assasah-yi Muṭāli'āt va Taḥqīqāt-i Farhangī, 1989), 84–8.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, 13.

contrast, Lāhījī's works completed after Nūrbakhsh's death praise him in both prose and verse without ever employing the term Mahdi,<sup>12</sup> and a lengthy discussion on the promised savior in the *Mafātīh al-ījāz* contains no mention of Nūrbakhsh.<sup>13</sup>

Pursuing a line of thought originating in Nūrbakhsh's own works, Lāhījī explains in the *Mafātīh* that the Muḥammadan Reality (*ḥaqīqa muḥammadiyya*) manifests itself in the bodies of living human beings through a process called projection (*burūz*).<sup>14</sup> This occurs at varying levels, so that the perfect humans in a given historical period are receptacles of the projection of the Muḥammadan Reality according to the level of spiritual perfection available in that age. Lāhījī most likely regarded Nūrbakhsh as the physical manifestation of Muḥammadan Reality in his lifetime in this sense (thus the term *mahdī-yi dawrān*), but not as the eschatological savior who is to be the only other complete manifestation of *ḥaqīqa muḥammadiyya* besides Muḥammad the prophet.<sup>15</sup> This view was further concretized after Nūrbakhsh's death when Lāhījī retained his fondness and respect for the teacher despite the fact that he had failed to fulfill traditional expectations regarding the Mahdi.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Shams al-Dīn Lāhījī, *Mafātīh al-ījāz fī sharḥ Gulshan-i rāz*, eds. Muḥammad Riḍā Bārzgar Khalīqī and ʿIffat Karbāsī (Tehran: Zavvar, 1992), 67, 293, 353–4, 585–7.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 265–87. Lāhījī's theoretical discussion about the Mahdi is strikingly similar to Nūrbakhsh's personalized description of the savior's identity and function. This suggests that Lāhījī was familiar with Nūrbakhsh's claim but chose not to ratify it at least after the teacher's death.

<sup>14</sup> For Nūrbakhsh's usage of this term see Bashir, 'Between Mysticism and Messianism,' 187–92.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> There is some evidence that other followers of Nūrbakhsh also saw him in a similar light. For example, the *Silsila-nāma* of ʿAlī Muḥibbī mentions Nūrbakhsh as the master of his own Shaykh Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Ṭāliqānī but does not distinguish him from any of the others in his list of the Kubravī *silsila* (fols. 44a–47a). Lāhījī died in 912/1506–7 and was buried in his *khānqāh* in Shīrāz. His was succeeded by his son Aḥmad Shaykhzāda Lāhījī who composed verse under the name Fidāʿī. He was among the companions of Shaykh Najm Zargar and Ismāʿīl I sent him as an ambassador to the court of Muḥammad Khān Shaybānī in Transoxiana where he had numerous discussions with local scholars. He died after returning to Shiraz from this mission and was buried in his ancestral *khānqāh* in 927/1520–21. Nūr Allāh Shūshtarī mentions Aḥmad's son Abū'l-Qāsim Baṣīr as a teacher of his own grandfather Nūr Allāh in Shiraz, and Sām Mīrzā gives some verses by his son-in-law Qāzī ʿAbd Allāh Yaḳīnī. Shūshtarī's personal affiliation with the Nūrbakhshīyyeh was through his familial connection to the hospice established by Lāhījī in Shiraz. For details see: Qāzī Nūr Allāh Shūshtarī, *Majālis al-muʿminīn*, ed. Ḥājī Sayyid Aḥmad, 2 vols (Tehran: Kitābforūshī-yi Islāmiyya, 1975), 2:153; ʿAlīshīr

Lāhījī's works and some other evidence suggest that a whole branch of the Nūrbakshīyyeh essentially disassociated itself from the messianic aspects of Nūrbaksh's legacy soon after his death. For these adherents, the designation 'Nūrbakshī' conferred upon them the prestige of a chain of initiation (*silsila*) going back to Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 617/1221).<sup>17</sup> They regarded Nūrbaksh as the *Mahdī* in only the literal sense (i.e. one who has received divine guidance), without implying a messianic function.<sup>18</sup>

In contrast with the purely Sufi Nūrbakshīyyeh, Qāsim Fayzbaksh (d. 919/1513–14), Nūrbaksh's eldest son, became the head of a Nūrbakshīyyeh in Sulighān that retained the more radical vision of Nūrbaksh's identity after his death.<sup>19</sup> Qāsim had been groomed by Nūrbaksh to be his successor in spiritual matters, a position that was augmented in later years through the expansion of the family's landholdings in the area around Sulighān. Qāsim (sometimes referred to as Qāsim Nūrbaksh in the sources) spent the first few years of his spiritual reign in Sulighān but was eventually drawn to the court of the Āq-quyūnlū ruler Sultan Ya'qūb (r. 883–896/1478–90) in Tabrīz some time around the early 1480s.<sup>20</sup> The exact nature of his liaison with the Āq-quyūnlū court remains obscure, which, in any event, must have been quite short since he was soon lured to Hirat

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Navā'ī, *Majālis al-naḥā'is*, ed. 'Alī Aṣghar Hikmat (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-yi Bānk-i Millī-yi Irān, 1944), 383; Sām Mīrzā Ṣafavī, *Tazkireh-yi tuḥfa-yi Sāmī*, ed. Rukn al-Dīn Humāyūnfarrukh (Tehran: 'Ilmī, n.d.), 109–10; Amīn Aḥmad Rāzī, *Haft iqḥim*, ed. Javvād Faḍīl, 3 vols (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī-yi 'Alī Akbar, 1950), 3:141–2; Luṭf 'Alī Big 'Azar, *Atashkadeh-yi 'Azar*, ed. Sayyid Ja'far Shahīdī (Tehran: Mū'assasah-yi Nashr-i Kitāb, 1958), 167.

<sup>17</sup> The Kubraviyya had been split into two major factions following Nūrbaksh's proclamation of Mahdhood. The Nūrbakshīyya's rival for Kubravī legitimacy was the Zahabiyya, stemming from 'Abd Allāh Barzishābādī (d. 873/1468), a student of Khuttalānī who refused to accept Nūrbaksh as the Mahdī. For the history of the Zahabiyya see: DeWeese, 'The Eclipse of the Kubraviyah,' and Richard Gramlich, *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens*, 3 vols (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1965–81), 1:4–18.

<sup>18</sup> For example, Shūshtarī states that Ishāq Khuttalānī had proclaimed Nūrbaksh the Mahdī in order only to raise a rebellion against the tyrannical Timurids (Shūshtarī, *Majālis*, 2:143).

<sup>19</sup> For the most extensive account of Qāsim's accession to the order's leadership see Kashmīrī, *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, 77, 93–4.

<sup>20</sup> The year can be adduced only based upon the biography of Shams al-Dīn 'Irāqī given in *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*. 'Irāqī is said to have spent nineteen years in the company of other Nūrbakshī Shaykhs following Nūrbaksh's death before becoming attached to Qāsim while he was still in Sulighān. He then accompanied Qāsim on his travels to the two courts (Kashmīrī, *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, 95).

following an invitation by the Timurid Ḥusayn Bāyqarā (r. 875–912/1470–1506).<sup>21</sup> The same two courts were also hosts to Nūrbakhsh's younger son Ja'far (d. after 909/1503–4), whom 'Alīshīr Navā'ī praises for his poetic talent in the *Majālis al-nafā'is*.<sup>22</sup>

Some detailed reports of incidents from Qāsim and Ja'far's stay in Hirat enable us to reconstruct the beliefs of the family branch of the Nūrbakhshīyeh at this stage. Navā'ī mockingly remarks that even forty years after Nūrbakhsh's death, Ja'far still believed that his father had been the Mahdi. He also states, without further elaboration, that Nūrbakhshīs in general were divided into two groups: those who believed that he had been the Mahdi, and those who thought that one of his descendants would some day rise as the expected figure.<sup>23</sup> This tantalizing possibility cannot be confirmed from any other source, though it is a view likely to have been popular in a community attempting to rationalize the death of a messiah.

More details are available for Qāsim's position at the Timurid court since he was Nūrbakhsh's principal successor and, in the eyes of local scholars, the inheritor of his father's indiscretions. Sources on the period generally portray the Nūrbakhshīyeh as an order rivaling the Naqshbandīyya for royal attention. The competition is exemplified by showdowns between Qāsim on the one hand and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 1492) on the other, with the victor changing according to the biases of each individual author.

Qāzī Nūr Allāh Shūshtarī (d. 1019/1610), who was himself affiliated with the Nūrbakhshīyeh through the aforementioned Lāhījī, provides an account favorable to Qāsim. In his version of events, Ḥusayn Bāyqarā had invited Qāsim to Hirat in his search for a cure from a persistent illness. He became very grateful to Qāsim upon his recovery after the Shaykh's arrival and put aside some areas as fiefs (*suyūrghāl*) for Qāsim and his wife.<sup>24</sup> This greatly displeased scholars such as Jāmī and Shaykh al-Islām (Sayf al-Dīn Aḥmad) Taftāzānī

<sup>21</sup> The letter of invitation is preserved in Navā'ī, *Asnād va makātibāt*, 403–5. Navā'ī takes the reference to another ruler (*vālī-yi ān ḥavālī*) to mean the Āqquyūnlū ruler Ūzun Ḥasan, but it is more likely to be to Sultan Ya'qūb on chronological grounds.

<sup>22</sup> Navā'ī, *Majālis al-nafā'is*, 96, 272.

<sup>23</sup> Ghiyās al-Dīn Khvāndamīr, *Habīb al-siyar*, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Humā'ī, 4 vols. (Tehran: Kitābkhāneh-yi Khayyām, 1954), 4:116. The author here wrongly states that Ja'far was Nūrbakhsh's oldest son, and this mistake is followed by all later sources.

<sup>24</sup> Shūshtarī, *Majālis*, 2:148–9.

(d. 916/1510–11)<sup>25</sup> who thought Qāsim incompetent in the exoteric religious sciences. To vindicate their suspicions, they suggested to Bāyqarā that Qāsim should give the sermon on Friday in the main mosque so that the general public could benefit from his erudition. Unaware of the scholars' malicious intentions, the Sultan liked the idea and agreed to the event. Next Friday, Qāsim began a sermon on the benefits of reciting 'lā ilāha illā llāh' after the customary invocations. Jāmī decided that this was the opportunity he had been waiting for and interrupted the sermon to say that he wanted to discuss this phrase. Qāsim replied, 'I heard that when you were in Iraq you wanted to analyze and dispute the phrase 'Alī walī allāh', and now (even) the phrase 'there is no god but God' is to be investigated!' The great audience gathered to hear the sermon began to laugh at this retort, and Qāsim ended his sermon with the *Fātiḥa*.<sup>26</sup>

Contrary to Shūshtarī, 'Abd al-Vāsi' Nizāmī Bākharzī (d. 904/1497–8) portrays Qāsim as the defeated party in his account of the incident in his hagiography *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī*. He states that Qāsim had arrived in Hirat from Ray and had become quite popular among the city's nobles. This popularity did not sit well with Jāmī, who devised a scheme to expose Qāsim's incompetence in religious matters. Consequently, an open debate attended by thousands was held between Qāsim and the 'ulamā' which unmasked Qāsim as a pretender. The Sultan then allowed him to leave Hirat only when he begged for mercy and publicly disavowed all his false teachings.<sup>27</sup>

The most pro-Nūrbakhshī account of Qāsim's interaction with the scholars is presented in Muḥammad 'Alī Kashmīrī's *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, a biography of Qāsim's disciple Shams al-Dīn 'Irāqī (d. 933/1526) who was a witness to the events as his teacher's companion in Hirat. Kashmīrī relates a number of stories illustrating the competition between Qāsim and the Sunnī 'ulamā' of Hirat with the former predictably vanquishing his enemies in each instance. In the event most closely resembling the accounts of Shūshtarī and Bākharzī, Kashmīrī

<sup>25</sup> For Taftāzānī see Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb*, 4:349.

<sup>26</sup> In another version of the event, Mīrzā 'Alā al-Dawleh states in his dictionary of poets entitled *Nafā'is al-ma'āsir* that Qāsim received great respect in Hirat, and one day close to ten thousand people pledged to become his students at the main mosque (cited, based upon a manuscript in Lahore, in Muḥammad Shafī', 'Fīrqa-yi Nūrbakhshīyeh,' *Oriental College Magazine*, 5, no. 4 [August 1929], 8).

<sup>27</sup> 'Abd al-Vāsi' Nizāmī Bākharzī, *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī*, ed. Najīb Mā'il-i Hiravī (Tehran: Nashr-i Nay, 1992), 188–9.



states that the scholars once challenged Qāsim to teach something from the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* of Ibn al-‘Arabī. They were then astounded to see that Qāsim could do so without even looking at the book and were later told that the *Fuṣūṣ* was deemed an easy book by the Nūrbakhshīyeh since Nūrbakhsh himself used to instruct students from it at the very beginning of their Sufi education. Qāsim then challenged the scholars with a much more difficult text, namely the *Tajaljal al-dhāt* of Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, which they were unable to comprehend after many days of constant study.<sup>28</sup>

Qāsim’s chief patron at the court was Bāyqarā’s nephew Sultan Muḥammad Kīchīk Mīrzā, whose death in 889/1484–5 persuaded him to leave Hirat for good in fear of his life.<sup>29</sup> Kashmīrī states that one of the scholars’ chief complaints against Qāsim was that he busied himself too much with medicine and, by this token, was not worthy of being called a Sufi shaykh. In response, Qāsim told his confidants that the criticism was a sign of spiritual ignorance on the part of people like Jāmī since they did not know that sainthood or spiritual authority (*valāyat*) underwent manifest and hidden cycles lasting about a century each.<sup>30</sup> The last manifest cycle had begun with the death of the Kubravī master ‘Alī Hamadānī in 786/1385 so that now (presumably after the year 890/1485) was a period in which the true saints (*awliyā’*) were concealed. Those cognizant of this historical watershed such as Qāsim did not make an open show of their knowledge, while ignoramuses like Jāmī went about aggrandizing themselves.

Stories about Qāsim’s stay in Hirat give us a blueprint for the status and beliefs of the Nūrbakhshīyeh just before the rise of the Safavids. The order had clearly gained a secure footing among Sufi organizations of the day since Qāsim, its head, could hold a position at the courts of Bāyqarā and Ya‘qūb Āq-quyūnlū. His standing was strengthened by the fiefs granted to him by rulers, enhancing the family’s economic status. Nūrbakhshī sources themselves portray the

<sup>28</sup> Kashmīrī, *Tuhfat al-aḥbāb*, 66–7.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 284–7.

<sup>30</sup> This idea had been around in the Kubraviyya before Nūrbakhsh’s time since Kashmīrī (correctly) cites Ja‘far Badakhshī as its origin (*Khulāṣat al-manāqib*, ed. Sayyida Ashraf Zafar [Islamabad: Markaz-i Taḥqīqāt-i Fārsī-yi Īrān va Pākistān, 1995], 81–2). However, Badakhshī did not connect the general principle to specific moments in historic time.

order as a rival to the influence of the Naqshbandiyya represented by Jāmī (and through him ‘Alīshīr Navā’ī) at Bāyqarā’s court. The fact that this was true at least for the brief period of Qāsim’s stay in Hirat during the mid-880–90s/1480s is borne out by Bākharzī’s polemic against him in his hagiography of Jāmī. It is also noteworthy that nowhere in the *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī* are Nūrbakhsh himself or Qāsim castigated for being Shī’īs despite Bākharzī’s antipathy towards Shī’ī activists in other parts of his narrative.<sup>31</sup> The Nūrbakhshiyeh was thus seen as a category apart from standardized sectarian groupings by its enemies.

On the ideological front, Qāsim’s branch of the Nūrbakhshiyeh attempted to rationalize the Mahdi’s death differently than Lāhījī and others who emphasized Nūrbakhsh’s Sufi accomplishments alone. Some members of this group ostensibly awaited a Mahdi from among Nūrbakhsh’s descendants while others evolved a more subtle understanding of his function. His life (794–869/1392–1464) fell within a rare period of manifest *valāyat* which began with the death of ‘Alī Hamadānī.<sup>32</sup> The Mahdi was thus essentially the preeminent Sufi of an age in which the esoteric secrets of Sufism (*ḥaqā’iq-i bāṭin*) were to be proclaimed openly in public. The person charged with this function was an elect among the elect since his job most closely approximated the mission of Muḥammad, the prophet. He was, therefore, like none other among Muslims living in post-prophetic times, and the age of disclosure had ended soon after his death. His special message was, however, to be preserved and propagated as the true Islam identical with the pure version instituted by Muḥammad in the seventh century.<sup>33</sup> The Nūrbakhshiyeh, therefore, was a kind of Islamic reformation whose mission was to shed the accretions of eight centuries of Islamic history and to transcend the sectarian and ideological divisions permeating the Islamic social milieu of the times.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Bākharzī, *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī*, 148–51.

<sup>32</sup> Nūrbakhsh himself also refers to his time period as the age of the manifestation of sainthood (*zuhūr-i valāyat*) in his works (cf. *Maktūb bih ‘Alā’ al-Daula*, in Ṣadaqiyyānlū, *Aḥwāl va āsār*, 81).

<sup>33</sup> A juridical compendium ascribed to Nūrbakhsh states that the author has been called upon by god to eliminate disagreements among Muslims in both legal principles (*uṣūl*) and practical law (*furū’*), by explaining Muḥammad’s *shar’*a exactly as it was instituted in the prophet’s own day (*al-Fiqh al-aḥwāl*, third printing [Original text in Arabic with Urdu translation by Abu’l-‘Irfān Muḥammad Bashīr; Skardu: Idāra-yi Madrasa-yi Shāh-i Hamadān Ṣūfiyya Nūrbakhshiyeh, 1997], 1).

<sup>34</sup> For an elaboration of this theme in Nūrbakhsh’s own works see Bashīr, *Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions* (forthcoming).

Though different in its understanding of Nūrbakhsh's mission, the Sufi Nūrbakhshīyeh probably also shared this reformist vision of the movement. Lāhījī's *Mafātīh al-ʿjāz* contains a general exaltation of Sufi esotericism over the exoteric knowledge (particularly jurisprudence) of people such as Shāfiʿī and Ibn Ḥanbal.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, he explicitly states that one should follow a Sufi master irrespective of whether he espouses the cause of ʿUmar or ʿAlī.<sup>36</sup> Contrary to descriptions in both late Safavid sources and secondary discussions, neither one of the two Nūrbakhshī groups can be called Shīʿī in the Twelver, Ismāʿīlī, Zaydī or the *ghulāt* senses.<sup>37</sup> In this period, Nūrbakhshīs saw themselves as a distinct grouping that stemmed from Sufism and attempted to transcend traditional sectarian divides.<sup>38</sup>

### *The Nūrbakhshīyeh and the Safavids*

Interaction between the Nūrbakhshīs and the Safavids began as the latter assumed a greater political role in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Upon his exit from Hirat, Qāsim made a brief pilgrimage to Mashhad and then returned to the area near Ray.<sup>39</sup> His

<sup>35</sup> Lāhījī, *Mafātīh al-ʿjāz*, 311.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 231. On this score, S.H. Nasr's claim that Lāhījī 'was thoroughly Shīʿī while being an outstanding *ṣūfī*' cannot be reconciled with the explicitly contradictory evidence of Lāhījī's own works (*Cambridge History of Iran*, 6:657).

<sup>37</sup> The point here is not to deny any connections between the Nūrbakhshīyeh and Shīʿism or ʿAlid loyalism in its broadest sense. My evaluation of Nūrbakhshī history suggests, however, that the movement's members did not identify with any one of the major Shīʿī traditions already in existence. Furthermore, the Nūrbakhshīyeh's ideological outlook cannot be assigned to any one of the established Shīʿī categories in the same way as Qizilbāsh religion can be called a form of *ghuluww*.

<sup>38</sup> The most prominent example for a deliberate 'Shīʿitization' of the Nūrbakhshīyeh in later literature is Shūstari's account in the *Majālis al-muʿminīn*. Among secondary sources, Marījan Molé's extended hypothesis about the gradual unfolding of Shīʿī tendencies in the Kubravī order between Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 617/1221) himself and Nūrbakhsh needs revision under the light of more recent studies. The attribution of such tendencies to ʿAlā al-Dawla Simnānī (d. 736/1336) and ʿAlī Hamadānī (d. 786/1385) now seem unlikely, and even in Nūrbakhsh's case, the Shīʿī aspect of his thought derived from his family background and not the training he received from Kubravī Shaykhs (cf. Jamal Elias, *The Throne Carrier of God: The Life and Thought of ʿAlāʿ ad-dawla as-Simnānī* [Albany: SUNY Press, 1995]; Devin DeWeese, 'Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī and Kubravī Hagiographical Traditions,' in *The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn [London: Khanqahi Nimatullahi Publications, 1992]; Bashir, 'Between Mysticism and Messianism,' 137–9).

<sup>39</sup> A solitary source, *Nafāʿ is al-maʿāsir*, states that he went back to Tabrīz to join the court of Sultan Yaʿqūb instead (Shaftī, 'Firqa,' 8).

residence from this point forward is named Ṭurusht, a locality close to Sulighān, another indication that the family had acquired more land in the area.<sup>40</sup> We hear of him next in the context of the struggles of the Safavids against the Āqquyūnlū. His name appears in the *Tārīkh-i ilchū-yi Nīzām Shāh* as the spiritual preceptor of Ḥusayn Kiyā Chulāvī (d. 912/1506), the overlord of Khār-u-Simnān and Fīrūzkūh.<sup>41</sup> Chulāvī was a partisan of Muḥammadī Mīrzā Āqquyūnlū (d. 906/1500) against his brother Alvand Beg and had aided the former in gaining Tabrīz in 905–6/1499. Ibrāhīm and Ismā‘īl, young sons of Ḥaydar the Safavid, were in residence in Lāhījān under the protection of Mīrzā ‘Alī Kār Kiyā at this time and were helped by the momentary success of Muḥammadī Mīrzā. The Nūrbakhshīs had thus somewhat inadvertently become allies of the Safavids during this period, and it is in part through this connection that Qāsim was treated favorably by Ismā‘īl after his defeat of the Āq-quyūnlū.<sup>42</sup> Ḥusayn Kiyā Chulāvī himself died of self-inflicted wounds after a failed rebellion against the Safavids in 912/1506,<sup>43</sup> though the Nūrbakhshīyeh did not pass into the ranks of Ismā‘īl’s enemies at this time.

Nūrbakhshī-Safavid relations after this alliance went through positive as well as negative phases. Qāsim was awarded more land by Ismā‘īl and the Nūrbakhshīs were seen as well-respected Sayyids from the district of Ray at the royal court. Qāsim’s son Bahā’ al-Daula (or Bahā’ al-Dīn) Ḥasan had followed in his father’s footsteps to Hirat, arriving at Bāyqarā’s court toward the end of the ruler’s life. He was later employed also in the court of Ismā‘īl for two or three years and was put to death for unknown reasons within his father’s lifetime (ca. 915/1509–10).<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Kashmīrī gives the name as Durusht (*Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, 127). The prosperity of Nūrbakhshī agricultural lands is remarked upon by Khvāndamīr (*Ḥabīb*, 4:611–2) and later historians who repeat his reports (e.g. Iskandar Beg Munshī, *Tārīkh-i ‘ālam-āra-yi ‘Abbāsī*, 2 vols [Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1955], 1:145).

<sup>41</sup> Aubin, ‘L’avènement des Safavides,’ 6.

<sup>42</sup> Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb*, 4:115.

<sup>43</sup> Ḥasan Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-tavārīkh*, ed. C.N. Seddon, 2 vols. (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1931), 1:77–80.

<sup>44</sup> Muḥammad Mufīd, *Jamī‘-i mufīdī*, ed. Īraj Afshār, 3 vols. (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Kitābfurūshī-yi Asadī, 1961), 3:105; Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-siyar*, 4:612. Ismā‘īl’s decree for Bahā’ al-Dawla’s execution is mentioned also in *Nafā‘is al-ma‘āsir* (Shafī‘, ‘Fīrqa,’ 9). His death date can be approximated to 915/1509–10 since he left Hirat upon Bāyqarā’s death in 912/1506 and spent 2–3 years with Ismā‘īl. A small treatise

Qāsim Fayzbakhsh's year of death is given variously, with 919/1513–4 being the most likely based upon internal Nūrbakhshī tradition.<sup>45</sup> The leadership of the Nūrbakhshīyeh now passed from Qāsim to his grandson Shāh Qavām al-Dīn Ḥusayn.<sup>46</sup> The new successor was the son of Qāsim's older son Shah Shams al-Dīn who also probably died while Qāsim was still alive. Qavām al-Dīn began to wield his power in the area more assertively, which led to the charge that he was taking on royal pretensions in lieu of his position as the head of a Sufi order.<sup>47</sup> His personal ambitions and his associations with members of the Āq-quyūnlū and Timurid ruling houses eventually led to the demise of the Nūrbakhshīyeh in Iran.

Qavām al-Dīn first acquired serious notice by Shah Ṭahmāsp's (r. 931–984/1524–76) court by becoming implicated in the murder of a famous poet Mawlānā Umīdī in 930/1523. Reports on the incident vary between an explicit accusation of murder in collaboration with an Āqquyūnlū faction,<sup>48</sup> suspicion without proof,<sup>49</sup> and no indication of any involvement.<sup>50</sup> He was spared any serious repercussions at the time but the charge was brought up once again during Ṭahmāsp's visit to Tihiran in 944/1537. Rūmlū (who was copied by most later sources) states that, at this time, Qavām al-Dīn came to attend the court and assumed the highest place among all courtiers. Other nobles from Ray found this objectionable, particularly since

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tise on Sufi themes ascribed to Bahā' al-Dawla was published by Ṣadaqiyānlū with his editions of Nūrbakhsh's works (Ṣadaqiyānlū, *Aḥwāl va āsār*, 21–6), but his greater competence was in medicine as evident from his work entitled *Khulāṣat al-tajārīb* (cf. MS. Bağdath Vehbi Efendi 1447, MS. Şehid Ali Paşa 2026/1, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Istanbul).

<sup>45</sup> Kashmīrī, *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, 439; *Nafā'is al-ma'āsir* in Shafī', 'Firqa,' 9. The year is given as 927/1520–1 by Khvāndamīr (*Ḥabīb*, 4:115), and 981/1573–4 by Shūstārī (*Majālis*, 2:149), which is chronologically impossible.

<sup>46</sup> Kashmīrī, *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, 477–9. Kashmīrī reports from his father that Qavām al-Dīn had sent a messenger to Shams al-Dīn 'Irāqī in Kashmir to apprise him of Qāsim's death and his own accession to the mantle of Nūrbakhsh. Qavām al-Dīn's proper name 'Ḥusayn' is identified only in Fażlī Işfahānī, *Afzal al-tavārīkh* (MS Or. 4678, British Library, fol. 11a, 97a). Aside from this detail, the remainder of the report in *Afzal al-tavārīkh* is virtually the same as the earlier *Aḥsan al-tavārīkh* of Rūmlū.

<sup>47</sup> Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-tavārīkh*, 1:279–80.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:177; Rāzī, *Haft iqlīm*, 3:43; Āzar, *Ātashkadeh*, 216.

<sup>49</sup> Sām Mirzā, *Tuḥfa-yi Sāmī*, 173. Sām Mirzā repeats the same rumor also about the death of a poet named Afzal-i Nāmī who lived around Tehran and had composed a chronogram on Umīdī's death (226).

<sup>50</sup> Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb*, 4:115–6.

they had already been suffering under his tyrannical overlordship of the area for some time.<sup>51</sup> He was then questioned by Qāzī Muḥammad, son of Qāzī Shukr Allāh, about his having adopted royal hobbies and mannerisms, but he stated that he was a Sufi and did not intend to be a king. He was then asked why he had built a fortress on his property and had collected armor (*juba va jūshan*), to which he remained silent. The court then presented him a list of names of people whom he had executed and whose property he had confiscated. He denied the latter charges but both his defense and his honor as a Sayyid were declared false, and he was put to death in 944/1537–38 after brief imprisonments first at the house of Qāzī Jahān and later in the fort of Alanjaq.<sup>52</sup>

The deeper underlying causes for Qavām al-Dīn's fall from favor are evident in a slightly more extended report on this incident given in an anonymous (and highly partisan) history of Shah Ṭahmāsp.<sup>53</sup> While it is clear that this author was familiar with Rūmlū's account of the matter (or vice versa), he adds that Qavām al-Dīn lorded over the area together with Ḥusayn Bāyqarā's grandson Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā b. Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā. The renegade Timurid prince was seeking to establish himself with the intention of regaining Hirat and may have sought aid from the Nūrbakhshīs based upon the family's earlier close ties with the Timurid court. He advised Qavām al-Dīn to seek a confrontation with Ṭahmāsp during his stay in Tihiran but the latter thought it better to placate the ruler with words rather than warfare. Qavām al-Dīn proceeded to the court counting on his status as a Sayyid to save him from death while Mīrzā Muḥammad escaped first to Kāshān and eventually India to seek his fortune.<sup>54</sup>

Qavām al-Dīn was accused of wrongdoing as in Rūmlū's report and an investigation of his property revealed a document according to which a group of people had declared him to be their king. It

<sup>51</sup> Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-tavārikh*, 1:279–80.

<sup>52</sup> Aubin suggests that Qavām al-Dīn was aligned with remnants of Āq-quyūnlū sympathizers in the Ray region and that he was investigated by the court due to the influence of Qāzī Jahān who had been imprisoned by the ruler of Gīlān at an earlier date upon Qavām al-Dīn's suggestion ('L'avènement des Safavides,' 93–4).

<sup>53</sup> Anonymous, *Ālam-ārā-yi Shāh Ṭahmāsp*, ed. Iraj Afshār (Tehran: Duniyā-yi Kitāb, 1992), 82–4.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 169–71, 235–42. He was eventually killed by Bayrām Khān in a battle against the Mughals.

appeared that Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā, whose name appeared foremost as an endorser on this document, had continued to correspond with Qavām al-Dīn after his departure from Ray, and the pair were still planning to aid each other in rebellious behavior. Shah Ṭahmāsp then ordered the same punishment for Qavām al-Dīn as had once been given to Ḥusayn Kiyā Chulāvī (a follower of Fayḍbakhsh) by his father Ismā‘īl. He was put in chains and eventually burned alive as a deterring lesson for all rebels.

Although tendentious due to its extreme glorification of the Safavid Shahs, this account of Qavām al-Dīn’s demise is plausible in light of the Nūrbakhshīs’ connections with the Timurids of Hirat and Chulāvī. As the Safavid empire consolidated itself under Ṭahmāsp’s reign, elements lingering from pre-Safavid ruling houses gradually dissipated through elimination or migration. Qavām al-Dīn chose to align himself with the Timurids (and the Āq-quyūnlū in the case of Umīdī’s murder) and was purged in the process.

Qavām al-Dīn’s death marked the end of the Nūrbakhshiyeh as an Iranian Sufi order with a corporate presence in political matters. Furthermore, his death was accompanied by a gradual shift away from the order’s intellectual stance as a movement transcending the Sunnī-Shī‘ī sectarian divide. The reformist version of Nūrbakhshiyeh espoused by both Lāhījī and Qāsim had by this time gained a solid foothold in Kashmir and its neighboring Baltistān (Little Tibet).<sup>55</sup> However, in Iran, the order was gradually taking on the color of Twelver Shī‘ism imposed upon the population. Indications of this change include the behavior of Qavām al-Dīn’s older brother Ṣafī al-Dīn Muḥammad who performed the ḥajj and also undertook a pilgrimage to Mashhad on foot at an advanced age. His poetry extols the virtues of mystical life and poverty along with exhibiting particular devotion to ‘Alī not characteristic of earlier Nūrbakhshī works.<sup>56</sup>

The Nūrbakhshī family succession was passed from Qavām al-Dīn to his son Shāh Qāsim (who abdicated his father’s pretensions),<sup>57</sup> and

<sup>55</sup> Nūrbakhshiyeh survives as a distinct religious community in Baltistān to the present (cf. Andreas Rieck, ‘The Nurbachshis of Baltistan – Crisis and Revival of a Five Centuries old Community,’ *Die Welt des Islams*, 35 [1995], no. 2: 159–88).

<sup>56</sup> Rāzī, *Haft iqlīm*, 3:44–6; Āzar, *Ātashkada*, 219. Āzar wrongly states that Qavām al-Dīn was Ṣafī al-Dīn’s father.

<sup>57</sup> Rāzī, *Haft iqlīm*, 3:46. The notice for Shah Qāsim in Mufīdī’s *Jamī‘-i mufīdī* (3:106), claiming that he was treated with respect at Ṭahmāsp’s court, is historically confused. He mistakenly transplants *Tārīkh-i ‘ālam-arā-yi ‘Abbāsī*’s notice on Qāsim Fayzbakhsh (1:145) onto Shah Qāsim and adds a few embellishments.

from him to Amīr Sayyid Muḥammad.<sup>58</sup> Besides these two, some other members and followers of the Nūrbakhshī family are also mentioned in various sources, though we do not have enough historical information to judge their activities.<sup>59</sup> It is, therefore, difficult to reconstruct the history of the Iranian Nūrbakhshīyyeh after Qavām al-Dīn with any degree of certainty. Both membership in the family and the order seem to have been honorable affiliations, though the Nūrbakhshīyyeh after about 1550 did not stand out as a political power or a significant independent intellectual movement.

The Nūrbakhshīyyeh's demise so soon after the rise of the Safavids was connected also to the complicated meanings the term 'Sufi' acquired beginning in Shah Ṭahmāsp's reign. As Kathryn Babayan has argued, the early Safavid empire witnessed an intense competition for power and ideology between the Safavids' Qizilbāsh followers and the Imāmī 'ulamā' brought into Iran to promote the empire's official religion.<sup>60</sup> The Qizilbāshs' sufiesque *ghulāt* religion was seen by the 'ulamā' to be Sufism in its truest form and they condemned it as religious innovation (*bid'a*), the quintessential form of heresy for those aiming for a shari'a-bound society. In this context, Nūrbakhsh's Mahdist claim was a natural target for scholars such as

<sup>58</sup> Rāzī, *Haft iqlīm* 3:46–7; Ghulām Ḥasan Suhrawardī Nūrbakhshī, *Tārīkh-i Balistān* (Mīrpūr, Azad Kashmir: Vīrīnāg Publishers, 1992), 183. A later source mentions a certain 'Sayyid Muḥammad Laḥṣavī Nūrbakhshī' whose grave in Nā'in has his date of death as 7 Dhū l-Ḥijja, 903 (July 27, 1498) (Ma'sūm 'Alī Shāh Shīrāzī, *Ṭawā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, ed. Muḥammad Ja'far Maḥjūb, 3 vols. [Tehran: Kitābkhāneh-yi Sanā'ī, n.d.], 3:159). Either this person is different than Qavām al-Dīn's grandson, or the date of death is incorrectly stated by the source.

<sup>59</sup> These include: Amīr Sa'd al-Ḥaqq 'Naṣībī' who resided in Yazd (Sām Mīrzā, *Tuḥfa-yi Sāmī*, 70; Āzar, *Ātashkada*, 221); Fikrī Nūrbakhshī 'Sayrī', who traveled to the Deccan to study with Shāh Ṭāhir (d. 952 or 3 or 6/1545–9) ('Alā' al-Daula, *Nafā'is al-ma'āsir* in Shafī', 'Fīrqa,' 11; Rāzī, *Haft iqlīm*, 3:48); Shāh Ḥusām al-Dīn Nūrbakhshī and his son Mīrzā Muḥammad Taqī, the latter of whom was awarded a fief (*ṭiyūl*) near Yazd in 1065/1654–5; he later moved to Isfahan and had two sons named Mīrzā Shāh Ḥusām al-Dīn and Mīrzā Shāh Nāṣir (Mufīd, *Jāmi'ī-i Mufīdī*, 3:106–7). Other members of the order not belonging to the family are mentioned by Sām Mīrzā (*Tuḥfa-yi Sāmī*, 61, 126, 127, 295, 332, 371) and 'Alā al-Daula (*Nafā'is al-ma'āsir* in Shafī', 'Fīrqa,' 10–11). A *Fālnāma* ascribed to 'Alī Riḳā 'Mīrzā Bābā Nūrbakhshī Shīrāzī' (MS. Add. 23,582, British Library, London) is also extant. The manuscript was copied in Isfahan in Rajab 1224 (August 1809), and the text has no obvious connection to Nūrbakhsh's ideas.

<sup>60</sup> Kathryn Babayan, 'Sufis, Dervishes and Mullahs: The Controversy over Spiritual and Temporal Dominion in Seventeenth-Century Iran,' in *Safavid Studies*, C. Melville, ed., (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 117–38.



Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī (d. 1111/1699) who castigated him severely for his exaggerations.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, the fiercely anti-Sufi Mullā Muḥammad Ṭāhir Qummī (d. 1098/1686) declared both that Nūrbakhsh was one of the great luminaries in the history of Sufism and that his personal claim was the natural outcome of a Sufi worldview.<sup>62</sup> Although Qummī states that Nūrbakhsh's Kubravī *silsila* enjoyed the greatest popularity in Iran, he does not cite the name of any Shaykh who comes *after* Nūrbakhsh in the spiritual chain.<sup>63</sup> The complete lack of any concrete references to Nūrbakhshī authors or works by Qummī and other polemicists indicates that their critique was a rhetorical exercise which was not directed towards an actual Nūrbakhshī presence. It is noteworthy (and surprising) that certain Safavid luminaries such as Bahā' al-Dīn 'Āmilī (d. 1030/1621) and Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī (d. 1091/1680) are reported as members of the order.<sup>64</sup> Their connection is likely to be cursory at best and is possible only through their common teacher, Muḥammad Mu'min Sadīrī, whose name occurs in a line of Qāsim Fayḍbakhsh's spiritual descendants recorded in a very late (nineteenth-century) source.<sup>65</sup> The lack of specificity regarding Nūrbakhshī affiliations after 957/1550 and the absence of extant literary evidence indicates that the order now survived more in name than in content.

### Conclusion

The institutional development of the Nūrbakhshīyyeh in late Timurid and early Safavid times is apparent from the historical role played

<sup>61</sup> Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *'Ayn al-ḥayāt*, Asad Allāh Suhaylī Iṣfahānī, ed. (Tīhran: Shirkat-i Sahāmī-yi Ṭab'a-yi Kitāb, 1963), 238.

<sup>62</sup> Mullā Muḥammad Ṭāhir Qummī, *Tuḥfat al-akhyār* (Tehran: Chāp-i Muṣavvar, 1957), 25, 202. This view is repeated also in Qummī's *Hidāyat al-'awāmm wa-faḍīḥat al-lī'ām*, MS. 1775, Kitābhāna-yi Āyat Allāh Mar'ashī, Qum, section nine (cf. Hamid Algar, 'Nūrbakhshīyyeh,' *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 8:136).

<sup>63</sup> The only other Nūrbakhshī to be mentioned by Qummī is Lāhījī though he is not identified as Nūrbakhsh's student. Qummī's work is generally a critique of the works of famous Sufi authors such as Rūmī, 'Aṭṭār, Ibn al-'Arabī, Shabistarī, etc. The inclusion of Lāhījī in this group was probably precipitated by the great popularity of his work *Mafāṭīḥ al-ijāz* among Persian Sufis.

<sup>64</sup> E. Kohlberg, 'Bahā' al-Dīn 'Āmelī,' *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 1:429–30; W. Chittick, 'Muḥsin-i Fayḍ-i Kāshānī,' *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 7:475–6.

<sup>65</sup> Shirāzī, *Ṭarā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 2:322, 3:215–6; Ṣadaqiyanlū, *Aḥwāl va āsār*, 62.

by its three leaders, Nūrbakhsh himself, Qāsim Fayzbakhsh and Qavām al-Dīn. The movement stemmed from Nūrbakhsh's messianic claim announced in 826/1423, but it acquired a stable social presence only once Nūrbakhsh settled down in Sulighān after Shāhrukh's death in 850/1447. The order continued to gain socio-political significance after Nūrbakhsh's death with the expansion of the family's economic power and Qāsim's involvement in the courts of Sultan Ya'qūb, Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, Ḥusayn Kiyā Chulāvī and eventually Ismā'īl. Although not at the very forefront of political life, the Nūrbakhshīyeh was a noticeable presence in Safavid circles at the time of Qāsim's death in 919/1513–4. Ismā'īl's patronage of the Nūrbakhshī family indicates that his personal messianic pretensions were not so exclusivist to preclude association with anyone else claiming to be the Mahdī. The Nūrbakhshīyeh was, in effect, a locally powerful order which sought and gained the overlordship of the new rulers of Iran.

The Nūrbakhshīs' connections with previous ruling houses resurfaced in the time of Qāsim's successor and soured the family's relationship with the Safavids. Qavām al-Dīn attempted to assert the order's power in the Ray region in collaboration with surviving Āq-quyūnlū and Timurid factions but was dealt with severely by Shah Ṭahmāsp. Alongside the fear of seditious behavior, the suppression of the Nūrbakhshīyeh occurred also at a time when the Shah was attempting to strengthen his Imāmī Shī'ī connections.<sup>66</sup> The Nūrbakhshīs' messianic background may now have become more problematic, giving Ṭahmāsp even more reason to quash their influence.

In ideological terms, Nūrbakhsh's messianic claim had evolved into a unique sectarian stance rooted in Sufism by the time of his death. Although divided between two groups over Nūrbakhsh's messianic claim, Nūrbakhshīs continued to consider themselves the bearers of a special religious mission which did not conform to standardized Sunnī or Shī'ī positions. However, political suppression and the absence of charismatic or intellectually capable leaders combined to make the movement lose its uniqueness in Iran within the first century of Safavid rule.

The formal sectarian rigidity (and consequent ideological stability) brought to Iran by the Safavids made it difficult for movements such

<sup>66</sup> Babayan, 'Sufis, Dervishes and Mullas,' 123–4.

as the Nūrbakhshiyya to survive as separate sects. Like the early Safavids themselves, the Nūrbakhshiyyeh was a product of the politically, socially and religiously turbulent fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The movement's primary messianic imperative was lost upon Nūrbakhsh's death, after which his memory became the source of charisma for his successors in the manner of other Sufi orders. At the same time, the external socio-political arena in Iran underwent a substantial transformation after the Safavids' success, leading to the eventual assimilation of the Nūrbakhshīs into the Twelver Shī'ī mainstream.

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## POPULAR LITERATURE UNDER THE SAFAVIDS

Jean Calmard

In previous studies on the Safavids, I endeavoured to show the motives, circumstances and results of the imposition of Twelver Imami Shī'ism on a Persian population then widely of Sunni obedience.<sup>1</sup> Shī'ī leanings that increasingly had permeated beliefs and practices throughout the Turko-Persian area from the time of the Mongol rule were canalised, reinforced or re-elaborated. This was done under the strong pressure of religious authorities, and particularly the influence of Twelver Imami *mujtahids*. In the present paper, their rulings against popular literature and rituals will be briefly recalled within their broader socio-religious context. Particular attention will be paid to the concept of popular literature, its distinction from courtly or learned poetry and prose being in many instances difficult to delineate. The status of storytelling and storytellers will also be addressed.

In the socio-religious context of Safavid Persia a certain number of texts comprising Shī'ī themes underwent various fates and changes. This was notably the case with those which included devotional aspects to the Imams and the *Ahl-i bayt*, sometimes confined to idolatrous adoration, deploration of their death, incitation for revenge of the unjustly shed blood of Imam Ḥusayn and other martyrs of the Drama of Karbala. More than learned treatises of Shī'ī jurisprudence, these popular religious texts (initially elaborated in Shī'ī, Sunni or heterodox environments) which may inform us about the true nature of Shī'ism practised under the Safavids.

As is well known, royal patronage for these devotional compositions was detrimental to classical Persian literature and mainly court poetry, which knew its widest extension in a vast Turko-Persian area, with an outstanding production, at least in quantity, in Mughal India.<sup>2</sup>

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*Abbreviations used are given at the end of the article.*

<sup>1</sup> See J. Calmard, 'Rituals, I' and 'Rituals, II'.

<sup>2</sup> On increased immigration to India of Persian literary elites under the Safavids, see: J. Calmard, 'Safavid Persia in Indo-Persian Sources and in Timurid-Mughal Perception', in M. Alam, et al., eds., *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and*

Another factor of literary defection to India was the politico-religious persecution of such oppositional movements as the Nuḡṭawiyya.<sup>3</sup> But feelings or necessity for emigration did not spare those who composed or diffused popular literature. Basing themselves on a long tradition of storytellers, they had been widely known in the Turko-Persian area under such various names as *maddāḥ*,<sup>4</sup> *qiṣṣeh-khvān*, etc. Before the Safavids, professional Persian storytellers were already at work in India. They had been particularly active in Khurasan. Many immigrants from that province continued to settle in India where Persian immigrants, from whatever place they came, were often styled as Khurasanī. To please contemporary audiences, old stories were rewritten, new ones were composed and Indian stories translated into Persian.<sup>5</sup> Safavid storytellers were known under the names of (sing.) *qiṣṣeh-khvān*, *daftar-khvān*, *naqqāl*, *maʿrakagīr*, *Shāhnāmeh-khvān*. Some of them, in Iran as well as in India, were learned men and poets. The art of storytelling required prerequisite qualities, notably a good memory, a good voice, and special training preferably from youth. As in the case of artists and artisans, there were families or 'dynasties' of storytellers.<sup>6</sup> The fate of all storytellers, great and small, depended on the favour they enjoyed with their patrons or popular audiences. But in the Safavid realm, they also had to suffer the prohibition of Imami clerics, whose attacks were primarily aimed at the texts and, secondarily, to their narrators and propagators. Due to the scarcity of reliable sources and research on this subject, I will limit myself to present an overview of the problems raised by the most relevant texts, bearing in mind that each one of them should deserve a separate study.

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*French Studies*, (New Delhi, 2000), 351–91; M. Haneda, 'Emigration of Iranian Elites to India during the 16th–18th Centuries', in M. Szuppe, ed., *L'Héritage timouride, Cahiers d'Asie centrale*, 3–4, 1997, 129–143.

<sup>3</sup> The *Nuḡṭawiyya*, also called *Mahmudiyya*, had connections with Hurufism and Nizārī Ismailism and played a part in the creation of Akbar's *ḏīn-i ilāhī*. Their partisans were mostly intellectuals and artisans. See: H. Algar, 'Nuḡṭawiyya', in EI/2; A. Amanat, 'The Nuḡṭawī movement of Mahmūd Pisikhānī and his Persian cycle of mystical materialism', in F. Daftary, ed., *Mediaeval Ismāʿīlī History and Thought* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996) 281–297.

<sup>4</sup> See Calmard, *Rituals I*: 131 ff. (based on Kashifī, *Futuwwat-nāmeḥ-yi Sultānī*, M.J. Mahjūb, ed. (Tehran: Bunyād-i Farhang, 1350s/1971), 275 ff.).

<sup>5</sup> Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 5/3, 1502 f.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 1503 f., about the family of Asad Qiṣṣa-khvān, who served Ghāzī Khān in Sind, and then Jahāngīr, was renowned as 'Ḥāfiẓ-Khvān' (for his memory), and composed poetry.

*The Dīvān of Khaṭā'ī*

In the first place, we find Shah Ismā'īl's *Dīvān*, composed under the *takhallus* of Khaṭā'ī (i.e. 'the sinner'), in Azari or 'Qizilbash' Turkish.<sup>7</sup> Written in a style of mystical exaltation proper to certain Sufis, Shah Ismā'īl's mystical poetry was strongly influenced by the Ḥurūfī poet Nasīmī (d. 820/1417–18). The themes of his *Dīvān* may be classified in three levels corresponding to the degrees of the mystical states of the young master Sufi poet. At the upper level, Ismā'īl proclaims his divine nature; this pretension reflects the surrounding adoration of his disciples who considered him as a reincarnation of 'Alī, the latter being the *mazhar* (i.e. the place of manifestation) of God under a humane shape. At the intermediate level, Ismā'īl is a body whose soul is 'Alī, but he is 'a water drop compared to him'. At the lower level, Khaṭā'ī is the slave sinner of the Shah (i.e. 'Alī). The *Dīvān* also contains many allusions to the 'Drama of Karbala' expressed in various contexts corresponding to the aforesaid mystical states or levels of perception. We constantly find the theme of revenge of Ḥusayn's or 'Alī's blood, 'Alī-Ḥaydār being also Shah Ismā'īl's father. The revenge on the reviled caliph Yazīd or the Marvanids is effected by Khaṭā'ī who descends from Ḥusayn of Karbala.<sup>8</sup> Khaṭā'ī's *Dīvān*, together with its 'adaptations' or 'imitations',<sup>9</sup> became a sort of liturgical text-book among the various trends of extremist philo-alidism (i.e. the Qizilbash, Baktāshī, 'Alavī, Ahl-i Ḥaqq, Shabak etc.). It contains utterly heterodox positions, such as *tajalli/teḡelli*, i.e. theophania or divine manifestation under a human shape; *tanāsukh*, sometimes compared to metempsychosis (or 'metasomatosis', 'metaphotosis'), i.e. various degrees of reincarnation. Divinisation of the spiritual master is also a constant feature of this *Dīvān*. Similar stories on Turkmen heroes, Khaṭā'ī's *Dīvān*, or compositions made under Khaṭā'ī's name, were sung by itinerant Sufi-minstrels (sing. '*āshiq*').<sup>10</sup> According to

<sup>7</sup> On Khaṭā'ī's *Dīvān* see: V. Minorsky, 'The Poetry of Shāh Ismā'īl I', *BSOS*, X (1938–42), 1006a–1053a; T. Gandjei, ed., *Il Canzoniere di Šāh Ismā'īl Ḥaṭā'ī*, (Naples: Istituto Universitari Orientale, 1959); *idem*, 'Ismā'īl I', in EI/2.

<sup>8</sup> Calmard, *Culte*, 478 ff.

<sup>9</sup> See T. Gandjei, 'Pseudo Khaṭā'ī', in C.E. Bosworth ed. *Iran and Islam*, Edinburgh, 1971, 263–266.

<sup>10</sup> On the '*āshiq*', see references in L.F. Albright, "Āšeq", in EI.R.

Membrè, songs named Khaṭāʿī, composed by Shah Ismāʿīl and Shah Ṭahmāsp, were sung at the weddings.<sup>11</sup>

Probably because Shiʿī clerics owed the decisive reassertion of their influence and authority to Shah Ismāʿīl's charisma, they apparently never attacked this literary monument of heterodoxy on theological grounds. It was neither translated into Persian, being untranslatable in any language without losing its peculiar Turkish poetical flavor.

### *The Abū Muslim-nāmeḥ*

Among many epico-religious texts dedicated, at least partly, to the Drama of Karbala and the cycle of revenge, some of them have been the target of the new religious Imami establishment. A particularly interesting text, which reveals the socio-religious mood of the Turco-Persian world from Seljuk times, is the Abū Muslim romance. Generally known under the name of *Abū Muslim-nāmeḥ*, its Persian composition is attributed to Abū Ṭāhir Ṭarsūsī (or Ṭartūsī, or Ṭūsī), said to have lived among the retinue of Maḥmūd the Ghaznavid.<sup>12</sup> By overthrowing the Umayyads and the Marvanids, Abū Muslim is presented as the perfect avenger of Imam Ḥusayn's blood. The romance asserts that he did better than the 17 or 72 insurgents (with Turkish men and women among them) who, despite the means they had at their disposal, 'came to no result'. For good measure, the legend adds that Abū Muslim killed the son of the accursed Shebr (i.e. Shamīr or Shimr), Ḥusayn's murderer.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Michele Membrè [= Membrè], *Relazione di Persia (1542)*, ed. G.R. Cardona et al., 48; tr. A.H. Morton, *Mission to the Lord Sophy of Persia* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1993) 42 (see also remarks of A. Piemontese, in the ed. of Membrè, 200 f., under 'catai').

<sup>12</sup> On legendary accounts about Abū Muslim, see: Mélikoff, *Abu Muslim*; G.H. Yusofi, *Abu Muslim Sardar-i Khurāsān*, Tehran, 1345/1966; *idem*, 'Abū Moslem Korāsānī', in EI; M.J. Maḥjub, 'Abu Muslim Nāma', *Sokhan*, 10, 380–386; *idem*, 'Abu Muslim-nāmeḥ. Sargozasht-i ḥamāsi Abu Muslim Khurāsānī', *Iran Shenāsī*: I=1/4 (1368/1990), 691–704; II=2/3 (1369/1991), 480–495; Safa, Majara; Calmard, *Culte*, 230–240; K. Babayan, 'Sufis, Dervishes and Mullahs: the Controversy over Spiritual and Temporal Dominion in Seventeenth-Century Iran', in Melville, *Safavid Persia*, [117–138], 119 ff.; Hossein Ismaili is preparing the edition of the Persian *Abū Muslim nāmeḥs* kept at the BNF, Blochet cat.

<sup>13</sup> Mélikoff, *Abu Muslim*, 112; Calmard, *Culte*, 237 ff. [see Persian ms., Blochet cat., Sup. persan 843, fol. 10b].



What remains striking in that epico-religious literature, both in its Persian and Turkish versions, is the permanent confusion between Shī'ī and 'Abbāsīd elements. Imami 'ulamas then considered Abū Muslim Marvāzī as a fervent Shī'ī.<sup>14</sup> However, the compilers of the *Abū Muslim-nāmehs* curiously utilise the term 'Sunni' to designate the partisans of the *Ahl-i bayt* and the 'Abbāsīd faction, by opposition to the followers of the Umayyads which they styled as 'Kharijites'. The faithful partisans of the *Ahl-i bayt* and Abū Muslim continued to be called 'Sunnis', even in the versions of the *Abū Muslim-nāmeḥ* revised to foster Safavid propaganda.<sup>15</sup> These later compilations may be easily identified, notably by the presence, among Imam Ḥusayn's avengers, of a certain Junayd, related to Ḥamza and 'Alī, said to be Abū Muslim's grandfather.<sup>16</sup> A *Junayd-nāmeḥ* figures among separate stories on some allegedly avengers of Ḥusayn's blood. Such tales were probably used to spread Safavid propaganda, in the *ghul-lāt* phase of the movement, by followers of Junayd, Ḥaydār and his sons, down to Shah Ismā'īl.<sup>17</sup> This fact is however not confirmed by historical sources. This merging between Abū Muslim's and Shah Ismā'īl's genealogy has its counterpart among the Kurds. Amid other assertions, Abū Muslim would be of Kurdish origin, alike, at least partly, Shah Ismā'īl's ancestors. For some Kurdish Ahl-i Ḥaqq, Abū Muslim is the manifestation of Kaw-Suar, 'Knight of the wind'.<sup>18</sup>

As they apparently could not openly condemn Khaṭā'ī-Shah Ismā'īl's *Dīvān*, the liturgical book proper to the Qizilbash and the Safavid *ṭarīqa*, the Imami clerics, anxious to purify Shī'ism from its extravagant beliefs and practices, naturally attacked the *Abū Muslim-nāmeḥ*. This was made from the outset of their rising influence. The first *mujtahid* who pronounced the banning of the book was, of course, 'Alī al-Karakī (d. 940/1534), later given the title *al-Muḥaqqiq al-thānī* and who was bestowed by Shah Ṭahmāsp such prestigious title as *Khātīm al-mujtahidīn* or *Mujtahid al-zamānī*, whereas his detractors called

<sup>14</sup> See for instance 'Abd al-Jalīl Rāzī (*Naqṣ*, 215 f.; Calmard, *Culte*, 231). See also, Safa, *Majara*, 238.

<sup>15</sup> See Mélikoff, *Abu Muslim*, 61, 73, 79, 93. There is an epic cycle on Junayd/Cuneyd (see: *ibid.*, 93, n. 4; Babayan, *l.c.*, 121, n. 19).

<sup>16</sup> Besides the widespread popularity of Ḥamza, the Prophet's uncle, in Safavid genealogical 'traditions', Ḥamza b. Mūsā al-Kāzīm is claimed among their ancestors (see Iskandar Beg, I: 7; tr. Savory, I: 13).

<sup>17</sup> Babayan, *l.c.*, 121 ff.

<sup>18</sup> See: M. Mokri, *Journal Asiatique*, 1974, 82; Calmard, *Culte*, 237, n. 617.

him *Mukhtari*<sup>19</sup>-i *mazhab-i shī'ī* 'the Inventor of Shī'ism'.<sup>19</sup> Basing himself on a *ḥadīth* of the sixth Imam, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, which condemned the story-tellers (*quṣṣā's*), al-Karakī violently attacked Abū Muslim. For him, his demonstrations of friendship towards the 'Alids was only a device to bring the 'Abbāsids to power.<sup>20</sup> He added Abū Muslim's name to the list of the ritually accursed enemies of the Imams and the *Ahl-i bayt*. Al-Karakī's pupil, Muḥammad b. Ishāq Ḥamāvī Abharī, also known as Fāzil Abharī, clarified the purpose of his master in his *Anīs al-mu'minīn*. For him, Abū Muslim is merely a Kaysanite, in reference to the partisans of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya's imamate. Abū Muslim is also accursed, diabolic and deserves to be burnt in the Hell. Anyone who loves him to excess is a *mulhīd* (i.e. a deviationist, a name formerly applied in Shī'ī polemics to Ismā'īlis or Bāṭinīs) or a Nasībī (i.e. a fanatic Sunni). Anyone who listens to the stories invented on Ḥamza (see below) adores both the storyteller and the devil. It is the same for those who listen to the fables composed on 'Abū Muslim the Kharijite full of hate' and to the eulogies pronounced on this 'accursed Nasībī'. According to the *fatwā* decreed by al-Karakī, it is incumbent on every good believer to curse this chief of the enemies of the sinless Imams.<sup>21</sup>

From Muḥammad b. Ishāq Ḥamāvī's sayings we may infer that in pre-Safavid Iran, and probably in the 16th century, the telling of *Abū Muslim-nāmehs* was still in fashion, particularly in Khurasan. The affirmation, according to which Shah Ismā'īl himself had formulated the ban on the recitation of this 'false story' and ordered the mausoleum dedicated to Abū Muslim near Nishāpūr to be destroyed, is rather curious.<sup>22</sup> The condemnation, and even the excommunication (*takfīr*) of Abū Muslim as well as the banning on the *Abū Muslim-nāmehs* and storytellers, threatening to have their tongues cut off, was resumed under Shah Ṭahmāsp in 932/1525. Abū Muslim's mausoleum, which had been reconstructed, was again destroyed.<sup>23</sup>

The condemnation of the Abū Muslim cult and romance by both the political and religious authorities could not, however, destroy the flame of enthusiasm inspired by this Khurasanian hero highly ven-

<sup>19</sup> Safa, Majara, 237; Calmard, Rituals I: 144; Newman, 78 ff.

<sup>20</sup> Safa, *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> See ref. to the *Anīs al-mu'minīn*, *ibid.*, 239 ff.; al-Karakī's original book, *Maṭā'īn al-murjimiyya* ('Invectives against the evil-doers') is cited from the *Anīs al-mu'minīn*.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 241.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 241 f. [The contents of Safa, Majara, have been summarized in *Adabiyāt*, 5/3, 1507–1510].

erated as a popular figure, including by prominent *‘ulamā*, till the end of the Safavid period. These feelings are particularly revealed by persistent polemics about Abū Muslim. A theologian, originally from Sabzavār, known under the name of Mīr Lawḥī,<sup>24</sup> wrote, towards 1043/1633, a book very strongly condemning Abū Muslim’s attitude and political action.<sup>25</sup> In polemical tracts, he also attacked the Sufis who, being supported by Muḥammad Ṭaqī Majlisī (the first Majlisī, d. 1070/1659), constantly praised Abū Muslim and the great Sufi al-Ḥallāj (d. 309/922). This condemnation provoked the hostility of Sufis and other people styled as ‘ignorants’ who even planned to kill him. But Imami *‘ulama* produced books and treatises in his defence.<sup>26</sup> This polemic around Abū Muslim continued to irritate the Persians, and resulted in a decrease of the ritual celebration of his memory.<sup>27</sup>

*The Mukhtār-nāmeḥ and the ‘seventy two uprisings’*

Another epic took shape around the personage of Mukhtār b. Abī ‘Ubayd al-Thaqāfi (d. ca 67/687) who played an essential part in the elaboration of early extremist Shī‘ism, notably in the movements of the Kaysāniyya and Khashabiyya.<sup>28</sup> Although he had been an authentic avenger of Ḥusayn’s blood, his attitude during the rising of the latter is unclear. Obscure points remain about his sincerity and motivations. However, he was claimed as being a true lover of the *Ahl-i bayt* by some Imami *‘ulama*,<sup>29</sup> whereas others were more reserved about his fidelity to the ‘Alid cause. In the Safavid period he seems to have been considered by some as a good Shī‘ī.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Also known under the name of Muṭahhar or Fāzil Sabzavārī, he was a pupil of Shaykh Bahā’ī and Mīr Dāmād and spent most of his life at Isfahan. See: A.H. Hairī, ‘Mīr Lawḥī’, in EI/2; Safa, *Majara*, 243.

<sup>25</sup> On his *Tarjama-yi Abū Muslim*, see: Hairī, *ibid.*; Safa, *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Hairī, *ibid.*; Safa, *ibid.* On a list of 17 books written in his defence, see Āqā Buzurg Tiḥrānī, *al-Dharī‘a*, IV, (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tiḥrān, 1941), 150 f.

<sup>27</sup> Safa (*ibid.*, 244), sees in Abū Muslim’s condemnation, springing essentially from *‘ulama* of Arab origin, the expression of an anti-nationalist feeling (*andīsheh-yi zīd-i shuhūbī*).

<sup>28</sup> On Mukhtār as a controversial historical figure, see G.R. Hawting, ‘al-Mukhtār b. Abi ‘Ubayd al-Thakafī’, in EI/2.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Abd al-Jalīl Rāzī says that ‘Mukhtār is the greatest of the Shī‘ites in the eyes of the rafizites’ (*Naqṣ*, 354; cf. Calmard, *Culte*, 215).

<sup>30</sup> For the poet and historian ‘Abdī Beg (Navīdī) Shīrāzī (d. 988/1580), he died as a martyr, see Calmard, *Rituals I*: 116.

His saga, mostly known under the title *Mukhtār-nāmeḥ*, seems to have developed along with the epic on the seventy two uprisings (*Haftād va seh khurūj*) extolling the deeds of seventy two avengers of Ḥusayn's blood, among whom there are Turks as well as many women, the main figure being Mukhtār's general, Ibrāhīm b. Mālik al-Ashtar. The deeds of these heroes (including prestigious historical avengers) are meant to valorise Abū Muslim's action.<sup>31</sup> Probably for that reason, and because the *Mukhtār-nāmeḥ* and related *Haftād va seh khurūj* contain as many fancies as the *Abū Muslim-nāmeḥ*, these texts and their narrators (*qiṣṣeh-kwānān-i farībandeh*) were also condemned by Fāzil Abharī.<sup>32</sup> It is noteworthy that in his attack against the storytellers, Fāzil Abharī is in no way critical of Mukhtār's action.

Such a negative attitude towards epico-religious literature seems to have been restricted to a limited number of Imami clerics. Unlike the Abū Muslim romance, Mukhtār and his saga had a continuous success. Although we may suppose that earlier versions of the *Mukhtār-nāmeḥ* (and related texts) were contemporary to the *Abū Muslim-nāmeḥ*, an increasing number of these compositions do exist—or subsist—only from the 10th/16th century, as well as non critical editions lithographed or printed from the 19th century.<sup>33</sup> Mukhtār's omnipresence in romanced biographies, religious dramas (*ta'zīyeh*), in miniatures or other popular paintings, testifies to the persisting attachment to this emblematic figure.<sup>34</sup> It is mostly the morbid iconography of the tortures which he inflicted on Imam Ḥusayn's murderers which contributes to his fame. Despite his ambiguities, he continued to be celebrated. In later compilations, Mukhtār and his companions are presented as being devoid of any personal political aims, their only ambition being to Ḥusayn's blood revenge. Whereas one may find traces of what had been the *Mukhtār-nāmeḥ* in its original version, crude artificial devices have been used to present him as a pure Imami Shī'ī. In these texts, even Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, in whose name he pretended to act, insists on the fact that the Imam

<sup>31</sup> In a Persian *Abū Muslim-nāmeḥ* (see above, n. 13) it is said that, although he was deprived of their considerable means, Abū Muslim could do better than these 72 insurgents (see Calmard, *Culte*, 237 ff.).

<sup>32</sup> *Anīs al-mu'minīn*, cited by Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 5/3, 1510.

<sup>33</sup> Calmard, *Culte*, 240 ff. See Storey/Bregel: two ms. for the 16th century [n° 596 (61); 492]; four ms. for the 17th century [n° 596 (60), (63), (66); 690] etc.

<sup>34</sup> Calmard, *Culte*, 257 ff.

of the Age is Ḥusayn's son, 'Alī Zayn al-'Abidīn.<sup>35</sup> The spread and composition of the *Mukhtār-nāmeḥ* was also perpetuated in India.

*The epic of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya*

In complete contradiction with any historical reality, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya is also the hero of his own saga in which he is presented as an avenger of his half-brother Ḥusayn.<sup>36</sup> We remain poorly informed about the circumstances of the composition, apparently late, of the epico-legendary texts concerning him. This hero is particularly revered in *futuwwa* /*fotovvāt* circles and in certain Sufi Persian *tārīqāt*, particularly the Yasawiyya and the Baktāshiyya.<sup>37</sup> Traces of his cult may also be found in legends and folklore, mostly in Persia (Island of Kharg), Afghanistan, India, and Central Asia, where he is celebrated under both his messianic and warlike aspects.<sup>38</sup> The nucleus of legendary accounts depicting him, allegedly, as an avenger of Ḥusayn's blood found their way into epico-religious *maqṭal nāmeḥs* utilised by preachers or storytellers along with Kāshif's *Rawzāt al-shuhadā*. Although there may have been different starting points for the legend, the latter evolved considerably, apparently in a Central Asian or Indian context. The cult and legendary accounts of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya seem to have penetrated in India following the Ghaznavid expedition in the Panjab. A legend centered on Ghāzī Miyān (identified as a certain Sālār Mas'ūd, a nephew of Maḥmūd of Ghazna) became very popular in Northern India. Ghāzī Miyān becomes a sort of avatar of the 'twin' brothers Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. Muḥammad Ḥanafīyya (or rather Ḥanīfa or Ḥanīf or Ḥambiya Muḥammad) appears as avenging his brothers killed by a Hindu raja. This story exists only in Indian vernacular languages (hindi, nepali).<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 245 ff., 250 ff.

<sup>36</sup> On Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya and the early extremist shiite movements, see: H. Banning, *Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya*, thesis, Erlangen, 1909; F. Buhl, 'Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya' in EI/2; C. Van Arendonck, 'Khashabiyya', *ibid.*; W. Madelung, 'Kaysāniyya', *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> See Calmard, *Culte*, 261 ff.

<sup>38</sup> On the cult, folklore and legends related to Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, see: Calmard, *Culte*, 261 ff.; *idem*, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya.

<sup>39</sup> See Calmard, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, 208 ff.

The original version of the epic centered on Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya is difficult to retrace. A historical romance in verse, entitled *Qisṣeh-yi Muḥammad Ḥanīf*, composed by the poet ‘Ashīq (11th/17th century), probably constitutes the ‘prototype’ of further stories, such as the *Zafarnāmeḥ* or *Ĵang-nāmeḥ-yi Muḥammad Ḥanīf*, composed in Dakhni verses in 1095/1684 by the poet Latif, protected by the Shī‘ī Qutb-Shahs of Hayderabad.<sup>40</sup> However, the original compositions of the available texts remain unclear. Stories concerning him developed along two lines. As a powerful apocalyptic hero, he appears together with other historical or fanciful figures as an avenger of Ḥusayn’s blood. His accursed enemies (Yazīd’s army) have tremendous means at their disposal (thousands and even millions of men, horses, elephants). This version of his saga was widely spread in India, Malaysia, Indonesia. It was translated into Malay and various vernacular languages.<sup>41</sup> In another set of stories, he appears as the hero of a kind of fairy tale in which he has to fight a warrior princess, ‘Zī-funūn Pākdāman’ before marrying her.<sup>42</sup>

In popular epico-religious literature further elaborated under the Safavids, the warlike aspect of the hero is retained only when he fights at the side of his father ‘Alī. As mentioned before, only the fourth Imam, ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Abidīn, then appears as the Imam of the Age and Muḥammad-i Ḥanafīyya’s eschatological role is limited. At the Parousia of the (Ḥusaynid) Mahdi, he appears at the rear-guard of the Sacred Family.<sup>43</sup> In later *ta‘zīyeh* dramas, he is mostly utilised to valorise the action of his half-brother Ḥusayn. When he valiantly proposes to fight Ḥusayn’s enemies, the latter advises him to be patient, like him.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See Ethé’s Catalogue, India office/British Library, vol. I: n° 1592. Ḥanīf should also be read Hanfiyya, for Hanafiyya (cf. Calmard, *Culte*, 262, n. 668, 669).

<sup>41</sup> See L.F. Brakel, *The Hikāyat Muḥammad Ḥanafīyyah* (ed. of the Malay text) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975); *Idem*, *The story of Muḥammad Ḥanafīyyah* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977). The basis for this *Hikāyat* seems to be a 18th century Indo-Persian manuscript. See Rieu’s Catalogue, British Library, Add. 8149, story entitled *Hikāyat Muḥammad-i Ḥanafīyya*, fols. 29a–82a.

<sup>42</sup> See ref. in Storey/Bregel, n° 596 (22). See also Calmard, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, 214 ff. I am preparing editions and translations of the most representative Persian versions of the saga of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya.

<sup>43</sup> *Mukhtār-nama*, apud Calmard, *Culte*, 263 f.

<sup>44</sup> See ref. to *ta‘zīya* literature, *ibid.*, 275 ff.

*The epic of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*

The saga of Muḥammad-i Ḥanafīyya may, in a way, be attached to the Khurasani Timurid epico-religious tradition as it appears, for instance in the *Khāvarān-nāmeḥ* of Ibn-i Ḥusām (terminated in 830/1426) dedicated to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.<sup>45</sup> Totally legendary, the exploits of 'Alī in the Orient unfold within the general mould of the Iranian national epic, mostly in its secondary versions. This epic had a considerable success in the Turko-Persian world, and particularly in India where was produced one of the most important epico-religious text in Persian, the *Ḥamleh-yi Ḥaydarī*, begun by Rafī' Khān Bāzīl and terminated by Abū Ṭālib Iṣfahānī.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, Safavid religious authorities may have been less cautious with epics related to 'Alī, who held the most prominent position, both in Twelver doctrine and Safavid-Qizilbash rituals. Legendary accounts about his military exploits or miracles continued to be apparently openly composed although they sometimes contained heterodox assessments. In this respect, we may mention a poem composed under the form of a *masnavī* by Fāriq Gīlānī in 1000/1591–2, when Shah 'Abbās was conquering Gīlān. Besides the usual fabulous or phantasmagoric themes, this text presents 'Alī as a sort of half-god and contains in its Introduction *Ḥurūfī* elements alongside with a praise of Shah 'Abbās, on whose reign a further consolidation of Imamism was operated.<sup>47</sup>

*The epic of Amīr Ḥamza*

The romance of Amīr Ḥamza, definitely Persian from its earliest compositions, developed from epic accounts concerning at least two different historical figures: 1) Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalīb, the Prophet's uncle, an early champion and martyr of Islam, the first *Sayyid al-Shuhāda*; 2) Ḥamza b. 'Abd Allāh, the Kharijite (d. 213/828–9), a Sīstānī insurgent who is also said to have waged battles in Sind and Hind. Known under different titles (*Dāstān/Qiṣṣeh/Asmār-i Amīr Ḥamza; Ḥamza-nāmeḥ; Rumūz-i Ḥamza*), the story was translated into Arabic.

<sup>45</sup> See Safa, *Hamāseh*, 377 f.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 379 ff. On other epics related to 'Alī, see Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 5/3, 1512 f.

<sup>47</sup> On this popular epic about 'Alī, see A. Bausani, *Persia religiosa* (Milano: Il Saggiatore, 1959), 365 ff.

But in the Arabic *Sīrat Ḥamza*, the hero is one of the Prophet's parents different from his uncle. The Ḥamza cycle was translated, adapted or rewritten in many languages, in vast cultural areas: Turkish, Indian, Malay-Indonesian, Georgian etc.<sup>48</sup>

Despite their condemnation by al-Karakī and his pupil Fāzīl Abharī, storytelling and compositions on Amīr Ḥamza seem to have been continuing in Safavid Persia. The most important versified epico-religious saga remnant from that period, is the *Ṣāhib-Qiyān-nāmeḥ*: its action takes place essentially in Iranian lands and the stories depict pre-islamic Iranian heroes and their deeds. Probably because of the attacks launched by some Imami clerics against the epic of Ḥamza and its exponents, the author of this text, composed in 1073/1662–3, remained anonymous.<sup>49</sup>

The greatest impulse for the writing, illustrating and reciting of stories on Amīr Ḥamza was given by the Emperor Akbar.<sup>50</sup> His initiative was followed under Jahāngīr, notably through the action of some courtiers and of the poet 'Abd al-Nabī. Author of the *Tazkireh-yi Maykhāneh*, 'Abd al-Nabī, originally from Qazvin, spent most of his life in India. Being reputed as a storyteller, particularly gifted in reciting stories on Ḥamza, he was protected by his compatriot Mīrzā Nizām Qazvīnī (*vāqī'a-nigār* at Jahāngīr's court at Agra) who was also fond of that saga. He then passed to the service of Amān Allāh, son of Maḥābat Khān, who appointed him to the direction of *Qiṣṣeh-khwānī* and *kitāb-dānī*. Among the books which he wrote then, he composed a treaty entitled *Dastūr al-fuṣahā* in which he gave guidance to *Qiṣṣeh-khwānān* on the correct recitation of *Qiṣṣeh-yi Amīr Ḥamza*.<sup>51</sup> It is obvious that no comparable sponsoring was ever bestowed on epico-religious literature in Safavid Iran, despite the persisting popularity of the epic of Amīr Ḥamza.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup> On the romance of Amīr Ḥamza, see G.M. Meredith-Owens, 'Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muttalib', in *EI/2*.

<sup>49</sup> On the *Ṣāhib-Qiyān-nāmeḥ* and further texts on Ḥamza, see Safa, *Ḥamāsa*, 379; Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 5/1, 584–585, 5/3, 1512. See also J. Shi'ār, *Qiṣṣeh-i Ḥamza: Ḥamza-nāmeḥ*, (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān, 1347s/1968), 2d ed. 1362s/1983. As mentioned by the editor in his *Introduction* of the second edition (12), this Ḥamza cycle contains essentially stories about Ḥamza and his companions before their conversion to islam.

<sup>50</sup> See Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 5/3, 1505–1506 (citing Muḥammad Shafī' Lāhorī).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* On 'Abd al-Nabī Fakhr al-Zamānī, see *ibid.*, 1735–1739 and *Index*.

<sup>52</sup> In their large majority, the extant manuscripts were written in India.



*The maq̄tal nāmeḥs and related religious elegiac literature*

Many other panegyric or epico-religious texts about the Prophet, the Imams and other holy persons were written in the Turko-Persian and Indo-Persian areas during the Safavid period. A large priority was given in Safavid controlled territories to literary compositions related to the cult of Imam Ḥusayn and other Shīʿī martyrs which constituted the most efficient device to propagate Shīʿī popular piety. Widely composed and diffused in the Turko-Persian world prior to the Safavids, historico-legendary texts, deriving from or largely inspired by *maq̄til* works in Arabic, are generally known under the name of *maq̄tal-nāmeḥ*. But probably because of their popular features, the Persian elite dismissed them as being devoid of literary value. The oldest extant versions of these *maq̄tal nāmeḥs* are therefore in Turkish, whereas the original Persian texts disappeared. We have to wait till the end of the 9th/15th century to dispose of what remains to my knowledge the only early *maq̄tal-nāmeḥ* in Persian with an integral text.<sup>53</sup> Often referring to the famous Arab transmitter of traditions Abū Mikhnaḥ, these texts constitute a real basis from which the liturgy of deploration of the drama of Karbala unfolded itself. But like the *Abū Muslim-nāmeḥs*, *Mukhtār-nāmeḥs* or epics related to other avengers, rather than on grief and lamentation for Ḥusayn and other martyrs, these compositions are essentially focused on the theme of revenge, almost ritual, with its set of atrocities or tortures inflicted on those responsible for the Karbala massacre.

The Persian text derived from the *maq̄tal-nāmeḥ* genre which attained the highest notoriety is the *Rawzāt al-shuhāda*, composed by Ḥusayn Vāʿiz Kāshifī (d. 910/1504–05). Despite his devotion for the *Ahl-i bayt* and his adoption of Shīʿī themes, then largely popular among Sunni Sufi circles, this Naqshbandī Sufi remained probably faithful to his Sunni obedience.<sup>54</sup> His son Fakhr al-Dīn ʿAlī Ṣāfi (d. 931/1522–23) mentions in his hagiobiographical work on the Naqshbandiyya (*Rashahāt ʿayn al-ḥayāt*) that upon the recommendation of the Sufi-poet

<sup>53</sup> On earlier Turko-Persian *maq̄tal-nāmeḥs* and this particular Persian text, illuminated with miniatures, see Calmard, *Rituals* I: 132 f.

<sup>54</sup> On his biography, see: Gh. H. Yousofi, 'Kashifi', in *EI/2*; Calmard, *Culte*, 286 ff.; G. Herrmann, 'Biographisches zu Ḥusayn Wāʿiz Kasifi', in R.E. Emmerick and D. Weber, *Corolla iranica* . . . (Frankfurt am Main-Bern-New York-Paris: P. Lang, 1991) 90–100.

Jāmī (898/1492) he adhered to that Sufi order.<sup>55</sup> Kāshifī was altogether a literary man (*adīb, fāzil*) who also composed treatises on *inshāʿ* (official correspondence), a Mirror for Princes, anthologies of Rumi's poetry etc., a theologian who wrote commentaries on the Kuran, and a gifted preacher (*vāʿiẓ*). Composed in 908/1502–03, at the dawn of Shah Ismāʿīl's reign, the *Rawẓāt al-shuhadā* ranks much above prior popular epico-religious works. It was written upon the demand of the Timurid prince Murshād al-Dawleh wa'l-Dīn ʿAbdallāh (Sayyid Mīrzā) and should be therefore considered as a courtly literary production. It constitutes a large and skilful synthesis of historical, hagiographic and legendary accounts related to the Drama of Karbala (with specific mentions of some *maqal nāmehs*) and of the relevant lyrico-elegiac literature (mostly *manāqib*), with additional poems by the author.<sup>56</sup> The *Rawẓāt al-shuhadā* was early translated, or rather adapted with additions, into Turkish by the trilingual Sufi poet Fuẓūlī (d. 963/1556).<sup>57</sup> It was paraphrased or abridged in Persian and by various Indian authors, in Dakhni and Hindustani.<sup>58</sup> Either in its original version or its adaptations and translations, this book was very popular among the Ottomans and the Mughals. A copy of the Persian text, illuminated with miniatures, was produced under Ottoman patronage.<sup>59</sup> On the other hand, as a kind of paradox, the fate of this work is not so well documented under Safavid rule, although it was to be used, often in abridged or adapted versions, by the *rawẓeh-*

<sup>55</sup> Calmard, *Culte*, 288 f.; Yousofi, *l.c.*; on Kāshifī's 'Shiism', see also Calmard, *Rituals I*: 131.

<sup>56</sup> For a thorough analysis and translations of its contents, see Calmard, *Culte*, 294–418; further translations, 519–570.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 302. A. Karahan ('Fuḍulī', in EI/2) considers Fuẓūlī's *Hadīqat al-suʿadā* rather as a *maqal* taken from the *Rawẓāt al-shuhadā*. He also considers Fuẓūlī as a moderate Twelver shiite (he was born and educated at the 'atabāʾ), his language having characteristics of literary *Āzarī* Turkish. Fuẓūlī composed panegyrics for Shah Ismāʿīl, the Safavid *valī* of Baghdad, as well as for Sulaymān the Magnificent and the Ottoman *pāshā* of Baghdad. On Fuẓūlī and the *Hadīqāt al-suʿadā*, written in Baghdad, see Milstein, 2 ff., 100 and *Index* [According to Milstein, Fuẓūlī was never identified as a Shiʿite].

<sup>58</sup> Calmard, *Culte*, 302 f., with ref. to a French translation from Urdu by Garcin de Tassy, *Les séances de Haidari* (1845). See also Yousofi, *l.c.*

<sup>59</sup> *Rawẓāt al-shuhadā*, cat. Pertsch, I: n° 572. See I. Stchoukine, B. Flemming, P. Luft, H. Sohrweide, *Illuminierte islamische Handschriften* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1971) (*Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, Band XVI*), Wiesbaden, 1971, n° 84, 225–229. On this manuscript and other Kāshifī's writings in Ottoman Baghdad, see Milstein, 106 and *Index*.

*khvāns* in Shī'ī mourning.<sup>60</sup> This book was then to constitute, together with Muḥtasham's elegiac poems (see below), a sort of breviary for preachers. There was a continuing tradition of 'maqtal' writing in Ottoman Bagdad.<sup>61</sup>

From Ṭahmāsp's reign, along with the policy of elaboration and propagation of Shī'ī doctrine, there was a reinforcement of the Safavids' charisma through the official assessment of their alleged 'Alid ancestry.<sup>62</sup> This association of the Safavids' lineage with the Imams and the *Ahl-i bayt* was further stressed, at the popular level, by a strong encouragement to compose elegiac poetry dedicated to the Imams and Shī'ī martyrs. Although that preference, together with other factors, entailed further waves of emigration of Persian court poets to India, this gave a decisive impulse to Shī'ī commemorations.

A fanatical Shī'ī poet, Mullā Ḥayratī Tūnī (d. 961/1554), who composed notably a *Shāhnāmeḥ* dedicated to the deeds of the Prophet and prestigious Shī'ī figures, was at times among Ṭahmāsp's retinue. He was known for his insolence in his youth. Although Ṭahmāsp was, at least, annoyed by the persisting influence of Sunnis in his realm, he was irritated by Ḥayratī's extremely violent attack against the Sunnis of Qazvin. The poet had to flee to Gīlān. Thanks to a *qaṣīdeḥ*, which he wrote in praise of 'Alī, he obtained forgiveness and reverted into Ṭahmāsp's good graces. Probably from that time, he composed elegiac praises (*manāqib* of the *Ahl-i bayt* and the Imams) for which he remained famous.<sup>63</sup> However, if we are to believe Iskandar Beg, this was only after having patronised court poets that, in his later years, Ṭahmāsp forbade them to recite their panegyrics before him and enjoined them to write verses in praise of the Imams instead. The recipient of Ṭahmāsp's disapprobation for these panegyrics was the Safavid court poet Mawlānā Muḥtasham Kāshānī

<sup>60</sup> See Calmard, *Rituals* II: 155 f.

<sup>61</sup> Milstein, 107 f.

<sup>62</sup> As is well known, this was done through a falsification of Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn's bio-hagiography, the *Ṣafwat al-ṣafā*, entrusted by Ṭahmāsp to Sayyid Abu'l-Faḥ al-Ḥusaynī (probably identical with Shaykh Ḥusaynī Kātīb-i Ardabili): see H. Zirke, *Ein hagiographischen Zeugnis zur persischen Geschichte aus der Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts. Das achte Kapitel des Safwat as-Safā in kritischen Bearbeitung* (Berlin: 1987), 5, 44.

<sup>63</sup> On Hayratī, see: Browne, IV, 170 f.; Rypka, 298; Safa, *Ḥamāseh*, 383 f.; Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 5/1, 586–588, 606 ff., 623 ff. According to Sām Mīrzā, *Tuḥfa-yi Samī*, quoted by Safa (*ibid.*, 587), although he pretended to be from Tūn, he was from Marv. He died in 961/1554, or 970/1562–3, according to H. Nakhjavānī cited by Rypka.

(d. 996/1587–8, or 1000/1591–2). When he received the Shah's reply, without any reward for his panegyrics, getting inspiration from the *Haft band* on Imam 'Alī of the late Muḥammad Ḥasan Kāshī, Muḥtasham composed his famous twelve strophe elegy on Imam Ḥusayn and the martyrs of Karbala. He was duly rewarded and, at once, court poets in the capital composed fifty or sixty such elegies and all were rewarded.<sup>64</sup> Muḥtasham's *Davāzdeh band* on the Tragedy of Karbala was regarded as a model for further elegies, homilies or dirges (*marthiyya*, pl. *marāthī*) on Shī'ī Imams and other martyrs.<sup>65</sup> It was frequently imitated but remained unmatched. Verses from it, reproduced or painted on canvas, on *qalamkārs* or other material, frequently adorn Muḥarram gatherings. They are sung by predicants or young men with harmonious voices called *Muḥtasham khvānān*.<sup>66</sup>

When considering Muḥtasham's biography, we are tempted to say that his feelings of sympathy towards the holy Shī'ī figures was rather of the kind widely prevailing in the Turko-Persian area before the Safavids, among Sunnis as well as Shī'a. His native town Kashan, although it had sheltered a Shī'ī community from Seljuq times, was not properly speaking a Shī'ī town when Shah Ismā'īl established his power.<sup>67</sup> Before becoming a professional poet, Muḥtasham was, like his father, a cloth-merchant (*bazzāz*). Although his poems were appreciated at Qazvin, he apparently continued to live in Kashān. Far from being a fanatical Shī'ī, he was very pragmatic in managing his career. Besides his protection at the Safavid court, through his brother 'Abd al-Ghanī he had contacts in India with the Mughal and Deccan courts. He notably enjoyed the patronage of the emperor Akbar and of his powerful notable 'Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i khānān.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Iskandar Beg, I: 178; tr. Savory, I: 274–275. Muḥtasham's predecessor, Mawlānā Ḥasan Kāshī, was particularly dear to Shah Ṭahmāsp. While he was in a state of depression, he says that he wept while reciting his *Haft band* which he quotes (*Tazkireh*, 61 f.). On Muḥammad Ḥasan Kāshī, a poet of 7th/13th century, born in Āmol, see Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 3/2, 745–751. The date of his death remains unknown. He was buried near the mausoleum of Sulṭāniya and, on Shah Ismā'īl's order, a tomb and a garden were laid out there (*ibid.*, 748, quoting Shushtari, *Majālis al-mu'minīn*). According to Kāshīfī, Ḥasan Kāshī was a 'genuine' *maddāh* (see Calmard, *Rituals I*: 134, n. 145).

<sup>65</sup> See Browne, IV, 172 ff. (with a translation of three strophes); Calmard, *Culte*, 571–581 (French translation of the twelve strophes); Safa, in CHI: IV, 954; Rypka, 298.

<sup>66</sup> Calmard, *Culte*, 572.

<sup>67</sup> See J. Calmard, 'Kāshān', in EI/2.

<sup>68</sup> See J.T.P. de Bruijn, 'Muḥtasham-i Kāshānī', in EI/2; Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 5/2, 792 f.

His production of non-religious poetry remains important. He dedicated his *Jalāliyya*, a cycle of 64 *ghazals*, to the itinerant dancer of Isfahan, Shāṭir Jalāl. He became an expert in versed enigmas and chronograms and celebrated the accession of Shah Ismāʿīl II, in 984/1576, by squeezing 1128 possible datings of the event into six *rubāʿīs*.<sup>69</sup> This confirms that, at least from that date, the poet had resumed writing court poetry and seeking royal patronage, even when the patron was willing to abandon the intolerant religious policy of his father and to reintroduce the Sunna.<sup>70</sup>

Towards the end of the Safavid period, the self-styled 'Alid origin of the Safavids was reasserted under Shah Sulaymān (1666–94).<sup>71</sup> The textual elaboration of Shīʿī commemorations was achieved by Mullā Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī ('Allāma Majlisī or Majlisī-yi sānī, d. 1110/1698). He enriched it with a sum of traditions and devotional writings dedicated to the *Ahl-i bayt* and the Imams which had already been collected by *akhbārī* Imamis and by various authors with Sufi leanings whose ideas, on the other hand, he reproved as a staunch exponent of rational Imami doctrine (*uṣūlism*). His ascendancy was at its peak under Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn (1694–1722) when he initiated an intolerant and repressive policy against the Sunnis and religious minorities which largely contributed to the Safavids decline and fall.<sup>72</sup> Despite his vast contribution to Shīʿī culture, both learned and popular, and his lasting influence on the Imami community, Majlisī was criticized even in his life time for his interpretation of traditions, or his political attitude during the occultation of the twelfth Imam. His repressive policy and those who further applied it were disapproved by Shīʿī clerics and laymen.<sup>73</sup>

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Muḥtasham's dirges are sung in Muḥarram ceremonies in India. See M. Tipoo, 'Observations on the origin and ceremonies of the Mohurram', *Madras Journal of Literature and Science*, October 1835, [315–335], 332.

<sup>69</sup> Rypka, 298; de Bruijn, *l.c.*; Safa, *ibid.*, 794–796.

<sup>70</sup> See B. Scarcia-Amoretti, in CHI, VI: 643. Shah Ismāʿīl II was a patron of arts (B. Gray, in CHI, VI: 891 f.).

<sup>71</sup> By the composition of an official hagio-biography, the *Silsilat al-nasab-i ṣafaviyya*, by Shaykh Ḥusayn Prizādeh Zāhidī, ed. Kāzīm-zādeh, Berlin, 1343/1945.

<sup>72</sup> See Abdul-Hadi Hairī, 'Majlisī', in EI/2. Majlisī never occupied the function of *mullā-bāshī* (see J. Calmard, 'Mollī', in EI/2). The most detailed biographical information on Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, his family, his disciples and his works is given by Āqā Aḥmad b. Muḥammad 'Alī Bihbahānī, *Mīr'at al-ahvāl-i jahān-nāmeḥ*, 2 vols., (Qum, 1373/1994), vol. I: 77 ff. and *Index*.

<sup>73</sup> Abdul-Hadi Hairī, *l.c.*

*Non-Islamic popular literature*

Like their Sunni colleagues, Imami *‘ulamā*, basing themselves on traditions going up to the Imams, were opposed to the composition and propagation of stories, fables, sagas of non-Muslim heroes. This was particularly the case in late Seljuq times, when the *uṣūlī* Imami ‘Abd al-Jalīl Rāzī condemned story-telling of *Shāhnāmeḥ*’s mythical figures.<sup>74</sup> But in the absence of any means of coercion, this clerical attitude could not prevent the everlasting success of epic literature. From the Ilkhanid period (1256–1335), there was a remarkable revival of royal ideology linked with the Iranian national epos.<sup>75</sup> This was to be accompanied through various dynasties, notably the Timurid, by a continuous sponsoring of calligraphies and paintings of *Shāhnāmeḥ* manuscripts. This epic was then rightly acknowledged as the most outstanding monument of Persian literature. At a popular level, there was apparently also a continued activity of storytellers (*Shāhnāmeḥ khwānān*) in the Turko-Persian world. From the outset of the Safavid period, versified eulogies were produced, under the title *Shāhnāmeḥ*, in praise of Shah Ismā‘īl’s deeds. The latter gave names of *Shāhnāmeḥ*’s heroes to his sons Ṭahmāsp, Sām, Bahrām. He also encouraged the calligraphy and illustration of Firdawsī’s *Shāhnāmeḥ*.<sup>76</sup> This was to reach its peak with the extraordinary ‘Houghton *Shāhnāmeḥ*’, finished under Ṭahmāsp’s reign.<sup>77</sup> Famous former Timurid painters and calligraphers, and other artists from various origins, continued to produce *Shāhnāmeḥ* manuscripts throughout the period.<sup>78</sup> Royal *Shāhnāmeḥ*s were also produced in the Ottoman realm, notably at Baghdad,<sup>79</sup> and many ‘*Shāhnāmeḥ*s’ praising Safavid or Indian monarchs were

<sup>74</sup> According to ‘Abd al-Jalīl Rāzī (*Naqẓ*, 64 ff.) in public places there were Shi‘ite storytellers (*manāqib-khwānān*) extolling the virtues of Shi‘ite holy figures and Sunni storytellers (*faẓā‘il-khwānān*) who, in ill-famed quarters, exalted the heroes of the *Shāhnāmeḥ*. He condemns the latter’s activities as being a dangerous innovation and deviation (*bid‘at va zīlālāt*); see Calmard, *Culte*, 434 ff.; Calmard, *Rituals I*: 132. It is difficult to know whether this religious attitude entailed a clear division between storytellers from that time. See Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 2, 192–194; Safa, ed., *Dārāb-nāmeḥ-yi Ṭarsūsī*, 2 vols., Tehran, 2nd ed. 2537/1977, I: *Muqaddima*, 21.

<sup>75</sup> This is amply demonstrated by M. Melikian’s contributions, notably in *Studia Iranica*, 17/1 (1988); 20/1 (1991).

<sup>76</sup> See B. Gray, in *CHI*, VI: 877 ff.

<sup>77</sup> On that manuscript, see *ibid.*, 889 ff. (B. Gray proposes dates from about 1520 to about 1530 for its completion).

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 891 f., 903 f., 906, 908.

<sup>79</sup> Milstein, 89, 100 and *Index*.

copied or written in Mughal India.<sup>80</sup> Shah 'Abbās's preferred Persian poets seem to have been Firdawsī and Hāfiz. *Shāhnāme* writing and painting were revived in the royal workshop under his patronage. He enjoyed epic storytelling which he attended in coffee houses (*qahveh-khāneh*) where he sometimes invited foreign visitors. In his assembly, he entertained *Shāhnāme* *khwānān* who were themselves poets and had a good voice.<sup>81</sup>

Since it is obvious that Safavid kings encouraged the production and spread of the Iranian national epos, one may wonder why Imami 'ulamā reacted apparently very little against this royal patronage. Contrarily to what happened with epics on Abū Muslim or on Amīr Ḥamza, there was no anathema against this non Islamic literature which evidently strongly influenced the composition of such epico-religious sagas. Moreover, the *Shāhnāme* *khwānān* (also known as *naqqāl* or professional storytellers, who, besides the *Shāhnāme* or its variants also recited epics deriving from the national legend) and their colleagues extolling the deeds and virtues of Shī'ī holy figures (the *maddāhs* or the *rawzeh-khwāns*) operated in the same places: the *may-dān* (large public square used for various festivities as well as horse races, polo ground etc.); *qahveh-khāneh*s and other various places of socio-religious gatherings. The antagonism between these categories of storytellers had no longer the same reason to exist as before Safavid times. It is worth noting that, probably from the Safavid period, the *naqqāls* began their performance by the *bismillāh* and poetical eulogies on the Imams.<sup>82</sup>

Although it is difficult to know to which extent the 'ulama appreciated Persian epic poetry, many of them, through personal interest or as a diversion from their stern theological studies, composed non religious prose or poetry. This was particularly the case with Safavid *ṣadrs* who, at least in the 10th/16th century, were probably more

<sup>80</sup> See D.N. Marshall, *Mughals in India. A bibliographical survey of manuscripts* (London and New York: Asia Publishing House, 1967), Index, s.v. 'Shah-namah'. On *Shāhnāme* writing and painting under Ismā'īl I, Ṭahmāsp I and 'Abbās I, see relevant bibliography in A. Welch, 'Safawids, Art and Architecture', in EI/2.

<sup>81</sup> See N. Falsafi, *Zīndāgāni-yi Shāh 'Abbās-i awal*, II, (Tehran: np, 1334 sh/1955), 27, 37.

<sup>82</sup> M.E. Page, 'Professional storytelling in Iran', in *Iranian Studies*, 12/3-4 (1979), [195-215], 197 (from M.E. Page, *Naqqālī and Ferdowsī: Creativity in the Iranian National Tradition*, PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1977 (not seen). See also M.J. Maḥjūb, 'Sokhanvarī', *Sokhan*, 9 (1337/1958), 780-786.

renowned as men of letters than as theologians.<sup>83</sup> But even a qualified Imami theologian such as the Arab Shaykh Bahā'ī (d. 1030/1621–22), who spent most of his career at the service of the Safavids, while promoting the influence of Imami 'ulama, also wrote anecdotes in Arabic and a Persian *masnavī*.<sup>84</sup> Al-Karakī's son-in-law, Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir, known as Mīr Dāmād (d. 1041/1630), a famous theologian and philosopher, was also a poet who wrote under the *takhalluṣ* of Ishrāq.<sup>85</sup> Another renowned theologian-philosopher, Mūrzā Abu'l-Qāsim Findiriskī (d. 1050/1640–1) also composed valuable mystic Persian poetry.<sup>86</sup> Besides numerous works on theology, philosophy, ethics, Mullā Muḥsin-i Fayz-i Kāshānī (d. 1090/1679) also composed Persian poetry.<sup>87</sup> The keen interest in Persian prose and poetry manifested by these and other Safavid Imami 'ulamā found its latest expression in the works and life of the poet-*mujtahid* Shaykh 'Alī Ḥazīn (d. 1180/1766) who spent the second half of his life in India.<sup>88</sup>

Together with the heroes popularized in the *Shāhnāmeḥ*, there was in Iranian royal ideology a strong influence of the themes contained in the Alexander the Great romance (*Iskandar-nāmeḥ*). From the Mongol times, Iranian rulers bore Alexander's honorific title of *Ṣāhib-qirān*. As a kind of heritage, this was used from Timur, down to the Safavids and the Qajars, in royal titles and coinage. The idealized and islamized Iskandar had been integrated from a long time into Persian literature and further into Turkish and other literatures throughout

<sup>83</sup> See J. Calmard, 'Ṣadr', in EI/2. Among the *sadrs* appointed under Shah Ismā'īl, 'none was a professing Twelver scholar or lay believer' (Newman, 75 f.; see also Calmard, *l.c.*).

<sup>84</sup> Browne, IV, 407. Scholars such as Browne, Minorsky, Lockhart, Savory, Corbin, Arjomand etc. tended to present Shaykh Bahā'ī and other Imami 'ulamas of the early 17th century as apolitical philosophers or mystics. This vision was strongly criticized by A. Newman, 'Toward a reconsideration of the 'Isfahan School of philosophy': Shaykh Bahā'ī and the role of the Safavid 'Ulama', *Studia Iranica*, 15/2 (1988), 65–199. He probably introduced the camel sacrifice in Persia (see Calmard, *Rituals II*: 151, n. 50).

<sup>85</sup> See A.S. Bazmee Ansari, 'al-Dāmādī', in EI/2; Safa, *Adabiyāt*, 5/1, 306–309.

<sup>86</sup> See S.H. Nasr, 'Findiriskī', in EI/2; Safa, *ibid.*, 310–314.

<sup>87</sup> On him, see W.C. Chittick, 'Muḥsin-i Fayz-i Kāshānī' in EI/2; Safa, *ibid.*, 328–336.

<sup>88</sup> On his origins, his tormented fate, his works (notably his memoirs and four *Diwāns*) see: Browne, 277–283; Sarfaraz Khan Khatak, *Shaykh Muḥammad 'Alī Ḥazīn: His life, Times and Works* (Lahore: M. Ashraf, 1944). On his influence as the greatest Shi'ite scholar in Northern India in his period and his protection, at Banaras, by the Hindu raja, see J. Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shi'ism in Iraq and Iran* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1988), 51 f.



the Turko-Persian area, including India. Along with the *Shāhnāmeḥ*, storytellers would extoll the deeds of Iskandar and rulers of their time in public places as well as in front of royal audiences.<sup>89</sup> Nizāmī's inimitable *Iskandar-nāmeḥ* (*Sharaf-nāmeḥ*, *Iqbāl-nāmeḥ*) served as a model for further compositions. Shah 'Abbās I seems to have been fond of the *Iskandar-nāmeḥ*.<sup>90</sup> This was also the case in these days with the Mughal and Ottoman rulers. Royal ideology attached to Iskandar was paramount in Turkey, notably under Sulayman the Magnificent (1520–1566) glorified in his lifetime as a new Alexander the Great.

The popularization of tales and stories (sing. *qiṣṣeh*, *dāstān*) by storytellers increased considerably in Persia throughout the Safavid period. Old stories were adapted or rewritten, sometimes in the *bahr-i tahvīl* meter adopted by both poets and storytellers (*naqqālān*, *ma'rakaḡīrān*). The simple and direct diction used in the *bahr-i tahvīl* made it a popular medium for professional storytellers to stir and retain their audiences' emotion.<sup>91</sup> New themes appeared, sometimes connecting historical writing and storytelling, such as poems about the repelling of the Portuguese from the Persian Gulf.<sup>92</sup> There was also a great amount of Indian stories, either translated or directly composed in Persian by Persian migrants. Along with epico-religious themes merging in the *maḡtal nāmeḥs*, there was a development of what may be called guild literature. Influenced by popular sufism, it found its best expression in the *shahrāshūb* (literally city-disturbing) poems and prose.<sup>93</sup> Besides *shahrāshūb* poets, there were also artisans and tradesmen who wrote poetry on their trade, sometimes using the special language or jargon which each guild had created for itself to preserve its identity and secrecy.<sup>94</sup>

Among the popular romances composed in the Turko-Persian area during the Safavid period, a complete epic cycle was dedicated to the semi-legendary figure of Kōroḡhlū/Kurughlū. The theme of 'the son of the blind one' is widely spread in Indo-European and Caucasian

<sup>89</sup> See I. Afshār, *Iskandar-nāmeḥ*, Tehran, 1343/1964, 12.

<sup>90</sup> He asked the minor poet Hidāyatullah Rāzī (one of his courtiers) to write, as a challenge, a meaningless poem in Nizāmī's *Iskandar-nāmeḥ*'s meter (Falsafi, [*op. cit.* n. 81], 40 f.)

<sup>91</sup> See M. Dabirsiyaqi, 'Bahr-e tahvīl', in EI.

<sup>92</sup> On *Jang-nāmeḥ-i Kishm* and *Jārūn-nāmeḥ*, see Storey, II/2, 309.

<sup>93</sup> See A. Gulchin Ma'ānī, *Shahrāshūb dar shī'r-i Farsi*, Tehran, 1346/1967.

<sup>94</sup> Some samples of these *shahrāshūbs* are given in translation by M. Keyvani, *Artisans and Guild Life in the later Safavid period* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1982), 263 ff.

folklores.<sup>95</sup> Tales on Kōroghlū have been written, from the 16th century, in various Turkish and non Turkish languages.<sup>96</sup> Alike those on the saga of Dede Qorqut, they are typically tribal Turkmen in their themes and ideology. The legend crystallised on a Jalālī insurgent, a sort of Anatolian ‘Robin Hood’ outlaw, whose deeds were celebrated in *dāstāns* by poet-minstrels (sing. *‘āshiq*) in Ottoman-Safavid bordering areas, from the early 11th/17th century.<sup>97</sup> Although they no longer had precise connection with the eponym of the movement, Shaykh Jalāl (d. 925/1519), ‘Jalālī’ insurrections against established powers, Ottomans and Safavids, constitute the socio-historical basis of the Kōroghlū epic cycle. In its Western variants, Kōroghlū belongs to a particularly turbulent Qizilbash tribe, the Takkalū. Although the Takkalū first enjoyed Shah Ismā‘īl favour, their influence was reduced by the rising power of the Ustājālū. Further to the Mahdist revolt of Bābā Shāhqūlī, in the Teke-ili (917/1511), Takkalū tribal elements entered Safavid territories by thousands. On their way to Azerbayjān, they massacred and plundered an important merchant caravan. This gave Shah Ismā‘īl the pretext to have these refugees eliminated. Their leaders were executed; genuine soldiers were distributed among other Qizilbash amirs; women and children were chased and left wandering on the roads.<sup>98</sup> Other Takkalū chiefs were ousted from their dominant position in favour of the Shāmlū in 937/1531.<sup>99</sup> Some elements among the Takkalū may have been particularly heterodox in their beliefs and ritual practices. Their conduct was severely condemned by Shah Ṭahmāsp himself in his *Tazkīreh*, when he mentions the defection to the Ottomans, in 938/1531–2, of the Qizilbash amir Ūlāmā/Ulmā Takkalū and a group of Sārlū/

<sup>95</sup> See R. Mollov, ‘Contribution à l’étude du fond socio-historique du Destan ‘Kōroghlu’’, *Etudes balkaniques*, Sofia, 7 (1967), [107–128], 107 ff.

<sup>96</sup> On variant of this tale in Persian, Armenian, Kurdish, Tadjik, etc. see R. Ra‘īs Niya, *Kūroghlu dar afsāneh va tārikh*, Tabrīz 1366/1987. In the 1830s, A. Chodzko collected Kōroghlu’s texts and published them in English and French translations. See J. Calmard, ‘Chodzko’, in *Elr*.

<sup>97</sup> This Jalālī identification was first made by P.N. Boratav in 1931 (see ref. in his article ‘Kōroghlu’, in *EI/2*; Mollov, *l.c.*, 109 ff.). Jalālī rebels were incorporated in the Ottoman army (see W.J. Griswold, ‘Djalālī’, in *EI/2*, *Supplement*). According to Boratav (*l.c.*), this hero has been identified as the Jalālī Kōroghlu Rūshen of Bolu.

<sup>98</sup> See J. Aubin, ‘L’avènement des Safavides reconsidéré’, *Moyen Orient et Océan Indien*, V, 1988, 86 ff.

<sup>99</sup> See H.R. Roemer, in *CHI VI*: 234.

Sārīlū who had joined him.<sup>100</sup> Despite the influence later enjoined by some Takkalū, such as members of the Sharaf al-Dīn Oghli family, allied by marriage with the Safavids, the tribe was submitted to a major purge by Shah ‘Abbās in 1004–5/1596–7.<sup>101</sup> Among the Takkalū, we also find poets. Vajīh al-dīn Shānī Takkalū was among the poets at the court of Shah ‘Abbās when he composed notably eulogies in praise of the Imams.<sup>102</sup>

In their revolts against the political establishment, Jalālī leaders had sometimes ambivalent attitudes. After they had been utterly defeated by the Ottomans, surviving Jalālīs were granted asylum by Shah ‘Abbās in 1016/1607.<sup>103</sup> But these unruly elements were often trouble makers in the Safavid capital, as it is shown by their attitude at a festival of *chirāghān*.<sup>104</sup> After a further rebellion under Shah ‘Abbās II (1642–1666), the tribe was eliminated on the Shah’s order.<sup>105</sup> It therefore remains obvious that Kōroghlū epic romance reflects the disillusion of the Qizilbash progressively evinced from power by the Safavids. Kōroghlū is presented as a Shī‘ī rebel who has to compromise permanently with the Ottoman Sultan and the Safavid Shah.<sup>106</sup> Messianic themes, a rather common feature in pre-Safavid popular Shī‘ism, are also present in Western variants of the romance. Kōroghlū is not dead and will reappear when his time has come.<sup>107</sup> In Eastern versions of the epic, anti-Shah tendencies are linked with the struggle of Central Asian peoples against Qizilbash invasions.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>100</sup> According to Ṭahmāsp, these were known for their heresy and atheism (*ilhād va zandaqa*), their shamelessness and licentiousness (*Tazkireh*, 16–17). In another passage (33), Ṭahmāsp explicitly calls them ‘Sārīlū Tekelū’. But there remain doubts about their identification and their connection with the Qizilbāsh system. In any case, they appear to have been particularly disloyal to the Safavid cause (see A.M. Morton, ‘The chub-i ṭarīq and qizilbash ritual in Safavid Persia’, in Calmard, *Etudes safavides*, [225–245], 239).

<sup>101</sup> See M. Szuppe, ‘Kinship ties between the Safavids and the Qizilbash Amirs . . .’, in Melville, *Safavid Persia*, [79–104], 94.

<sup>102</sup> See Safā, *Adabiyāt*, 5/1, 623; 5/2, 943–949.

<sup>103</sup> See Iskandar Beg: II: 772 ff.; tr. Savory, II: 967 ff.

<sup>104</sup> At Isfahan, in 1018/1609 (see Calmard, *Rituals* II: 148).

<sup>105</sup> Mollov, *l.c.*, 116 (citing Petrushevsky).

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 112 f. In a variant, the Shah is named ‘Shaykh-oghlu Shaykh ‘Abbās’.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 121 f.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 125 f. I wonder why Jiri Cejpek (in Rypka, 634–641) considers Guroghlū/Kōroghlū’s romance as ‘definitely East-Turkish, or to be more precise, Turkmenian’. He denies possible Western Turkish influences ‘after the severing of connections with Western Iran’.

Many features of this Kōrughlū romance further demonstrate the uneasiness of Safavid Shahs at imposing a strict Imami obedience on their Qizilbash disciples. The persistence of their specific beliefs and rituals shows the limits of their religious policy in this respect.<sup>109</sup> As in the case of Shah Ismā‘īl’s *Divān*, it seems that Imami ‘ulama abstained from any judgement on this popular literature extolling the deeds of Turkmen heroes whose moral values they probably lumped together with other heterodox beliefs and practices.

To conclude, I would like to formulate some remarks showing our limited knowledge about Safavid popular literature and the storytellers. These were greatly impressed and influenced by such prominent authors as Firdawsī and Nizāmī. But even those who attained some fame or a status as writers remain rarely identifiable. Whenever we know them by their name or *takhalluṣ*, information on their lives and works remained scanty. They seldom appear in *tazkireh* literature, with the exception of some *shahrāshūb* poets. We remain poorly informed about their techniques, their ways to attract their audiences, the real contents of their speeches, rarely noted by contemporary observers. European eyewitness accounts about popular culture are always useful, mainly when they come from authors like Olearius, Chardin, Du Mans, or others. However, their testimonies remain sketchy or incomplete. Observations on life, manners and customs retained more their attention from the end of the 18th century.

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<sup>109</sup> See Morton, *l.c.*, 243 ff.

- Calmard, Rituals I = J. Calmard, 'Les rituels Shi'īs et le pouvoir. L'imposition du Shi'isme safavide: eulogies et malédictions canoniques', in Calmard, *Etudes safavides*, 109–150.
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- CHI = *Cambridge History of Iran*
- EI/2 = *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.
- EIr = *Encyclopaedia Iranica*
- Iskandar Beg = Iskandar Beg Turkamān Munshī, *Tārīkh-i Ālam-āwā-yi Abbāsi*, ed. I. Afshar, 2 vols., Tehran, 1334–35/1955–56; tr. R.M. Savory, *History of Shah Ābbās*, (Boulder and New York: Westview Press, 1979–86).
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## NUQTAVIYYEH À L'ÉPOQUE SAFAVIDES

Iḥsān Ishrāqī

Au IX<sup>e</sup> siècle de l'hégire/XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle lors des conflits à la suite de l'éclatement de l'État Ilkhanid et les attaques de Timour, un courant de pensée d'origine soufie (mystique) suivant la vision du monde des Ismā'īliyya,<sup>1</sup> est apparu sous le nom de Ḥurūfiyyeh. Le créateur de la secte Ḥurūfī était un homme originaire d'Astarābād,<sup>2</sup> surnommé Faẓlallāh, connu également sous le nom de Na'imī.

Il exerçait le métier de chapelier et s'occupait à ses besoins par cette profession. Pour cette raison on l'avait aussi surnommé 'Ḥalāl-Khūr' (qui vit de ce qu'il gagne légitimement).<sup>3</sup>

Selon les sources authentiques qui ont mentionné les Ḥurūfiyyeh, Faẓlallāh est né en 740/1339.<sup>4</sup> Mīrānshāh, fils de Timour, sur l'ordre de son père, tua Faẓlallāh et ordonna de traîner son corps dans le bazar de Alanjaq (à Nakhjavān).<sup>5</sup>

Faẓlallāh était un érudit, un homme de savoir et de connaissance. En attribuant des significations étonnantes et des interprétations bizarres aux versets du Qur'ān et en basant ses interprétations et ses commentaires sur l'authenticité des lettres et leur secrets, il a prétendu que celui qui veut comprendre le sens réel des livres sacrés et des propos des prophètes anciens, doit prendre connaissance des particularités, des significations et des secrets des lettres.<sup>6</sup> Bien entendu, la croyance en interprétation et en herméneutique des chiffres et des lettres en Perse et dans d'autres territoires anciens, n'était pas une chose nouvelle et avait des origines historiques: Les Pythagoriciens

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<sup>1</sup> K.M. Al-Shaybī, *Tashayyū' va Tasavvuf*, A. Zakāvati, tr. (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1374/1993), 29.

<sup>2</sup> S. Kiyā, *Vāẓhnāmeḥ-yi Gurgānī* (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tihirān, 1330/1951), 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>4</sup> A. Gulpinarlı, *Fihrist-i mutūn-i Hurūfiyyeh*, T. Subhānī, tr. (Tehran: Vizārat-i Farhang va Irshād-i Islāmī, 1374/1993), 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 9; M.A. Khān Tarbiyat, *Dānishmandān-i Azarbayjān* (Tehran: n.p., 1314/1935), 387.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Gulpinarlı, 25–28, Kiā, 14.

reconnaissaient certaines divisions pour les chiffres et faisaient correspondre à ceux ci, toute sorte d'essence et de sens.<sup>7</sup> Pour Ikhvān al-Şafā, les chiffres ont non seulement une relation interne avec la nature, mais aussi avec la révélation.<sup>8</sup>

Avant l'apparition de la secte Ḥurūfiyyeh en Perse, il existait un autre secte actif, sous le nom de Baktāshiyyeh, adepte de Ḥājī Baktāsh-i Valī (mort en 738/1737). Les adoptes de Baktāshiyyeh de disaient épris d'Imam 'Alī et s'attachaient à célébrer les cérémonies d'Āshūrā (deuil de l'Imam Ḥusein 3e Imam des Shī'ites).<sup>9</sup> Mais en raison des conditions non favorables en Perse, ils ont immigré en l'Anatolie. En s'infiltrant dans l'appareil des Sultans Ottomans, et avec leur appuie, ils ont établi leurs propres institutions et *khānqāh* (monastères). Ils ont joué aussi un rôle déterminant dans la formation de l'armée Yeni-Tchéri. Les adeptes de Ḥurūfiyyeh de la Perse qui se sont enfuis plus tard, se sont dirigés vers l'Anatolie et ont rejoint le secte Baktāshiyyeh.<sup>10</sup>

En ce qui concerne l'idéologie des adeptes de Ḥurūfiyyeh, de vastes recherches ont été entreprises par des orientalistes tels que Edward Browne, Clement Howard, Helmut Ritter et Gulpinary. Quelques œuvres appartenant aux idées d'Ḥurūfiyyeh comme *Jāvīdān-nāmeḥ*, *Ustuwār-nāmeḥ*, *Moḥabbat-nāmeḥ*, *Nawm-nāmeḥ* et certains livres et essais se trouvent actuellement dans des bibliothèques nationales de Paris, de Cambridge, d'Iran et de la Turquie. Parmi les livres qui traitent du problème de l'apparition et du développement de Ḥurūfiyyeh, on peut citer *Mujmal al Tavārikh* de Faṣīḥī-yi Khāfī, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar* de Khvāndamīr, *Rawżāt-al-Şafā* de Mirkhvānd, *L'Histoire* d'Ibn Khaldūn, *Tazkīreh-yi* de Daulatshāh-i-Samarqandī, *Arafāt-i Āshiqīn* de Tāqī-al-dīn Uhādī, *Tārikh-i Alfī* de Qāzī-Zādeh Tatāvī et *Maṭla' al-Sa'dayn* d'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī.

Faẓlallāh, à vingt-trois ans, a commencé à propager ses idéologies à Isfahan. Il a également séjourné quelque temps au Gilan et au Dāmḡān. Il a passé les dernières années de sa vie à Bākūiyya, ou Bākū. On peut remarquer dans ses œuvres ainsi que dans celles de ses adeptes ou encore dans les divers livres ou essais, son attache-

<sup>7</sup> 'A.A. Dehkhudā, *Lughatnāmeḥ* (Tihran: Dānishgāh-i Tihrān, 1325/1946-), 15213.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1300-02; E.G. Browne, *Tārikh-i adabī-yi Iran*, A. Şāliḥ, tr. (Tehran, 1358/1979), 2: 551-58.

<sup>9</sup> Z. Şafā, *Tārikh-i Adabiyāt-i Iran* (Tehran: Firdawsī, 1356/1977), 4: 52.

<sup>10</sup> Browne, A. Hekmat, tr. (Tehran, 1357/1978), 3: 516-7.



ment à la science, son don pour écrire en vers et en prose, sa connaissance en théologie des livres sacrés et des langues Turque et Arabe et sa fidélité au soufisme.<sup>11</sup>

Les commentaires et les hémeneutiques que Fazlallāh a fait du Qur'ān et des propos du Prophète, l'on approché d'une part aux idées Ismā'īliyya et d'autre part a celles de Baktāshiyeh.<sup>12</sup>

De telles hérésies provoquaient naturellement la colère et la haine des gouverneurs de la Perse et de l'Asie mineure, suivis de sévères sanctions.

Fazlallāh Na'imī a tenté d'attirer l'amir Timour vers sa voie mystique.<sup>13</sup> Or l'amir ayant découvert son intention, a donné l'ordre de son assassinat. Puis en 804/1410 Mīrānshāh, fils de Timour, le tua de ses propres mains et ordonna de trainer son corps en public et de le jeter au feu.<sup>14</sup>

Après la mort de Fazlallāh, ses califes (ses élèves fidèles), qui étaient apparemment au nombre de cinq, ont commencé à propager secrètement ses idées et se sont réfugiés en Anatolie pour être à l'abri des poursuites et de la torture. Là sous l'habit de la secte Baktāshiyeh et en le joignant, ils ont promu leur idéologie. Mais avec tous ces efforts, leur secret n'est pas resté caché.<sup>15</sup>

Alors les sultans Ottoman ont a maintes reprises procédé à leur assassinat et leur massacre. Parmi ces victimes on peut citer Nasīmī, poète célèbre, qui a été tué par la *fatwā* (décret religieux).<sup>16</sup> Les activités des adeptes de Ḥurūfiyyeh n'ont pas pour autant cessé, même en Perse, et ont continué tout au long de la vie de Timour et de ses successeurs.

En 829/1425 Aḥmad-i Lūr, un des adeptes de Fazlallāh Astarābādī, a agressé a coup de couteau Shāhrukh-mīrāzā, fils de Timour, à la grande mosquée d'Herāt.<sup>17</sup> Mīrkhvānd a détaillé cet incident dans *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*. Il écrit:

Après l'attentat contre Shāhrukh, on a trouvé une clé dans les habits d'Aḥmad-i Lur et cette clé ouvrait la porte de la cours couverte du

<sup>11</sup> Kiyā, 24.

<sup>12</sup> Al-Shibi, 382.

<sup>13</sup> Browne, 3: 511.

<sup>14</sup> Tarbyat, 387.

<sup>15</sup> Kiyā, 22.

<sup>16</sup> Gulpinarli, 16.

<sup>17</sup> Ghiyās al-Dīn Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, M. Dabīrsiyāqī, ed. (Tehran: Khayyām, 1353/1974), 3: 615.

bazar dans lequel travaillait Aḥmad. Les commerçant du bazar ont indiqué que celui-ci y était chapelier et fréquentait des personnes célèbres telles que Mawlānā Ma'rūf le calligraphe et Chah Qāsim-i Anvār.<sup>18</sup>

Sous l'ordre de l'Etat, Mawlānā Ma'rūf a été écroué et Chah Qāsim-i Anvār expulsé de Khorāsān. Il a été contraint de s'installer à Samarqand, mais Uluq Beg l'a tenu en honneur.<sup>19</sup>

A partir de cette époque et jusqu'à l'accession des safavides au pouvoir, les adeptes de Hurufiyya ne se sont pas montrés actifs. Or pendant le règne du Chah Ṭahmāsp I, en raison de l'apparition de la secte Nuḡṭaviyeh, l'idéologie des lettres a survécu sous une nouvelle couverture.<sup>20</sup>

Maḥmūd Pasikhānī-i Gīlānī et le fondateur de la secte Nuḡṭaviyyeh. Il paraît qu'il a fondé sa religion en 800/1397 pendant du regne d'amir Timour. Maḥmūd a été d'abord un des disciples de Fazlallāh Astarābādī, mais Fazlallāh l'a banni en raison de son égoïsme et son désobéissement, et c'est ainsi qu'il a été connu sous le nom de 'Maḥmūd le banni' (*maṭrūd*).<sup>21</sup> Les autres disent de lui qu'il était un savant intelligent et orateur et par sa conviction il ne s'est jamais marié. Maḥmūd est mort en 831/1427, et d'après certains historiens qu'il s'est donné la mort en se jetant dans de l'acide fort.<sup>22</sup>

La religion de Maḥmūd Pasikhānī a trouvé de nombreux disciples au IX<sup>e</sup> et X<sup>e</sup>/XV et XVI siècle en Perse, en Anatoli et Inde. Les Nuḡṭaviyyeh sont ainsi nommés parce que Maḥmūd attribuait l'apparition et la création de chaque chose à la terre qu'il l'appelait Nuḡṭa.<sup>23</sup>

Parmi eux, celui qui ne s'était pas marié était appelé Vāḥid (le singulier) et celui qui était marié était Amin (le confident). Le fait de ne pas se marier était concidéré comme vinéré dans leur religion et Maḥmūd mettait en garde ses disciples contre le mariage.<sup>24</sup>

Les adeptes de Maḥmūd, sont également appelés les Passikhanians mais les musulmans les traitaient d'impie (*mulḥid*). Ils ont également

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 616.

<sup>19</sup> N.A. Falsafi, *Tārīkh-i Z̄indigānī-yi Shāh 'Abbās* (Tihran: Dānishgāh-i Tihrān, 1342/1963), 3: 906-7.

<sup>20</sup> S. Kiyā, *Nuḡṭaviyyān va pasikhāniyān* (Tehran: Anjuman-i Iran, 1320/1941), 9.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*; Azarkeyvan, *Dabistān-i mazāhib*, vol. 1 (Tihran, 1362/1981), 247.

nommés métempsycosistes parce qu'ils pensaient que l'entité de tout ce qui a une forme et une apparence, demeurera toujours dans le monde et se séincarnera continuellement sous forme de pierre, de végétal, d'animal ou d'homme.<sup>25</sup>

Comme Maḥmūd Pasikhānī faisait des commentaires étranges sur des versets du Qur'ān, il a également été surnommé le mécréant (l'impie ou *zandīq*) et ses adeptes, les Mécréants (*zanādaqā*).<sup>26</sup>

Bien que l'apparition des sectes Ḥurūfiyyeh et Nuqtavī comme celle des autres branches de soufisme aient été accompagnées par un mélange des pensées mystiques et des croyances religieuses, mais—comme ils avaient placé le combat contre la religion officielle—c'est pourquoi les pouvoirs de cette époque, ceux des Timourides ou les Safavides, ne supportaient pas l'existence de tels sectes et essayaient de les anéantir.

L'une des caractéristiques du régime des Safavides, était d'appuyer, dès le début, ses fondements sur la vision du monde mystique puis sur le chiïsme. Chah Ismā'īl, le fondateur de la dynastie Safavide, en imitant ses ancêtres, s'est fait appelé (*Murshid-i-Kāmil*) le guide spirituel des soufis. Ce titre a continué d'exister chez ses successeur en tant qu'un signe d'héritage et de la continuité de la direction du *Khānqāh-i Ardabīl*.

Or peu après la formation de la dynastie Safavides, l'aspect mystique du *Khānqāh-i Ardabīl* subit influence chiïsme et les souverains safavides n'espéraient d'autre choses que l'obéissance totale et la servitude absolue de la part des soufis; mais peu après que les Safavides étaient confrontés aux problèmes externes, les adeptes de la secte Nuqtaviyyeh, profitant de cette occasion, ont commencé leur activité dans les différentes régions de la Perse. Ils ont fait de la propagande dans les régions telles que Kashan, Naṣanz ou Qazvin.<sup>27</sup> De nombreux artistes (hommes de goût) et poètes ainsi que les adeptes des idéologies hérétiques se sont convertis à cette secte. Des cadeaux leur parvenaient ainsi à partir de Sind, Kitch ou de Mukrān.<sup>28</sup> Le roi Ṭahmāsp après avoir le transfert de la capitale de Tabrīz à Qazvin

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*; Kiyā, 1.

<sup>26</sup> Maḥmūd Afūshatā-i Naṣanzī *Nuqāvat al-Āsār*, I. Ishraqī, ed. (Tihran: Irshād, 1373/1992), 515; Kiyā, 6.

<sup>27</sup> Kiyā, 32.

<sup>28</sup> Qāzī Aḥmad-i Qumī, *Khulāṣāt al-Tavārīkh*, I. Ishraqī, ed. (Tihran: Dānishgāh-i Tihrān, 1359/1981), I: 462–65.

en 965/1557, a eu l'occasion de renforcer les organisations Shi'ītes et de combattre les adeptes de différentes croyances surtout les sunnites et les adeptes de Zaydī et de Nuḡṭavī. Qāzī Muḡammad Varāmīnī, le poète de la cour de Chah Ṭahmāsp en 975/1567, en envoyant une lettre composée en vers de la part du souverain au Khān Aḡmad-i-Gilānī, lui a suggéré de se lever contre les sunnites et les adeptes de Zaydiyya.<sup>29</sup>

Le souverain, a entrepris l'oppression des sunnites de Qazvin et à arrêter et emprisonner les adeptes des Nuḡṭaviyyeh tel que Ḥayātī le poète qui est resté emprisonné pendant deux ans et été libéré seulement après la mort de Chah Ṭahmāsp. Il est alors parti en Inde et s'est mis au service de Nūr al-dīn Muḡammad Jahāngīr le souverain de ce pays.<sup>30</sup>

En 972/1564 Chah Ṭahmāsp a aveuglé Abu'l-Qāsim 'Amrī, un des poètes et savants les plus appréciés et les plus renommés dans sa cour en l'accusant d'appartenir à la secte Nuḡṭaviyyeh.<sup>31</sup>

Comme les successeurs de Chah Ṭahmāsp, étaient après sa mort confrontés d'une part aux conflits internes et affrontaient d'autre part l'empire Ottomān, les adeptes de Nuḡṭavī ont trouvé une plus grande liberté dans la propagation de leur croyance. Il en était ainsi jusqu'à l'arrivée au trône de Chah 'Abbās I.

En 994/1564, deux ans avant l'accession au pouvoir de Chah 'Abbās I, dans un combat entre les partisans de Chah Muḡammad, le Père de Chah 'Abbās, et Valījān Khān le Turkomane, le gouverneur de Kāshān, certains membres de la secte Nuḡṭaviyyeh, ont soutenu Valījān et se sont faits tuer au cours de la guerre. Afzal Dutārī, le musicien, et Mīr Biqāmī, deux leaders de Nuḡṭavī, ont été ainsi tués.<sup>32</sup>

En 996/1587 Chah 'Abbās, après avoir accédé au pouvoir, a persécuté les chefs Qizilbāshs (membres des tribus dévoués aux Safavides) qui avaient troublé le royaume, en l'entraînant dans les guerres civiles au moment du règne de son père,<sup>33</sup> puis il a pensé à extirper les missionnaires et les disciples de Nuḡṭavī.

<sup>29</sup> Kiyā, 51; Falsafī, 907.

<sup>30</sup> Kiyā, 6; Falsafī, 908.

<sup>31</sup> Kiyā, 54-5.

<sup>32</sup> Naṭanzī, 251-2; Iskandar Munshī, *Ālam āra-yi 'Abbāsī*, I. Afshār, ed. (Tihran: Amīr Kabīr, 1350/1971), 381-5.

<sup>33</sup> Kiyā, 6.

En 999/1590 Abu'l-Qāsim 'Amrī, déjà cité, s'est révolté à Shiraz en compagnie de ses condisciples. Mais il a été assassiné par le décret religieux (*Fatwā*) des 'ulamā' de Shirāz. Cet incident a résolu Chah 'Abbās de faire cesser toute activité de Nuqtaviyyeh.<sup>34</sup>

En 1001/1592 les adeptes de Nuqtaviyyeh de Qazvin sous la direction de Darvīsh Khusraw, ont préparé le terrain pour un soulèvement général. Les principales sources de cette époque témoignent de l'ampleur de ce complot. La cour (*Takiyya*) vaste de Darvīsh Khusraw, pour célébrer des cérémonies des mois de deuil, se remplissait chaque jour par des fidèles qui venaient des pays proches ou lointains à Qazvin. Le souverain constatant le grand nombre des disciples de Darvīsh Khusraw, ne jugeait pas bon de la combattre publiquement et faisait semblant de s'intéresser à cette secte et disait qu'il aimerait connaître les secrets de celle-ci.<sup>35</sup>

Darvīsh, était persuadé que Chah 'Abbās est devenu l'un de ses disciples, lui a enseigné les points essentiels de la croyance Nuqtaviyyeh. Il avait aussi prévu qu'avant 1002/1593 un de ses disciples arrivera au trône et comme le souverain est la personne la plus compétente pour ce rang, il est préférable qu'il reste lui-même au pouvoir.<sup>36</sup>

Chah 'Abbās, constatant le nombre élevé des partisans de Darvīsh Khusraw et craignant sa révolte contre la monarchie, s'est décidé à l'éliminer. Il a réalisé son intention en 1001/1592 lorsqu'il était en route vers Luristān pour refouler la rébellion de Shahvardī-i-Lor.<sup>37</sup>

Sur l'ordre du roi, l'un des chefs, nommé Malik 'Alī Sultan, le chef des Hérauts en compagnie de Darvīsh Khusraw et ses compagnions ainsi que Yūsufī Tarkishdūz et Darvīsh Kūchak Qalandar, ont été arrêtés. C'est alors qu'une étoile filante est apparue dans le ciel, ce qui est un signe considéré généralement comme de mauvaise augure pour la monarchie. Mullā Jalāl-i Munajjim Bāshī (le chef des astrologues) avait prédit que si le monarque veut échapper du possible danger de cette catastrophe céleste, doit abdiquer en apparence pour trois jours et se faire remplacer par un condamné à mort, qui sera tué à la fin du troisième jour; tuer faire disparaître les effets nefastes de l'étoile. Ainsi on a remplacé le roi par Yūsufī Tarkishdūz qui a été tué après trois jours.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Naṭanzī, 515.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Munshī, 476.

Après quelque temps, Darvīsh Khusraw fut aussi tué et par la suite le roi s'est mis à massacrer les fidèles de la secte Nuḡṭaviyyeh comme Mīr Sayyid Aḡmad-i Kāshī connu sous le nom de Pīr Aḡmad (Aḡmad le sage), un des grands maîtres de Nuḡṭaviyyeh Mawlānā Sulaymān-i Sāvajī, et Būdaq-i Beg-i Dīn Uqlī, l'un des chefs de Nuḡṭavī.<sup>39</sup>

Lorsque Chah 'Abbās en 1010/1601 parcourait la distance entre Mashhad et Isfahan à pied, a tué de sa propre main deux maîtres penseurs de Nuḡṭaviyyeh aux nom de Darvīsh Kamāl-i-Aqlīdī et Darvīsh Turāb et quelques disciples de ceux-ci. On a découvert dans les papiers de Mīr Sayyid Aḡmad Kāshī quelques lettres appartenant à ses disciples. Ainsi un certain nombre d'adeptes de ce secte ont été identifiés et arrêtés. L'un d'eux était Mulla Muḡammad Bāqir Khurda, un des plus renommés calligraphes et poètes de Kashān. Mais Chah 'Abbās l'a amnistié en raison de son talent et de sa finesse du goût et l'a placé au rang des calligraphes (de la cour).<sup>40</sup>

En raison de la sévérité de Chah 'Abbās, un bon nombre de fidèles à la croyance Nuḡṭaviyyeh se sont échappés de la Perse pour d'installer en Inde; car le roi Gourkāni d'Inde, Jalāl al-Dīn Muḡammad Akbar agissait avec modération envers les fidèles des différentes religions et sectes et il traitait les musulmans et les hindous sans discrimination.<sup>41</sup>

C'est ainsi que les adeptes des différentes religions et de nombreux poètes, écrivains, peintres et calligraphes persans, qui s'étaient exilés en Inde, ont réussi à avoir des postes et des rangs élevés dans l'appareil gouvernemental de Akbar. Ce facteur perturbait de temps en temps l'atmosphère amicale des relations entre la Perse et l'Inde.<sup>42</sup>

En 1040/1630 Darvīsh Rizā, l'un des adeptes de Nuḡṭaviyyeh a prétendu être Mahdī à Qazvin. Il a attiré de nombreuses personnes autour de lui ont quelques chefs des tribus Shahsavān et Zanganah. Darvīsh Rezā a choisi le 16eme jour du mois de Dhihajja pour sa sortie. Il est parti en compagnie de ses disciples envahir le siège du roi à Qazvin en prononçant la formule Allahu-Akbar (Dieu est le plus grand).<sup>43</sup> Lorsqu'il a pénétré dans la ville, une bataille s'est

<sup>39</sup> Natanzī, 526–7.

<sup>40</sup> Kiyā, 7; Munshī, 476.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Falsafī, 212–15.

<sup>43</sup> Muḡammad Ma'sūm-i Isfahānī, *Khulāsat al-Siyar*, I. Afshar, ed. (Tihran: Intishārāt-i 'Imī, 1368/1989), 119; Iskandar Beg, Muḡammad Yūsuf-i Muvarrikh *Ẓayl-i Ālam ārā*, Suhayli-i Khvānsārī, ed. (Tihran: Islāmiyyeh, 1317/1938), 83.

éclatée entre lui et ses compagnons et les forces de l'Etat. Mais en dépit de la grande sacrifice de ses disciples, il fut vaincu et tué.<sup>44</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Le mouvement des derviches de Nuqtaviyyeh est le prolongement du mouvement de Ḥurūfiyyeh, et historiquement en continuation avec la vision du monde des sectes tels que Bāṭaniyya Ismā'īliyya, Sarbidārān, Ahl-i Ḥaq et Baktāshiyeh s'inspirant des pensées mystiques des écoles post islamiques en Perse.

Leur objectif était l'affaiblissement des gouvernements turcs et mongols par la publicité, la propagation de leur idéologie et parfois la lutte armées (Les Qalandars).

Le mouvement de Nuqtaviyyeh tout comme celui de Ḥurūfiyyeh avait plus de sympathisant parmi les citadins surtout les corporations et les artisans et ce fait est un signe de l'opposition de ces classes au régime oppresseur et tyrannique de l'époque.

Le principe de la croyance de Nuqtaviyyeh se reposait sur les rotations, transmigration des âmes dans le monde, la foi en Mahdī (12e Imam) et les commentaires mystérieux des apparences de l'existence et le secret des comportements peut attirer des adeptes et leur donner l'espoir de parvenir à leur souhaits.

Bien que les Safavides aient été eux-mêmes des disciples des écoles mystiques de Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn et fiers d'appartenir à cette école, après leur arrivée au pouvoir, le soufisme subit influence chiisme les rois ont combattu toute autre vision mystique du monde, autre que les voies contraire ou différentes de celle de leur lignée. Cette lutte était dirigée contre les adeptes des religions et sectes qui n'étaient pas en concordance avec la religion officielle de l'Etat.

<sup>44</sup> Isfahāni, *Khulāṣat al-Sayyār*, 119; Muvarrikh, 83-4.

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THE IMMIGRANT MANUSCRIPTS: A STUDY OF THE  
MIGRATION OF SHĪ'Ī WORKS FROM ARAB REGIONS  
TO IRAN IN THE EARLY SAFAVID ERA

Rasūl Ja'fariyān

*In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful*

During the very first days of the establishment of Safavid rule, the Shī'ī Imamī creed was declared as the state religion. However, the Shī'ism of the family of Shaykh Ṣafī—irrespective of the time from which it dates—was not a Shī'ism characterized by scholarship and legal learning. Apart from the absence of Shī'ī scholars and jurists, Shī'ī works on *fiqh* were also not accessible to them. However, immediately following the establishment of Safavid power the migration of scholars began and they were invited to Iran. This issue has been examined in various studies. What has received less attention is that in addition to the immigration of scholars, Shī'ī works and writings were also brought to Iran from Arabic-speaking lands, and played an important role in the religious development of Iran.

*The Migration of Shī'ī Manuscripts from Arab Regions to Iran*

Shī'ism was brought to Iran from Arab regions in four stages. It came, first, through the Ash'arīs at the end of the 1st/7th and during the 2nd/8th century; secondly through the pupils of Shaykh Ṭūsī, and especially those of Shaykh Mufīd, who were from Ray and Sabzawar and resided in those cities; thirdly through the school of Ḥillah under the leadership of 'Allāmeḥ Ḥillī (d. 726/1225) and his son Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn; and fourthly through the scholars of Jabal Āmil residing in that region, or in Iraq, during the 10th/16th and 11th/17th centuries who later migrated to Iran.

During the third stage, and to a greater extent during the fourth, the works of Arab Shī'ī authors found their way into Iran and resulted in consolidating the foundations of juristic Shī'ism in this land. The movement of books accompanied scholars who brought

their personal libraries to Iran. Also, on many occasions, pilgrims to the holy shrines would buy manuscripts in Iraq and bring them to Iran, as is evident from marks and inscriptions indicating ownership on the back of the manuscripts.<sup>1</sup>

The absence of Shīʿī works in the early days of Safavid rule is generally accepted by historians. An important remark in this regard is that of Rūmlū in his *Aḥsan al-Tawārikh*. He writes that:

During those days the people did not have any knowledge of the issues of the Jaʿfarī *mazhab* and the principles and laws of the *mazhab* of the Twelve Imams, because there did not exist any works on Imamī *fiqh*. The first volume of the book *Qawāʿid-i Islām* (i.e. *Qawāʿid al-Aḥkām fī Maʿrifat al-Ḥalāl wa al-Ḥarām*), one of the works of the prince of erudite scholars, Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, which was in the possession of Qāzī Naṣr Allāh Zaytūnī, served as the main textbook for the teaching and learning of religious issues until the time when the sun of the true Twelver *mazhab* rose and illuminated the horizons of research.<sup>2</sup>

It appears that this remark is correct only in a limited sense in the year 907/1501 and that too only of Azerbayjān, because we know that there existed many manuscripts of the works of ʿAllameh Ḥillī, as well as other Shīʿī sources, before the Safavid period. We should therefore have some reservations in accepting Rūmlū's remark in its blanket form.

Most important from the viewpoint of discussing the issue of the extant of Shīʿism in Iran prior to the appearance of the Safavids is, in the first place, the valuable work *Riyāz al-ʿUlamā va Ḥiyāḍ al-Fuḍalāʾ* of Mīrzā ʿAbd Allāh Afandī (d. ca. 1130/1717), a pupil of ʿAllāmeḥ Majlisī (d. 1111/1699), who, with a great effort lasting several decades, undertook a search to identify Shīʿī works and collect biographical details of Shīʿī scholars. The second source consists of the old manuscripts kept in Iranian libraries and, of course, a more complete account of the immigrant manuscripts could be obtained by more thorough research than has been carried out here.

Upon detailed examination of such sources, the extant of Iran's familiarity with the faith prior to its establishment by the Safavids

<sup>1</sup> See the first folio of the manuscript of *Hāshiyā Hāshiyat al-Sharīf ʿalā Sharḥ al-Maṭālib* (ms. 8046 at AML).

<sup>2</sup> Ḥasan Beg Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-Tawārikh*, ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Navāʾī, ed. (Tihiran: Intishārāt-i Bābak, 1357 H. Sh/1979), 86.

becomes clear. In fact, several cities of Iran served as seats of Shīʿism, such as Kashan, Sabzavar,<sup>3</sup> Astarābād,<sup>4</sup> and, at times, Ray and Ṭūs,<sup>5</sup> and were places where manuscripts of Shīʿī works on *fiqh* in particular were copied. Evidence of this is provided by the works of ʿAllāmeḥ Ḥillī, to which we have referred elsewhere,<sup>6</sup> including Allāmah *Qavāʿid*, a copy of which was made by Ḥasan b. Ḥusayn b. Ḥasan Sarābeshnawī, a resident of Kashan, in the year 763/1361 and which Afandī saw at Tabrīz.<sup>7</sup> Another example is the manuscript of Shaykh Ṭūsī's *Mabsūṭ* which was in Afandī's possession and bore an *ijāza*, dated 584/1188, in the hand of Ḥasan b. Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī Duriyastī, a resident of Kashan.<sup>8</sup> Another *ijāza* by the same scholar existed on a manuscript of Shaykh Mufīd's *Irshād*, which was also seen by Afandī. Another manuscript of the *Irshād*, made by Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn Jāsbī Harāzkanī, completed in 565/1170 and compared with a manuscript of Faḍl Allāh Rāwandī in 566/1170 exists in the Ayatullāh Marʿashī Public Library (AML, ms. 1144). A manuscript of Sayyid Murtaẓā's *al-Intiṣār*, dated 25 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 591/1195 was written by Abu'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʾIbrāhīm b. Ḥasan b. Mūsā Farāhānī in a locality of Kashān called Bāb Walān (?) and is kept at the AML (ms. 3598). Another manuscript containing several Shīʿī books and treatises, such as Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn's *Irshād al-Mustarshidīn va Hidāyat al-Ṭalibīn*, one *Riṣāleḥ fi ʿIlm al-Kalām* by an unknown author, and ʿAlī b. Yūsuf Nīlī's (6th/12th century)

<sup>3</sup> A manuscript of Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn's *Īẓāḥ al-Fawāʿid* was written by Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Juvaiyī in the years 793–4/1389–91 at Sabzavar. See *Fihrist-i Kitābkhāneh Majlis*, ʿAlī Ṣadrāʾī, ed., (Qum: Markaz-i Intiṣhārāt-i Daftar-i Tabliqāt-i Islāmī, H. Sh/1979), 25: 249.

<sup>4</sup> Concerning Astarābād, see Mīrzā ʿAbd Allāh Afandī *Riyāz al-ʿUlamāʾ* (Qum: Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh Marʿashī, 1401 H. Sh/1980–1), 2: 413. A copy of Shahīd-i Avval's *Kitāb al-Bayān* was completed by a scholar named ʿImād b. ʿAlī Astarābādī on Tuesday 5 Shaʿbān 861. This might have been in Iran, for we know that Astarabad was an important Shīʿī centre during the 9th/15th century.

<sup>5</sup> One of the Shīʿī scholars of the 6th/12th century is Naṣīr al-Dīn Abū Ṭalīb ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥamzah Mashhadī, known as Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī. Quṭb al-Dīn Kaydarī was among his pupils, as he himself narrates *ḥadīth* from Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī. Afandī had seen his book *Kitāb al-Vāfi fi Kalām al-Muthbat wal Nāfi*, whose manuscript had been written in 679/1280. He also saw a manuscript, dated 578/1182, of *Ṣaḥīfat al-Riẓā* in his possession. See Afandī, 3: 216.

<sup>6</sup> For a list of the ʿAllāmeḥ's works whose manuscripts were made in Iran or by Iranian scholars before the Safavid era, see Rasūl Jaʿfariyān *Taʾrikh-i Tashayyūʿ dar Īrān* (Qum: Anṣāriyān, 1376 H. Sh/1996), 2: 669–76.

<sup>7</sup> Afandī, 3: 397–98.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 179; 3: 418.

*Muntaha al-Suʿūl fī Sharḥ al-Fuṣūl*, as well as other works, was written in 845/1441 in the village of Lāmbalangī.<sup>9</sup>

Afandī also saw an old manuscript of Quṭb al-Dīn Rāwandī's *Minhāj al-Barā'ah fī Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha* at Astarābād which, according to him, had probably been written during the lifetime of its author (6th/12th century).<sup>10</sup>

Another example relates to the story of the discovery of the book *Fiqh al-Riḏā* as narrated by Majlisī from Qāzī Amīr Ḥusayn. The story states that a group of persons from Qum residing in Mecca had brought its manuscript, dating from the era of Imam Riḏā (ʿa).<sup>11</sup> This book is an epistle (*risāleh*) of Ibn Bābawayh to his son, Ṣadūq (d. 380/991–2), although its text consists of the traditions of the Imams and has no particular relation to Imam Riḏā (ʿa). All these books must have been written in Iran and, naturally, they negate the view that no manuscripts of old Shīʿī works existed at the beginning of the Safavid era.

Afandī also noted a manuscript copy of the exegesis of Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī which had been written during the lifetime of the author (6th/12th century).<sup>12</sup> Perhaps that manuscript, dated Sunday 12 Ṣafar 595/1198, is the same as the one which was written by Abū Saʿīd b. Ḥusayn Kātib Bayhaqqī in the AML (ms. 368). This work, which is in Persian, must have remained in Iran. There are several manuscripts of the *Nahj al-Balāgha* which are related to Iran. One dates to the 7th/13th century and was copied by Ḥasan b. Mahdī ʿAlavī Ḥasanī Āmulī Bahlawī in Rabīʿ al-Awwal 677/1278 and is preserved at AML (ms. 3994). Afandī noted a *risāla* entitled *Risāla fī Ḥall al-Shukūk fī Ṭaṣavvur va Ṭaṣdīq* by Shaykh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sharaf Shāh Naishāpūrī which was copied by Najātī Naishāpūrī and was dated 693/1293.<sup>13</sup>

It is worthy of note that some works of Iranian Shīʿī authors were extant in Arab lands in the pre-Safavid period and Afandī had seen an old manuscript of Quṭb al-Dīn Rāwandī's *Āyāt al-Aḥkām* in Baḥrayn.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Fihrist-i Nusakh-i Khaṭṭī-yi Kūtābkhāneh Millī*, 14: 160–63.

<sup>10</sup> Afandī, 2: 42.

<sup>11</sup> Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār* (Tihran: Islāmiyyeh, 1376/1957), 1: 11; Afandī, 2: 30.

<sup>12</sup> Afandī, 2: 157.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 5: 109.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 424.

From what can be found in the *Riyāz* it may be said that most of the old manuscripts that were brought by immigrant scholars during the early years of Safavid rule were kept at Ardabīl, most likely at the library attached to the shrine of Shaykh Ṣafī. In this regard Afandī mentions many such manuscripts which he had seen at Ardabīl.<sup>15</sup> Tabrīz should also be mentioned in this regard. Afandī writes that he had seen many books copied by Shaykh ‘Alī b. Maṣṣūr b. Ḥusayn Mazīdī. For instance he says:

I have seen Shaykh Ṭūsī’s *Istibṣār* in his handwriting in the village of Khusrowshah in the vicinity of Tabrīz which was written in the year 877/1472. I have seen ‘*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riṣā*’ in the village of Dehkhāriqān near Tabrīz. I have also seen the fifth volume of ‘*Tazkirat al-Fuqahā*’ at Tabrīz.<sup>16</sup>

At Ardabīl, Afandī saw a manuscript of a work of Ibn Khālvayh, the author of the *Kitāb al-Āl*, with the title *al-Tāriqiyeh*, which had been written in 561/1165.<sup>17</sup> We know that this city had been the spiritual capital of the Safavids and was held in much regard right until the end of the Safavid era. Shāh ‘Abbās I donated many manuscripts to the shrine of Shaykh Ṣafī. This collection was subsequently stolen by the Russians and transferred to the library at the Academy of Sciences at Leningrad.<sup>18</sup> However, it may be said that, after Ardabīl, most of these manuscripts went to Isfahan, which is quite natural as it became the Safavid capital after 1000/1591. Besides Ardabīl and Isfahan, these works were also to be found in many other Iranian cities, including Astarābād, Ray, Bārfurūsh (present day Bābul) and Tihiran.<sup>19</sup>

A further point is that during that era there existed three Arab Shī‘ī centres in the Islamic world from which Shī‘ī works came to Iran. The first was Iraq (*Irāq-i ‘Arab*), a region nearest to Iran and an important base for Shī‘ī scholars. The second was Baḥrayn, whose Shī‘ism was very ancient. The third region was Jabal ‘Āmil, in the

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<sup>15</sup> See, for instance, *Riyāz al-‘Ulamā*, 1: 186; 2: 64; 101, 103, 109, 122; and 4: 18, 319. It should be noted that Afandī had seen manuscripts of several books during the Safavid period at Ardabīl, and this shows that books were provided on a regular basis for the library at Shaykh Ṣafī’s shrine. See *ibid.*, 4: 332.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: 269.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 24.

<sup>18</sup> In this regard see the journal *Nashr-i Dānish*, year 16 (1372 H. Sh/1993.), no. 6, 24–28.

<sup>19</sup> Afandī, 4: 262; as well as other instances, for example, *ibid.*, 2: 157, 196.

Lebanon, whose Shīʿism dated from centuries before the establishment of Safavid rule. Shīʿī works were scattered in these regions and were mainly brought to Iran by migrating scholars.

Many of the Shīʿī works brought to Iran later returned to Iraq, especially when Najaf recovered its position as the scholarly centre of the Shīʿī world after the rule of Nādir Shāh.<sup>20</sup> It must also be mentioned that the discussion concerning immigrant manuscripts should not be limited to foreign manuscripts; many of the old sources which existed in Iraq were copied during the early days of the Safavid rule and the manuscripts made were brought to Iran. For instance, a manuscript of Irbilī's *Kashf al-Ghumma* was copied by Ṭaifūr b. Sulṭān Muḥammad Bisṭāmī in 1047/1637 from a manuscript belonging to ʿAlī Karakī (d. 940/1534). Karakī had made his own copy in the year 908/1502 from the author's original autograph.<sup>21</sup> Thus a book belonging to scholar of Jabal ʿĀmil residing in Iraq—who himself came to Iran—was brought to Iran in the shape of a second-generation copy.

#### *Manuscripts from Jabal ʿĀmil*

Jabal ʿĀmil was by tradition a Shīʿī region, its Shīʿism probably dating from the time of the migration of some tribes of the *Anṣār* to that area. This centre has produced many Shīʿī scholars whose biographical accounts have been given by Shaykh Ḥurr ʿĀmilī in the first part of *Amal al-Āmil*. He mentions that one funeral ceremony during the lifetime of Shahīd-i Sānī (d. 965/1557) was attended by seventy *mujtahids*.<sup>22</sup> During the 10th/16th century many scholars of this region, like other Arab regions, would have studied in Iraq, especially at Najaf and Ḥillah, and many of them would have returned to Jabal ʿĀmil after their studies. In the course of three centuries after the establishment of the Safavid regime, from 10th/16th to 12th/18th centuries, many of them came to Iran and some went to

<sup>20</sup> We know that some decades ago some people tried hard to collect manuscripts from Iranian cities to have them transferred to the library at Imam ʿAlī's shrine.

<sup>21</sup> *Fihrist-i Kūtābkhāneh-yi Milṭi*, Ḥabīb Allāh ʿAẓīmī, ed. (Tihiran, 1372/1993), 13: 230–31.

<sup>22</sup> Shaykh Ḥurr ʿĀmilī, *Amal al-Āmil* (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Andalūs, 1385/1965), 1: 15.

India.<sup>23</sup> Most of them, on coming to Iran, were appointed to official positions such as that of *ra'īs al-'ulamā* or *Shaykh al-Islām*.<sup>24</sup>

Some of these scholars came to Iran for the purpose of pilgrimage to Mashhad, not to assume official positions in the Safavid regime,<sup>25</sup> and brought with them manuscripts of some works existing in Jabal 'Āmil or Iraq, or works written in India.<sup>26</sup> For instance, one scholar from Jabal 'Āmil, named Muḥī al-Dīn b. Aḥmad b. Tāj al-Dīn 'Āmilī, completed many copies of a number of treatises of the Shahīd-i Sānī during the years 953–54/1546–47.<sup>27</sup> This was during the lifetime of Shahīd-i Sānī and probably Muḥī al-Dīn came for the purpose of pilgrimage to Mashhad and settled in Iran. He must have made his copies from a manuscript which had been brought to Iran from abroad. Shaykh 'Alī Minshār 'Āmilī was one who had migrated to India and on coming to Iran brought with him about four thousand books, of which at least some must have been taken to India from Jabal 'Āmil before they were brought to Iran. This library came into the possession of Shaykh Bahā'ī, the husband of Shaykh 'Alī's only daughter, but it later perished.<sup>28</sup>

Many of the immigrant scholars possessed personal libraries. Many of them were descendants of outstanding scholars and possessed manuscripts of the writings, *yjāzas* and notebooks of important scholars of Jabal 'Āmil and brought these on on their migration to Iran. For instance, Shaykh 'Ālī, a descendant of Shahīd-i Sānī, possessed among his books the works of Shaykh Ḥasan, Shahīd's son, which were seen by Afandī.<sup>29</sup> As mentioned, this situation continued from the 10th/16th to the 12/18th century. In the second half of the 12th/18th century, Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad Makkī Jizīnī 'Āmilī, a descendant of Shahīd-i Avval (d. 785/1384), lived at Najaf. He possessed an important library which, among other books, contained a manuscript of Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn's *Īẓāḥ al-Fawā'id* completed by Shahīd-i

<sup>23</sup> *Fihrist-i Kūtābkhāneh Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Islāmī*, Īraj Afshār, Dānish Pazhūh et al., eds. (Tīhran: Majlis, 1347/1969), 15: 126.

<sup>24</sup> Shāh Ṭahmāsp had said that he would make use solely of scholars from Jabal 'Āmil for administration of these kinds of affairs. See Afandī, 3: 90.

<sup>25</sup> Some of them, like the family of Shaykh Bahā'ī's brother, settled down at Mashhad and joined the servants of the shrine. See *Fihrist-i Kūtābkhāneh Āyatullah Mar'ashī*, 21: 354: no. 8385.

<sup>26</sup> Afandī, 5: 136.

<sup>27</sup> *Fihrist-i Kūtābkhāneh Millī*, 13: 31.

<sup>28</sup> Afandī, 4: 266.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 233.

Avval. His books, with marks of ownership in his handwriting, are found in several Iranian libraries, for his sons migrated to Iran.<sup>30</sup>

A precious collection of treatises dating from 902/1496, most probably written at Jabal 'Āmil, contains several *risālas* such as Shaykh Muḥīd's *al-Nukāt al-Iṭiqādiyya*, 'Abd al-Vāḥid b. Ṣafī Nu'mānī's *Nahj al-Sidād ilā Sharḥ Vājib al-Iṭiqād*, Shahīd-i Avval's *al-Naḥḥiyya*, Karjākī's *Ma'dan al-Jawāhir*, Abū Muḥammad Qāsim Ḥarīrī's *Mulḥat al-I'rāb*, along with a note in Shahīd-i Sānī's hand dated 19 Rabī' al-Sānī 950/1543, and is kept at AML (ms. 1126). The scribe is 'Alī b. Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī 'Anqānī, who had written it on the order of Zayn al-Dīn Muḥīd b. Aḥmad Mārūnī.

Afandī had seen a manuscript of Ibn Idrīs' *al-Sarā'ir* bearing a note by Sharaf al-Dīn Ḥusayn b. Naṣīr al-Dīn Mūsā b. 'Awd, dated 16 Rajab, 761/1360. It is most likely that this scholar came from Jabal 'Āmil.<sup>31</sup> Afandī had seen a collection in the hand of a certain scholar of Jabal 'Āmil bearing the date 752/1351 which had been completed at Ḥillah.<sup>32</sup> A manuscript of Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn's *Taḥṣīl al-Najāt* existed at Shahīd-i Sānī's library and Afandī had seen on it an *ijāza*, dated 736/1335, by Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn written for Sayyid Nāṣir al-Dīn Ḥamzah b. Ḥamzah b. Muḥammad 'Alavī Ḥusaynī. This work must have been in Ḥillah from where it was taken to Jabal 'Āmil before it was brought to Iran.<sup>33</sup> Afandī's remark that this book was among the books of Shahīd-i Sānī probably indicates that the works of the Shahīd were kept at the house of his son and descendants at Isfahan.

There exists a manuscript of Shaykh Ṣadūq's *Thawāb al-A'māl* at 'Allāmeḥ Ṭabāṭabā'ī Library (ATL) at Shiraz which had been copied by 'Alī b. Fāris b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Aḥmad b. Ibrāhim b. Abī al-Fawāris 'Āmilī and is dated 12 Sha'bān 763/1362.<sup>34</sup>

Afandī reports having seen a collection at Ardabīl in the possession of a scholar of Jabal 'Āmil which bore the signature of Shaykh

<sup>30</sup> Shaykh Āqā Buzurg Ṭihrānī and 'Alī Naqī Munzavī, *Al-Kawākib al-Muntashira* (Tihiran: Tihiran University, 1372 H.Sh./1993), 739, 740.

<sup>31</sup> Afandī, 2: 182.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 5: 79.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 200.

<sup>34</sup> Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 'Min Turāthunā al-Khālīd fī Shiraz' in *Mirāth-i Islāmī-yi Īrān*, Rasūl Ja'fariyān, ed. (Qum: Kitābkhāneh Āyatullah Mar'ashī, 1373 H. Sh./1996), 1: 300.



‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Makkī ‘Āmilī, son of Shahīd-i Avval. Under his handwriting Shaykh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Jubā‘ī had written that its writer died in 865/1460.<sup>35</sup>

In Isfahan Afandī also saw a collection in the hand of its author, Shaykh Zayn al-Dīn ‘Alī Muḥammad b. Yūnus Bayāḏī, the author of *Širāṭ al-Mustaqīm*, in the library of Aḥmad Baḥrānī. Afandī gives a list of the author’s treatises contained in this old collection.<sup>36</sup>

### *Manuscripts from Iraq*

The city of Ḥillah in Iraq was the most important Shī‘ī centre during 7th/13th–9th/15th centuries. It has been said that during the lifetime of ‘Allāmeḥ Ḥillī four hundred and forty *mujtahids* lived in this city.<sup>37</sup> Iraq was the place to which Shī‘a migrated from all regions. In fact, since the time of the leadership of Shaykh Muḥīd and Shaykh Ṭūsī, Iraq had held a central academic position for Shī‘ism. This central position was transferred to Iran during the Safavid era for two and a half centuries, after which it partly returned to Najaf. In the period before the Safavid era Shī‘ī manuscripts were mainly written in Iraq, and with the establishment of Safavid rule these manuscripts were transferred to Iran.<sup>38</sup> For instance, a manuscript that had been written in Najaf in 947/1540 and which at the end bears a note in the hand of ‘Alī Karakī dated 952/1545 is presently preserved at the Majlis Library (see catalogue of the manuscripts at the Majlis Library, vol. 25, p. 59, no. 7050). Later on a part of them returned to Iraq but the to and fro movement of these works was continuous.

A manuscript of Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn’s *Īẓāḥ al-Favā’id* with a mark indicating its ownership by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Ḥillī Juhaymī, which has been recognized as an old and precious manuscript, is preserved at AML (ms. 1162).

A manuscript of Ibn Shahr Āshūb’s *Manāqib*, whose first part was completed by Ja‘far b. Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn Qamarwayh Ḥā’irī on 16

<sup>35</sup> Afandī, 4: 251.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: 256–58.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 361.

<sup>38</sup> Some of these works were copied at Najaf during the Safavid period itself and then sent from there to Isfahan. See *Fihrist-i Kūtābkhāneh Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Millī*, 12: 315.

Rajab 587/1191 and a portion of the second part completed by Abū al-Qāsim b. Ismāʿil Varrāq Ḥillī at the end of Rajab 658/1259, is preserved at the Isfahan Public Library.<sup>39</sup>

A manuscript of Shahīd-i Avval's *Durūs* (d. 786/1384), completed on Monday 12 Ramaḍān 846/1442 is preserved at Āyatullāh Gulpaygānī Library (AGL) (ms. 125). It is likely that this manuscript was written in Iran at Astarābād. It bears an *ijāza* dated 836/1432—that is, before the completion of the writing of the manuscript—given by ʿAlī b. Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad Astarābādī to Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ʿImādī Nīlī.

A manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Lumʿa* written by Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Khūyūnī Muisī dated 808/1405 and completed at Najaf is presently kept at AṬL at Shiraz.<sup>40</sup> Taqī al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Kaf ʿamī (d. 905/1499) is an outstanding Shīʿī figure. He was originally from Jabal ʿĀmil but came to Najaf and drew much benefit from the library of Imam ʿAlī's Shrine in compiling his books.<sup>41</sup> Living some years before the emergence of the Safavids, he compiled many works. After the establishment of the Safavid regime his works, most of them in the form of original autographs, were transferred to various Iranian cities, especially those of Azerbayjān, the centre of the Safavid regime. Afandī saw some of these manuscripts.

Afandī also saw at Irawan a large collection consisting of several treatises, all of which were in the hand of Kaf ʿamī, with such dates of compilation as 848/1444, 849/1445 and 852/1448.<sup>42</sup> He had seen another *risāla* in Kaf ʿamī's own hand at Māzandarān entitled *Ghurrat al-Manṭiq* and yet another entitled *Durrat al-Manṭiq*. He appears to have seen a book on the exegesis of the *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* in Kaf ʿamī's hand at Tabrīz.

Afandī noted a manuscript copy of *al-Malāḥim wa al-Fitan* in the hand of its author Ibn Ṭāvūs (d. 664/1265), bearing the handwriting of ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Jamāl al-Dīn, dated 670/1271.<sup>43</sup> He also saw a manuscript of *Kitāb al-Majdī* by al-ʿUmarī, the famous genealogist (*nassāba*), bearing a note dated 682/1283 by the same ʿAbd al-

<sup>39</sup> *Fihrist-i Nuskheh-hā-yi Khaṭṭī-yi Kitābkhāneh-yi ʿUmūmī-yi Isfahān*, 311–12. Another part of the same *Manāqib* pertaining to the same period is kept at Tabrīz.

<sup>40</sup> Ṭabāṭabāʾī, ʿMin Turāthunāʾ, 440.

<sup>41</sup> Afandī, 1: 21.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 22–23: 257.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: p. 164.

Karīm b. Aḥmad b. Ṭāvūs.<sup>44</sup> Afandī cited a manuscript of Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd's versification of Tha'lab's *al-Faṣīḥ* (*al-Faṣīḥ al-Manzūm*) which bore a noted dated 701/1301.<sup>45</sup> He had also seen a collection of the verses of Sayyid 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad Ḥusaynī Ḥā'irī at Ardabīl written by one of his pupils in the year 750/1349 during the poet's lifetime.<sup>46</sup> He also noted a collection at Ardabīl in the hand of Muḥammad b. 'Alī Jubā'ī 'Āmilī, the grandfather of Shaykh Bahā'ī and pupil of Ibn Fahd Ḥillī, containing elegies written by Shaykh 'Alī b. Shahfīnī Ḥillī on Imam Ḥusayn ('a).<sup>47</sup> He had also seen a manuscript of Fāzil Miqdād's *Arba'īn* in the hand of Shaykh Zayn al-Dīn 'Alī b. Ḥasan b. Ghalāleh (or 'Alālah?) bearing an *ijāza* by Shaykh Miqdād, dated 822/1419.<sup>48</sup> Again at Ardabīl Afandī noted a manuscript of *Risālat al-Muqna'ah fī Ādāb al-Ḥajj* by Muḥammad b. Shujā' Anṣārī, a contemporary of Fāzil Miqdād, in the hand of the same scribe, Shaykh Zayn al-Dīn 'Alī, and dated 822/1419.<sup>49</sup> Also at Ardabīl he cited a manuscript of Sayyid Murtaẓā's *Fuṣūl* which he compared with the original.<sup>50</sup>

Afandī saw a manuscript of Sayyid Murtaẓā's *Tanzīh al-Anbiyā'* which bore an *ijāza* by Sayyid 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib b. Murtaẓā, written at Musul and dated 723/1331.<sup>51</sup> He noted a manuscript of Sayyid Murtaẓā's *Dīvān* which had been read to him and which also bore his handwriting. Afandī made a copy of it for himself over the course of ten days.<sup>52</sup> He also saw a manuscript of *Majmā' al-Bayān* in the hand of Quṭb al-Dīn Kaydarī which had been read for Khvājah Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī.<sup>53</sup> Afandī had seen a manuscript of Sayyid Murtaẓā's *al-Ghurar va al-Durar* at Ardabīl which had been written in the year 545/1150.<sup>54</sup>

At Isfahan Afandī cited a manuscript of the *Nahj al-Balāgha* dated 677/1278 which written by Sayyid Najm al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 167.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 183; 4: 123.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 235.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 403; 4: 107.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 408.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 409.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: 183.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 267, 291.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: 48.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 297.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: 30.

Ḥusayn b. Ardashīr Ṭabarī, apparently at Ḥillah.<sup>55</sup> This manuscript bore marks which showed that it had been in Ḥillah for centuries before being brought to Iran. Another manuscript of the *Nahj al-Balāgha* was in the possession of Afandī. Dated 499/1105 (469/1076 according to another manuscript), it had been copied by Ḥusayn b. Ḥasan b. Ḥusayn Muʿaddab.<sup>56</sup> Afandī had seen a manuscript of Ibn ʿAtāʾīqī's *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha* written in 786/1384 at Isfahan, which also bore his handwriting.<sup>57</sup>

Some works dating from 5th/11th–8th/14th centuries whose manuscripts are kept at AML include the following:

*Rijāl al-Kashshī*, dated 14 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 577/1181 (ms. 2636). This manuscript bears marks of ownership of some Shīʿī scholars including several members of a Farāhānī family residing in Iraq (*Iraq-i Arab*) with dates extending from 6th/12th–7th/13th century (see the catalogue of AML manuscripts, vol. 7, p. 209).

*Bāsāʾir al-Darajāt* by Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Ṣaffār Qummī, dated 1 Ṣafar 591/1195 (ms. 1574).

*Al-Tibyān* by Shaykh Ṭūsī, bearing the Shaykh's handwriting with the date Rabī al-Awwal 455/1063, as well as that of Shaykh Abū al-Wafāʾ, dated Jamādī al-Awwal 494/1100 (ms. 83).<sup>58</sup> Other volumes of the work kept at AML bear ms. nos. 3670, 3665, and 8419, and pertain mainly to 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries.

*Al-Mabsūṭ* by Shaykh Ṭūsī, copied by Shams al-Maʿālī b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad Muḥammadī, one of the pupils of the Shaykh, and dated 507/1113 (ms. 276). Other manuscripts of this work, dating from 6th/12th century, are kept at this library and bear ms. nos. 2562 and 2613.

*Man lā Yaḥduruhu al-Faqīh* by Shaykh Ṣadūq. Two volumes of this book copied in 6th/12th century are kept at AML with ms. nos. 235 and 2151. *Al-Nihāya* by Shaykh Ṭūsī, copied by Ḥamzah b. Naṣr Allāh b. Aḥmad Mūṣalī is dated 14 Shawwāl 507/1113 and bears the signature of Ḥasan b. Sidād Ḥillī dated 727/1326 and an *ijāza* by Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī Varāmīnī for Zayn al-Dīn b. ʿAlī b. Ḥasan ʿImādī, dated 691/1291 (ms. 241). Other manuscripts of the *Nihāya*, one dated middle of Ṣafar 535/1140 and another dated

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 37.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 43.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 106.

<sup>58</sup> Afandī had seen this manuscript; *Ibid.*, 4: 85.

599/1202 are kept at this library with ms. nos. 1840 and 3126. The second manuscript bears *yǎzas* by Muḥaqqiq Ḥillī dated Shawwāl 645/1248 and 654/1256.

A collection of Shaykh Mufīd's *risālehs*. This collection dates from the 6th/12th century and contains 16 treatises (ms. 243). *Al-Irshād* by Shaykh Mufīd, copied by Sulaymān b. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān Ḥā'irī at Najaf during 7th/13th century (ms. 7220).

*Al-Sarā'ir* by Ibn Idrīs dating from 7th/13th century (AML, ms. 2603). It should be mentioned that at the library of Shaykh Ṣafī's shrine Afandī had seen a manuscript of the *Sarā'ir* that had been read to Shams al-Dīn Abū 'Alī Fakkhār b. Ma'd, one of his pupils.<sup>59</sup> He had seen another manuscript of the *Sarā'ir* at the library of Āmirzā Fakhr al-Mashhadī which was copied during its author's lifetime.<sup>60</sup>

*Majmā' al-Bayān* by Ṭabrisī, dating from 7th/13th century (ms. 2273).

*Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid* by Shaykh Ṭūsī, dating from 7th/13th century (ms. nos. 253 and 4867).

Perhaps the most important works on *fiqh* which were brought to Iran from Iraq before the establishment of Safavid rule are those of 'Allāmeḥ Ḥillī. Many of the works of both 'Allāmeḥ and his pupils were handed down to the Safavid era almost intact. The late Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz Ṭabātabā'ī, in his work *Maktabat al-'Allāmeḥ al-Ḥillī*, gave a relatively complete list of the works of the 'Allāmeḥ in Iranian libraries and other locations. That list need not be repeated here but is long enough to convince us that most of the 'Allāmeḥ's works came down in the form of 8th/14th and 9th/15th century manuscripts to the Safavid period and later eras.

Afandī saw a manuscript of the 'Allāmeḥ's *Khulāṣat al-Rijāl*, written by one of his pupils, which differed in many places from its more recent versions.<sup>61</sup> The copyist was Ḥasan b. Ḥusayn b. Ḥasan b. Mu'āniq and it was dated 707/1307.<sup>62</sup> A manuscript of the 'Allāmeḥ's *Khulāṣah* written by 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī Ṭabarī, written at Najaf Ashraf and dated Dhū al-Qa'dah 747/1346, exists

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: 319; 5: 33.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 5: 33.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 258.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 175.

at Shiraz.<sup>63</sup> Afandī stated that a manuscript of the ‘Allāmeḥ’s treatise on the subject of *vājibāt al-zakāt* and its principles (*arkān*) was in his possession. He refers to it as an old manuscript (*nuskheh-yi ‘atiqeh*) written close to the time of the author.<sup>64</sup> Afandī also possessed manuscripts of two of the ‘Allāmeḥ’s treatises, one of which was on the topic of the rationale behind the abrogation of the laws (*ḥikmat-i naskh-i aḥkām*) written in answer to a question of Sulṭān Muḥammad Khudābandeh, and another was entitled *Vājib al-Vuḍū’ wa al-Ṣalāt*, and was written for his minister Taramtāsh. He refers to them as ‘two old manuscripts’ with the remark that they were written at a time close to the era of the author.<sup>65</sup> Afandī had received a manuscript of *Rijāl al-Kashshī* bearing ‘Allāmeḥ Ḥillī’s handwriting.<sup>66</sup> A manuscript of the ‘Allāmeḥ’s *Īdāḥ Mukhālafah Ahl al-Sunnah* dated 723/1323 is kept at the Majlis Library (catalogue of the Majlis Library manuscripts, 15: 30).

Afandī noted a copy of ‘Allāmeḥ’s *Taḥvīr* which bore an *ijāza* by Ḥasan b. Ḥamzah Najafī dated 862/1457, and 836/1432 on some pages.<sup>67</sup> A manuscript of the *Taḥvīr* written by Washshāḥ b. Muḥammad b. ‘Asah (?) dated 2 Jamādī al-Avval 719/1319 is kept at AML (ms. 7815). Another manuscript of the *Taḥvīr* in this library was written by Muḥammad b. Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Nāṣir al-Mujaljal. The manuscript was completed on Tuesday 6 Sha‘bān 747/1346 and it is preserved at AGL (ms. 261). This manuscript was compared in 775/1373 with the author’s original and bears a note dated Rajab 783/1381 and a mark of ownership dated 30 Rabī‘ al-Sānī 941/1534 by Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī Sayyarī Baḥrānī. A manuscript of ‘Allāmeḥ Ḥillī’s *Irshād al-Adhhān* written by Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī ‘Alavī Ṭūsī in 28 Ramaḍān 704/1304 at Ḥillah was in the library of Farḥād Mirza in 1297/1879 and is presently kept at the Majlis Library (vol. 14, p. 171). This manuscript bears an *ijāza* in ‘Allāmeḥ’s hand dated end of Dhū al-Ḥijjah 704/1304. A valuable collection pertaining to the 8th/14th century and containing several treatises and *ijāzas* of the ‘Allāmeḥ and his son, Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn, as well as others, is kept at the Majlis Library (catalogue of manu-

<sup>63</sup> Ṭabāṭabā’ī ‘Min Turāthunā’, 442.

<sup>64</sup> Afandī, 1: 378.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 378–79.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 296.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 182; 3: 154–55.

scripts, vol. 14, pp. 226–27, no. 4953). Another manuscript of *Sharḥ Irshād al-Adhhān* by Kamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ‘Atā’iqī written close to the era of the author (8th/14th century) is preserved at AML (ms. 8609).

A manuscript of the ‘Allāmeḥ’s *Kashf al-Fawā’id fī Sharḥ Qavā’id al-‘Aqā’id*, written in 902/1496 at the Madrasa Zainabiyya at Ḥillah, is preserved at AML (ms. 8047).

A manuscript of the ‘Allāmeḥ’s *Qavā’id al-Aḥkām*, written by Sulṭān b. Ḥasan b. Sulṭān b. Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Shajarī and dated end of Rabī‘ al-Awwal 823/1420, is preserved at AML (ms. 8673). This manuscript had been in the possession of the family of Fayz-i Kāshānī. Afandī saw a copy of the *Qavā’id*, dated 761/1359, in the hand of Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Nīlī.<sup>68</sup> He had also seen a manuscript of Khvājeh Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī’s *Kitāb al-Ḥisāb* bearing an *ijāza* in the hand of the ‘Allāmeḥ for Khvājeh Rashīd al-Dīn Āwī.<sup>69</sup>

A collection containing the ‘Allāmeḥ’s *Nahj al-Mustarshidīn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn* and Ibn Maytham Baḥrānī’s *Qavā’id al-Marām fī ‘Ilm al-Kalām*, along with several treatises by Baiḍāwī, was written at Najaf by ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib b. Muḥammad ‘Ubaydalī and is dated 798/1395 and kept at AML (ms. 8751). Afandī saw a copy of *Risāla Mukhtaṣara fī Munāsakhāt al-Mirāth* by Sayyid ‘Amīd al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib (d. 754/1353), a nephew of ‘Allāmeḥ Ḥillī, which bore a note in the ‘Allāmeḥ’s hand and was copied by Aḥmad b. Ḥaddād Ḥillī in the year 721/1321.<sup>70</sup>

A manuscript of a work of Sayyid ‘Imīd al-Dīn (‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad) entitled *Kanz al-Fawā’id fī Ḥall al-Mushkilāt al-Qavā’id* and compiled in the interval between middle of Rajab and 20 Sha‘bān 737/1336, whose copy was made on 19 Ṣafar 782/1380, existed at the personal library of Shaykh Faḍl Allāh Nūrī and is presently kept at the Majlis Library (catalogue; vol. 12, p. 94; no. 4387). Another manuscript of the same book copied by a scholar of Jabal ‘Āmil named ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn Maysī on Monday 9 Ṣafar 790/1388 is preserved at AML (ms. 8426). The same author had written a *sharḥ* on the ‘Allāmeḥ’s *Sharḥ al-Īqūt*,

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: 92.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: 205.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 260.

and an old manuscript of it written during the author's lifetime was in Afandī's possession.<sup>71</sup>

Some other very old Iraqi manuscripts that were transferred to Iran include a manuscript of the *Qurb al-Asnād* in the hand of Ibn al-Mahjanār Bazzāz, a jurist who was Shaykh Mufīd's contemporary, which was used by Afandī.<sup>72</sup> ʿAllāmeḥ Majlisī also wrote that he had used an old manuscript bearing the handwriting of Ibn Idrīs which seems to be the same manuscript as referred to by Afandī.<sup>73</sup> He also possessed a manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Anwār* by Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh Bakrī copied in 696/1296.<sup>74</sup>

At Tabrīz Afandī saw a copy of the *Ṣaḥīfeh Sajjādiyyeh* which had been compiled by Ibn Ashnās, and he mentions it as a manuscript that was probably written during the lifetime of the compiler.<sup>75</sup> He says that the original manuscript of the author existed during his time in the possession of one of the major scholars.<sup>76</sup> He had also seen another manuscript of the *Ṣaḥīfa* bearing the date 603/1206 and the handwriting of Shahīd-i Avval.<sup>77</sup> Another manuscript that he had seen was that of the book *Nuzḥāt al-Nāḥir fī al-Jamʿ bayn al-Ashbā va al-Naḥāʾir* by Muhazzab al-Dīn Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Riẓẓāt al-Nīlī, dated 674/1275.<sup>78</sup> Afandī saw at Astarābād a copy of the book *Miṣbāḥ al-Muhtadīn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn* by Shaykh Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Rāshid Ḥillī, dated 883/1478. He also saw a manuscript of Shaykh Ṭūsī's *Miṣā al-Mutahajjid* bearing a note in the hand of Shaykh Ḥasan b. Rāshid which was dated 830/1426.<sup>79</sup> Also, he saw a copy of ʿAllāmeḥ's *Qawāʾid* bearing the handwriting of Shaykh Ḥasan b. Rāshid at the library of Fāzil Hindī.<sup>80</sup> At Isfahan he saw a manuscript of the *Ḥashiya Yamanī* on the *Kashshāf* in the hand of Shaykh Ḥasan b. Rāshid Ḥillī and copied in 824/1421.<sup>81</sup>

Afandī mentions having seen at Isfahan an old manuscript of the book *al-Masāʾil al-Yaqīn li Dhawī al-Fiṭna wa al-Tamkīn* dated 824/1421

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 261.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 418.

<sup>73</sup> Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, 1: 26.

<sup>74</sup> Afandī, 1: 43.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 312.

<sup>76</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: 397–98.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 84.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 186; 3: 343.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 187.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 342.



in the hand of Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. Ḥamza Ṣarīḥānī, which he identifies as being the same as the *Masāʿil* of Ibn Abī Ṭayy.<sup>82</sup> He saw also a copy of Shaykh Ṭūsī's *al-Tibyān* bearing an *ijāza* in the Shaykh's hand.<sup>83</sup> He had also seen a manuscript of the book *al-Marāsīm al-ʿAlaviyya* by Abū Yaʿlā Sallār b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Daylamī, one of the pupils of Shaykh Mufīd and Shaykh Ṭūsī, which had been written close to the time of the author.<sup>84</sup> A manuscript of Shaykh Mufīd's *Irshād* from the 7th/13th century is kept at AML (ms. 318).

Afandī saw a manuscript of Shahīd-i Avval's *al-Durūs* copied by Ḥasan b. Ḥusayn b. Maṭr Asadī at Kubenān, which was dated 802/1399 and mentioned Ḥillah. This manuscript had been written for Aḥmad b. Jaʿfar Shāmī Ḥillī.<sup>85</sup> At Qazvin Afandī had seen a manuscript of the book *Tahfat al-Ṭālibīn fī Maʿrifat Uṣūl al-Dīn* by ʿAbd al-Samīʿ b. Fayyāḍ Asadī Ḥillī, to which he refers as a really old manuscript (*kānat ʿatīqah jiddan*).<sup>86</sup>

Afandī saw several old manuscripts of the book *ʿUyūn al-Muʿjazāt* by Ḥusayn b. ʿAbd al-Vahhāb, one of the contemporaries of Shaykh Ṭūsī. He had seen these at Kazerun, Baḥrayn and Laḥsā and he remarks that the manuscript he saw at Kazerun was dated 566/1170. From his further remarks it appears that the manuscript at Kazirun had long since been among the endowments of the shrine of one of the sayyids.<sup>87</sup>

Afandī noted copies of the book *Kitāb al-Taḥqīq al-Mubīn fī Sharḥ Nahj al-Mustarshidīn* by Mawlā Najm al-Dīn Khiḍr b. Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥablrūdī, a resident of Najaf, bearing the date 828/1424, close to the time its compilation. One of these manuscripts was at Tabrīz and the other at Ardabīl. Afandī had also seen manuscripts of his other books at Ardabīl, Astarabad and Sārī (in Kafʿamī's hand). At Isfahan he had seen a manuscript of a refutation written by Ḥablrūdī against Yūsuf b. Makhzūm Aʿvar, who had written against the Shīʿa. Its date of compilation was 839/1435.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 163.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 174.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 441.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 180.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 121.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 124; 126, 128; cf. *Fihrist-i Kitābkhāneh Āyatullah Marʿashī*, 21, 241, no. 8281.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 237–38.

*Some Manuscripts from Bahrayn*

Frequent visits of scholars from Bahrayn to Iran were a common feature of the Safavid period. At times Iranians also travelled to Bahrayn. For instance, Shaykh Ḥusayn, Shaykh Bahāʾī's father, who had resided in Iran for years, went to Bahrayn, where he died.<sup>89</sup> Some Bahraynis were engaged in studies in Iraq. For example, Shaykh Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī Hajrī was a pupil of ʿAlī Karakī. Afandī saw his books at Mashhad and an *ijāza* by him at the shrine of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm at Ray.<sup>90</sup> Afandī mentions a book *Sharḥ Sharḥ al-Yāqūt*, whose author was ʿAmīd al-Dīn, son of the ʿAllāmeḥ's daughter. The *Sharḥ al-Yāqūt* is by the ʿAllāmeḥ himself. Afandī remarked that ʿAmīd al-Dīn's *Sharḥ* was popular in Bahrayn and he had seen a very old manuscript of it at Isfahan.<sup>91</sup> Afandī saw in Yazd a manuscript in the author's hand of the book *Javāmiʿ al-Saʿādat fī Funūn al-Daʿwāt* by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Yaḥyā b. Ḥusayn Baḥrānī, a scholar of the era succeeding Ibn Fahd Hillī.<sup>92</sup> A manuscript of Ibn Fahd Hillī's book (d. 841/1437) *Kitāb al-Masāʾil al-Shāmiyya fī Fiqh al-Māmiyya*, written close to the author's era, is kept at AML (ms. 8484).

*ʿAllāmeḥ Majlisī and Old Shīʿī Manuscripts*

ʿAllāmeḥ Majlisī was very keen to use old and reliable manuscripts of various sources in his compilation of the *Bihār al-Anwār*. In the *Bihār*, after mentioning his sources, he presented a section entitled *ʿFī bayān al-wuthūq ʿalā al-kutub al-mazkūra va ikhtilāfuhā fī zālik*.<sup>93</sup> In this section he examined the reliability of his sources and defended their credibility on the grounds that the manuscripts he had used were old and bore *ijāzas* of eminent scholars and traditionists. First he mentions the works of Ṣadūq and remarks that a corrected manuscript of the *Amālī* was in his possession which was written at a time close to the author's era and bore *ijāzas* of many teachers (*mashāyikh*). He also possessed a manuscript of Ṣadūq's *Khiṣāl* bear-

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 121.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 142.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 378.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 114.

<sup>93</sup> Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, 1: 26–7.

ing an *ijāza* of Shaykh Miqdād. The first volume of *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riżā* was in the form of an old manuscript which was considered by some to be in Ṣadūq’s own hand. Majlisī does not accept this, but writes that it bore Ṣadūq’s signature. He mentions a book entitled *Kitāb al-Imāma*, whose author was unknown to him, but from the *ijāzas* appearing on an old manuscript of it he infers that the author must have been an outstanding Shī‘ī author and jurist.

He also possessed an old manuscript of Ḥimyarī’s *Qurb al-Asnād* bearing Ibn Idrīs’ handwriting. He possessed an old manuscript of Shaykh Ṭūsī’s *Amālī* bearing *ijāzas* of scholars. In addition he had an old manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Ikhtisās*, ascribed to Shaykh Muḥid, to which he refers as an old manuscript.<sup>94</sup> He also had two old manuscripts of ‘Ayyāshī’s *Tafsīr* but does not mention their dates. Majlisī possessed a manuscript in the author’s hand of Shaykh Ṭabrisī’s *A‘lām al-Varā* as well as a manuscript of the *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, which he terms an old manuscript (*nuskha ‘atīqa*).<sup>95</sup> He also possessed the manuscript of a certain *Kitāb al-Du‘ā* by an unknown author to which he refers as an old manuscript.<sup>96</sup> Majlisī also possessed another collection of supplications whose manuscript was written in 576/1180 and which Ibn Ṭāvūs had also cited repeatedly in his books.<sup>97</sup> The ‘Allāmeḥ possessed a manuscript of *Al-Ghārāt* which had been made by one of the scholars from a manuscript written close to the author’s era and which had been placed at his disposal.<sup>98</sup> He mentioned a copy manuscript of *Dalā’il al-Imāma*, to which he refers as an old corrected manuscript (*nuskha qadīma muṣāḥḥaḥa*), which existed at the shrine of Imam ‘Alī (‘a) and had been used by him.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 28–9.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 31.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 33.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 37.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 40.

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BĀQIR AL-MAJLISĪ AND ISLAMICATE MEDICINE:  
SAFAVID MEDICAL THEORY AND PRACTICE  
RE-EXAMINED

Andrew J. Newman

To date the conventional wisdoms surrounding the career and contributions of the late-Safavid period Twelver Shī'ī theologian and *faqīh* Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (d. 1110/1698 or 1111/1699–1700) and the nature of prophetic medicine, and Shī'ī prophetic medicine in particular, suggest that to the extent that both are conventionally portrayed as ferociously anti-rationalist both al-Majlisī and Shī'ī prophetic medicine would appear to have been exceptionally well-suited to each other.

Re-consideration of this apparent suitability involves, first, surveying conventional portrayals of al-Majlisī's contribution to late-Safavid religious discourse, of Shī'ī prophetic medicine and of Safavid-period medical theory and practice in general. Inasmuch as Cyril Elgood is the foremost Western scholar identified with the history of Safavid-period medical theory and practice, the present discussion also briefly addresses Elgood's legacy. The paper then moves to examine relevant sections of al-Majlisī's *magnum opus Bihār al-Anwār*, an early version of which was completed in 1070/1659 and several volumes of which were completed by 1081/1670,<sup>1</sup> to suggest that, indeed, al-Majlisī and Shī'ī prophetic medicine were well-suited to each other but for reasons quite contrary to those based on conventional understandings of both.

*'One of the greatest, most powerful and most fanatical mujtahids'*

Aside, perhaps, from certain, more recent, figures in the history of Iranian Shī'ism, no figure in Twelver Shī'ī history has been the

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<sup>1</sup> E. Kohlberg, 'Behār al-Anwār', *ELr*, IV: 90–93. See also S. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Khātūnābādī, *Vaqā'i al-Sinīn* (Tehran: Islāmiyya, 1352/1973), 535–6, which gives the date of 1091/1680–1 as the date of completion of a portion of the work.

object of such continued vilification in the Western sources as al-Majlisī.

In our own century the origin of many conventional wisdoms about various aspects of Safavid society can be traced to the work of Edward Browne. In 1924 Browne declared al-Majlisī ‘one of the greatest, most powerful and most fanatical *mujtahids* of the Safawi period’, and suggested that what ‘left Persia exposed to perils’—a reference to ‘the troubles which culminated in the supreme disaster of 1722’, the Afghan invasion—was ‘the narrow intolerance so largely fostered by him and his congeners’. Browne cited as examples of that intolerance al-Majlisī’s ‘ruthless persecution’ of ‘Sufis and heretics’.<sup>2</sup>

Laurence Lockhart’s 1958 characterisation of al-Majlisī’s legacy both echoed and elaborated upon the contributions of Browne. As had Browne Lockhart described al-Majlisī as ‘an extremely bigoted *mujtahid*’ and ‘a rigid and fanatical formalist’. According to Lockhart, al-Majlisī was ‘violently opposed to the Sunnis’. He also disliked the Sufis, owing to ‘their pantheism but also because so many eminent Sufis had been Sunnis’. Like Browne also, Lockhart condemned al-Majlisī for weakening the resolve and fibre of Safavid society. Thus, according to Lockhart al-Majlisī initiated a ‘religious campaign’ which ‘took the form of denunciation, and often persecution, of all who did not follow the strait and narrow path of his own choosing’. Because the Sunni Ottomans and Shī‘ī Safavids were at peace at the time, this campaign was waged inside Safavid territory and thus both aroused the ire of Iranian Sunnis and yet failed to inspire Iranian Shī‘a ‘with any real martial spirit’ a—the latter a point validated solely by reference to, and citation of, Browne’s earlier description of the profoundly negative impact of al-Majlisī and his ‘congeners’ on Iranian society at ‘the moment of supreme national crisis . . . in 1722’.<sup>3</sup>

Lockhart was not, however, content merely to reproduce Browne’s ‘analysis’. Indeed, Lockhart added three features to Browne’s critique of al-Majlisī. First, having noted his antipathy for the Sufis, Lockhart—citing only a single essay of al-Majlisī’s in the Browne Collection at

<sup>2</sup> E.G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, 4 (Cambridge: The University Press, 1953, reprint of the 1924 edition), 403, 120. See also 404, 194–5, 366.

<sup>3</sup> Laurence Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safawi dynasty and the Afghan occupation of Persia* (Cambridge: University Press, 1958), 32–33, 70, 71 n. 1. The latter referred to Browne, 4: 120, cited above.

Cambridge—stated al-Majlisī also fiercely denounced Aristotelian and Platonist philosophers as being ‘followers of the infidel Greek’, an addition to Browne’s polemic which will be of special interest to the present discussion. Lockhart also stated that al-Majlisī’s influence over Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn was substantial and was demonstrated by latter’s appointment of himself as *mullā-bāshī* ‘or head of the Mullas’.<sup>4</sup> Finally, although Lockhart acknowledged ‘we have no definite proof’, he concluded ‘it is highly probable that it was this fanatical leader who was responsible for this increase in persecution’ of Jews and Armenians that marked the latter half of the second Safavid century. Elsewhere Lockhart also associated al-Majlisī with the persecution of Zoroastrians in this period.<sup>5</sup>

More recent scholars have not been much kinder to al-Majlisī. Thus, in 1966, offering no supporting evidence, Nasr referred to al-Majlisī’s persecution of ‘the intellectual methods of the *hakims* and philosophers’ and, echoing both Browne and Lockhart, implied such persecution contributed to the fall of the dynasty to the Afghans.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Lockhart, *ibid.* For his statement that al-Majlisī had been appointed *mullā bāshī* Lockhart relied on V. Minorsky’s work with the late-Safavid period administrative manual *Tazkirat al-Mulūk*, where Minorsky identified as al-Majlisī a partial reference to the first individual to hold this post. See Lockhart, 72, 72 n. 3, citing *Tazkirat al-Mulūk, A Manual of Safavid Administration (circa 1137/1725)*, V. Minorsky, ed. and transl., (London: Luzac, 1943), 41. See also 110. S.A. Arjomand subsequently identified *Tazkirat al-Mulūk*’s ‘Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir’ as, in fact, a reference to Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir Khātunābādī (d. 1715). See his *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 154–5.

<sup>5</sup> Lockhart, 32–3, 72 f., 73 n. 2. Curiously, Lockhart did not to avail himself of Dwight M. Donaldson’s *The Shi’ite Religion, A History of Islam in Persia and Irak* (London: Luzac, 1933), written by a medical missionary with a Ph.D. who resided some sixteen years in Mashhad. The book was critiqued by Nicholson at Cambridge—Lockhart’s book was published by Cambridge—and included numerous translated citations from al-Majlisī’s works, none of which displays the ‘fanaticism’ which Lockhart attributed to al-Majlisī. On the broader socio-economic roots of the persecution of Jewish, Armenian and Banyan merchants, see R. Mathhee, ‘The Career of Muhammad Beg, Grand Vizier of Shah ‘Abbās II (r. 1642–1666)’, *Iranian Studies*, XXIV/i–iv (1991), esp. 23–8.

<sup>6</sup> S.H. Nasr, ‘The School of Ispahan’, in M.M. Sharif, ed., *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1966), 931. In a later essay, still absent any specific supporting references, Nasr described al-Majlisī as ‘the most formidable spokesman for the reaction which set in within Shi’ī religious circles during the later Safavid period’ and noted his condemnation of the *ḥukamā* (philosophers). See his ‘Spiritual Movements, Philosophy and Theology in the Safavid Period’, in *Cambridge History of Iran*, 6, *The Timurid and Safavid Periods*, P. Jackson, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 694.

Although Nasr’s characterisations of al-Majlisī’s legacy echoed those of both Browne and Lockhart, unlike Lockhart Nasr was aware of Donaldson’s 1933 contribution,

In his 1980 volume on the Safavids Savory identified al-Majlisī as *mullā-bāshī*, noted his hostility toward the Sufis and added that al-Majlisī had persuaded Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn (reg. 1694–1722) to issue ‘unjust and intolerant decrees’ against the religious minorities. In a volume published the next year Lambton called al-Majlisī ‘a forceful character, violently opposed to both Sunnis and Sufis. He also denounced the philosophers as being followers of the infidel Greek’.<sup>7</sup> Also in 1981 the political scientist Homa Katouzian, without citing a single source, characterised al-Majlisī as one of the ‘worldly religious leaders’—in fact, the only one named by Katouzian—who gained a ‘great deal of political power . . . their influence was the cause of a lot of political mistakes which weakened the state, and helped the Afghan invasion.’ To this conventional accusation, Katouzian added a charge that will also be of interest in the discussion below, that ‘apart from his disruptive political influence, . . . [al-Majlisī] had greatest share in proliferating unreliable *akhbār* . . . and promoting superstitious beliefs, through his writings’.<sup>8</sup> In 1984 S.A. Arjomand put al-Majlisī at the head of a ‘triumphant hierocracy’ which assumed control of the society and the state in the late-seventeenth century and sought to suppress all intellectual inquiry and minority religious tendencies; the activities of al-Majlisī and like-minded co-religionists were ‘an important cause’ of the Afghan invasion and the overthrow of the Safavid dynasty.<sup>9</sup> In his 1985 introductory work on Shī‘ism, citing only to Browne and Lockhart, Momen called al-Majlisī ‘one of the most powerful and influential Shī‘ī *‘ulamā*’ of all time’ and noted his ‘suppression of Sufism and philosophy, the propagation of dogmatic legalistic form of Twelver Shī‘ism and the suppression of Sunnism and other religious groups.’<sup>10</sup>

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cited above. See S.H. Nasr, Hamid Dabbashi, Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, et al., eds., *Shī‘ism, Doctrines, Thought, and Spirituality* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 1988), where Nasr (5) called Donaldson ‘one of the well-known American students of Iran of the early part of this century.’

<sup>7</sup> Roger Savory, *Iran Under the Safavids* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 234, 237–8, 251, citing no sources; Ann K.S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 268 n. 17, citing only to Lockhart, 70, as cited above.

<sup>8</sup> Homa Katouzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1981), 70 n.

<sup>9</sup> Arjomand, *The Shadow*, 190 f.

<sup>10</sup> Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shī‘ Islam* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 115–6, 115 n. 7, referring only to Browne, 4: 404, and Lockhart, 70, both cited above.



*The Legacy of Prophetic Medicine*

Conventional portrayals of the prophetic medical tradition in Islam, particularly Shīʿī prophetic medicine, suggest that this tradition ought to have provided a perfect vehicle for al-Majlisī's supposed fanatic obscurantism, the chief point of intersection between the prophetic medical tradition and al-Majlisī's own discourse being hostility to the Hellenic legacy.

Islamic medicine is conventionally described as composed of two distinct, dichotomous traditions: the pre-Islamic Galenic and the prophetic. The former is generally said to have made its way into Arabic during the period of the great translations, beginning especially in Baghdad in the early 3rd/9th century. Broadly speaking, Galenic medicine asserted that equilibrium in the four humours (*al-akhlāt*)—blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile—produced well-being. This presupposed a system of therapy aimed at maintaining or restoring this equilibrium by changes in diet, environment, activity, and use of external medications. Such well-known Islamic medical writers as the Iranian philosopher, medical writer and practitioner Abū Bakr Muḥammed al-Rāzī (Rhazes) (d. 310/923) and Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) (d. 428/1037) are usually judged adherents of this tradition.

According to the conventional wisdom the translation movement, a key feature of the 'golden age of Islam', betokened the inherent lack of originality and creativity at the basis of Islamic civilisation. The latter finally revealed itself in the 'decline' which commenced in the twelfth century, with the Abbasid caliphate finally meeting its political, not to say socio-economic, end with the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in 655/1258. The decline of the Galenic tradition is portrayed as following, and following on from, the fall of Baghdad. Thereafter the second, dichotomous, tradition—that of prophetic medicine—is said to have asserted itself. Ostensibly, prophetic medicine represented an effort to see medical theory and practice as capable of analysis strictly based on divine revelation. Sunni Muslims focused on the Qur'an and the statements and practices of the Prophet and his immediate associates—texts collectively referred to as the *ḥadīth* literature. These were the very sources which also provided the bases for the development of Sunni theology and jurisprudence.

Most Western writers have accepted E.G. Browne's analysis of the prophetic tradition which itself utilised the criticism of that tradition by Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406). The latter had characterised the tradition as

definitely no part of divine revelation but  
 . . . something customarily practised among the  
 Arabs [before the rise of Islam].

More recently Bürgel and Ullmann characterised the [Sunni] prophetic tradition as ‘quackery piously disguised’.<sup>11</sup> As such, Bürgel—who based his work with prophetic medicine on *Sahīḥ al-Bukhārī*, a collection of prophetic *aḥādīth* collated by Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870)—in a tone implicitly accepted by many scholars, grouped together prophetic medicine, astrology, alchemy and magic and stated all these had been

looked upon as sciences by the great  
 majority, and even by most of the scholars.  
 Nevertheless, they were hothouses of irrationalism,  
 the rational disguise making them even  
 more harmful.

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<sup>11</sup> See the Fitzpatrick Lectures delivered by Browne at the College of Physicians in November 1919 and November 1920, published as *Arabian Medicine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921 and 1962), especially 7, 13–14. The first edition of this work appeared only three years before the fourth volume of his *A Literary History of Persia*, cited above. The Ibn Khaldun quote itself is from C. Bürgel’s ‘Secular and Religious Features of Medieval Arabic Medicine’, in *Asian Medical Systems: A Comparative Study* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 50, 60, citing Browne, *ibid.* The same ‘analysis’ is on offer in Manfred Ullmann, *Islamic Medicine*, Islamic Surveys, No. 11 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1978), e.g. 5, 22, 55–106.

The inherent lack of creativity at the basis of Islamic civilisation prior to the fall of Baghdad is also said to be reflected in the limited achievement of Islamic medicine prior to 1258: ultimately, ‘Islamic medicine’ is judged to have involved less an interest in and efforts at supplementing Galenic medicine than the better arrangement and organisation of the Greek *materia medica* which was being made available in translation. According to Ullmann (22), for example,

the Arabs had received Greek medicine  
 at the last stage of its development and  
 could do no other than assume that this  
 system was perfect and final.

In this Ullmann was only echoing Browne (2, 5–6) and Bürgel (53–54). For a lengthier description, and critique, of this dichotomous understanding of the relationship between the Galenic and prophetic medical traditions, see our preface to *Islamic Medical Wisdom: the Ṭibb al-ʿAṣma*, Batoöl Ispahany, transl. (London: Muhammadi Trust, 1991), and our ‘“Tashrīḥ-i Maṣūri”’: Human Anatomy Between the Galenic and Prophetic Medical Traditions’, in *La Science dans le Monde Iranien*, ed. Z. Vesel, et. al. (Tehran: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1998), 253–71.

As such, these were 'enemies' of 'rational thought', harmful to the 'essentials of science', and were the 'spiritual forces . . . most potent in paralysing the scientific impetus of the golden age'.<sup>12</sup>

The Twelver Shī'a included among their 'revealed texts' the Qur'ān, the traditions of both the Prophet and his companions and, most importantly also, the statements of and narratives about the twelve Imams, the last of whom disappeared in 259–60/873–874. The latter texts are referred to as *ḥadīth* or *akhbār*. If Sunni prophetic medicine was not sufficiently problematic, no less a figure than Fazlur Rahman characterised Twelver prophetic medicine in particular as promoting the 'pain and discomfort of disease' and seeking the assistance of a doctor 'only if disease threatens to become incurable and [the] pain unbearable'. The Shī'a, according to Rahman, 'underplay the natural cures and . . . emphasize the value of suffering', a tendency, he argued, 'undoubtedly connected with the passion motif and the stress on martyrdom, of which Sunni Islam has little trace'.<sup>13</sup>

#### *The Legacy of Cyril Elgood*

With regard to Safavid-period medical theory and practice in particular, the contributions of Cyril Elgood merit special attention. Elgood was born in 1893 and, having attended Oxford, volunteered for service and was posted to India in 1914. Transferring to the Indian Army in 1918 he was invalided out in 1919. In 1925 he received his medical qualification at Barts hospital in London and served as physician to the British legation in Tihran from 1925 to 1931. He returned to England where he remained until 1948, except for a three-year stint in Florence. From 1948 to 1953 he worked in Sudan, Saudia Arabia and Qatar and from 1953 to his death in 1970 he served as part-time director of medical services in the Seychelles.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Bürgel, 54.

<sup>13</sup> See his *Health and Medicine in the Islamic Tradition* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 37–8.

<sup>14</sup> See F.R.C. Bagley, 'Elgood' *ELr*, 8: 362–63.

Most of Elgood's writings addressed 'Persian' medicine.<sup>15</sup> But if Elgood lacked formal, advanced credentials as a historian, let alone a historian of medicine and Islamic medicine in particular, he was well-acquainted with the extant literature on Islamic medicine, and the prophetic tradition especially:<sup>16</sup> indeed, his attitude toward prophetic medicine was a mirror image of that on offer in the earlier literature as discussed above. Thus, for example, in 1962, in an article well-known among historians of Islamic medicine, Elgood depicted the

story of Arabian medicine [sic] . . . as one of continual rebellion by the doctors against the system of thought imposed on them by the theologians

and defined the basis of prophetic medicine as pre-Islamic practices. The text considered in the article, he stated, 'shows how far orthodox Arab physicians were restrained in the development of scientific ideas by religion'.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> These include his 'Translation of a Persian Monograph on Syphilis, entitled "Risala-yi Itishak" by Imad al-Din Mahmud Bin Mas'ud Bin Mahmud-ul-Tabib', *Annals of Medical History*, n.s., Vol. 3 (1931), 465–486; 'A Treatise on the Bezoar Stone by the late Mahmud ebn Mas'ud the Imad ul-Din, the physician of Ispahan; translated from the original Persian', *Annals of Medical History*, n.s., Vol. 7 (1935), 73–80; *Medicine in Persia* (New York: Hoeber, 1934), as part of the *Clio Medica* series (republished in 1978); his major work *A Medical History of Persia and the Eastern Caliphate from the Earliest Times until the Year A.D. 1932*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) and the 83-page *Safavid Surgery* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1966). In 1968 he published the four-page 'Persian Gynaecology' in *Medical History* (12/4 (1968), 408–12). Elgood's last and most relevant work was *Safavid Medical Practice* (London: Luzac and Co., Ltd., 1970). Part one of this work was, as Elgood himself noted, an expansion of the two Safavid-period chapters of the 1951 *A Medical History of Persia*, drawing, in the main, on four Persian-language medical treatises—of which two actually predate the Safavid period—and on works of European travelers; part two of *Safavid Medical Practice* was, simply, his 1966 *Safavid Surgery*.

<sup>16</sup> Between his 1951 *A Medical History of Persia* and his 1970 *Safavid Medical Practice*, Elgood published two works which contributed to the discussion of the interaction between the Galenic and prophetic traditions. These were: 'The Medicine of the Prophet', *Medical History*, 6 (1962), 146–53, and the better-known 'Tibb-ul-Nabbi or Medicine of the Prophet, being a translation of Two Works of the same name, 1. The Tibb-ul-Nabbi of al-Suyuti, 2. The Tibb-ul-Nabbi of Mahmud bin Mohamed al-Chaghghayni, together with introduction, notes and glossary', *Osiris*, 14 (1962), 33–192.

<sup>17</sup> See C. Elgood, 'Tibb-ul-Nabbi or the Medicine of the Prophet', 37, 38. On the latter page, Elgood explained that the dominance of religion explains why 'the greatest names of early Islamic physicians were Persians who were Shi'ites and were not bound by the Sunna or were Christians or Jews who were not bound by Islam

Perhaps unsurprisingly, therefore, when Elgood considered the Safavid period he focused mainly on the Galenic medical tradition and its practitioners; the prophetic medical tradition receives no attention at all in *Safavid Medical Practice*. Even defined as such, however, Safavid-period medical theory and practice had its faults and failings. In that volume's second chapter, entitled 'The Clinicians', Elgood identifies one of these:

No large text-books of Medicine (*sic*) were written in Safavid times. The period is characterised by monographs and pamphlets on some specific point or by commentaries on the large books of times passed. There is no greater proof of the stagnation of Safavid Medicine than this fact. It shows that no fresh ideas had arisen, no ancient theory was contested. All that the best medical brains of the country could do now was to scratch at what they had inherited from their forefathers and produce variety by adding personal anecdotes.

Elsewhere in the same chapter he identified another 'disappointment': 'of hospitals in Safavid times there is scarcely a mention in literature', in contrast with 'the days of the Caliphs of Baghdad . . . the most glorious time of hospital construction'.<sup>18</sup>

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at all', making clear the extent of his knowledge of the backgrounds of some of the Persian medical writers and practitioners. Elgood wrongly attributed the essay in question to Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abū Bakr al-Suyūṭī (d. 910/1505). See C. Elgood, 'Tibb-ul-Nabbi', 165–175, esp. 170, 167. On the authorship of this treatise, see Hakim Altaf Ahmad Azmi, 'A New Manuscript on Prophet's Medicine by Jalal al-Din al-Soyuti', *Studies in History of Medicine and Science*, 9/iii–iv (1985), 95–112; Emilie Savage-Smith, 'Attitudes towards Dissection in Medieval Islam', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 50/i (1994), 73 and 73 n. 14.

<sup>18</sup> Elgood, *Safavid Medical Practice*, 19, 27. Historians of Islamic medicine are now vigorously contesting the notion of the great Baghdad hospital supposedly built by Hārūn al-Rashīd (d. 169/786) and, more importantly, the 'inspiration' for the caliph's building programme, the hospital and medical school allegedly founded by East Syrian Christians in Jundi Shapur in the Sassanian period. The earliest salvo in the debate was perhaps fired by Michael Dols in his 'The Origins of the Islamic Hospital: Myth and Reality', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 61 (1987), 367–390.

Elgood usually failed to supply evidence for those statements not based on a specific text, manuscript or otherwise, a fact noted in the one-paragraph review of the book by a historian of medicine in the *BHM* 47/iv (1973), 422.

Our own 'Medicine in the Safavid Period' (*EI*<sup>2</sup>, 8: 783–85) contains references to what was, in fact, a very eclectic amalgam of court and 'popular' medical theory, practice and care over the period.

*Al-Majlisī Between Galenic and Prophetic Medical Theory and Practice*

If Elgood's 'analyses' of medical theory and practice in the Safavid period, despite their focus on the Galenic tradition, seem problematic, Rahman's generalisations as to the fatalistic nature of Shī'ī prophetic medical tradition stand as all the more so.

Rahman based his evaluation of this tradition on *Ṭibb al-A'imma*, a ninth century compilation of statements of the Shī'ī Imams. More careful examination of *Ṭibb al-A'imma*, in fact, reveals substantial evidence of the Imams' knowledge of, and recourse to, natural cures and encouragement to consult medical experts. There is no trace whatsoever of any doctrinal stress on personal suffering and martyrdom and, where the Western-scholars named above have stressed the dichotomous nature of the Galenic and prophetic traditions, in this collection the Imams are portrayed as aware of and incorporating aspects of the Galenic humoural tradition of medicine into their own analyses of illness and wellness. Moreover, work with a later Persian-language essay on human anatomy, 'Tashrīḥ-Manṣūrī', completed in Shiraz in 1396 by Manṣūr ibn Muḥammad, aka Ibn Ilyās, suggests that for Sunni Islam also such an eclecticism was in evidence during the Muzaffarid and early Timurid periods.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, in one of his last works Dols suggested a certain affinity between the Galenic and the [Sunni] prophetic traditions generally.<sup>20</sup> Thus, rather than inherently antagonistic, there would appear to be fewer incompatibilities between the prophetic medical tradition—Sunni or Shī'ī—and the Galenic than has been suggested to date.

Such a suggestion is only further substantiated by examination of those sections of al-Majlisī's Arabic-language *Biḥār al-Anwār* which contain material on medical theory and practice and which reveal

<sup>19</sup> On *Ṭibb al-A'imma*, see our introduction to the translation of this collection, and the collection itself, cited above. On Ibn Ilyās, see our 'Tashrīḥ-i Manṣūrī', n. 11.

<sup>20</sup> Thus, Dols depicted Islamic medicine not as composed of opposing traditions but as existing along a continuum between the Galenic and the prophetic medical theories and bodies of practice and, indeed, defined prophetic medicine as a

blend of three distinct traditions . . . : the folk  
medicine of the Arabian bedouin, the borrowing of  
Galenic concepts . . . , and the over-arching principle  
of divine or supernatural causation.

See Michael W. Dols, *Islam and Medicine*, a review of Fazlur Rahman's *Health and Medicine* in *History of Science*, xxvi (1988), 421.

al-Majlisī to have been much less the intolerant, bigoted and, especially, anti-Hellenic religious fanatic that one would expect based on the secondary accounts of his discourse cited above. In its original version *Bihār* ran to 25 volumes. Those completed between 1081/1670 and 1105/1693, that is by al-Majlisī himself, included 1–5, 9–13, and 22 by 1670, volumes 6–8 by 1092/1681, the two parts of volume 18 by 1098/1686 and volume 14 in 1105/1693. The remaining volumes were completed after al-Majlisī's death in 1110/1698 or 1111/1699–1700, but were based on his drafts.

*Bihār's materia medica* is found in some fifty chapters in volume 14, *Kitāb al-Sam wa'l-ālam*, on cosmology and natural history, and thus is among that material collected and collated by al-Majlisī himself.<sup>21</sup> Portions of this material—especially those chapters on anatomy and medicaments—repay especial attention for what they reveal of al-Majlisī's disposition to the Galenic and prophetic medical traditions.

*Bihār's* material on anatomy ranges over three chapters. Chapter 46, covering some forty pages in the 1983 edition, discusses the body's faculties and senses. Al-Majlisī opens the chapter with references to several verses from the Qur'ān and the comments of the Shī'ī *mufasssīr* al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Qummī al-Nīshāpūrī (d. 1327–8) on these.<sup>22</sup> Al-Majlisī then cites eight traditions of the Imams all traced, by either al-Majlisī himself or the editor, to recognised earlier compilations of the Imams' traditions.<sup>23</sup>

The last twenty-six pages of this chapter comprise two sets of al-Majlisī's own comments on the faculties and senses. Al-Majlisī identifies the five external senses as those of hearing, seeing, smelling, taste (*zā'iqā*), and touch and the five internal senses as common feeling, imagination (*khayāl*), supposition (*vahm*), memory (*ḥāfiẓa*) and fancy (*mutakhayyala*). Herein, he both offers his own comments and cites

<sup>21</sup> These include chapters 42 to 89 in volume 14, corresponding to volumes 58–59 of 1403/1983 Beirut edition. The latter were kindly made available to me by the late John Cooper. On the dates of these volumes, see Kohlberg, 91, 92.

<sup>22</sup> On al-Nīshāpūrī, and al-Majlisī's certification of his Shī'ism, see Muḥsin al-Amīn, *Aḡyān al-Shī'a* 5 (Beirut: Dār al-Ta'āruf, 1983/1403), 248–9. I am grateful to Professor Wilferd Madelung for directing me to this reference.

<sup>23</sup> The Qur'anic verses are 2: 7, 16: 78, 23: 78 and 30: 22. 23: 78 states, for example, 'It is He who has created for you hearing, eyes, and hearts. Little thanks you give.' See chapter 46, entitled 'The faculties (*quwa*) of the soul (*nafs*) and their senses (*mashā'ir*) of the external (*ḥāhira*) and internal (*bāḥina*) senses and the rest of the physical senses (*ḥawāss*)', found in volume 58 of the present edition, 245–86.

those of such earlier ‘Galenic’ writers as al-Rāzī, but without rancor or invective. Where al-Majlisī offers, and argues for, his own viewpoints, he does so in a detached, ‘philosophical’ manner.

Al-Majlisī’s second set of comments form the conclusion of this chapter. Herein he refers to earlier discussions on the different portions of the brain cavity, in the main referring to *al-ḥukamā*; he does also, however, cite comments on human anatomy offered by the prominent Shī‘ī rationalist scholar Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Nu‘mān, al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 412/1022), in his *al-Masā’il*, in reply to questions about various of these faculties and other abilities. Al-Majlisī also identifies other faculties which are shared by animal and vegetative bodies. These include those of nourishment, growth (*nāmiyya*) and procreation, and their various subdivisions. Associated with the faculty of nourishment, for example, are the faculties of attraction (*jāzība*), retention (*māsika*), digestion (*hāḍima*) and expulsion (*dāfi’a*). He suggests that *al-ḥukamā*, whom he does not identify, count the imaginative faculty as part of the procreative faculty, but that such scholars as Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274), Fahkr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. ca. 543/1149)—a staunch defender of both Sunnism and anti-rationalist theology—and al-Ghazālī (d. 504/1111) disagreed. He cites the comments of these three as well as those of the very Sunni mathematician, astronomer and theologian ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Qūshjī (d. 878/1474) who, in fact, criticised al-Ṭūsī’s Shī‘ism.<sup>24</sup> Al-Majlisī ends the chapter with the comment that, in fact, insofar as these precise details are dependent on ‘a visible order of strange forms, odd shapes, arranged drawings and differing colours . . . beliefs in these become confused (*tahayyarat al-awhām*)’ and they cannot be understood: ‘the writings on these, as is known in the case of anatomy (*tashrīḥ*) and the advantages of the creation of mankind, exceed 5000 although what is not known of it is greater than what is known’. He added that ‘it can be conceded that this has issued forth from that faculty known as the imaginative’. Having thus cast some doubt on the usefulness, let alone the veracity of anatomical musings to date, al-Majlisī makes clear his preference for recourse to the revelation in the explication of these issues: ‘indeed such could not issue

<sup>24</sup> On al-Qūshjī, see A. Adnan Adivar, ‘‘Alī al-Qūshjī’’, *EI*<sup>2</sup>, 1: 393; Rahman notes al-Qūshjī’s anti-Shī‘ī tendencies in his ‘‘Alī Qūshjī’’, *EB*, 1: 876–7. I am grateful to Professor Wilferd Madelung for directing me to these references.



forth but from [one] wise, knowledgeable, knowing (*khabīr*) and omnipotent (*qadīr*).<sup>25</sup>

Chapter 47 addresses the anatomy of the parts of the body. Where the previous chapter contained no traditions al-Majlisī, his preferences for the revelation now clear, assembled thirty-two traditions in this chapter. Of these he took eighteen from three collections collated by al-Shaykh al-Ṣādūq, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (d. 380/991–2); these were *‘Ilal al-Sharā‘i* (13), *al-Khiṣāl* (3) and *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riżā* (2), and six from the earlier *al-Kāfi*, the collection of the Imams’ statements compiled by Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb al-Kulaynī (d. 329/941). The latter was the first of ‘the four books’, the great early collections of traditions compiled in the two hundred years following the disappearance of the twelfth Imam in 259–60/873–4.<sup>26</sup> Despite his preference for the revealed sources, several of these texts and al-Majlisī’s comments thereon, demonstrate an interest in, and the possibility of, effecting a reconciliation between the Imams’ traditions and aspects of the Galenic anatomical tradition, as, indeed, had the traditions in the ninth century *Ṭibb al-‘Imma*.

Thus, for example, the long first tradition this chapter, cited from al-Ṣādūq’s *‘Ilal*, addresses the creation of Adam as depicted in the Torah. In the tradition, there are references to the body as having been formed of moisture (*ruṭb*), dryness (*yābis*), heat (*sukhn*) and cold (*bārd*)—identified as ‘the four elements’ by medical writers in the Galenic tradition. Then Allāh created the black bile, the yellow bile, blood and phlegm—‘the four humours’ of Galenic medicine. Moisture is associated with the yellow bile, dryness with the black bile, heat with the blood and cold with the phlegm, the narrator explains, and the doctor knows that illness (*suqm*) results from surpluses or deficiencies in these and knows the medicaments which will restore balance.

Al-Majlisī’s comments following this tradition only build on these points of reconciliation and intersection between the two medical traditions. Thus, for example, al-Majlisī comments that a reference

<sup>25</sup> Al-Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Bihār al-Anwār*, 58 (Beirut, 1403/1983): 280, 282, 284, 285–86. On al-Rāzī, see G.C. Anawati, ‘Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī’, *ET*<sup>2</sup>, 2: 751–55. On the term *tashrīḥ*, see Savage-Smith, ‘Attitudes towards Dissection’.

<sup>26</sup> This represents 56% of the traditions in the chapter. Only five of the thirty-two traditions in this chapter are not easily traceable to earlier collections. The remaining nine traditions are drawn from eight other earlier collections. On ‘the four books’, see the prefatory remarks in our *The Formative Period of Twelver Shi‘ism: Hadīth as Discourse Between Qum and Baghdad* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000).

to *al-nafs* in the tradition is to be understood as referring to *al-rūḥ al-ḥayawānī* ('the animal pneuma' in the Muslim Galenic tradition) and a reference to *al-rūḥ* alone to *al-nāṭīqa* (talking). Ultimately, however, al-Majlisī is not completely satisfied with this text in particular, as is it attributed to the Sunnis.<sup>27</sup>

Al-Majlisī then cites two traditions from al-Ṣādūq's *al-Khiṣāl*. In the first of the two the sixth Imam, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 147/765), refers to the body as composed of *al-rūḥ* (the pneuma), *al-ʿaql* (the intellect), *al-dam* (blood) and *al-nafs*. Al-Majlisī, again, explains that *al-nafs* refers to *al-rūḥ al-ḥayawānī* and *al-rūḥ* refers to *al-nafs al-nāṭīqa*. In the second tradition Imam Ja'far is quoted as describing the body as composed of *al-nār* (fire), *al-nūr* (light), *al-rīḥ*—often synonymous with *al-rūḥ*—and *al-mā'* (water). The first, says the Imam, allows man to eat and drink, with the second he sees and thinks, with the third he hears and smells and the last allows him to taste what he eats and drinks. Al-Majlisī comments that the fire refers to *al-ḥarāra al-gharīzīyya*, the Arabic anatomical term for 'the innate heat', which he says is born of the fire. The water, he says, refers to the saliva.

In the following tradition, the fourth in this section, cited from al-Ṣādūq's *ʿUyūn al-Akhhbār*, the seventh Imam, Mūsā b. Ja'far (d. 182/799), answering a question from the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd about *al-ṭabāʿi al-arbaʿa* (the four natures), replies that these are *al-rīḥ* (the pneuma), *al-dam* (blood), *al-balgam* (phlegm) and *al-mirra* (bile). Al-Majlisī then comments on the meaning of these terms suggesting, for example, that *al-rīḥ* probably refers to the yellow bile or the animal pneuma, and that *al-mirra* referred to both the yellow and black bile together. He closes his comments on this text saying:

I have seen discussions such as this in the works of  
the ancient *aṭibba* (doctors) and *ḥukamā*  
(philosophers).<sup>28</sup>

After the long seventh text, also from al-Ṣādūq's *ʿIlal*, in which Imam ʿAlī addressed Allah and the creation, al-Majlisī explains certain terms in the text as references to the Galenic medical/anatomical terminology in effect, and again, intimating a compatibility between

<sup>27</sup> *Bihār* 58: 286–92. The text of the tradition can be found in *Bihār* on 286–90. For an introduction to the elements, humours, faculties, pneumata, etc., see Ullmann, 55–64.

<sup>28</sup> *Bihār* 58: 294.

the prophetic and Galenic medical traditions. Thus, for example, al-Majlisī suggests that *al-rīḥ* in the text might refer to the yellow bile while *al-mirra* might refer to the black bile, as he had suggested before, or vice versa, or that *al-rīḥ* refers to the animal pneuma and *al-mirra* is meant to refer to both the yellow and the black. He then quotes the *tafsīr* of ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī (d. after 306/919), one of the earliest Twelver Shī‘ī Qur’ān commentaries, that there are four *ṭabā‘ī*: the two biles, the blood and the phlegm, with the blood being located in the East, the phlegm in the North, the yellow bile in the South and the black in the West. The eighth text, also from ‘*Ilal*, cites Imam Ja‘far as referring to the four *ṭabā‘ī* as the blood, bile, pneuma and phlegm, the four *da‘ā’im* (supports) as *al-‘aql* (rational wisdom), understanding, memory and *al-‘ilm* (knowledge), and the four *arkān* (pillars) as light, fire, *al-rūḥ* and water.<sup>29</sup>

The eighteenth text, also from ‘*Ilal*, cites Imam Ja‘far as referring to the Prophet’s discussion of, and his explanation of the logic behind, the manner in which Allah created man. The teleological explanation of this process—i.e. that various specific anatomical structures are identified as having been created to perform specific functions—given in this tradition is familiar in anatomical discussions found in the writings of authors usually identified as within the Galenic tradition of Islamic medicine. Thus, the Prophet is cited as saying that Allah

created man’s eyes from two pieces of fat and he placed saltiness (*al-malūḥa*) in them, otherwise they would dwindle away, for the salinity ejects any dirt that falls into the eye. And He placed bitterness (*al-marārah*) in the ears as a veil (*ḥijāb*) for the brain, so that any creature (*dābbah*) that falls in seeks the way out, otherwise it would pass through to the brain. And sweetness (*al-‘udhūba*) was placed upon the lips as a blessing from God Almighty upon mankind that he might thereby discover the sweetness of saliva (*al-rīq*) and the taste of food and drink. And he placed coldness (*al-burūda*) inside the nostrils so that if you lodge anything in the head you expel it.

<sup>29</sup> *Biḥār* 58: 298–303.

In his own comments following the text, al-Majlisī notes that he has cited similar texts elsewhere in *Bihār*.<sup>30</sup>

Several traditions cited by al-Majlisī in this chapter refer to *al-urūq al-mutaḥarrika* (the moving vessels) and *al-urūq al-sākina* (the silent vessels), terms used by medical writers in the Galenic tradition as referring to the arteries and the veins respectively. In the twenty-fifth tradition both the terminology and the teleological dimension of Islamic anatomy are in evidence. In this text, cited from *al-Kāfī*, Imam Jaʿfar quotes the Prophet as saying that man has 360 vessels, of which 180 are ‘moving’ and 180 are ‘silent’, and that if the ‘moving’ vessels were silent one could not sleep and that if the ‘silent’ vessels moved also one could not sleep and that the Prophet praised Allah 360 times when he awoke each day.<sup>31</sup>

In the twenty-sixth tradition, from *al-Manāqib* of Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, Ibn Shahr Ashūb (d. 587/1192), a Christian asked Imam Jaʿfar about *isrār al-tibb* (the secrets of medicine) and then about the body itself. Then Imam replied that Allah had created the body with 248 bones—the same number as that given by both al-Rāzī in his anatomical work *Kitāb al-Manṣūrī* and Ibn Ilyās in his anatomy—and 360 ‘vessels’. The Imam then listed the number of bones in the various parts of the body. Al-Majlisī noted that other versions of this text gave the figure as 246 bones. This, said al-Majlisī, was the more accurate figure, since the teeth ought not to be counted as bones. He added that *al-aṭibba* (the doctors) had disagreed as to whether the teeth were, or were not, bones. Some had said they were bones, others called them *ʿaṣab* (nerves) and still others maintained they were *ʿuḍv murakkab*, (‘compound organ’ in the anatomies of the Galenic Muslim medical writers). Al-Majlisī states that the traditions demonstrated that the teeth were not bones or nerves because the Imams counted them as not having feeling or life. This, he says, does not

<sup>30</sup> *Bihār* 58: 312–14, ad 313. See also, for example, number 20, on 314–15. For references to the teleological style of Islamic anatomies, see our ‘Tashrīḥ-i Manṣūrī’, 257, 260–61, 263. My thanks to Mr. Colin Wakefield and Dr. Emilie Savage-Smith for their great assistance with the translation of this text and for drawing attention to both the unique vocabulary employed in this text—*al-marāra*, for example, usually refers to the gall bladder in Galenic Arabic anatomies—and the details of the explanations for the functions assigned the anatomical structures described herein. The anatomical terminology and specific functions on offer in this text will be the subject of further comparative examination.

<sup>31</sup> *Bihār* 58: 316–17. See also numbers 22, 24 and 26, on 316–17.

greatly contradict the previous understanding, as some doctors maintain that the teeth have no feeling nor do they have life. Some doctors say they do have feeling, al-Majlisī writes, citing Ibn Sīnā in *al-Qānūn* and Galen. Galen is cited as stating that of the bones only the teeth have feeling because the faculty of sense at the teeth contain soft nerves. This, comments al-Majlisī, is strange. How can the latter contain anything soft when they are mixed in with the bones? Those who maintain the teeth are not bones, he writes, describe the teeth instead as *mu'allafa* (compound [organ]) not *mufrada* (simple [organ]). They deduce this, he says, by the *shazāyā* (splinters, fragments) visible in the teeth which are *ribāṭiyya* and *ʿaṣabiyya*—references to the stuff of ligaments and nerves, respectively—and, they say, this is found in the teeth of larger animals.

Al-Majlisī then addresses the number of the teeth, noting that in the twenty-sixth tradition the Imam intimated the total to be 28 or 32. The latter figure is reached, al-Majlisī explains, if one adds an additional four teeth known as *isnān al-ḥilm* (the term Galenic anatomists used to refer to the wisdom teeth) which appear at maturity. Therefore, al-Majlisī explains, the two different totals in the text may be understood as referring to different individuals. Al-Majlisī then quotes Ibn Sīnā in *al-Qānūn* as stating that there are 32 teeth but that the *navājjid* (molars) may be missing in some people, in which case there are 28 teeth. Ibn Sīnā had then listed the different teeth, and reiterated the total as either 32 or 28, depending on the molars. These, Ibn Sīnā had explained, appear at maturity, about thirty years of age.<sup>32</sup>

### *Al-Majlisī and the Galenic Anatomical Tradition*

Taken together, consideration of the texts and, especially, the comments assembled in chapters 46 and 47 reveal al-Majlisī's efforts to achieve a reconciliation between Qur'anic citations and, especially, the Imams' traditions, and the Galenic anatomical tradition in Islam.

Chapter 48 is entitled 'On what the *al-ḥukamā* and *al-aṭibba* say on the anatomy of the body and its parts'. The chapter is arranged in seven *fuṣūl* (sections). The first deals with the primary (*aṣliyya*)

<sup>32</sup> *Bihār* 58: 316–19. On the number of bones in the body, see also our 'Tashrīḥ-i Maṣūri', 260, 262–63.

organs of the body. Of these the simple organs include the bones, nerves, muscles, tendons, ligaments, the (blood) vessels, membranes, the flesh, the humours, and cartilage, and the *murakabba* (compound) organs include the skull, the brain, the jaws, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the teeth, the throat, as well as the lungs, heart, stomach, the bladder, the sexual organs and the various combinations of bones which make up the arms and the hand, and legs, etc. The second section addresses the anatomy of *al-rā's* (the head) and its organs. Section three deals with *al-ḥalq* (the throat), *al-ḥanjara* (the larynx) and the instruments of sound'. The fourth section covers *al-ʿunq* (the neck), the spinal cord and the ribs, while the fifth addresses the anatomy of *al-ṣadr* (the chest), *al-baṭn* (the abdomen), *al-aḥshā'* (the intestines) and the hands. Section six discusses 'the anatomy of the instruments of procreation', while the seventh covers the remaining organs of the lower body. A subsection of section seven deals with the number of bones in the body, and a final, unnumbered section addresses the forms of Allah's creations.

In this chapter al-Majlisī relates in detail, without comment or criticism and absent reference to or citation of any Qur'anic text or any of the Imams' traditions, every major anatomical organisational principle and, indeed, the entire corpus of anatomical terminology developed in the writings of such scholars in the Galenic medical tradition as al-Rāzī, author of *Kitāb al-Manṣūrī*, Ibn Sīnā and Sayyid Ismā'īl b. Ḥasan al-Jurjānī, the student of Ibn Sīnā once-removed who completed his Persian-language general medical compendium *Zākhara-yi Khwarāzms̄hāhī* in 1112. Comparison with the first two works in particular is made all the easier in that both *Bihār* and the earlier major Islamic medical writings are in Arabic.<sup>33</sup>

In most instances, al-Majlisī simply lists information on the structure in question. At one point, for example, addressing the structure of *al-dimāq* (the brain), he quotes, at some length, the Sunni Ibn Sīnā's discussion of the organ's three cavities from *al-Qanūn*. He refers also to entries in the dictionaries of Ismā'īl b. Ḥammād al-Jawharī (d. 1002–1010) and Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 1415),

<sup>33</sup> *Bihār* 59: 1–61. On the various Persian-language anatomies, see our 'Tashrīḥ-i Manṣūrī', 259 f. It is noteworthy that, although these medical writers are usually identified as of the Galenic tradition, they did not uniformly agree with other on all points of anatomy. For examples of such disagreements, see our 'Tashrīḥ-i Manṣūrī', 260–62, 263–66.

neither known for his Shī'ī affiliations.<sup>34</sup> In section seven's short subsection al-Majlisī gives the total as 248, not counting *al-simsimāniyya* (the sesamoid bones) which, if added, would make the total 264. He cites the number of muscles as, according to Galen, 529, or 518, according to Ibn Abī Ṣādiq al-Nīshāpūrī (d. after 460/1068), a student of Ibn Sīnā and a medical practitioner in Nishapur.<sup>35</sup>

Detailed comparative analysis of all aspects of *Bihār's* anatomy with the anatomies of all of his forbearers is beyond the scope of the present paper. On three points in particular, however, al-Majlisī accepted key aspects, if not all, of the Hellenic medical corpus, thus belying his reputation in the secondary-sources as an indefatigable opponent of all things Greek and, especially, anything remotely associated with 'philosophy' and 'the philosophers'.

First, al-Majlisī accepts the Aristotelean notion that the heart is the first organ to come into existence in the foetus. Opening chapter forty-eight al-Majlisī, using the anatomical terminology on offer in the major Arabic-language anatomies written to date, states that the most important organs of the body are the brain, the heart, the liver and *al-unthayān* (the reproductive organs). The first contains the faculty of sense and movement, the second the life force, and the third contains the faculty of nourishment; with these three, the individual may sustain life. The fourth, and last, contain the faculty of procreation, to sustain *al-naʿs* (the species). All of these organs, al-Majlisī states, depend upon, and function in harmony with, each other. The heart contains *al-ḥarāra al-gharīziyya* (the innate heat) and is *al-raʿīs al-muṭlaq* (the absolute master)

and it is the first [organ] which appears  
in *al-ḥayāvan* (the animal). From it flows *al-rūḥ*  
(the pneuma) which bears sense and movement to  
the brain, and thence to the rest of the members.  
From it also flows the *rūḥ* which is the origin  
of nourishment and growth to the liver, and thence  
to the rest of the members.

<sup>34</sup> *Bihār* 59: 54–9. The section quoted from Ibn Sīnā can be found in the Beirut edition (1970?) of *al-Qānūn*, 2: 4–5. See also *Bihār* 59: 50 for a further citation from *al-Qānūn*. See also L. Kopf, 'al-Djawharī', *EI*<sup>2</sup>, 2: 495–97; H. Fleisch, 'al-Fīrūzābādī', *EI*<sup>2</sup>, 2: 926–27.

<sup>35</sup> Although in his different works Galen had in fact given different totals, al-Jurjānī cited the critique of his teacher, Ibn Abī Ṣādiq, of Galen's count, and agreed with his teacher's citation of the total as 518, not 529. Al-Rāzī accepted the total as 529. For further details, see our 'Tashrīḥ-i Manṣūrī', 261–2.

The notion that the heart was the first of the organs to appear has something of a history in Islamic, and Galenic, anatomy. Of the earlier ‘philosophical’ medical writers, Ibn Sīnā, al-Jurjānī and Ibn Ilyās argued the heart was the most important of the body’s organs and, as such and therefore, was the first to develop after conception. Ibn Ilyās, for example, had noted that Hippocrates argued the brain was first to be formed, that al-Rāzī had argued for the liver, that Ibn Sīnā had argued for the umbilical cord and that unnamed others had argued for the vertebral column. Ibn Ilyās pronounced himself in agreement with Aristotle, who had held for the heart, and argued that the heart must precede the liver since the organ which is the source of the natural heat—i.e. the heart—needed for the formation of the faculty of nourishment—which Ibn Ilyās also held was located in the liver—must be formed first. The heart also must precede the brain because as long as the body is devoid of the life-force—the source of which was believed to be the heart—, it will be without the senses which are located in the brain. Thus, in arguing for the heart as both ‘the absolute master’ and, more importantly, as the first organ to appear, al-Majlisī was not only agreeing with such earlier Sunnis as Ibn Ilyās and Ibn Sīnā but also with such Greeks as Aristotle.<sup>36</sup>

Al-Majlisī’s sixth section deals with the anatomy of the reproductive organs. In the process, again like Ibn Ilyās, al-Majlisī discriminated within the Hellenic legacy. In this chapter al-Majlisī affirms the existence of the female semen, in this case opposing Aristotle and agreeing both with earlier treatises in the Sunni prophetic tradition, such prominent Sunni writers in the Galenic tradition as al-Rāzī and Ibn Sīnā and Hippocrates and Galen. More interesting is the evidence al-Majlisī cites in support of his position. Ibn Ilyās could have cited supportive statements on this issue by Hippocrates and Galen and Islamic medical writers but, instead, cited only a *ḥadīth* of the Prophet. Al-Majlisī, by contrast, quoted only several para-

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<sup>36</sup> *Bihār* 59: 1–2. For further detail on the importance of the heart, see our ‘Tashrīḥ-i Maṣūūrī’, 263, 265. Recent secondary source authors have suggested that Muslim writers rejected Aristotle *in toto*. See, for example, B. Musallam, *Sex and Society in Islam, Birth Control Before the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 40; P. Sanders, ‘Hermaphrodites in Medieval Islamic Law’, in N. Keddie and B. Baron, eds., *Women in Middle Eastern History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 76.



graphs from Ibn Sīnā's discussion of this point in *al-Qānūn*; he cited nothing from the Qur'an or the Imams' traditions.<sup>37</sup>

Thirdly, and finally, just as such other Muslim anatomical writers in the Galenic tradition as Ibn Sīnā and al-Jurjānī, al-Majlisī viewed the female reproductive anatomy as more similar to that of the male than not, but somehow inverted or turned upside down. Indeed, from ancient times until only very recently, the male and female forms were assumed to be more alike than not.<sup>38</sup>

*Al-Majlisī, Doctors and 'the Natural Cures'*

Rahman claimed that the Shī'a promoted the 'pain and discomfort of disease' and the seeking the assistance of a doctor 'only if disease threatens to become incurable and [the] pain unbearable'. The Shī'a, he continued, 'underplay the natural cures and . . . emphasize the value of suffering'. Rahman based his evaluation of this tradition on a reading of *Ṭibb al-A'imma*, a 3rd/9th century compilation of statements of the Shī'ī Imams which, when systematically examined, in fact contains little evidence to support Rahman's characterisations.

Thirty nine chapters in this section of *Bihār al-Anwār* contain some 498 traditions of the Imams on illnesses and their cures. Of these 39 chapters, chapters 50 through 76 contain 359 texts on specific afflictions and pains and their cures. Of the 359, 326, 91% of the total, are easily traceable to earlier sources. Of these 113, nearly a third, are cited from the same *Ṭibb al-A'imma*; 50, 14%, are cited

<sup>37</sup> Newman, *ibid.*; *Bihār* 59: 47–50. See also Musallam, 43 f. Al-Majlisī, however, had also cited a long tradition from Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar at the end of chapter 47 which contained a passing reference to the 'two semens' (*Bihār* 58: 320–30, esp. 320), a text which had also appeared in an earlier part of *Bihār*. Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar al-Ju'fī, a companion of the sixth Imam Ja'far al-Šādiq, was discounted by many twelver Shī'ī scholars as unreliable; see our *The Formative Period of Twelver Shī'ism*, s.v.; Wilferd Madelung, 'Khaṭṭābiyya', *EI*<sup>2</sup>, 4: 1132–3.

<sup>38</sup> *Bihār* 59: 47–50; Musallam, 40 f. The first female skeleton formally presented only in the last half of the 18th c and it was only European writers of this period who supported ideas of the inferior status of women based on references to their supposedly inferior reproductive anatomy. See Thomas Laquer, 'Orgasm, Generation, and the Politics of Reproductive Biology', in *The Making of the Modern Body, Sexuality and Society in the Nineteenth Century*, C. Gallagher and T. Laquer, eds. (Berkeley; University of California Press, 1987), 1–41. On Ibn Sīnā and al-Jurjānī, see our 'Tashrīḥ-i Maṣūūr', 261.

from al-Kulayni's *al-Kāfi*, a slightly earlier compilation; 44, 12%, are cited from *Makārim al-Akhlāq* of al-Ḥasan b. al-Faḥr al-Ṭabrī (fl. 6th/12th c); 41, 11%, are cited from *al-Maḥāsin* of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālid al-Barqī (d. 273–80/887–94), perhaps the first of the great compilations of Twelver hadith; and 20, 5%, are cited from al-Ṣadūq's *al-Khiṣāl*. Thus 268 of the 359 texts, 75%, are traceable to five sources.<sup>39</sup>

In light of Rahman's comments, chapter 50—containing thirty five texts—repays especial attention. In the tenth tradition, cited from *Ṭibb*, Imam Ja'far, was asked:

about a man taking medications which sometimes kills and sometimes cure, those who are cured being more numerous. He replied, 'Allah has sent down the illness and the cure. He has not created an illness without making a cure for it. So take it [i.e. the cure], and take [i.e. invoke] the name of Allah.'<sup>40</sup>

As for seeking out a doctor, of whatever faith, in the immediately previous text, the fifth Imam Abū Ja'far al-Bāqir (d. 735), was asked

about a man being treated by Christians and Jews and taking medications from them. He [al-Bāqir] replied: 'There is no objection to that. Healing is only in the hand of Allah, the Exalted.'

Al-Majlisī himself then cites Muḥammad b. Maṣṣūr, Ibn Idrīs, (d. 598/1202), Muḥammad b. Makkī, al-Shahīd al-Avval (d. 785/1384), as well as the comments of al-Ḥasan b. Yūsuf, al-'Allāma al-Ḥillī (d. 725/1325), that the believer might seek out a Jewish or Christian doctor if the need arose.<sup>41</sup>

With no apparent hesitation in these chapters al-Majlisī cites the works of Sunni authors, including some of the 'Galenic persuasion'. Thus, for example, in a chapter on urinary afflictions al-Majlisī cites without comment both the Spanish-born botanist and pharmacologist Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, Ibn al-Bayṭār (d. 645/1248), himself citing Galen, and Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Fīrūzābādī on related matters. In a chapter on stomach and back pain, al-Majlisī refers to

<sup>39</sup> Al-Majlisī, 59: 62–214. There is no chapter 51. On al-Barqī, see our *The Formative Period of Twelver Shī'ism*, s.v.

<sup>40</sup> Al-Majlisī, 59: 66/10; *Ṭibb* (Newman, ed.), 75.

<sup>41</sup> Al-Majlisī, 59: 65/9; *Ṭibb*, 75/1.

comments of Galen and in a chapter on cures for *bawāsīr* (piles) he refers to comments by Ibn Sīnā and Ibn al-Bayṭār.<sup>42</sup>

Where Rahman claimed the Shīʿa ‘underplay the natural cures’ chapters 77 through 88 of volume 14 contain 139 texts on various simple and compound medicaments to be taken for specific afflictions. These include texts in which the Imams discussed endives, frankincense, fleawort, black cumin, wild rue, and jasmine, and the ailments for which the Imams deemed these efficacious; all of these had also been discussed in *Ṭibb*.<sup>43</sup> Of these 139 traditions, 86, 62%, are easily traceable to earlier sources: 32, 23% are cited from *Ṭibb*, the source consulted by Rahman; 19, 14%, are cited from the earlier *al-Kāfī*; and 10, 7%, are cited from *Makārim*. Thus, 61 texts, 44%, are cited from three sources which were already well-used by al-Majlisī.<sup>44</sup>

Of these texts one in particular, cited from *Ṭibb*, repays attention.

[On the authority of the Imam] . . . [These medications] will be beneficial, if Allah, the Exalted, wills, for black and for yellow bile, for phlegm, pain in the belly, vomiting, fever, pleurisy, chapping of hands and feet, suppression of urine, looseness of the bowels, pain in the belly and the liver, and heat in the head. It is necessary to abstain from dried dates, fish, vinegar, and legumes, and the person who drinks it should eat [a dish of sugar, almonds, and vinegar] with sesame oil. He should drink it for three days, two *mithqāl* a day. I would give him one *mithqāl* to drink but the Imam, peace be upon him, said, ‘two *mithqāl*’, and said that the Prophets had apportioned it for our Prophet, blessings be on him and his family.

Take one *raṭl* of cleansed Cassia fistula and steep it in a *raṭl* of water for a day and a night. Then strain it, taking the clear liquid and throwing away the residue. Add to the clear liquid one *raṭl* of honey, one *raṭl* of juice of quince, and forty *mithqāl* of the oil of roses. Cook it on a low fire until it thickens. Then remove it from the fire and leave it to cool. When cooled, add three *mithqāl* each of pepper, long pepper, cinnamon, clove, cardamom, ginger, Chinese cinnamon, and nutmeg, all ground and sieved. Mix it well and put in a green earthenware jar or a bottle. Drink two *mithqāl* of it on an empty stomach

<sup>42</sup> Al-Majlisī, 59: 189, 195, 198. It is also clear that al-Majlisī himself undertook some independent research on some of the questions, and terminology, found in these texts. See, for example, 59: 201. On Ibn al-Bayṭār, see J. Vernet, ‘Ibn al-Bayṭār’, *ET*<sup>2</sup>, 3: 737.

<sup>43</sup> See *Ṭibb*, s.v.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Majlisī, 59: 215–304. The bulk of the 53 untraceable texts in chapters 77 through 88 are found in chapter 88, a chapter of *nawādir* (miscellaneous) texts on the subject.

and it will be beneficial, Allah, the Mighty and Sublime, willing. It is beneficial for what has been mentioned, and for jaundice and severe, continuous fever from which there is a fear of the person getting pleurisy, and for high temperature.<sup>45</sup>

This text, especially, demonstrates both an awareness of and adherence to certain elements of Galenic humoural theory—to wit, the references to black and yellow bile and phlegm, and the notion that external medications can restore internal equilibrium—, but also belief in the efficacy of seeking out treatment generally, and the efficacy of compound medicaments in particular.

In these chapters also, there are references to Galenic practitioners. A chapter of two texts on *hatīlaj* (yellow [?] myrobalan), *amlaj* (emblic myrobalan) and *batīlaj* (beleric myrobalan) contains three citations from Ibn Sīnā. A chapter of 14 texts on compound medications described as being efficacious for a variety of afflictions and illnesses also contains a citation, without comment, from *al-Qānūn*. A long chapter of 72 miscellaneous texts cites comments by Galen and Ibn al-Bayṭār.<sup>46</sup>

### *Summary and Conclusions*

Although these texts and *Bihār*'s discussion are, of course, in Arabic al-Majlisī made a number of the essential points of these of *Bihār*'s chapters available in Persian, in the ninth *bāb* of his Persian-language *Kitāb-i Hilyat al-muttaqīn*, completed in 1079/1668–69.<sup>47</sup> Based on careful consideration of the texts and personal comments on offer in the various 'medical' chapters in volume 14 of his *Bihār*, and *Hilyat al-muttaqīn*, al-Majlisī emerges as less a fanatic fabricator of religious texts, and certainly no fierce critic of all things Greek, than is usually suggested in the Western-language sources. Indeed, his perspective on things medical appears in line with that of his clerical predecessors in the faith's formative period, as represented by those of the Imams' statements assembled in the ninth century *Tibb al-A'imma*. This re-evaluation of al-Majlisī's legacy with regard to his

<sup>45</sup> Al-Majlisī, 59: 240–45; *Tibb*, 92/2.

<sup>46</sup> Al-Majlisī, 59: 237–9, 249, 278. On the various forms of myrobalan, see *Tibb*, 88, 108.

<sup>47</sup> Muḥammad Bāqir ibn Muḥammad Taqī Majlisī, *Kitāb-i hilyat al-muttaqīn*, 4th edition (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Bāqir al-'Ulūm, 1378/2000), 233 f.

supposed fanatical persecution of various groups and ideas in this period confirms the work of Vera Moreen who, in a 1992 article, translated and then examined a treatise by al-Majlisī on *ahl al-zimma* and concluded that al-Majlisī's fierce reputation as a persecutor of the Jews was in distinct need of re-evaluation.<sup>48</sup>

At the same time, examination of the Imams' traditions on medical theory and practice as found in *Bihār* further confirms our earlier conclusions, based on *Ṭibb al-A'imma*, that the Shī'ī variant of the prophetic medical tradition did not promote the 'pain and discomfort of disease' and seeking the assistance of a doctor 'only if disease threatens to become incurable and [the] pain unbearable', let alone 'underplay the natural cures and . . . emphasize the value of suffering', as Rahman suggested in 1989.

On balance, then, both al-Majlisī's *materia medica* and the Shī'ī prophetic medical tradition were, in fact, well suited to each other, if not for the reasons too often suggested in the literature on each to date.

A larger question still remains as to the underlying purpose served by al-Majlisī's eclectic approach toward medical theory and practice. Given the diversity and, especially with the recourse to magic and astrology, potentially unorthodox nature of Safavid-period medical theory and practice and given al-Majlisī's role as an associate of the Safavid court and an Uṣūlī *faqīh* of the first order, his work generally, and *Bihār al-Anwār* and *Hilyat al-muttaqīn* in particular, were written in the context of an intersection between clerical and court interests in the promulgation of Shī'ī orthodoxy, i.e. the Uṣūlī variant, throughout Safavid territory. The inclusion of medical materials in both these works both suggests an effort to challenge any unorthodox medical theories—perhaps especially, for example, Sunni-based, or 'radical' Akhbārī, material—let alone such unorthodox practices as represented by astrology and magic. The latter two, in particular, often found favour at the Safavid court, perhaps especially in times of socio-economic and political stress and were, doubtless, also widespread among the 'popular classes'.<sup>49</sup> *Pace* Dols, the very eclectic

<sup>48</sup> V.B. Moreen, 'Risāla-yi Ṣawā'iq al-Yahūd [The Treatise Lightning Bolts Against the Jews] by Muḥammad Bāqir b. Muḥammad Taqī al-Majlisī (d. 1699)', *Die Welts des Islams* 32 (1992), 177–195.

<sup>49</sup> On Akhbārism see our 'The Nature of the Akhbārī/Uṣūlī Dispute in Late-Safavid Iran. Part One: 'Abdallāh al-Samāhijī's "Munyat al-Mumārīsīn"', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 55, i (1992), 22–51; 'Part Two: The

nature of the prophetic medical tradition, Sunni or Shīrī, could lend itself to identification with such unorthodox discourse. Al-Majlisī's efforts, visible in *Bihār* especially, to highlight points of compatibility between the Imams' traditions and the Galenic tradition bespeak an effort to provide the bases for an anti-radical discourse. Thus, the very eclectic nature of the prophetic tradition permitted it to be identified just as well with the Galenic tradition of medical theory and practice.

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Conflict Reassessed', *BSOAS*, Vol. 55, ii (1992), 250–261. On alternative medical theories and practices in the Safavid period, see our 'Medicine in the Safavid Period' (*ET*<sup>2</sup>, 8: 783–85).

SAFAVID ADMINISTRATION OF AVQĀF:  
STRUCTURE, CHANGES AND FUNCTIONS,  
1077–1135/1666–1722

Maṣṣūr Şifatgol

I

Safavid rule (907–1148/1501–1736) caused fundamental changes in the social, economic, political and religious structure of Iranian society. These changes were very significant in the religious sphere, both courtly and public. One of the most important results of Safavid religious policy, from the point of view of this study, was the emergence, development and expansion of the *avqāf* institution as a vital part of the Safavid administration.

Despite the importance of the role of the Safavid *avqāf* institution for the understanding of the religious, economic, social and political history of Iran during this period, there has been no comprehensive scholarly research on the subject. This is perhaps owing to the lack of *avqāf* sources and their scattered distribution, especially the *vaqfnāmeḥ-hā*, as well as the political and social upheavals of the time. Additional factors are the forcible detainer of *avqāf*, the confusion in the administration of the *avqāf*, and the difficulties for scholars in using the *vaqfnāmeḥs*, especially the problem of *siyāq* numbers, for calculating the real income and expenditure of the *mawqūfāt*. In fact, we have no comprehensive study of the *avqāf* institution and its evolution and growth in the Safavid period.

I offer the following classification of periods to assist in the study of the Safavid *avqāf* institution:

- 1) From the establishment of the Safavid state to the reign of Shah ‘Abbās I (907–996/1501–1588).
- 2) The reign of Shah ‘Abbās I (996–1038/1588–1629).
- 3) The period between the death of Shah ‘Abbās I and the coronation of Shah Sulaymān (1038–1077/1629–1666).
- 4) From the reign of Shah Sulaymān to the collapse of Isfahan (1077–1135/1666–1722).

The main task of this study is to clarify the structure and functions of *avqāf* in the latter part of Safavid rule. I have chosen this period because it seems that *avqāf* at this time had some particularities that set them apart from earlier periods. We can consider this period as the zenith of Safavid rule in all aspects of the life of Iranian society. The period was especially significant from the religious point of view, as well as in relation to *avqāf*. However, as this period follows on from previous periods, a brief discussion of these earlier periods is necessary.

Safavid rulers were familiar with *avqāf* income. Their ancestors had been *mutavallīs* of some *mawqūfeh* and the *khānqāh* of Ardabīl had many properties, some endowed by the Mongol Ilkhans and their courtiers, including Rashīd al-Dīn Faẓl Allāh al-Hamādānī.<sup>1</sup> The income from these *avqāf* was the main financial instrument used by the early Safavids for their political goals.<sup>2</sup>

When the Safavids became the rulers of Iran their limited role as leaders of small groups of *murīds* (followers) changed to that of sovereigns of a large number of people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. As a result the Safavids, as Shahs of Iran, became the creators of religious endowments (*mawqūfāt*).

Concomittant with the emergence and development of the Safavid state, the main structure of the religious institutions of Iran and the *avqāf* administration developed and expanded. Therefore, although the Safavid institution of *avqāf* was based on the system of previous

<sup>1</sup> Before Safavid rule, especially during the reign of the Mongol Ilkhans Qazankhān and Uljaytūkhān, Rashīd al-Dīn Faẓl Allāh had close relations with the Khānqāh of Ardabīl. In one of his letters to Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn he says that he made some endowments to the Khanghah; see Rashīd al-Dīn Faẓl Allāh Hamadānī, *Savāmiḥ al-Afkār-i Rashīdī*, Muḥammad Tāqī Dānishpazhūh, ed. (Tihiran: Kitābkhāneh-yi Markazī-yi Dānishgāh-i Tihirān, 1358/1980), 245–46; Ibn-i Bazzāz Ardabīlī, *Ṣafvat al-Safā*, Ghulām Rizā Ṭabāṭabāʾī Majd, ed. (Tabrīz: Muṣṣaḥiḥ, 1373/1994), 740–42. For a review of this book, see Manşūr Şifatgol 'Mulāhiḥātī Intiqādī darbārā-yi chāp-i Ṣafvat al-Ṣafā', *Ā'ini-yi Pazhūsh* 6 (1375/1996), 14–29.

<sup>2</sup> The best source of details concerning the endowments of the *khānqāh* of Ardabīl is *Sarīḥ al-Milk*. This contains details about endowments between the years 613–995/1216–1587. See Zayn al-'Abidīn 'Abdī Beg Shīrāzī (Navīdī), *Sarīḥ al-Milk*, ms. no. 2734/F, National Library of Iran; Microfilms no. 1655–1658, Central Library of Tihiran University. Part of this source has been edited as an M.A. dissertation with an incorrect title; see Zayn al-'Abidīn 'Abdī Beg Shīrāzī (Navīdī), *Sarīḥ al-Milk: Taṣṭiḥ-i Savād-i Vaqf-nāmeḥ-yi Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn Ishāq-i Ardabīlī* (Dar al-Irshad; Dar al-Saltāneh-yi Tabrīz, Tumanī Mishkin, Khalkhal, Mughanat, Sarab, Hashtrud, Chukhursa'd), Ghulām Rizā Āghākhānī, ed., Department of History, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, University of Tihiran (1374/1995).



periods, during Safavid rule it became a part of 'Safavism', a policy which functioned as a religious and political instrument both in internal and external affairs. On the other hand the structure of the Safavid religious system gradually became the most important structure benefitting from *avqāf* income. Indeed, study of the *avqāf* institution during Safavid rule, especially during the time of the later Safavids, tells us that the religious institution flourished both in the capital and in the provinces.

During the first period of Safavid rule, the *avqāf* institution took its structure from the pre-Safavid period. Later it continued to grow and evolve, the Safavid rulers endowing many properties to religious buildings and holy shrines in particular.

The first Safavid ruler, Shah Ismā'īl I, spent most of his time in civil war and wars with the Uzbeks and Ottomans. He therefore lacked time to establish great buildings or make huge endowments. However, he paid attention to the *avqāf* institution, and some evidence shows that during his rule the repair and erection of religious buildings were undertaken.<sup>3</sup> During his lengthy rule, Shah Ṭahmāsp I created many *muqaffa'* to the holy shrines of Ḥazarāt-i 'Abdulazīm in Ray<sup>4</sup> and the holy shrine of Astāneh-yi Shāhzādeh Ḥusayn in Qazvīn. In 938/1532 Shah Ṭahmāsp I endowed some properties, including the Royal Bath (*Ḥammām-i Shāhī*) to the Astāneh.<sup>5</sup> The custodians of this Astāneh were the Mar'ashī Sayyids.<sup>6</sup> One of the members of the royal family, Shāh Baygī Begum, the wife of Shah Ismā'īl I, endowed some properties to Astāneh-yi Shāhzādeh Ḥusayn in 938/1532 and 943/1537.<sup>7</sup> She also endowed a village near Varāmīn, Ḥasan Ābād, to those *sayyids* who were resident in Madīna, in the Hijaz.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, Lutfallāh-i Hunarfar, *Ganjīneh-yi Āsār-i Tārīkhī-yi Isfāhān* (Isfahan: Saqāfi, 1344/1965), 360–61, for a report on the repair of the Ḥarūne Velayat in 918/1512. Also Mīrzā Shāh Ḥusayn-i Isfāhānī, the minister of Shah Ismā'īl, created the *Maṣjid-i 'Alī* in Isfahan in 929/1523 (*ibid.*, 374).

<sup>4</sup> For a list of his *avqāf* to this holy shrine, see Muḥammad 'Alī Hidayatī, *Astāneh-yi Ray* (Tehran: np, 1344/1965), 77–93. Zaynab Begum, his daughter, endowed some properties to this shrine (*ibid.*, 93–97).

<sup>5</sup> H. Mudaressi Tabāṭābāī, *Bargī az Tārīkh-i Qazvīn* (Qum: Kitābkhāne-yi 'Umūmī-yi Ḥazarāt-i Āyatullāh al-'Uzmā Najafī Mar'ashī, 1361/1982), document no. 8, 134–42.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, document no. 7, 131–34.

<sup>8</sup> Qāzī Aḥmad Qumī, *Khulāṣāt al-Tavārīkh*, Iḥsān-i Ishrāqī, ed. (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān, 1357/1979), I: 289–90.

Shah Ṭahmāsp I was also interested in the city of Qum and its affairs. During the year 949/1542 he spent a few months in the city and tried to improve it, especially the holy shrine of Ḥaẓrat-i Ma'şūmeh Fāṭimeh.<sup>9</sup> The contemporary historian Ḥasan Beg Rūmlū states that the Shah usually punished those who encroached on the *avqāf*.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps as part of the foreign or religious policy of the Safavid state, Shah Ṭahmāsp I endowed many properties to the holy shrine of Imam Ḥusayn<sup>11</sup> and to one of the most important religious leaders in the early years of his rule, Shaykh 'Alī 'Abdul 'Alī, known as Shaykh Karākī, in the Iraqi shrine cities, the 'Atabāt.<sup>12</sup> Apparently during this period, when the Safavid *avqāf* had been expanded, the need developed to distinguish between pre-Safavid and Safavid *avqāf*. The sources use the two terms '*avqāf-i qadīmī*' and '*avqāf-i jadīdī*' respectively.<sup>13</sup>

The reign of Shah 'Abbās I was the outstanding period for institutionalising and centralising the *avqāf* administration. After the stabilisation of the Safavid state, in the year 1015/1606 the shah endowed all of his properties which were worth over a thousand tumans, and their revenues, approximately seven or eight hundred tumans, to the fourteen Shī'ī saints (*Chahārdeh Ma'şūm*). These included all buildings, even the royal palaces which belonged to him personally. These large *mawqūfāt*, named *avqāf-i Chahārdeh Ma'şūm*, contained many properties, especially in Isfahan, Khurasan and other provinces.<sup>14</sup> No doubt foreign policy considerations, portions of the income of these endow-

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I: 299.

<sup>10</sup> Ḥasan Beg Rūmlū, *Ahsan al-Tawārīkh*, 'Abdul Ḥusayn Navā'ī, ed. (Tihiran: Bābak, 1357/1979), I: 482–83.

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance, Iraj Afshār, 'Vaqfnāmeḥ-yi Ab-i Furāt' (Az Shah Ṭahmāsp-i Şafavī) *Farhang-i Irān Zāmin*, XIV, no. 6 (1345), 313–18.

<sup>12</sup> 'Abdallāh Afandī Işfahānī, *Riyāz al-'Ulāma*, Ḥusayn-i Sa'īdī Khurāsānī, tr. (Mashhad: Āstāneh Quds-i Razavī, 1374/1995), III: \*.

<sup>13</sup> Qazanī or Rashīdī endowments were part of the *avqāf* from the pre-Safavid period which remained during Safavid rule: Klaus-Michael Rohrborn, *Provinzen und Zentralgewalt Persiens im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, tr. K. Djahandari (Tihiran: B.T.N.K., 1979/1994), 189–90; Muḥammad 'Alī Golriz, *Minudar ya Bab al-Janat Qazvīn*, II (Tihiran: Dānīshgāh-i Tihiran, 1337/1957), 903–04; *Barg Az Tārīkh-i Qazvīn*, document no. 14, 152–53.

<sup>14</sup> Iskandar Beg Turkaman (Munshī), *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam ārā-yi Abbāsī*, Iraj Afshār, ed. (Tihiran: Amīr Kabīr, 1350/1971), II: 760–61. For the text of the deed of bequest, see Valī Qulī Shāmlū, *Qīṣas al-Khāgānī*, ed. Sayyid Ḥasan Sa'adat-i Naşīr, (Tihiran: Vizārāt-i Farhang va Irshād-i Islāmī, 1371/1993), I: 186–97. This text has been published; see Abdul Ḥusayn-i Sipantā, *Tārīkhcheh-yi Avqāf-i Isfahan* (Isfahan: Anjuman-i Āsar-i Millī, 1346/1967), 65–72.

ments was endowed for the Shī'ī religious centres outside Iran, especially the holy shrines in 'Atabāt in Iraq, Mecca and Madīna.<sup>15</sup>

The *Chahārdeh Ma'sūm* endowments were very important, and Shah 'Abbās I appointed an administrator, with the title *Vazīr Mauqūfāt-i Chahārdeh Ma'sūm*, to oversee them.<sup>16</sup> This person was amongst the most important administrators of the Safavid state,<sup>17</sup> and apparently some holy shrines such as Āstaneh-yi Shāhzādeh Ḥusayn in Qazvin used the income of these endowments.<sup>18</sup>

## II

From the death of Shah 'Abbās I (1038/1629) to the beginning of the reign of Shah Sulaymān (1077/1666) all kinds of *avqāf* increased in number and the *avqāf* institution underwent changes in its structure and functions. Meanwhile the endowment of properties (*raqābat*) and other kinds of *avqāf*, such as books and carpets, was continued by rulers, courtiers, notables and the middle classes. Apparently, during his reign Shah Ṣafī (1038–1052/1629–1642) was not overly interested in creating large *avqāf*. He was more concerned to settle the affairs of the *avqāf* of his ancestors, such as that of *Chahārdeh Ma'sūm*<sup>19</sup> and the Shāhzādeh Ḥusayn in Qazvīn.<sup>20</sup>

Khalīfeh Sulṭān, prime minister (*ʿIṭimād al-dawla*) of the Safavid state and a leading *ʿālim*, also created a large number of *avqāf*, apparently entitled *Avqāf-i Chahārdeh Ma'sūm*.<sup>21</sup> Most of the *vagfnāmeḥ* which

<sup>15</sup> *Qisṣaṣ al-Khāgānī*, I: 189; *Tārīkhcheh-yi Avqāf-i Isfahan*, 66–67.

<sup>16</sup> Anon., *Alqā-i va Mavājīb-i Dawreh-yi Salāṭīn-i Ṣafāviyyeh*, ed. Yūsuf Raḥīmlū (Mashhad: Dānīshgāh-i Firdawsī Mashhad, 1371/1993), 48–49.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 48. For details on the *Muqāfāt-i Chahārdeh Ma'sūm* and its income, see also microfilm nos. 6767 and 7058, Central Library of Tihnan University; also ms. no. 2459, fols. 55a, 55b, 56a–57b, 64a–66a in the same library.

<sup>18</sup> *Bargī Az Tārīkh-i Qazvīn*, 166–67. Apparently the situation of the *Avqāf* of the holy shrine had been problematic during the years 1028–1029/1619–1620; see *ibid.*, 167, document no. 20.

<sup>19</sup> Muḥammad Ma'sūm Beg Khājīgī-yi Iṣfahānī, *Khulāṣāt al-Siyar*, Iraj Afshar, ed. (Tihnan: 'Ilmī, 1367/1988), 63–4.

<sup>20</sup> *Bargī Az Tārīkh-i Qazvīn*, 276.

<sup>21</sup> On Khalīfeh Sulṭān and his family, see *Tārīkh-i 'Alam Arāye 'Abbāsī*, I: 149, and II: 1091. Regarding his endowments see Muḥammad Tāqī Dānīshpīzihūh, *ʿAsnād-i vaqf-i khwandān-i Khalīfē-yi Sulṭān*, *Nāmeḥ-yi Āstān-i Quds* 9, nos. 1–2, 107–110; Muḥammad Bāqīr-i Khvānsārī, *Rawzāt al-Jannāt fī Aḥwāl al-'Ulāma wa Sādāt*, Muḥammad Bāqīr Sa'īdī, ed. (Tihnan: Maktabāt al-Islāmiyyeh, 1357/1979), III: 156.

remain from this period and belong to the holy shrine of Qum are about endowments, such as the bequests of the Qurʾān and other religious books to the shrine. Mudarrisi-yi Ṭabāṭabāī says that this is perhaps due to the usurpation of the properties of the shrine, including lands and other kinds of endowments, by the *mutavallīs* and others.<sup>22</sup>

During the latter years of Safavid rule, the *avqāf* institution witnessed some important changes. It seems that some changes occurred during the reign of Shah ʿAbbās II (1052–1077/1642–1666). Up to this time, the *avqāf* institution had become vast, and the income from it had consequently increased. This led to disputes amongst those who intended to control that income, but Shah ʿAbbās II decided to settle the affairs of the *avqāf* institution and dismissed some of the custodians, such as the *mutavallī* of the Ardabīl shrine.<sup>23</sup> The chronicler Vaḥīd-i Qazvīnī states that during this period the affairs of the *avqāf* of *Chahārdeh Maʿšūmeh* became confused, so Shah ʿAbbās II decided to exercise direct control over it.<sup>24</sup> Despite these events, the *avqāf* institution continued to exist and some new kinds of *avqāf* were created during this period.<sup>25</sup>

I classify the three kinds of *avqāf* during this period as follows:

- 1) Royal *avqāf*, containing the Shah's *avqāf* and those of the princes or prince.
- 2) *Avqāf* by courtiers, including properties of statesmen and others related to the Safavid court.
- 3) *Avqāf* by others, including merchants and landowners.

Shah Sulaymān did not create a large number of *avqāf*. In fact, it seems that he did not have any motivation to endow large properties. During his reign the large number of *avqāf* that his ancestors

<sup>22</sup> H. Mudarrisi Tabāṭabāī, *Turbat-i Pakān*, I (Tihran: Anjūman-i Āsar-i Millī, 1355/1975), I: 126–27.

<sup>23</sup> Muḥammad Ṭāhir-i Qazvīnī (Vaḥīd), *Abbās-nāmeḥ*, ed. Ibrāhīm Dehgān (Arak: Davūdī, 1329/1951), 216.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 223–24.

<sup>25</sup> For example, the *Avqāf* of the Shafīyeh school in Isfāhan; see *Ganjīneh-yi Āsar-i Tārīkhī-yi Isfāhān*, 591–92. On the *Madrasah-yi Āqā Kāfūr*, see 606–08, and also J. Chardin, *Safarnāmeḥ-yi Shardan*, Iqbal Yaghmāʿī, tr. (Tihran: Ṭūs, 1374/1996), IV: 147–374. For other examples, see Nuzhat Ahmadi, 'Chahār Vaqf-nāmeḥ Az Chahār Madrasah-yi Isfāhān Dar Daurah-yi Şafavī' *Mīrath-i Islāmī-yi Iran*, Rasul Jafariyan, ed. (Qum: Kitābkhāneh-yi Hażrat-i Āyātullāh Maʿrāshī Najafī, 1375/1996), III: 103–113.

had created continued to exist and, although the policy of increasing the *khāṣṣeh* and *khālīṣeh* continued in this period, there is no information about the creation of large endowments by the shah.<sup>26</sup> It seems that during the Safavid period the creation of royal endowments was connected with other religious policies such as the creation and establishment of large religious buildings, including mosques and schools. During the reign of Shah Sulaymān, there was little activity in this field by the shah, so no considerable endowment was made. Some members of the royal family did create religious endowments, however. Shah Sulaymān's mother, for example, endowed some properties to the Iraqi shrines. Zubaydeh Begum, the shah's daughter, also endowed properties there, and later added further properties (*raqābat*) to this endowment.

In the reign of Shah Sulaymān courtiers too created some *avqāf*. One of the most important of this kind was the properties endowed by Shaykh 'Alī Khan-i Zangāneh, the first *'Itimād al-dawleh* of the shah, in 1100/1689 to a school which he built in Hamadan.<sup>27</sup> In 1083/1672 a woman member of the royal harem named Dadakhātūn also created *avqāf*. It is noteworthy that this was for her daughter. Another woman, Murvārīd Khānum, endowed some properties to the holy shrines in the 'Atabāt in 1090/1679, and Zaynab Bayum created an endowment for general benefit in 1103/1692. Imāmverdī Beg, governor (*valī*) of Fars in 1094/1683, made an endowment in Shiraz,<sup>28</sup> and in 1089/1678 Ḥusayn 'Alī Khān-i Zangāneh endowed some properties to the schools which he built in Bihbahān.<sup>29</sup>

Concerning the third kind of *avqāf*, namely the 'popular' *Mawqūfāt*, we have no detailed information. We know that Amir 'Alī al-Khādīm al-Ḥusaynī al-Astarābādī, apparently a local landowner, endowed some properties for his children in 1090/1679. Interestingly, the custodian of this endowment, after his death, was his daughter, Fāṭimeh Khānum.<sup>30</sup> We also know that Mīrzā Beg, perhaps the father of the

<sup>26</sup> Some manuscripts, especially Qur'āns, were endowed by Shah Sulaymān to Qum's holy shrine, see *Turbat-i Pakān*, I: 161, 164.

<sup>27</sup> For the text see ms. no. 5114, and microfilm no. 7060, Central Library of Tihiran. This has been published by Manūchīhr-i Sutūdeh, 'Savād-i Tumār-i Vaqfnāmeḥ-yi Madrasah-yi Buzurg-i Hamadān Az Mauqūfāt-i Shaykh 'Alī Khān-i Zangāneh', *Tārīkh* no. 1, I: 170.

<sup>28</sup> He funded the Imāmiyyeh school in Maḥalliyyeh Darb-i Kāzīrūn; see Ḥasan-i Fassāī, *Farsnāmeḥ-yi Nāṣir* (Tihiran: Sanā'ī, n.d.), 154.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>30</sup> Manūchīhr-i Sutūdeh, *Az Astāreh tā Astarābād* (Tihiran: Anjuman-i Āsār-i Millī), III: 354–61.

Mīr Abū Ṭālib Findiriskī who wrote *Tuḥfāt al-‘Ālam* in the early years of Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn’s reign, created an endowment for his children in 1092/1681 in Astarābād.<sup>31</sup> Another interesting endowment was that of Khvājeh Karīm al-Dīn Barakūhī in Kirman province.<sup>32</sup>

As noted, royal endowments in this period were not considerable, perhaps owing to the Safavid rulers’ interest in creating mosques and other important buildings. Contrary to the situation of royal *avqāf* during Shah Sulaymān’s reign, the three kinds of *avqāf*, especially the royal endowments, reached their zenith in the reign of his son and successor. One reason for this may have been that the establishment of large buildings, such as mosques and schools, increased in this period. During Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn’s reign religious endowments in Iran increased considerably, as did the financial and bureaucratic influence of members of the religious institution who managed them. During the thirty years of his reign Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn gave many endowments to Iraqi ‘Atabāt and other religious centres, to the holy shrines in Iran, and to his children.

The shah paid special attention to the Sulṭāni religious school,<sup>33</sup> a royal school in Isfahan which derived its revenue from *avqāf*.<sup>34</sup> The establishment of this school shows that, in this era, religious teaching was institutionalised in Iran, and the number of its endowments clearly shows the extent of the financial power of religious teachers, students and custodians.

In the deed bequest to the school, issued in 1118/1706, many endowments were given to this school.<sup>35</sup> The number of its endowments increased, according to the *vaqfnāmeḥ*, until 1128/1716. Regulations regarding its endowments, their income and expenditure, were enumerated in detail. According to these *vaqfnāmeḥ*, the income of 11

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.

<sup>32</sup> Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Bāstānī Parīzī, *Sang-i Haft Qalām Bar Mazar-i Khājjāneḥ Haft Chāh* (Tihiran: Bihnashr, 1362/1983), 338–62; Muḥammad Mufīd Mustaufī BaḤqī, *Jamī‘i Muḥfīdī*, Iraj Afshar, ed. (Tihiran: Asadī, 1340/1961), III: 498.

<sup>33</sup> Sayyid ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Khātūnābādī, *Vaqā-yi al-Simīn*, M. Bihbūdī, ed. (Tihiran: Islāmiyyeh, 1352/1973), 556–57, 559–61; Muḥammad Ibn Kalb‘alī Tabrīzī, *Farā‘id al-Favā‘id Dar Ahvāl-i Madāris wa Masājīd*, Rasul Jafariyan, ed. (Tihiran: Daftar-i Nashr-i Mirāth-i Maktūbah, 1373/1994), 291.

<sup>34</sup> On the text of the deed of the land for the school and mosque, see Muḥammad Nādir Naṣīrī Muqaddam.

<sup>35</sup> The original text is preserved in the Iran National Museum, ms. 8550. See also microfilm no. 1735 in the Central Library of the University of Tihiran and Sipantā, *ibid.*, 120–298.

villages, 33 gardens, 48 farms, 35 *qanāts*, 2 baths, 1 caravanserai, 1 market, 11 tracts of land, 1 *qahveh khāneh* (coffee shop), 3 mills, 8 walnut trees, 862 other kinds of trees and 1 castle were given to the custodian, teachers, students and other members of the school. An examination of the endowments of the school shows that its total revenue was considerable.<sup>36</sup> It is noteworthy that students and teachers of the school were enjoined to rely on books of *ḥadīth* and avoid discussing or using philosophical books or mystical ideas.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to creating endowments for his school in Isfahan, Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn also established religious endowments in other parts of Iran. Two examples are the endowments for the holy shrine of Shāhzādeh Ḥusayn in Qazvin,<sup>38</sup> and in Fars for his children in 1124/1712 (*vaqf bar awlād*). The income of this *mawqūfeh* belonged to the shah's children.<sup>39</sup> According to the *vaqfnāmeḥ* he endowed to his sons properties in Rizvān, Fasā, Khafrak and Marvdasht and the village of Ḥusaynābād in Fars.<sup>40</sup> He also created an endowment in Bihbahān and endowed the village of 'Alī-Ābād to his children.<sup>41</sup>

We do not know why the shah created this endowment, since people usually created endowments for their children if they feared confiscation of their properties or other problems. Until their creation, no Safavid king had created endowments for his children. Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn also created some *avqāf* in Tihran,<sup>42</sup> Dastgird and Linjān.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps some of these endowments were confiscated

<sup>36</sup> For a recent analysis of the Sulṭāni School and its *avqāf*, see Manṣūr Šifatgol, *Religious Structure and Thought Under the Last Safavids (1052–1148/1642–1735)* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis: University of Tihran, 1999).

<sup>37</sup> Sipantā, *ibid.*, 169.

<sup>38</sup> *Bargī Az Tārikh-i Qazvin*, document no. 47, 240–41. On the two other holy shrines mentioned in this document, see Muḥammad 'Alī Gulrīz, *Mīnūdar ya Bāb al-Janna*, (Tihran: Dānishgāh-i Tihrān, 1337/1957), 629–30, 634–49.

<sup>39</sup> Sipantā has published the text; see *Tārikhcheh-yi Avqāf-i Isfahan*, 258–59.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.

<sup>41</sup> Ibrāhīm Dibāji, 'Vaqfnāmeḥ-yi Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn', *Ma'rif-i Islāmī* 5 (1347/1947), 80–83. For another example, see Ḥusayn Umīdyānī, 'Niḡārishī bar Yik Vaqfnāmeḥ-yi Tārikhī Az Dawreh-yi Šafaviyyeh',  *Ganjīneh-yi Asnād* 9/1–2, nos. 21–22 (1375/1995), 20–27. Umīdyānī published a deed of bequest from the year 1118/1706. The original text is preserved in Sāzmān Asnād Millī Iran, Tihran. Some other endowments created by the shah comprised books; see Iraj Afshār, 'Vaqf va Amānat Dādan-i Kitāb (Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn)', *Rahmānā-yi Kitāb*, 15 (1351), 859–62. See also ms. no. 4594, Central Library of the University of Tihran and *Vaqā-yi al-Sinīn*, 563; *Turbat-i Pakān*, I: 170–71.

<sup>42</sup> Sipantā, *ibid.*, 275–76.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 277–84.

after the collapse of Isfahan and during the period of confiscation of the *avqāf* under Nādir Shah.<sup>44</sup>

An important example of the *avqāf* of the royal family in this period was the bequest of Mariam Begum, the aunt of the shah. She endowed many properties in 1115/1703 for the school which she had built in Isfahan, and continued to add to the *avqāf* of this school till 1131/1718.<sup>45</sup> As in the case of the Sulṭāni School, the deed of the endowment of this school stipulated that the teachers and students had to read books of *ḥadīth* and avoid such items as philosophical works like *Al-Shifa* and *Al-Ishārāt* by Ibn Sīnā.<sup>46</sup>

In following the custom of the royal family, different statesmen and courtiers created many endowments for special religious purposes. Some examples are as follows: *Mawqūfāt-i Āqākamāl*, from the court minister Āqā Kamāl<sup>47</sup> who built a school in Isfahan named *Sulṭān Husayniyyeh*, built in 1107/1695;<sup>48</sup> the endowments of Amīr Mahdiya, known as Ḥākīm al-Mulki Ardīstānī,<sup>49</sup> for the school of Kāseh-garān in Isfahan in 1104/1693,<sup>50</sup> and also the endowments of his wife, Zaynab Begum, to the school of Nīmāvārd in 1113/1707.<sup>51</sup> The custodian of this school was her son, Āqā Muḥammad,<sup>52</sup> and one of his main tasks was the designation of the head of the school.<sup>53</sup>

There were also other non-royal endowments. Muḥammad Rizā Beg Zangāneh endowed some properties in Isfahan, Hamādan and Kermānshāh for his children.<sup>54</sup> Another example of endowments for

<sup>44</sup> See my 'The question of avqāf under the Afsharids (1735–1803/1148–1218): Safavid heritage and Nādir Shah's measures', in *Materiaux pour l'histoire économique du monde iranien*, Rika Gyselen and Maria Szuppe, eds. (Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Etudes Iraniques, 1999), 209–232 (Cahiers de Studia Iranica, 21).

<sup>45</sup> Sīpantā, *ibid.*, 302–16. On the school of Maryām Begum, see Honarfār, *Ganjīneh-yi Āsār-i Tārīkhī-yi Isfahan*, 662–67.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 299.

<sup>47</sup> On Āqā Kamāl, see *Vaqā-yi al-Sīnīn*, 557.

<sup>48</sup> On the endowment, see Rasūl Jafāriyān (ed.), 'Vaqfnāmeḥ Madrasah-yi Sulṭān Ḥusayniyyeh Ma'rūf biḥ Madrasah-yi Āqā Kamāl' *Mīrāth-i Islāmī Iran*, (Qum: 1373/1994), I: 259–90.

<sup>49</sup> Nuzhat Aḥmadī, 'Chahār Vaqfnāmeḥ az chahār madrasah-yi Isfahan dar dawreh-yi Safavi', *Mīrāth-i Islāmīyyeh Irān*, III: 114–24.

<sup>50</sup> On this school, see *Ganjīneh-yi Āsār-i Tārīkhī-yi Isfahan*, 652–56.

<sup>51</sup> Aḥmadī, *ibid.*, 124–29.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>54</sup> *Tārīkhcheh-yi Avqāf-i Isfahan*, 139. Muḥammad Rizā was the nephew of Shaykh 'Alī Khān Zangāneh.



the children of the endower was that of Ḥajj Qāsim ‘Alī Astarābādī in 1119/1707.<sup>55</sup> Also in Astarābād, Ḥajj Isfandiyār Katūlī endowed some properties for his children and for the ceremony of *Chahārdah Ma’sūm* in 1132/1719–20.<sup>56</sup>

During this period both royal and other *avqāf* were controlled by a highly organized bureaucratic network. The whole system was controlled by a structure led by a *sayyid* whose title was *ṣadr*. The *ṣadr* had his own administration for *jadīdī* (i.e. Safavid -period) endowments, separate from *qadīmī* or pre-Safavid endowments.

It has been suggested that Shah Sulaymān in fact divided the duties of the *ṣadr* and created two *ṣadrs*, one *ṣadr* for royal *avqāf* and another for non-royal *avqāf*. Such a view is held by Savory<sup>57</sup> and Minorsky,<sup>58</sup> probably relying on Chardin and Kaempfer. Kaempfer reports that Shah Sulaymān divided the duties of the *ṣadr* and appointed two *ṣadrs* in 1081/1670.<sup>59</sup> Chardin states that at the beginning of his rule the shah divided the position and appointed two *ṣadrs* who were his relatives.<sup>60</sup>

Although, according to the *Tazkīrat al-Mulūk*<sup>61</sup> and *Dastūr al-Mulūk*,<sup>62</sup> at one time only one *ṣadr* controlled the *avqāf*, there is evidence that the division of the post was operative earlier than the reign of Shah Sulaymān, in the reign of Shah ‘Abbās I. Mullā Jalāl Munajjim, in his *Rūznāmeḥ*, writes that in 1015/1606 Mīr Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad, known as Qazāikhān, became the *ṣadr* for the non-royal *avqāf*,<sup>63</sup> Mīr Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥasan holding the post for royal *avqāf*.<sup>64</sup> These reports

<sup>55</sup> Manūchīhr-i Sutūdeh, *Az Astārah tā Astarābād*, III: 381–86.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 387–88.

<sup>57</sup> R.M. Savory, *Iran Under the Safavids*, tr. into Persian as *Irān-i ‘Asr-i Šafavī* by Aḥmad Šabā (Tihiran: Kitāb-i Tihrān, 1363/1985), 210; cf. Colin Turner, ‘ṣadr’, *EI*<sup>2</sup>, 751.

<sup>58</sup> V. Minorsky, *Ta’līqat-i Minorsky bar Tazkīrat al-Mulūk*, tr. into Persian by Mas‘ūd Rajabnīyā, with the *Tazkīrat al-Mulūk*, Moḥammad Dabīr Siyāqī, ed. (Tihiran: Amīr Kabīr, 1368/1990), 74.

<sup>59</sup> Engelbert Kaempfer, *Safarnāmeḥ-yi Kīmpfir. Tarjūmih-yi Kaykāvūsi Jahāndārī* (Tihiran: Khvārazmī, 1378/2000) (Persian translation), 122.

<sup>60</sup> J. Chardin, *Voyages*, tr. into Persian as *Safarnāmeḥ-yi Shardan* by Iqbal Yaqmā’ī (Tihiran, Tūs, 1372/1994), V, 1695–96.

<sup>61</sup> *Tazkīrat al-Mulūk*, 2.

<sup>62</sup> Mīrzā Raf’ā, *Dastūr al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Tāqī Dānishpazhūh, *Majalleḥ-yi Dānishkādeḥ-yi Adabīyāt va Ulūm-i Insānī*, University of Tihiran, no. 1, 66.

<sup>63</sup> Mullā Jalāl Munajjim, *Tārīkh-i ‘Abbāsī (Rūznāmeḥ-yi Mullā Jalāl)*, S. Vaḥīdīniyya ed., (Tihiran: Vaḥīd, 1366/1988), 208.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

are confirmed by Iskandar Beg Munshī.<sup>65</sup> The reports show that two *şadrs* (*āmmeh* and *khāṣṣah*) existed during the reign of Shah ‘Abbās I.

### *Conclusion*

At a time when no governmental budget existed for the maintenance of schools, mosques and other popular institutions, the huge income from endowments was very important. In fact, the income from *avqāf* was fundamental to the cultural, economic and social life of Iran. At the same time, the income from *avqāf* helped the social, political and religious goals of the Safavid state.

The situation of *avqāf* under the later Safavids shows that the number of royal *avqāf*, those of the courtiers and non-royal *avqāf* increased during the reign of Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn, in comparison with that of Shah Sulaymān. The basic characteristic of these *avqāf*, except those of some magnificent buildings such as Madrasa-yi Sulṭāni, was that many of them were endowed for the benefit of the endowers' children. Even Shah Sulṭān Ḥusayn endowed many properties for this purpose.

One of the most important aspects of the *avqāf* of this period was the conditional situation of the teaching. Some endowers emphasised that students had to avoid the study and discussion of books on philosophy and mysticism in the school. This requirement shows the domination of Akhbārī ideas in this period.

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<sup>65</sup> Iskandar Beg Munshī, *Tārīkh-i Ālam ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī*, II: 719.

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