

STUDIES IN PERSIAN CULTURAL HISTORY

POLITICS, POETRY, AND SUFISM IN MEDIEVAL IRAN

New Perspectives on
Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl*

Chad G. Lingwood



BRILL

Politics, Poetry, and Sufism in Medieval Iran

Studies in Persian Cultural History

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Chad G. Lingwood



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Such is the custom of rulers,
You will have heard this if you remember
The paladins stand on their left hand
Because the heart is bound to the left side
The chancellor and the men of the pen are on the right side
Because the science of writing and book-keeping is fixed to the right
hand.

They situate the Sufis in front of their face,
For they are the mirror of the soul, and they are better than a mirror,
Since they have polished their breasts in remembrance and
contemplation of God

In order to receive the pure image in the mirror of the heart.

—Rūmī, *Maṣnavī-yi maʿnavī*, book 1, 1.3150–3153

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND STYLE

In the transliteration of Arabic and Persian words, I have adopted the system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, with the exception of the Arabic letters *th* and *dh*, which I have rendered by means of *s* and *z* in transliterating Persian. In cases where Arabic phrases appear in a Persian text, or where works written in Persian have Arabic titles, I have transliterated these according to the Persian system (see below). Qur'ānic and *ḥadith* citations have been transliterated using their original Arabic vocalizations. Arabic, Persian, and Turkic terms that have entered the English language, such as dervish, madrasa, shaikh, Sufi, sultan, etc. have not been italicized, with the exception of such terms as *shāh* and *vazīr*, the particular connotations of which are not conveyed by the Anglicized forms *shah* and *vizier*. Geographic regions and other common toponyms are given in English and without diacritics (e.g., Azerbaijan, Tabriz). In the notes, bibliography, and text, I have followed the 15th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

ء	- ' (final ʾ)	ر	- r	ف	- f	final ʾ -a
ب	- b	ز	- z	ق	- q	alif (long a)-ā
پ	- p	ژ	- zh	ك	- k	wāw (long u)-ū
ت	- t	س	- s	گ	- g	yā' (long i)-ī
ث	- ṣ	ش	- sh	ل	- l	fathah-a
ج	- j	ص	- ṣ	م	- m	kasra-i
چ	- ch	ض	- ḏ	ن	- n	zamma-u
ح	- ḥ	ط	- ṭ	و	- v	diphthong with ی -ai
خ	- kh	ظ	- ṭ	ه	- h	diphthong with و -au
د	- d	ع	- ' (final ʾ)	ی	- y	
ذ	- z	غ	- gh			

INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with the allegorical romance *Salāmān va Absāl*, composed by the medieval Persian poet-mystic ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, which has been somewhat maligned by modern scholarship that has tended to regard it simply as a trite and even grotesque tale about the amorous affair between a prince and his wet-nurse. This study seeks to counter this view by demonstrating that *Salāmān va Absāl* contains valuable historical information about the political, religious, cultural, and ethical dynamics of the court of the Āq Qoyūnlū dynasty during the reign of sultan Ya‘qūb b. Ūzūn Ḥasan, and that it is in fact a complex allegory that functions as an esoteric “mirror for princes,” that is, a medieval Perso-Islamic work of advice for rulers. On account of its rich symbolism, it operates on three distinct yet interrelated levels of meaning—the ethico-political, the mystical, and the historical. The third historical level is of particular interest as it relates to the personal struggle of the ruler Ya‘qūb. To be specific, it allegorically depicts the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler’s addiction to wine and his subsequent public repentance from drinking.

The first level of meaning of *Salāmān va Absāl* concerns the ethical and political advice it proffers on the art of good governance. In many instances, this advice accords with the counsels and aphorisms contained in such classic medieval Perso-Islamic manuals of advice as *Qābūs-nāma*, *Siyyar al-mulūk*, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, and *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*. These works emphasized the importance of justice (‘*adl* or ‘*adālat*) in the administration of the state, arguing that consistent maintenance of justice results in stable rule. Jāmī echoes this idea in *Salāmān va Absāl* and marshals a well-known though non-canonical *ḥadīth* that credits Muḥammad with declaring that an infidel ruler who is just is preferable to a Muslim ruler who is a tyrant (*ẓālim*). Likewise, the ancient Iranian conception, expressed in the medieval manuals of advice, that religion (*dīn*) and kingship (*daulat*) are like “twin-brothers,” in other words functionally co-dependent, underlies the ethico-political level of meaning of the *Salāmān va Absāl* narrative.

Most medieval Islamic dynasties applied this traditional Sasanian notion in terms of state support for religious scholars (‘*ulamā*’) and normative Islam, but it appears that in the case of Ya‘qūb and the Āq Qoyūnlū, the fraternity of “turban and crown” also involved court patronage of Sufis,

or Muslim mystics. The ethico-political advice of Jāmī to the ruler Ya‘qūb is that he should recognize that “true kingship” consists in his becoming a Sufi-ruler. The true vicegerent of God (*khalīfat Allāh*), according to Jāmī, is the Sufi-ruler whose inner being is supported by the twin-pillars of *dīn* and *daulat*, and who attains that degree of perfection, or “inner justice,” by seeking the blessings of Sufi mystics and by following strictly their advice. For this reason, the present study seeks to demonstrate that the first plane of meaning of *Salāmān va Absāl* represents Jāmī’s appeal to Ya‘qūb to intensify his interest in and political, and perhaps financial, support of individual Sufis and mystical brotherhoods by striving to become a spiritual person himself.

The second plane of meaning on which the tale of *Salāmān va Absāl* is to be understood is the mystical. Throughout his tale, Jāmī presents Ya‘qūb with advice on two fundamental requirements of the mystical path, namely, repentance (*tauba*) and subjugation of the carnal soul (*nafs*). Repentance is a concept that was routinely discussed in the classic Sufi manuals, such as *Kashf al-mahjūb* and *al-Risāla al-Qushairiyya*, since it represents the first station on the path to spiritual enlightenment. The theme of repentance permeates the entire *Salāmān va Absāl* narrative, which culminates in the repentance of Salāmān and his abandonment of his beloved wet-nurse, Absāl, so that he may inherit his father’s throne as the King of ancient Greece. In making repentance the dominant theme of *Salāmān va Absāl*, Jāmī intended his Āq Qoyūnlū audience to recognize that the narrative depicts symbolically the initial stages of the spiritual transformation of the soul. Moreover, just as the classic Sufi manuals maintain that the repentance of an adept must be accompanied by the annihilation of his carnal soul, or ego-self, *Salāmān va Absāl* states that Salāmān’s renunciation of the pleasures he derived from Absāl represents symbolically the eradication of base instincts and expression of contrition for past sins. It is therefore our contention that the character of Salāmān represents the three conditions of the soul mentioned in the Qur’ān and cited by Sufis as the path to spiritual perfection, that is, the “soul that incites to evil” (*al-naḥs al-ammāra bi-al-sū*), the “soul that blames itself” (*al-naḥs al-lawwāma*), and the “soul at peace” (*al-naḥs al-muṭma’inna*).

Also reflected in the three aspects of the soul, and thus the three stages of the spiritual transformation of Salāmān, are the three modes of being that were articulated in the writings of the great thirteenth-century theosophist, Ibn al-‘Arabī. Jāmī was a proponent of the theosophical system of Ibn al-‘Arabī, whose ideas, including the concept eventually known as the “Oneness of Being” (*waḥdat al-wujūd*), are reflected in *Salāmān va Absāl*.

For this reason, *Salāmān va Absāl* should be included in scholarly discussions about the influence on Jāmī of the metaphysics of Ibn al-‘Arabī.

Finally, the conclusion to *Salāmān va Absāl* depicts the visionary mystical experience of the heart. According to Sufi tradition, the visionary experience represents the culmination of the mystical quest and is a sign of God’s wish to reveal Himself to Himself in the purified heart of the Sufi saint. This event is vividly portrayed at the end of *Salāmān va Absāl* when, having realized that his dream-vision of Venus was a sign of the reality of the oneness of God, Salāmān experiences gnosis, that is, true knowledge of God through knowledge of the self, thereby becoming one of His saints (*valī*).

Scholarship thus far has not adequately situated the tale of *Salāmān va Absāl* in its historical context. Consequently, specialists have never recognized that, in addition to its mystical meaning, the tale is historically significant and communicates important information about Ya‘qūb. This inattention to the historical merits of *Salāmān va Absāl* has led historians of the reign of Ya‘qūb to rely almost exclusively on the official (and in some cases, flawed) court chronicle of Ya‘qūb, the *Tārīkh-i ‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*. *Salāmān va Absāl* is by no means a substitute for the historical chronicle. Rather, its historical value rests with the information it conveys symbolically—details which this study seeks to corroborate by employing several contemporary Āq Qoyūnlū sources, including court commissioned histories, royal edicts, personal letters, literary anthologies, hagiographies, and poetry addressed to Ya‘qūb. By cross-checking these sources with an historical reading of *Salāmān va Absāl*, this study seeks to demonstrate that *Salāmān va Absāl* operates as an historical allegory that refers symbolically to Ya‘qūb’s personal addiction to wine and his subsequent repentance from it beginning in 893/1488. Contrary to the received wisdom, which maintains that Jāmī wrote *Salāmān va Absāl* in 885/1480 as a coronation gift for Ya‘qūb, this study endeavors to prove that the work was actually written to commemorate Ya‘qūb’s public abstinence, and hence, was composed between the years 893/1488 and 895/1490.

In order to demonstrate that *Salāmān va Absāl* is an historical allegory, the study argues that each character in the tale represents a key member of the Āq Qoyūnlū court and that the lust of Salāmān for Absāl represents Ya‘qūb’s addiction to alcohol. Salāmān thus represents Ya‘qūb, Absāl symbolizes wine, the King of ancient Greece represents the ideal of kingship, and the Sage represents Ya‘qūb’s mentor and *vazīr*, Qāzī ‘Īsā Sāvajī. Textual support for this interpretation is to be found in *Salāmān va Absāl* itself, specifically a line in which Jāmī quotes from the *Maṣnavī-yi ma‘navī*

by Rūmī. This pivotal line, which is taken from the allegory by Rūmī about a king who fell in love with his handmaiden, states that the true identities of “lovers” should be hidden from the uninitiated and that their tale should be told in the “garments” of others. This statement, which occurs early on in the poem, signals that *Salāmān va Absāl* contains a deeper, hidden meaning and that its characters—referred to as “lovers”—actually represent other individuals, in this case the historical figures Ya‘qūb and Qāzī ‘Isā Sāvajī. According to the logic of this historical interpretation, the killing of Absāl and the penitent return of Salāmān to his father symbolizes the renunciation of wine by Ya‘qūb and his rededication to the throne he inherited from his father, Ūzūn Ḥasan.

Finally, it is the contention here that, despite its ancient Greek provenance, Jāmī’s version of the story of Salāmān and Absāl was patterned after the above-mentioned allegory by Rūmī about the king who fell in love with his handmaiden. In addition to the fact that *Salāmān va Absāl* is written in the same metre as the *Maṣnavī*, the characters in Jāmī’s tale—Salāmān, Absāl, the King, and the Sage—may be said to correspond respectively to the handmaiden, the goldsmith, the king, and the divine physician-sage in Rūmī’s allegorical tale.

Another historical aspect of *Salāmān va Absāl* explored in this study is the frequency with which spiritual techniques traditionally associated with the Naqshbandī Sufi order are referred to in the text. For example, we find numerous allusions to the silent remembrance of God (*ẓikr-i khafī*), to the initiatory practice of fixing the image of the shaikh in one’s heart (*rābiṭa*), and to the ability of the shaikh to concentrate and deploy his spiritual energy (*himmat*). One explanation for the prevalence of Naqshbandī terminology could be Jāmī’s well-known membership in the order and his reputation for having initiated several prominent members of the Timurid court into it. Taking this and Jāmī’s enduring rapport with Ya‘qūb into consideration, the present study speculates that the poet-mystic may have intended to introduce Ya‘qūb to the rudiments of Naqshbandī Sufism, albeit from a distance, since Jāmī resided in the Timurid capital, Herat. Jāmī may thus have been acting as a shaikh to Ya‘qūb. Such a claim is not entirely unfounded, especially if we consider that the Naqshbandīs were unique among medieval Sufi orders in their belief that a shaikh could transmit spiritual guidance to disciples through his *himmat*, without being physically present. In order to further buttress this claim, the present study demonstrates that, although the Khalvatī order was the main presence at the Āq Qoyūnlū court in Tabriz, local or transplanted Naqshbandīs, such as Darvīsh Qāsim, Shahīdī Qumī, and

Şun‘ Allāh Kūzakunānī, also exerted considerable influence over Ūzūn Ḥasan and Ya‘qūb. Therefore, the terminology and ideas expressed in *Salāmān va Absāl* would not have been alien to an Āq Qoyūnlū audience, and might even have augmented the efforts of local Naqshbandīs to ingratiate the order with the royal court. It appears that the conventional view that the Naqshbandī order was not involved in Āq Qoyūnlū affairs is no longer tenable, and the overall impact of Sufi mysticism on the politics and personalities of the Āq Qoyūnlū court of Ya‘qūb needs to be understood more broadly.

CHAPTER ONE

APPROACHING JĀMĪ'S *SALĀMĀN VA ABSĀL* AS A PERSO-ISLAMIC BOOK OF ADVICE FOR RULERS

Over four centuries after its composition, the poem *Salāmān va Absāl* by Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 898/1492) and its evocative narrative involving an illicit romance between a pubescent prince and his wet-nurse still appears to discomfort modern literary historians of classical Persian *belles-lettres*. Largely dismissed by its critics, including Edward G. Browne, A. J. Arberry, and Jan Rypka, as “curious,” “silly,” “crude,” and even “grotesque,” the tale of *Salāmān va Absāl* has come to be regarded as one of Jāmī's lesser achievements, a bizarre aberration in his corpus of otherwise straightforwardly mystical and didactic poems.¹ Another reason for its relative obscurity is that it was dedicated to a Türkmen ruler, Abū al-Muẓaffar Ya'qūb b. Ūzūn Ḥasan (hereafter Ya'qūb; d. 896/1490), leader of the Āq Qoyūnlū tribal confederation, whose reign has received little attention in comparison to his Timurid and Ottoman contemporaries.²

¹ Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, Vol. 3, *The Tartar Dominion (1265–1502)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 523; A. J. Arberry, *FitzGerald's Salaman and Absal: A Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 39; and Jan Rypka *et al.*, *History of Iranian Literature*, trans. P. van Popta-Hope (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1968), 287. In addition, see Johann Christoph Bürgel, *The Feather of the Simurgh: The “Licit Magic” of the Arts in Medieval Islam* (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 133, who labeled it “strange.” For an even more unsparing critique, see Iraj Dehghan, “Jāmī's *Salāmān and Absāl*,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 30, no. 2 (1971): 125–26. See also Marianna Shreve Simpson, *Sultan Ibrahim Mirza's Haft Awrang: A Princely Manuscript from Sixteenth-Century Iran* (Washington DC: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 169 n. 6. Arberry, it should be noted, thought enough of *Salāmān va Absāl* to publish an entire study of Edward FitzGerald's free and somewhat abridged translations of the tale alongside his own literal rendering. Similarly, a brief extract of the poem and the corresponding translation by FitzGerald appears in Browne, *Literary History of Persia* 3:524–26.

² Several exceptions exist, particularly the studies of Vladimir Minorsky and John Woods. For a partial translation of the court history of Ya'qūb, see Faẓl Allāh b. Rūzbihān Khunji-Iṣfahānī, *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī, Persian Text Edited by John E. Woods, with the Abridged English Translation by Vladimir Minorsky, Persia in A.D. 1478–1490* [= Turkmenica, 12], ed. John E. Woods (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1992). For a discussion of the fiscal situation during the reign of Ya'qūb and the aborted campaign to centralize power by his *vazīr* through a series of sweeping reforms, see Vladimir Minorsky, “The Āq-qoyunlu and Land Reforms (Turkmenica, 11),” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17, no. 3 (1955): 451–58. The political turmoil of Ya'qūb's twelve-year reign is covered in John E.

To be sure, the scandalous romance, one that is incestuous and thus religiously proscribed, might at first glance distract casual readers from apprehending the mystical significance of the tale and the esoteric didacticism of its anecdotes. However, it is precisely through the indelicate, if not shocking, theme of the narrative that the subtleties of mystical transformation and esoteric allusion find their veiled expression.³ With this in mind, an abbreviated overview of the narrative itself is in order.

The Narrative Context of Salāmān va Absāl

The tale opens with the description of a King (*shahryār, shāh*) of ancient Greece who succeeds in making a Sage (*ḥakīm*) his companion in both “solitude” (*khalvat*) and “society” (*ṣuḥbat*). Adhering to the direction (*tadbīr*) and instruction (*talqīn*) of the Sage, the King conquers the entire world, its inhabitants prospering under the foundation of his justice (*ʿadl*) and munificence (*jūd*).

Contemplating his condition (*ḥāl*), the King realizes that, although he has acquired the good fortune of rulership (*daulat*), he remains without a son to succeed (*khalaf*) him. Speaking with the Sage, the King relates his desire for a worthy heir, declaring that there is no greater blessing (*niʿmat*) than a son. The response of the Sage is a withering condemnation of carnal lust (*shahvat*) which, in his opinion, only serves to sever wisdom (*khirad*) from the heart (*dil*) and light (*nūr*) from the eyes. Women, much like wine, are the locus of this lust and must therefore be avoided. To produce an heir, the Sage draws semen from the King’s spine and deposits it in a place other than a female womb.⁴ Jāmī is careful to note that the seminal

Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1999), 125–47.

³ For a study addressing the mystical teachings symbolically embedded within the bawdy tales of the *Masnavi-yi maʿnavi* by Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, see Mahdi Tourage, “Phallocentric Esotericism in a Tale from Jalal al-Din Rumi’s *Masnavi-yi Maʿnavi*,” *Iranian Studies* 39, no. 1 (2006): 47–60.

⁴ According to Galenic physiology and medieval Islamic theories on medicine, sperm was created in the brain and stored in the spine. For a discussion of the transmission of ancient Greek medical knowledge into Islam, see Edward G. Browne, *Arabian Medicine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921). In the translation of an earlier Arabic version of the tale of Salāmān and Absāl by Ḥunain b. Ishāq, the king’s sperm was deposited inside a mandrake/*mandragora* tree. See Henry Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, trans. Willard R. Trask (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), 211. On the cross-cultural beliefs in the magical powers of the mandrake and the myth that it grows from human sperm, see Thierry Zarccone, “The Myth of the Mandrake, the ‘Plant-Human,’”

emission occurred without carnal lust (*bī shahvat*). Nine months later, a flawless child emerges who, on account of his perfection (*salāmat*), is given the name Salāmān.

The motherless Salāmān is then assigned a ravishing beauty named Absāl as his wet-nurse (*dāya*). Absāl immediately becomes infatuated with her suckling, whose beauty reaches perfection when he becomes fourteen years of age. Absāl's attraction to Salāmān is made manifest when she uses her irresistible coquetry to seduce him. Her stratagem works and soon Salāmān yearns after her and they consummate their union (*vaṣl*) in a love affair that sees Salāmān abandon both King and Sage in favor of his beloved Absāl.

Distressed by these events, the King and the Sage summon Salāmān to the palace. His salvation, they determine, is contingent on imparting good counsel (*naṣīḥat*) to him. Salāmān is urged to realize his noble origin and abandon his libertine ways. Apologetic in his rejoinder, Salāmān nevertheless suggests that it is fate that has inscrutably determined this romance to be his destiny. Vexed by so much reproach, he flees with Absāl by night and arrives at a shoreless sea. Finding a skiff, the two travel until they reach an emerald isle where they enjoy each other's companionship (*ṣuḥbat*) unmolested.

Stung by the departure of his son, the King gazes into his magical world-displaying mirror (*āyīna-i gītī numāy*) and sees Salāmān and Absāl who are happily unconcerned with anything except each other.⁵ Initially compassionate, the mercy of the King subsides as he grows more sorrowful. He decides to apply the power of his spiritual concentration (*himmat*) towards Salāmān in order to detach him from Absāl.⁶

Diogenes 52, no. 3 (2005): 115–29. See also the Zoroastrian story of Gayumarth (Old Persian, Gayō-marētan; Middle Persian, Gayōmard/t), the protoplast of man, whose sperm produced the rhubarb plant, from which grew the first mortal man and woman. See Mary Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, 3 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1975–82), 1:140.

⁵ This is normally taken to be the mythic world-displaying cup, the so-called *jām-i Jamshīd* or *jām-i Kai Khusrāu*, which is also associated with Solomon (Sulaimān) in the Qur'an and the Alexander legend. For details on how the ancient literary motif of a world-displaying cup traveled from Iran to India, see Meera Khare, "The Wine-Cup in Mughal Court Culture—from Hedonism to Kingship," *The Medieval History Journal* 8, no. 1 (2005): 143–88.

⁶ According to the Sufi mystical tradition, *himmat* denotes the concentrated spiritual energy a perfect mystic projects from his heart (*dil* or *qalb*) towards a desired objective. It is therefore considered a miracle-producing power and is usually associated with prophets and saints. Descriptions of the creative potential of *himmat* appear most often in the theosophy of Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-'Arabī (d. 637/1240). For examples, see Ibn al-'Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikām*, ed. Abū al-'Alā 'Afīfī, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1966), 1:127–30;

Deprived of Absāl and consumed by grief, Salāmān recognizes the intervention of his father. In an act of repentance (*tauba*), he returns to the King, who enjoins him to abandon Absāl and pursue his true destiny—kingship (*mulk*). Unconvinced by the entreaty of his father, Salāmān goes into the wilderness (*ṣaḥrā*), kindles a fire, and plunges into the inferno together with Absāl. The King, secretly aware of the situation, intervenes and uses his power of concentration (*himmat*) to ensure that Absāl is in turn engulfed while Salāmān emerges unscathed from the flames.

Salāmān is distraught at the death of Absāl, which prompts the King to seek a remedy from the Sage. Salāmān submits to the intervention of the Sage, who promises to bring Absāl back and make her his eternal companion. Whenever Absāl enters the mind of Salāmān, the Sage creates an image (*ṣūrat*) of her, holds it before Salāmān's eyes, and describes the beauty of Venus (*zuhra*) instead. Salāmān eventually becomes absorbed in the adoration of Venus' face, thereby effacing the image (*naqsh*) of Absāl forever from his mind.

Freed from his grief over the death of Absāl, Salāmān gives his heart to the One [true] beloved (*ma'shūq*), i.e., the Divine, and thus becomes worthy of the crown of kingship (*aḡsar-i shāhī*) and the throne of the sultanate (*takht-i salṭanat*). Before an assembly of notables of the state (*arkān-i daulat*), the King invests Salāmān with crown and throne, commanding obeisance to his son from all those present.⁷ The tale culminates with the King delivering his "testament" (*vaṣīyyat-nāma*) to Salāmān, in which he advises him to be guided by religion-acquiring reason (*'aql-i dīn-andūz*), to rule with justice (*'adl*), and to appoint a wise (*dānā*) and trustworthy (*amīn*) *vazīr* to counsel him.⁸

Ibn al-'Arabī, *The Bezels of Wisdom* [*Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikām*], trans. R. W. J. Austin (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 156–62; and Henry Corbin, *L'imagination créatrice dans le soufisme d'Ibn 'Arabī*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Flammarion, 1977), 171–73 and 175–77. On the tendency for scholars to accentuate the miraculous implications of *himmat* at the expense of its other contexts, especially as it is understood in the writings of Ibn al-'Arabī, see William C. Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn 'Arabī's Cosmology* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), 406 n. 8.

⁷ A parallel event to the Qur'anic story of the creation of Adam (Q 15:28–29) where God commands his angels "fall you down, bowing before him!"

⁸ In the Persian tradition of advice literature, *vaṣīyyat* generally means "testament," "advice" or "counsel." See Charles-Henri de Fouchécour, *Moralia: Les notions morales dans la littérature persane du 3^e/9^e au 7^e/13^e siècle* (Paris: Éditions Recherches sur les Civilisations, 1986), 382 n. 81.

The Provenance of the Salāmān and Absāl Allegory

The characters Salāmān and Absāl, and the allegorical symbolism they represent, do not originate with the tale of Jāmī. In fact, Salāmān and Absāl figure prominently in a series of medieval Arabic and Persian philosophical and mystical allegories, most of which predate Jāmī's adoption of the characters by many centuries.⁹ The characters Salāmān and Absāl first appear in the ninth chapter of the *Kitāb al-ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt* by Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1037) in which he discusses the "stages of the gnostics" (*fī maqāmāt al-ʿarīfīn*):

Gnostics have stages and degrees by which they are favored over others while in their earthly life. It is as if their bodies were garments that they had removed and stripped away (to move) toward the Realm of Sanctity (*ʿālam al-quḍs*). They have things hidden and manifest that are denied by whoever would deny them but are deemed momentous by whoever has come to know them. We will tell you about these things. And when your ear has been struck by what it hears, and what you will hear has been narrated to you, it will be the story of Salāmān and Absāl. Know that Salāmān is a similitude coined for you and that Absāl is a similitude coined for your degree of gnosis, if you be one of the people. So decipher the allegory (*al-ramz*), if you are able.¹⁰

It has widely been suggested that what followed was the narrative depiction by Ibn Sīnā of the psychological struggle occasioned by a spiritual reorientation. Unfortunately, the original text is lost. The only sources for the possible contents of the lost narrative are commentaries on the *Ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt* by the Qurʾān commentator-exegete, Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿUmar Rāzī (d. 606/1209), and the Shiʿite polymath Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274). Describing the tale as an insoluble enigma, Rāzī nevertheless unraveled enough meaning to conclude that Ibn Sīnā invented the names "Salāmān" and "Absāl" to signify Adam and Paradise (*janna*), respectively.¹¹ Considered this way, the story represents the exile of the soul from Paradise and its progressive return to the original state of

⁹ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Salāmān and Absāl" (by P. Heath).

¹⁰ Ibid.; and Ibn Sīnā, *Tarjuma va sharḥ-i Ishārāt wa tanbīhāt*, Pers. trans. Ḥasan Malikshāhī (Tehran: Surūsh, 1363/1984), 439–40. For the Arabic text and excursive notes on the etymologies of "Salāmān" and "Absāl," see Ibn Sīnā, *Al-Ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt*, ed. Sulaimān Dunyā (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1960–68), 47–56. Ibn Sīnā also mentions Absāl in his *Risāla fī al-qadar*.

¹¹ Dehghan, "Jāmī's *Salāmān and Absāl*," 118.

bliss and perfection, a journey that Henry Corbin described in his excursus on the tales of Salāmān and Absāl as representing “the whole myth of the Anthrōpos.”¹²

Ṭūsī, on the other hand, provides two versions of the tale in his commentary. The first, purportedly of ancient Greek provenance, was translated into Arabic from the Syriac by Ḥunain b. Ishāq (d. 260/873). It shares many points in common with the narrative by Jāmī, starting with the forbidden romance between a young prince and his wet-nurse.¹³ In the neo-Platonic interpretation of Ṭūsī, the prince Salāmān corresponds to the rational soul (*naḥs-i nāṭiqā*), Absāl to the corporeal faculty (*quvvā-yi jismī*), the King to the Active Intellect (*‘aql-i fa‘āl*), and the Sage to divine emanation (*faiz-i ilāhī*).¹⁴ By implication, this version of the Greek tale recounts the infatuation of the soul with material pleasures, which it overcomes only when divine will acts through its angelic agent, freeing soul from body so that it assumes its rightful place at the divine Throne.¹⁵

Before we accept the ancient Greek origin of this version *in toto*, its invocation of ancient Iranian motifs and imagery needs to be acknowledged.¹⁶ For example, the ascension and return of the soul to its luminous origins, coupled with the widespread use of light terminology, a theme later manifested in the Illuminationist (*Ishrāqī*) philosophy of Shihāb

¹² Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 207.

¹³ Though mostly in accord with one another, a short list of “minor” differences between the Hellenistic version by Ṭūsī and the poetic version by Jāmī is provided by Dehghan, “Jāmī’s *Salāmān and Absāl*,” 121–22. For a recent study on the rich legacy of the ancient Greek version, see Sayyid Ḥasan Amīn, *Salāmān va Absāl: Uṣṭūra-i yūnānī dar farhang-i irānī va falsafa-i islāmī dar chahārdah rivāyat* (Tehran: Dā’irat al-Ma’ārif-i Irān-shināsī, 1383/2004).

¹⁴ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Salāmān and Absāl” (P. Heath); and Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 218–19.

¹⁵ The commentary by Ṭūsī briefly mentions the appearance of Salāmān and Absāl or “Ibsāl” (imprisonment) in the *al-Nawādir* by Ibn al-‘Arabī, where Salāmān, a man famous for his goodness is held captive with Absāl, a man known for his wickedness. In the story, Salāmān is freed while Absāl languishes and eventually dies. Writing in the eleventh/seventeenth century, the philosopher of the Illuminationist school in Isfahan, Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1050/1640–41), more widely referred to as Mullā Ṣadrā, cites *Salāmān wa Absāl* in his *Kitāb al-aṣṣār al-arba‘a* in support of the doctrine concerning the pre-existence of the soul. For references to Ibn al-‘Arabī’s use of the character’s names, see Dehghan, “Jāmī’s *Salāmān and Absāl*,” 119. For Mullā Ṣadrā, see Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 207 n. 4. Other appearances of the Salāmān and Absāl characters in Arabic and Persian literature (at least fourteen in all) are discussed throughout in Amīn, *Salāmān va Absāl: Uṣṭūra-i yūnānī*.

¹⁶ On the prevalence of ancient Iranian motifs in such Hellenized Persian romances as *Vāmiq* va *‘Azrā*, *Vis* va *Rāmīn*, and *Varqa* va *Gulshāh*, see Dick Davis, *Panthea’s Children: Hellenistic Novels and Medieval Persian Romances* (New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 2002).

al-Dīn Yaḥyā Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191), are just several indications the tale could also have been of an Iranian provenance.¹⁷ Likewise, the incestuous relationship might be a reflection of the ancient Zoroastrian tradition of consanguineous marriage.¹⁸ Finally, another indication arises when comparing the birth of Salāmān from a tree with Zoroastrian and Manichaean traditions concerning the generation of humans from a plant.¹⁹

Ibn Sīnā's Version of the Allegory

In the second version, which Ṭūsī ascribes to Ibn Sīnā and which bears little resemblance to the ancient Greek version of the tale, Salāmān and Absāl are royal siblings. This rendition casts Salāmān as a king and Absāl as his courageous and loyal younger brother. Based on the commentary by Ṭūsī, the narrative concerns the infatuation of the wife of Salāmān for Absāl, and the extraordinary lengths the latter goes to resist her sexual advances.²⁰ Seeking a respite from her constant ruses, Absāl departs to conquer "east and west" on behalf of his brother and returns to the royal palace only to be poisoned by his jilted lover. Overcome by grief at the death of his beloved brother, Salāmān executes his wife, renounces kingship, and retires to solitary contemplation of God.²¹

¹⁷ A view posited by N. Peter Jooose, "An Example of Medieval Arabic Pseudo-Hermeticism: The Tale of Salāmān and Absāl," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 38, no. 2 (1993): 281.

¹⁸ For the issue of same kin-marriage amongst Zoroastrian (esp. Achaemenian) elites, see Richard N. Frye, "Zoroastrian Incest," in *Orientalia Iosephi Tucci Memoriae Dicata* (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1985), 445–55. See also Jamshed K. Choksy, *Evil, Good, and Gender: Facets of the Feminine in Zoroastrian Religious History* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 90–91; and *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Incest and Inbreeding" (by Geert Jan van Gelder).

¹⁹ Jooose, "An Example of Medieval Arabic," 286–87, who also points to the transformation of Absāl into Venus and the Mazdaean notion of Fravartī, the earth-bound soul encountering her celestial counterpart Daēnā, as evidence of an Iranian provenance (p. 285); See also Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Maṣnavi-yi Salāmān va Absāl-i Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī: Taṣṭihīq va taḥqīq, tauzīḥāt va ta'līqāt*, ed. Zahrā Muhājirī (Tehran: Nashr-i Nay, 1376/1997), 68–69.

²⁰ Peter Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy in Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā): With a Translation of the Book of the Prophet Muḥammad's Ascent to Heaven* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 94.

²¹ Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy*, 94. This version of Salāmān and Absāl is very similar to and may in fact have its basis in the Tale of the Two Brothers, an ancient Egyptian folk tale dated around 185 BC and which is contained in the Papyrus D'Orbiney. For a detailed study of the Egyptian tale, see Wolfgang Wettengel, *Die Erzählung von den beiden Brüdern: Der Papyrus d'Orbiney und die Königsideologie der Ramessiden* (Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag, 2003).

As in the Greek version, Ṭūsī interprets Salāmān to be a representation of the rational, or speaking, soul (*al-naḥs al-nāṭiqā* or *naḥs-i gūyā*).²² Absāl, on the other hand, is equated with the speculative intellect (*al-ʿaql al-naẓarī*).²³ The wife of Salāmān, meanwhile, comes to embody concupiscence (*shahva*) and the faculties (*quvvā*) of the animal soul (*al-naḥs al-ḥayawānī*).²⁴ East and west, that is to say, the intelligible (*maʿqūl*) and sensible (*maḥsūs*) worlds, are subdued by the acquired intellect (Absāl), bringing to the rational soul (Salāmān) the fruits of its victories.²⁵ Hermeneutically, the climactic act of Salāmān, according to Ṭūsī, symbolizes the quelling of corporeal passions so that the rational soul (Salāmān) can devote itself entirely to contemplation of the divine realm.²⁶ The (brotherly) relationship of Salāmān and Absāl, coupled with the use of a “world-displaying mirror” by king Salāmān, have led to suggestions that Ibn Sīnā borrowed the two characters (or their names) from the biblical brothers Absalom and Solomon.²⁷

Salāmān and Absāl in Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān

The characters Salāmān and Absāl also appear—significantly—in the *Risāla Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* of the Andalusian philosopher Abū Bakr b. Ṭufayl (d. 581/1185–86) as a clarification of the meaning of Ibn Sīnā’s phrase “Oriental Wisdom” (*al-ḥikmat al-mashriqiyya*).²⁸ The use of the characters

²² Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 227.

²³ Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy*, 95; and Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 228.

²⁴ Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy*, 95.

²⁵ Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy*, 95.

²⁶ Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy*, 95. It is worth noting that alleged shortcomings in the exegesis by Ṭūsī of both versions have been indicated by Henry Corbin’s *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 218–20. See also Salman H. Bashier, *The Story of Islamic Philosophy: Ibn Ṭufayl, Ibn al-ʿArabī, and Others on the Limit between Naturalism and Traditionalism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2011), 40–41.

²⁷ Dehghan, “Jāmī’s *Salāmān and Absāl*,” 121.

²⁸ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Salāmān and Absāl” (by P. Heath). In fact, the full title is *Risāla Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān fī asrār al-ḥikmat al-mashriqiyya* and is distinct from the *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* by Ibn Sīnā (the first of his three récits visionnaires in the *Ishārāt wa al-tanbihāt*; the others being the *Risālat al-ṭair* and *Salāmān wa Absāl*). For a discussion of the noetic and experiential dimensions of the *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* cycle, see Aaron W. Hughes, *The Texture of the Divine: Imagination in Medieval Islamic and Jewish Thought* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 2004), esp. 133–43. See also Paul E. Walker, “Philosophy of Religion in al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Ṭufayl,” in *Reason and Inspiration in Islam: Theology, Philosophy and Mysticism in Muslim Thought: Essays in Honour of Hermann Landolt*, ed. Todd Lawson (London: I. B. Tauris in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2005), esp. 95–96.

by Ibn Ṭufail is original, for he casts Absāl as a gnostic who lives on an island whose habitants, epitomized by their king, Salāmān, stubbornly adhere to the external tenets and rituals of religion.²⁹ Not satisfied with literalism and visible displays of piety, Absāl, representing the inner dimension of religious spirituality, arrives at Ḥayy's island in search of a place to engage in solitary contemplation.³⁰ Absāl subsequently becomes a disciple of Ḥayy, though the two are unsuccessful in their attempts to convey the hidden truths of revelation to the other islanders.³¹

Coded Speech: The Overall Power of Allegory

Despite the differences between them, the ancient Greek version and the versions of Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Ṭufail share a common feature: each is an allegorical expression of the mystical path. More precisely, each depicts the quest for the Divine presence by the individual soul, an inward journey in which tribulation and painful purification alchemically transform the soul until it is capable of reflecting the reality of the unity of God.

Allegory, or the mode expressing thoughts in coded speech by saying one thing and meaning another, naturally lent itself to describing mystical experience, which ultimately is impossible to describe.³² A literal or outer (*ẓāhir*) level of meaning, usually in the form of a tale that makes sense in and of itself, could therefore be used to mask a deeper, esoteric (*bāṭin*) meaning impenetrable but to those capable of recognizing the images and deciphering the esoteric significance of certain words. Prose allegories like *Salāmān wa Absāl* and *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* were thus ideal vehicles for the explanation of spiritual progression toward the Divine mysteries to Sufi initiates; this was accomplished through the concealment offered by the exoteric narrative.

The ideal vehicle, however, for expressions of the Islamic mystical experience was not prose but poetry, particularly poetry written in the Persian language, which on account of its capacity to be both vague and

²⁹ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Ḥayy b. Yaqẓān" (by A.-M. Goichon).

³⁰ Absāl first appeared to Ḥayy at the very moment the latter, having retired to a cave for forty days of spiritual contemplation, reached *unio mystica*.

³¹ For a discussion of the exoteric and esoteric interpretations of the tale, see J. Christoph Bürgel, "Symbols and Hints: Some Considerations Concerning the Meaning of Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*," in *The World of Ibn Ṭufayl: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*, ed. Lawrence I. Conrad (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 114–32.

³² For a survey of allegory and its protean uses, see Agnus Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), esp. 2–23.

precise, was unparalleled in its potential for creating word plays (*tajnīs*), double meaning, and amphibology (*ihām*).³³ Jāmī's version of *Salāmān* and *Absāl*, which was written in rhyming couplets of Persian verse, is unique in that it describes this experience within the framework of a poetic form (*masnavī*). Stated differently, Persian poetry served as the ideal medium for Jāmī to create an unusually esoteric composition: a work of political and ethical advice set within an allegorical romance that actually describes the spiritual journey of the soul.

Another unique aspect of Jāmī's version of the *Salāmān* and *Absāl* narrative is that it is addressed directly to a royal patron, Ya'qūb, a prince from the Bāyandur clan of Oghuz Turks, whose twelve-year reign (883–96/1478–90) as ruler of the Āq Qoyūnlū (White Sheep) confederation of Türkmen tribes in northern Iraq, eastern Anatolia, and Azerbaijan, was marked both by literary-cultural achievements and his own struggles with alcohol addiction.³⁴ It appears that as a consequence, Jāmī infused his version of *Salāmān* and *Absāl* with enough practical advice on governing according to Perso-Islamic principles to allow us to view his versified rendition of the tale as a mirror for princes.

Salāmān va Absāl, an Esoteric Mirror for Princes

As the first poetic treatment of the tale in Persian, Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl* contained the potential to convey secrets of esoteric knowledge concerning the mystical transformation of the soul. But, as this study endeavors to prove, it also contains disguised information regarding historical figures at the Āq Qoyūnlū court. Thus, the primary aim of this study is to demonstrate that the mystico-historical esotericism present throughout Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl* had a larger didactic motive: to provide political and ethical advice for the ruler.

Mystically-inclined Persian mirrors for princes, written by Sufis, were not unknown in medieval Iran. For example, *Sāz va pīrāya-yi shāhān-i pūrmāya*

³³ Maria E. Subtelny, *Le monde est un jardin: Aspects de l'histoire culturelle de l'Iran médiéval*, Cahiers de Studia Iranica, 28 (Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniennes, 2002), 153.

³⁴ That Ya'qūb was a drunkard is mentioned in several sources, including the *Ṣaḥā'if al-akhbār*, an Ottoman chronicle written by Darvīsh Aḥmad (also known as Munajjim-bāshī) and based on an eleventh/seventeenth century Arabic source of the same title. In it, Ya'qūb's reputation is as a ruler "disposed to drink and a merry life, and very fond of poetry." For a reference, see Browne, *Literary History of Persia* 3:415.

by Afzāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Kāshānī (d. 610/1213–14),³⁵ *Mirṣād al-ʿibād min al-mabḍāʾ ilā al-maʿād* by Najm al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 652/1256–57),³⁶ and *Zakhīrat al-mulūk* by ʿAlī b. Shihāb al-Dīn Hamadānī (786/1385)³⁷ each explicated the idea of perfect kingship by correlating it with the Sufi mystical concept of the Perfect Man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) as the true vicegerent of God (*khalīfat Allāh*).³⁸

Contrary to most appraisals of *Salāmān va Absāl*, which treat it simply as a romantic allegory,³⁹ this thesis seeks to argue that the tale by Jāmī is in fact a multi-layered work of practical ethical wisdom incorporating major elements of the Perso-Islamic tradition of advice literature, variously referred to as *andarz*, *pand*, *naṣīhat*, *vaṣīyat*, *siyar*, and *akhlāq*.⁴⁰

³⁵ William Chittick, *The Heart of Islamic Philosophy: The Quest for Self-Knowledge in the Teachings of Afdāl al-Dīn Kāshānī* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 178–94.

³⁶ Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, *The Path of God's Bondsmen from Origin to Return = (Mirṣād al-ʿibād min al-mabḍāʾ ilā al-maʿād): A Sufi Compendium*, [*Mirṣād al-ʿibād min al-mabḍāʾ ilā al-maʿād*], trans. Hamid Algar (Delmar, NY: Caravan Books, 1982).

³⁷ Amina Steinfelds, "Reflections on a Mystic Mirror: The Beinecke Manuscript of ʿAlī Hamadānī," in *Old Books, New Learning: Essays on Medieval and Renaissance Books at Yale*, ed. Robert G. Babcock and Lee Patterson (New Haven, CT: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, 2001), 55–66.

³⁸ See also the *Majmaʾ al-baḥrain* of Shams al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Abarqūhī (composed between 711/1311–12 and 714/1314–15 cited in Ann K. S. Lambton, "Sufis and the State in Medieval Persia," in *State and Islam*, ed. C van Dijk and A. H. de Groot (Leiden: Research School CNWS, 1995), 23–25.

³⁹ ʿAlī Aṣghar Ḥikmat, *Jāmī: Mutāẓammin-i taḥqīqāt dar tārikh-i aḥvāl va āṣār-i manẓūm va nushūr-i khātīm al-shuʿarā*, (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-i Bank-i Millī Irān, 1321/1942), 189; Browne, *Literary History of Persia* 3:523; A. J. Arberry, *FitzGerald's Salaman and Absal*, 42; Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature*, 297; J. T. P. de Bruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry: An Introduction to the Mystical Use of Classical Poems* (Richmond: Curzon, 1997), 123; and Aʿlā-Khān Afṣahzād, *Naqd va bar rasī-yi āṣār va sharḥ-i aḥvāl-i Jāmī* (Tehran: Mirās-i Maktūb, 1999), 211. Arberry hints at the historicity of the poem when he addresses Jāmī's potential motive: "The myth of the philosopher who had the ear of the king had haunted eastern imagination ever since Aristotle was supposed to have instructed the Emperor of Greece... Jāmī... must have felt peculiarly well qualified to play the traditional role of rhyming counselor," Arberry, *FitzGerald's Salaman and Absal*, 42.

⁴⁰ The starting point for any investigation into medieval Perso-Islamic mirrors for princes remains the studies by Ann K. S. Lambton, notably: "Quis Custodiet Custodes? Some Reflections on the Persian Theory of Government (Part 1)," *Studia Islamica* 5 (1955): 125–48; "Quis Custodiet Custodes? Some Reflections on the Persian Theory of Government (Part 2)," *Studia Islamica* 6 (1956): 125–46; "Justice in the Medieval Persian Theory of Kingship," *Studia Islamica* 17 (1962): 91–119; "Islamic Mirrors for Princes," in *Atti del convegno internazionale sul tema, La Persia nel medioevo* (Roma, 1970), Accademia nazionale dei Lincei (Rome, 1971), 419–42; *State and Government in Medieval Islam: An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory: The Jurists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); and "Changing Concepts of Justice and Injustice from the Fifth/Eleventh Century to the Eighth/Fourteenth Century in Persia: The Saljuq Empire and the Ilkhanate," *Studia Islamica* 68 (1988): 27–60. For a survey of Persian ethico-political works before the eighth/fourteenth century, see de Fouchécour, *Moralia*, passim.

Demonstrating that *Salāmān va Absāl* operates as a mystical mirror for princes will be carried out by interrogating those concepts and statements on statecraft it contains which correspond to and repeat ideas expressed in several classic medieval Persian works of advice. That is to say, key aspects of *Salāmān va Absāl* will be compared and integrated with similar aspects found in such Perso-Islamic manuals of advice as: *Qābūs-nāma* by Kay Kā'ūs b. Iskandar;⁴¹ *Sīyar al-mulūk* by Nizām al-Mulk;⁴² *Naṣīhat al-mulūk* by Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī;⁴³ *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī* by Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī;⁴⁴ and finally, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* by Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī.⁴⁵

First in terms of chronology is the *Qābūs-nāma* of Kay Kā'ūs b. Iskandar (d. ca. 477/1084–85), a Ziyarid princeling from the Caspian provinces of Tabaristan (Mazandaran) and Gurgan in northern Iran. Noted for its brisk practicality, this manual, which emphasizes the Zoroastrian principle of moderation (*paimān*; *mīyāna* or *andāza*) and manly virtue (*javānmardī*), was completed in 474/1082–83 for Kay Kā'ūs' son and successor Gilānshāh (d. 483/1090).⁴⁶ Encyclopedic in its outlook, the forty-four chapters of the

⁴¹ Kay Kā'ūs b. Iskandar, *The Nasihat-nama, Known as Qabus-nama of Kai Ka'us b. Iskandar b. Qabus b. Washmgir*, ed. Reuben Levy (London: Luzac, 1951) (hereafter cited as *Qābūs Nāma*); Kay Kā'ūs b. Iskandar, *A Mirror for Princes: The Qābūs Nāma*, trans. Reuben Levy (London: Cresset Press, 1951). The work is also known as *Kitāb-i naṣīhat-nāma*.

⁴² Also referred to as the *Sīyāsāt-nāma*. Nizām al-Mulk, *Sīyar al-mulūk: Sīyāsāt-nāma, ta'līf-i Khvāja Nizām al-Mulk Abū 'Alī Ḥasan Ṭūsī*, ed. Hubert Darke (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1341/1962) (henceforth cited as *Sīyar al-mulūk* [*Sīyāsāt-nāma*]); and Nizām al-Mulk, *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings* [*Sīyar al-mulūk*], trans. Hubert Darke (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978). On the notion that *Sīyar al-mulūk* [*Sīyāsāt-nāma*] has been wrongly ascribed to Nizām al-Mulk, see Alexey A. Khismatulin, "To Forge a Book in the Medieval Ages: Nezām al-Molk's *Sīyar al-Muluk* (*Sīyāsāt-nāma*)," *Journal of Persianate Studies* 1 (2008): 30–66.

⁴³ Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad Ghazālī, *Naṣīhat al-mulūk*, ed. Jalāl Humā'ī (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āṣār-i Millī, 1351/1972); and Abū Ḥamid Ghazālī, *Ghazali's Book of Counsel for Kings* (*Nasihat al-muluk*), trans. F. R. C. Bagley (London: Oxford University Press, 1964).

⁴⁴ Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, ed. Muḥtabā Minuvī and 'Alī Rizā Ḥaidarī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Khvārazmī, 1357/1978); and Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, *The Nasirean Ethics*, trans. G. M. Wickens (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964).

⁴⁵ Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī, musammā bih Lavāmī' al-ishrāq fī makārim al-akhlāq*, ed. M. K. Shīrāzī (Calcutta: Ḥabl al-matīn, 1911); and Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī [Davānī], *Practical Philosophy of the Muhammadan People... Being a Translation of the Akhlak-i Jalaly, The Most Esteemed Ethical Work of Middle Asia, from the Persian of Fakir Jany Muhammad Asāad*, trans. W. F. Thompson (London: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1839). The manual is less commonly known by its principal title, *Lawāmī' al-ishrāq fī makārim al-akhlāq* (Flashes of Illumination on Praiseworthy Ethics).

⁴⁶ For a review of modern scholarship on the *Qābūs-nāma*, see Soheila Amirsoleimani, "Of This World and the Next: Metaphors and Meanings in the *Qābūs-nāma*," *Iranian Studies* 35, nos. 1–3 (2002): 4. On the ancient Iranian idea of the perfect measure (*paimān*), see Shaul Shaked, "Paymān: An Iranian Idea in Contact with Greek Thought and Islam," in *Transition Periods in Iranian History. Actes du Symposium de Fribourg-en-Brisgau*

Qābūs-nāma tackle a range of spiritual and mundane matters, including: knowing God, the creation of the prophets and their mission, the etiquette of eating, purchasing a horse, rearing children, the art of controlling an armed force, and the conduct of kingship.

Written about four years after the *Qābūs-nāma* (i.e., 478/1087) is the *Siyar al-mulūk*, an administrative handbook on medieval *realpolitik* by the doyen of medieval Persian *vazīrs*, Nizām al-Mulk al-Ṭūsī (d. 485/1092). Supposedly commissioned at the urging of the Saljuq ruler Malikshāh (d. 485/1092) as an internal review of his realm, the *Siyar al-mulūk* served as a candid and expedient appraisal of the Great Saljuq empire. Its preoccupation with safeguarding the hierarchical status quo by maintaining the ruler's monopoly on coercive force (*siyāsat*), though justified by Nizām al-Mulk with reference to old Sasanian precedents, reflects the perturbations of its author over contemporary threats posed by insurrectionist and heretical religious groups of fifth/eleventh century Iran, notably the Ismā'īlī Shi'ites (referred to in the text as Bāṭinīs).⁴⁷

Another manual written for a Saljuq patron and useful for the present study is the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* ascribed to the Muslim theologian Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazālī (d. 505/1111). Completed twenty-three years after the *Siyar al-mulūk* and dedicated to the Saljuq ruler Muḥammad b. Malikshāh (d. 511/1118) on behalf of his younger brother Sanjar (d. 552/1157), the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* is in fact an amalgam of two very dissimilar sections; the first serving as a homiletic exposition of the Islamic faith, the second as a theoretical and practical guide to kingship. It is this latter exposition and the forthright Islamization of ancient Iranian traditions concerning the relationship between religion (*dīn*) and kingship (*mulk*) that is of special interest for this study.⁴⁸

The first major post-Mongol work of Perso-Islamic ethico-political advice, the *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī* by Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, is particularly useful in correlating *Salāmān va Absāl* to the body of works on political advice.⁴⁹ The most influential medieval Persian advice manual, the *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*

(24 mai 1985), Cahiers de Studia Iranica, 5 (Paris: L'Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniques, 1987), 217–40.

⁴⁷ Nizām al-Mulk, *Siyar al-mulūk* [*Siyāsat-nāma*], 297–98 (trans. 208–9).

⁴⁸ For the contention that Ghazālī did not write the section of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* concerning kingship, see Patricia Crone, "Did al-Ghazālī Write a Mirror for Princes? On the Authorship of *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 10 (1998): 167–91. But see also the opinion of Carole Hillenbrand, "Islamic Orthodoxy or Realpolitik? Al-Ghazālī's Views on Government," *Iran* 26 (1988): 92.

⁴⁹ Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*; and *Nasirean Ethics*, passim.

synthesized Aristotelian philosophy with ancient Indo-Iranian ideals of hierarchy by augmenting earlier Islamic works on political philosophy by Abū Naṣr Fārābī (d. 339/950) and Abū ‘Alī b. Miskawaih (d. 421/1030).⁵⁰ The *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, which was ultimately dedicated to the Ilkhanid ruler of Iran, Hülegü (d. 663/1265), conceptualizes society as a cooperative effort to achieve a degree of “perfection” that can only be realized in the communal unit of the city (*madīna*). Borrowing the Aristotelian concept of man as a “civic animal” (*al-insān al-madaniyy bi-al-ṭabʿ*), Ṭūsī states that humans are inclined by nature to congregate in cities and engage in social interaction (*ijtimāʿ*) while occupying themselves with a diversity of crafts and professions.⁵¹ According to Ṭūsī, the role of the ruler is to regulate a cooperative ethic of mutual aid (*muʿāvanat*) amongst these diverse groups by keeping each within its proper hierarchical rank or vocational place and in a condition of interdependency.⁵² The resulting societal equilibrium (*iʿtidāl*) is equated with justice (*ʿadl*), the highest of virtues.⁵³ This arranging of a polity according to the fundamental order of the universe, that is the external macrocosm, is implicitly mirrored by the necessity for the individual (i.e., the ruler) to properly order the inner microcosm of himself.

This study will explore how the idea of “man as the microcosm” is reflected in Jāmī’s *Salāmān va Absāl*. The need of the ruler to realize his place as the shadow of God (*ẓill Allāh*) by keeping his bodily humors in balance and passions in check will be compared with the perfect ruler or the need of the Sufi mystic to perfect his spiritual self by disciplining (*tadbīr*) his carnal soul, or *nafs*. The concept of acting as the vicegerent of God (*khalīfat Allāh*) or shadow of God on earth will therefore be discussed in connection with the Sufi conception of the Perfect Man.⁵⁴ Special attention will be paid to the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* by Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī (d. 908/1502–3), which was dedicated to both Ūzūn Ḥasan (d. 882/1478)

⁵⁰ Specifically, the *Madīnat al-fāzila* by Fārābī and the *Tahzīb al-akhlāq* by Miskawaih.

⁵¹ Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, 252 (trans. 97 and 190). For a discussion of how this philosophical concept influenced subsequent Perso-Islamic mirrors for princes, see Subtelny, *Le monde est un jardin*, 59–72; and Maria E. Subtelny, “A Late Medieval Persian *Summa* on Ethics: Kashifi’s *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī*,” *Iranian Studies* 36, no. 4 (2003): 604–5 and 621.

⁵² Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, 249–50 (trans. 189).

⁵³ Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, 288 (trans. 230).

⁵⁴ For a discussion of Jāmī’s interpretation of the concept of the *al-insān al-kāmil* (Perfect Man), see William Chittick, “The Perfect Man as the Prototype of the Self in the Sufism of Jāmī,” *Studia Islamica* 49 (1979): 135–57.

and his eldest son Sulṭān-Khalīl (i.e., the older uterine brother of Ya'qūb) sometime between 871–81/1467–77. It represents an Āq Qoyūnlū mirror for princes, which was based in part on ideas contained in the *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī* by Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī. It is, however, unique among mirrors in its insistence that the ruler associate with Sufi mystics and support dervishes who, by way of their spiritual energy (*himmat*), can act as kingmakers.⁵⁵ In addition to its admonitions to Ūzūn Ḥasan and Sulṭān-Khalīl regarding the political importance of Sufi mystics, the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* contains esoteric elements which buttress the claim put forward in this study that the Āq Qoyūnlū court of Ya'qūb was fertile ground for the reception of such mystical works as Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl*. That is to say, the prevalence of Sufi mystical ideas at the Āq Qoyūnlū court was such that not only was a "traditional" mirror for princes (i.e., the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*) pervaded with Sufi ethics, but a mystical allegory—in poetic form no less—could also be a vehicle by which concepts of statecraft were communicated.

In order to establish that *Salāmān va Absāl* and the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* fit within the literary genre of Persian mirrors for princes, we shall examine the defining characteristics of several classic works. By highlighting their shared statements concerning such concepts as kingship, religion, justice, the punitive capacity of the ruler, and the vizierate, these manuals of practical advice will, each in its own way, be treated as antecedent expressions of some of the ideas contained in the *Salāmān va Absāl* by Jāmī.

For example, passages reflecting such perennial Iranian themes as the necessity for the king to exercise justice ('*adl* or '*adālat*'); the idea that religion and kingship are twin-brothers (encapsulated in the expression: *dīn va daulat du barādarand*) and thus interdependent; and the indispensability of a good *vazīr*, will be offered as evidence to suggest that Jāmī's intention was, among other things, to impart wisdom about kingship and statecraft to his Āq Qoyūnlū addressee. In so doing, this study will argue that besides being a mystical Persian romance, Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl* also belongs to the genre of Persian mirrors for princes.

Finally, by comparing *Salāmān va Absāl* with the abovementioned corpus of Persian manuals spanning some five centuries, the durability of ancient Iranian ideals relating to proper governance will be evinced.

⁵⁵ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 135.

Salāmān va Absāl *and the Maṣnavī of Rūmī*

In addition to arguing that *Salāmān va Absāl* is a mystical mirror for princes, a series of secondary hypotheses will be put forward. Chief among these is that the work by Jāmī is partly based on the first tale in the *Maṣnavī-yi ma'navī* by Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1273), namely “The story of the king’s falling in love with a handmaiden and buying her,” which Rūmī takes as an allegorical description of the purification of the soul through love.⁵⁶ By comparing the symbolic significance of the characters in Rūmī’s tale—namely the king, the divine physician, the handmaiden, and the goldsmith—with those in Jāmī’s tale, it will be demonstrated that *Salāmān va Absāl* was, in addition to its ancient Graeco-Iranian heritage, modeled in part after Rūmī’s famous homiletic tale.⁵⁷ To substantiate this claim, we will point to Jāmī’s inclusion of key passages from the tale by Rūmī, his use of the metre of the *Maṣnavī*, and the fact that both narratives share a degree of shocking grotesqueness.

The Historical Significance of Salāmān va Absāl

Jāmī’s tale has another purpose beyond its primary functions as a mirror for princes and an experiential tale, or récit visionnaire, explicating the path of gnostic self-realization—it is also an historical allegory in which the principal characters symbolically represent discrete historical figures at the Āq Qoyūnlū court. Salāmān appears to represent the addressee of the poem, Ya’qūb; the King of ancient Greece represents the ideal of kingship; the Sage represents Ya’qūb’s advisor and *vazīr*, Qāzī Ṣafī al-Dīn b. Shukr Allāh ʿĪsā Sāvajī (d. 896/1491); and Absāl symbolizes wine and the life of libertinage. The initial infatuation of Salāmān with and subsequent renunciation of Absāl will therefore be contextualized within the historical reality of the public repentance (*tauba*) by Ya’qūb and his prohibition of the consumption of wine in Tabriz in 893/1488.⁵⁸ Jāmī, it will be argued,

⁵⁶ An observation first noted but never developed by Reynold A. Nicholson. For his passing reference to the similarities between the two tales, see Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *The Mathnavī of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī*, ed. and trans. Reynold A. Nicholson, 8 vols. (London: Luzac, 1925–40), 7:14. See also Dehghan, “Jāmī’s *Salāmān and Absāl*,” 124.

⁵⁷ For the record, the tale was not Rūmī’s invention, but may be traced back to the *Kitāb al-Qānūn fī al-ṭibb* of Ibn Sīnā. For a reference, see the commentary by Nicholson in Rūmī, *Mathnavī* 7:14.

⁵⁸ Although the *farmān* (edict) banning wine-drinking apparently has been lost, a description of its contents and the ceremony marking Ya’qūb’s repentance are found in Khunji-Isfahānī, *ʿĀlam-ārāy-i amīnī*, 73.

composed and dedicated his *Salāmān va Absāl* to Ya'qūb not only for its high-minded mystical didacticism, but also on account of the narrative's depiction of actual personalities and events that would have been familiar to Ya'qūb. That is to say, using a mystical tale, Jāmī took the occasion of the renunciation of drinking by Ya'qūb to encourage him to embark upon, or at least recognize, the pious austerities involved in the Sufi mystical path, which he regarded as a prerequisite of kingship.⁵⁹

This contradicts the received view that Jāmī composed and dedicated his *Salāmān va Absāl* as a coronation gift to celebrate the commencement of the independent rule of Ya'qūb in 885/1480.⁶⁰ Internal evidence in the text itself provides support to make a case for a later date of completion. By reviewing this and other evidence in contemporary sources of the late ninth/fifteenth and tenth/sixteenth centuries, including the official history of the reign of Ya'qūb, the *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi aminī* by Faḡl Allāh b. Rūzbihān Khunjī-İsfahānī (d. 927/1521), and the personal correspondence of Jāmī and Ya'qūb, this study will argue that the dedication by Jāmī of his *Salāmān va Absāl* to Ya'qūb occurred after the latter's public repentance from drinking and was the culminating act of his sustained dialogue with the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler. This rapport, expressed in letters and poetry replete with terms associated with the doctrines and practices of the Naqshbandī Sufi order (*ṭarīqa*), suggests that their relationship resembled that of a Sufi master and his disciple.

Overview of the Primary Sources

As John E. Woods has observed, there is no shortage of primary historical sources available for the study of the Āq Qoyūnlū period.⁶¹ The problem, however, lies in the fact that many of these materials are fragmentary, making Āq Qoyūnlū historiography an exercise in synthesis. As a result, a variety of documentary, epigraphical, numismatic, bureaucratic, narrative,

⁵⁹ Commemorating the renunciation of wine-drinking by a prince by dedicating a mirror for princes to him was apparently not uncommon in late ninth/fifteenth and early tenth/sixteenth century Iran. As Subtelny has shown, the late medieval Timurid preacher and polymath Ḥusain Vā'iz Kāshifī (d. 910/1504–5), dedicated his advice manual, the *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī*, to Sulṭān-Ḥusain Bāyqarā and his son Abū al-Muḥsin Mirzā (d. 913/1507) after the latter made a public repentance (*tauba*) and renunciation of wine-drinking at his father's court in Herat. For a discussion of the contents of the *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī* and its historical context, see Subtelny, "A Late Medieval Persian *Summa* on Ethics," 604.

⁶⁰ Hikmat, *Jāmī*, 190.

⁶¹ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 215.

and literary sources must be exploited in order to undertake an effective inquiry into any aspect of Āq Qoyūnlū history.

Bearing this in mind, the notion that *Salāmān va Absāl* is a mystical and historically relevant mirror for princes, will be supported by a variety of Persian literary sources, most of which are contemporary or near-contemporary with the poem itself, which is to say they were completed during Jāmī's lifetime or shortly thereafter during the tenth/sixteenth century. The first such "primary source" is the *Salāmān va Absāl* itself. Other poems addressed to the Āq Qoyūnlū court, especially those that corroborate historical information contained in *Salāmān va Absāl*, will be cited. This study will investigate the official histories of the reigns of Ya'qūb and his father, Ūzūn Ḥasan, namely the *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, by Khunjī-Iṣfahānī and the *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya* by Abū Bakr Ṭihṛānī-Iṣfahānī (d. 882/1478). Additional information will be gleaned from Safavid-era chronicles, such as the *Tārīkh-i Ḥabīb al-siyar fī akhbār-i aḫrād-i bashar* by Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Khvāndamīr and the *Lubb al-tavārīkh* by Mīr Yaḥyā b. 'Abd al-Laṭīf (Ḥusainī Saifi) Qazvīnī. This study also makes use of hagiographical literature, specifically, the *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī* by 'Abd al-Vāṣī' Nizāmī Bākhārzi, the *Rauzāt al-jinān wa jannāt al-janān* by Ḥāfiẓ Ḥusain Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī Bābā-Farajī, the *Rashahāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* by Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī b. Ḥusain Vā'iz Kāshifi, the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülšenī* by Muḥyī Gulshanī, and the *Majālis al-ushshāq* by Amīr Sayyid Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥusain Gāzurgāhī. The following literary anthologies will be consulted, the *Hasht bihisht* by Ḥakīm Shāh-Muḥammad b. Mubārak Qazvīnī, the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī* by Sām Mīrzā Ṣafavī, the *Tazkirat al-shu'arā'* by Daulatshāh b. 'Alā' al-Daula Bakhtishāh al-Ghāzī Samarqandī, and the *Rauzāt al-salāṭīn* by Sulṭān Muḥammad Fakhrī Haravī. Finally, the personal correspondence between Jāmī and Ya'qūb will also be analyzed and discussed.

Salāmān va Absāl by Jāmī

Our inquiry necessarily begins with Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl* itself. A relatively short *masnavī* of 1,131 verses, it is traditionally grouped in Jāmī's heptad of *masnavīs*, called *Haft aurang* (Seven Thrones),⁶² five of which are in imitation of the quintet of romantic and didactic *masnavīs* by

⁶² The term "*Haft aurang*" is from the Younger Avesta *haptōiringa* (literally, "having seven marks") and the Middle Persian (Pahlavi) *haftōring*; it refers to the constellation Ursa Major or the "Great Bear." See *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Constellations" (by D. N. MacKenzie).

Nizāmī Ganjavī (d. 605/1209) known simply as the *Khamṣa*.⁶³ The edition used in this study is the critical edition of the *Haft aurang* by A'lā-Khān Afṣaḥzād (1999), which is based on eight manuscripts, including the oldest known copy of the *Haft aurang*, which is dated 895/1490 in Herat and held in the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan in Tashkent.⁶⁴ In the opinion of Afṣaḥzād, the 895/1490 manuscript is the most complete *Haft aurang* manuscript.⁶⁵ With this assessment in mind, the present study includes a new, revised translation of *Salāmān va Absāl* (see Appendix 2)—one which takes into greater account the political and spiritual contexts within which Jāmī composed the poem. While relying on the critical edition by Afṣaḥzād, an attempt has also been made to corroborate key passages and ambiguous terms or images in the poem by comparing his edition with that of Zahrā Muhājiri, whose own critical edition of the *Salāmān va Absāl* (1998) was based on six manuscripts of the *Haft aurang*,⁶⁶ the oldest of which is purported to be an autograph copy held in St. Petersburg which she erroneously dates to 890/1485 (i.e., two years before Ya'qūb's repentance in 893/1488).⁶⁷ The autograph appears at the end of the second section (*daftar*) of the *Silsilat al-zahab* and reads: "The one who is copying this book is its versifier, and he is 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī" (*rāqim al-kitāb nāzimuhu wa huwa al-faqīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmī*).⁶⁸

⁶³ The *Haft aurang* (or *Sab'a*) comprises: *Silsilat al-zahab*; *Salāmān va Absāl*; *Tuḥfat al-aḥrār*; *Subḥat al-abrār*; *Yūsuf va Zulaikhā*; *Lailī va Majnūn*; and *Khīrad-nāma-i Iskandarī*. Only *Salāmān va Absāl* and *Silsilat al-zahab* are entirely distinct from the five *maṣnavīs* by Nizāmī. For a discussion of Jāmī's extension of Nizāmī's *Khamṣa*, see J. T. P. de Bruijn, "Chains of Gold: Jāmī's Defence of Poetry," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 26, no. 1 (2002): 84.

⁶⁴ Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad Jāmī, *Maṣnavī-yi haft aurang*, ed. A'lā-Khān Afṣaḥzād, Zāhir Aḥrārī, Jābilqā Dād 'Alīshāh, Aṣghar Jānfidāh, and Ḥusain Aḥmad Tarbiyat, 2 vols. (Tehran: Mirās-i Maktūb 1376–78/1997–99), 1:391–448. All subsequent references to Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl* are to the Afṣaḥzād edition of the *Maṣnavī-yi haft aurang* and are henceforth abbreviated as *SA*. For descriptions of the eight MSS, six of which are cited in the introduction to *Salāmān va Absāl* by Zāhir Aḥrārī, see Jāmī, *Maṣnavī-yi haft aurang*, 33–51 and 383–89. The 895/1490 MS is described in A. A. Semenov et al., *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii nauk Uzbecksioi SSR*, 11 vols. (Tashkent: Akademia nauk UzSSR, 1952–87), 2:174.

⁶⁵ Jāmī, *Maṣnavī-yi haft aurang*, 34.

⁶⁶ For descriptions of the six MSS she used, including the *Salāmān va Absāl* MS purportedly copied during Jāmī's lifetime (890/1485), a microfilm of which is kept at the University of Tehran (no. 1062), see Jāmī, *Maṣnavī-yi Salāmān va Absāl*, 10–12.

⁶⁷ For a detailed description of the autograph MS, see Victor Rosen, *Les manuscrits persans de l'Institut des langues orientales* (Amsterdam: Celibus, 1971), 215–59. See also O. F. Akimushkin et al., *Persidskie i tadzhikske rukopisi Instituta narodov Azii AN SSR: Kratkii alfavitnyi katalog*, 2 pts. (Moscow: Nauka, 1964), 1:443–44; and Jāmī, *Maṣnavī-yi haft aurang*, 40–41.

⁶⁸ Rosen, *Les manuscrits persans*, 215.

It is followed by the inscription: “on the eleventh of Dhū al-Ḥijja in the year 890.”⁶⁹ Even if the autograph were authentic, its appearance at the end of the second of the three *daftar*s of the *Silsilat al-zahab* does not mean, as Muhājirī presumes, that the other six *masnavi*s, including *Salāmān va Absāl*, were transcribed on this date. It should be noted that W. Ivanov, E. È. Bertel’s, and Najīb Māyil Haravī doubted the authenticity of this and other manuscripts purporting to contain the autograph of Jāmī.⁷⁰

Other Persian Poetry Addressed to Ya‘qūb

In addition to *Salāmān va Absāl*, Jāmī’s *Silsilat al-zahab* includes a eulogy of Ya‘qūb in the third *daftar*.⁷¹ The importance of the eulogy rests in its subtle criticism of Ya‘qūb’s immoral behavior. Jāmī also addressed several *qaṣīdas* to Ya‘qūb. These works will be examined later on for information they reveal about the nature of the relationship between the two men.⁷² Besides the poetry of Jāmī, this study is also concerned with other works of poetry addressed to Āq Qoyūnlū rulers or generated at the Āq Qoyūnlū courts in Tabriz and Shiraz. This literature has hardly been exploited but it indicates that the Āq Qoyūnlū were patrons of Persian *belles-lettres*.⁷³ For example, the literary productions of poets affiliated with the Āq Qoyūnlū, such as Ahlī Shīrāzī (d. 942/1535), Kamāl al-Dīn Banā’ī Haravī (d. 918/1512), Bābā Fighānī (d. 925/1519), and Shahīdī Qumī (d. 935/1528–29), which often contain valuable historical information embedded (or encrypted) within them, will be mentioned in connection with members of the Āq Qoyūnlū court.⁷⁴ Ahlī Shīrāzī, for example, dedicated his allegorical *masnavi* on

⁶⁹ Rosen, *Les manuscrits persans*, 215–16.

⁷⁰ W. Ivanow, “Genuineness of Jāmī’s Autographs,” *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 10 (1934): 1–7; and Ivanow, “Another Autograph of Jāmī,” *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 16 (1940): 104–5. For Bertel’s skepticism, see Jāmī, *Masnavi-yi haft aurang*, 41. Najīb Māyil Haravī, *Jāmī* (Tehran, 1377/1998), 174 n. 3. See also M. Mahfuz-ul Haq, “Jāmī and His Autographs,” *Islamic Culture* 1 (1927): 608–16, who accepts the autograph as authentic.

⁷¹ Jāmī, *Silsilat al-zahab*, which is contained in the *Masnavi-yi haft aurang*, 1:364, lines 6015–33.

⁷² Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Aḥmad Jāmī, *Dīvān-i Jāmī*, 2 vols., ed. A’lā-Khān Afshāzād (Tehran: Mirās-i Maktūb, 1378/1999).

⁷³ A notable exception to this are the analyses of Paul Losensky. For example, see Paul Losensky, “Shahīdī Qumī: Poet Laureate of the Āqqūyūnlū Court,” in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer, Sholeh A. Quinn, and Ernest Tucker (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 282–300; and Paul Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani: Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda, 1998).

⁷⁴ Ahlī’s works must have enjoyed some degree of renown, for an illuminated copy of his *Kulliyāt* was included, along with the poetry of Firdausī, Nizāmī, ‘Umar Khayyām, Sa’dī,

love, *Sham' va parvāna*, to Ya'qūb.⁷⁵ Banā'ī, for his part, addressed his 5,000 verse narrative poem *Bahrām va Bihrūz* (or *Bāgh-i Iram*) to Ya'qūb as well.⁷⁶ Neither work has been the object of any detailed study in English. Contributing to this lacuna is a tendency to regard panegyrics and allegorical or mystical poetry as having no historiographical value.⁷⁷

Official Court Chronicles and General Histories

Despite its implicit bias in favour of the ruler, the official court history of Ya'qūb, *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, by Khunjī-Iṣfahānī remains the single most important source for Āq Qoyūnlū history.⁷⁸ Commissioned by Ya'qūb but completed in the reign of his son and successor Abū al-Faṭḥ Bāysunghur (d. 898/1493), the chronicle by Khunjī-Iṣfahānī covers the first four years of the reign of Ya'qūb (882–86/1478–81); omits the years 886–90/1481–85; resumes with the years 890–91/1485–86; and covers events of the years 891–96/1486–91, the final four years of his patron's rule.⁷⁹ This last part

and Hāfiz), in a collection of diplomatic offerings accompanying a Safavid embassy to Istanbul in 998/1590. For a reference, see Fariba Zarinebaf-Shahr, "Cross-Cultural Contacts in Eurasia," in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer and Sholeh A. Quinn, in collaboration with Ernest Tucker (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 539. For discussions of the poet's life and works, see Inamul Haq Kausar, "Ahli Shīrāzī," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 18 (1970): 115–39; Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, 160–64, 260–65, 267–74; and *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Ahli Shīrāzī, Mowlānā Moḥammad" (by W. Thackston).

⁷⁵ The poem is contained in Ahli Shīrāzī, *Kulliyāt-i ash'ar*, ed. Ḥamid Rabbānī (Tehran: Kitābkhāna-i Sanā'ī, 1964), 571–619.

⁷⁶ Kamāl al-Dīn Banā'ī, *Bar guzīda-i Bāgh-i Iram yā Bahrām va Bihrūz*, ed. Sayyid Āsād Allāh Muṣṭafavī (Tehran, 1351/1972). *Bahrām va Bihrūz* was, in all likelihood, composed after Banā'ī's service to Ya'qūb, for he speaks of the ruler as deceased. For a reference, see C. A. Storey, *Persian Literature: A Bio-bibliographical Survey*, 3 vols. (London: Luzac, 1927–71), 1:302.

⁷⁷ An issue addressed by Manūchīhr Kāshif, "Tārīkh va khāṭira dar shī'r-i fārsī," *Iran nameh* 15, no. 2 (1997): 251–81. For an example of how a narrative *maṣnavī* reflected gender relations at the Timurid court, see Walter Feldman, "Genre and Narrative Strategies in the 'Seven Planets' (*Sab'a-i Sayyār*) by Mīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī," *Edebiyāt* 10, no. 2 (1999) 243–78, esp. 269–74.

⁷⁸ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 220. On several occasions, its author (Khunjī-Iṣfahānī) insists on his impartiality only to announce his intention to suppress news of events he regards as counter to the Islamic religious law (*sharī'a*), with the murder of the Naqshbandī shaiḥ, Darvīsh Sirāj al-Dīn Qāsim in 891/1486, by Ya'qūb being the most egregious example. For the "haphazard" chronology of Khunjī-Iṣfahānī and his clear antipathy toward the Imāmī (Twelver) Shī'ism espoused by the Safavids, see the comments of Vladimir Minorsky in Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Persia in A.D. 1478–1490*, 13.

⁷⁹ Storey, *Persian Literature* 1:300; and Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 220. For the subsequent influence of Khunjī-Iṣfahānī on Islamic political philosophy, see Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam*, 178–200. An overview of his theological works and his relations with Mamluk, Āq Qoyūnlū, and Uzbek rulers is provided by Ulrich W. Haarmann,

is written from the perspective of an eyewitness. An important entry concerning the efforts by Ya'qūb to secure the advice of Jāmī and benefit from his spiritual energy (*himmat*), appears in a section describing events in the year 892/1487, a period presumably better documented since Khunji-İsfahānī would have been physically present. As the official chronicler, Khunji-İsfahānī is an important figure in Āq Qoyūnlū history. A staunch Sunnī, Khunji-İsfahānī studied theology in Shiraz under Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī and was introduced to Sufi mysticism by Pir Jamāl al-Dīn Ardīstānī (d. 879/1474–75), leader of the Jamāliyya, a sub-branch of the Suhrawardī order.⁸⁰ He later joined the Jahri brotherhood, an affiliate of the Naqshbandī order, composed eulogies on Khvāja Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband (d. 791/1389), the eponymous founder of the *ṭarīqa*, and sought the friendship of disciples of the influential Naqshbandī leader from Samarqand, Khvāja Naṣir al-Dīn 'Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār (d. 895/1490).⁸¹

The official chronicle of the reign of Ūzūn Ḥasan, the *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya* by Ṭīhrānī-İsfahānī will be referred to only sporadically, since it does not provide much information immediately relevant to this study.⁸² But as the earliest major internal Āq Qoyūnlū historical source, it does nonetheless include details about the close association of Ya'qūb's father with *ṭarīqa*-affiliated Sufis and “rogue” dervishes such as the shaman-like shaikh “Tāj al-Mujāzīb” Bābā 'Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī (date of death unknown).⁸³ As this study will argue, information about such relation-

“Yeomanly Arrogance and Righteous Rule: Faḏl Allāh Rūzbihān Khunji and the Mamluks of Egypt,” in *Iran and Iranian Studies: Essays in Honor of Iraj Afshar*, ed. Kambiz Eslami (Princeton, NJ: Zagros, 1998), 109–24.

⁸⁰ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Khundjī, Faḏl Allāh b. Rūzbihān” (by U. Haarmann).

⁸¹ Ibid. Khunji-İsfahānī's Naqshbandī affiliation is also indicated by the *Sharḥ al-viṣāya*, a commentary he wrote on the *Vaṣīyyat-nāma*, the spiritual testament of 'Abd al-Khālīq Ghijduvānī (d. ca. 617/1220), forefather of the Khvājagān, a precursor of the Naqshbandiyya, and codifier of its core doctrines. See Jürgen Paul, “Solitude within Society: Early Khwājagānī Attitudes toward Spiritual and Social Life,” in *Sufism and Politics: The Power of Spirituality*, ed. Paul L. Heck (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2006), 138 and 156 n. 8. See also, Faḏl Allāh b. Rūzbihān Khunji-İsfahānī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk al-mulūk, The Sulūk u'l-Mulūk (A Manual of Government based on Islamic Principles) by Faḏlullāh b. Rūzbihān al-İsfahānī (in 920 A.H./1514 A.D.)*, ed. Muḥammad Nizām al-Dīn and Muḥammad Ghūs (Hyderabad: Persian Manuscript Society, 1386/1966), 13.

⁸² Abū Bakr Ṭīhrānī-İsfahānī, *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya*, ed. Necāti Lugal and Faruk Sümer, 2 vols. (Ankara: Çaphane-yi Encümen-i Tarih-i Türk, 1962–64).

⁸³ For lively descriptions of the sometimes crass prognostications 'Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī delivered at formal Āq Qoyūnlū gatherings, see Ṭīhrānī-İsfahānī, *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya*, 253; and Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 82–83. For references to the indebtedness of Ūzūn Ḥasan to Sufis, see Ṭīhrānī-İsfahānī, *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya*, 476 and 485.

ships suggests that, as successor to Ūzūn Ḥasan, Ya'qūb continued the Āq Qoyūnlū tradition of soliciting the advice of Sufi mystics.

More useful for biographical information and accounts of events at the court of Ya'qūb is the *Ḥabīb al-siyar* by Khvāndamīr (d. ca. 942/1536), a universal history composed in 930/1524 and dedicated to the Safavids.⁸⁴ With its strongly biographical focus, the *Ḥabīb al-siyar* is helpful in determining the influence of Qāzī 'Īsā Sāvajī and of the extended Sāvajī family of bureaucrats on the administration of Ya'qūb. It also affirms the interest of Āq Qoyūnlū rulers in Jāmī's poetry. For example, the *Ḥabīb al-siyar* contains a description of the reception given to a Timurid diplomatic mission when it presented (or at least intended to present) Jāmī's *Kulliyāt* to Ya'qūb and Qāzī 'Īsā.⁸⁵

Finally, another Safavid-era chronicle, the *Lubb al-tavārikh* by Mīr Yaḥyā b. 'Abd al-Laṭīf (Ḥusainī Saifī) Qazvīnī (d. 962/1555), which was completed in 948/1541, recounts several details of the reign of Ya'qūb in an unexpectedly sympathetic tenor.⁸⁶ Much of the account by Yaḥyā Qazvīnī deals with the incapacitating sorrow that gripped Ya'qūb after the death of his younger uterine brother, Yamīn al-Dīn Abū al-'Izz Yūsuf Bahādur (d. 895/1490). A quatrain (*rubā'ī*) ascribed to Jāmī, and included in the *Lubb al-tavārikh*, not only illustrates Ya'qūb's despair, but suggests that Jāmī and the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler enjoyed a close rapport, one which appears to have lasted a lifetime.⁸⁷

Hagiographies and Biographical Works

Islamic hagiographic literature, broadly speaking, is a genre devoted to individuals or groups, usually Sufi mystics, whose recognized status as "saints" or "holy men" made them ideal subjects of devotional accounts.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Ghiyās al-Dīn b. Humām al-Dīn Khvāndamīr, *Tārīkh-i Ḥabīb al-siyar fī akhbār-i aqrād-i al-bashar*, ed. Muḥammad Dabīr Siyāqī, 4 vols. (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī-yi Khayyām, 1362/1983).

⁸⁵ Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-siyar* 4:450–51.

⁸⁶ The *Lubb al-tavārikh* remains to be critically edited. The following uncritical edition was used: Yaḥyā b. 'Abd al-Laṭīf Qazvīnī, *Kitāb lubb al-tavārikh, kih bi sāl-i 948 qamarī ta'līf shuda ast* (Tehran: Instishārāt-i Bunyād va Gūyā, 1363/1984). For a study of the *Lubb al-tavārikh*, specifically, the information it contains on the Āq Qoyūnlū, see Altan Çetin, "Yahya Kazvinî'nin Lubb Et-Tevârî'hinde Akkoyunlularla Alâkalı Bilgiler," *Belletîn* 71, no. 260 (2007): 53–64.

⁸⁷ Qazvīnī, *Lubb al-tavārikh*, 365.

⁸⁸ For a survey of such works from the early and medieval periods, see J. A. Mojaddedi, *The Biographical Tradition in Sufism: The Tabaqāt Genre from al-Sulamī to Jāmī* (Richmond: Curzon, 2001).

As a consequence of their tendency to emphasize the extraordinary feats of their subjects, historians have traditionally dismissed hagiographies as unreliable sources for medieval Islamic history.⁸⁹ Recently however, a reappraisal of the historical value of such works, by scholars like Jo-Ann Gross, Devin DeWeese, and Jürgen Paul, has occasioned renewed interest in a literary genre that was variously designated as *tazkirāt*, *maqāmāt*, *manāqib*, and *ṭabaqāt*.⁹⁰ As a revered poet and Naqshbandī mystic, Jāmī was the subject of the *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī* by ‘Abd al-Vāṣī‘ Nizāmī Bākhārī (d. 909/1503), a hagiological account of the life of Jāmī that contains information pertinent to this study.⁹¹ Its preoccupation with events in Timurid Herat is reflected in the fact that Ya‘qūb goes entirely unmentioned. The *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī* does, however, contain a description of Jāmī’s encounter with Ūzūn Ḥasan at Tabriz during his sojourn in Āq Qoyūnlū territory on his way home to Herat after performing the *hajj* in 878/1473.⁹²

The presence and influence of Sufi mystics at the Āq Qoyūnlū court in Tabriz, particularly the activities involving members of the Naqshbandī order, will be explored through several other tenth/sixteenth century Persian hagiographical anthologies. Foremost among these is the *Rauẓāt al-jinān wa jannāt al-janān* of Ḥāfiẓ Ḥusain Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī Bābā-Farajī (d. 997/1589), more widely referred to as Ibn Karbalā’ī.⁹³ As a guide for pilgrims to the burial places of famous religious figures in Tabriz and its environs, the *Rauẓāt al-jinān* functions as both a local history (*tārīkh*) and a hagiographic anthology (*tazkira*). Filled with detailed biographical information on deceased Sufis, poets, scholars, and other notables, the *Rauẓāt*

⁸⁹ For an overview of studies based on Islamic hagiographies and arguments in favor of their use as historical sources, see *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. “Hagiographic Literature” (by Jürgen Paul). For a different perspective, see Ann K. S. Lambton, “Persian Biographical Literature,” in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 143; and R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988), 174–79 and 257.

⁹⁰ Jo-Ann Gross, “Authority and Miraculous Behavior: Reflections on Karamat Stories of Khwaja ‘Ubaydullah Ahrar,” in *The Heritage of Sufism*, Vol. 2, *The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism (1150–1500)*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn (Oxford: Oneworld, 1999), 159–72; Devin DeWeese, *An Uvaysi Sufi in Timurid Mawarānahr: Notes on Hagiography and the Taxonomy of Sanctity in the Religious History of Central Asia*, Papers on Inner Asia, 22 (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana, 1993); and Jürgen Paul, “Au début du genre hagiographique dans le Khurassan,” in *Saints orientaux*, ed. D. Aigle (Paris: De Boccard, 1995), 15–38.

⁹¹ ‘Abd al-Vāṣī‘ Nizāmī Bākhārī, *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī: Gūshahā-yi az tārikh-i farhangī va ijtimā’ī-yi Khurāsān dar ‘aṣr-i Taimūriyān*, ed. Najīb Māyil Haravī (Tehran: Nashr-i Nay, 1371/1992).

⁹² Nizāmī Bākhārī, *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī*, 184.

⁹³ Ḥāfiẓ Ḥusain Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān wa jannāt al-janān*, ed. Ja‘far Sulṭān al-Qurrā’ī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1344/1965).

al-jinān is a valuable source for gauging the degree to which the court of Ya'qūb patronized local mystics and Sufi brotherhoods. Special attention will be paid to material concerning the chief exponent of the Naqshbandī order in Tabriz, Ṣun' Allāh Kūzakunānī (d. 929/1522–23), whose prior association with Jāmī and alleged interlocutions with the “ruler of the time” (i.e., Ya'qūb) suggest that the Naqshbandī intellections or advice of Jāmī might also have been conveyed to Āq Qoyūnlū notables through such individuals.

Another compendium of biographies of prominent Naqshbandī saints is the *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* by Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī b. Ḥusain Vā'iz Kāshifī (d. 939/1532–33).⁹⁴ Completed in 909/1503–4, the bulk of the *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* concerns the predecessors, life, teachings, miracles, and disciplines of Khvāja 'Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār, whose political, financial, and missionary activities have been the subject of several studies.⁹⁵ The *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* is a useful source for reconstructing the inauspicious visit by Jāmī to Āq Qoyūnlū-administered Baghdad in 878/1473, where a flaring sectarian dispute forced him to return to the relative calm provided by the court of Ūzūn Ḥasan in Tabriz.⁹⁶ Jāmī's relief upon meeting the father of Ya'qūb appears to be alluded to in a section of his *Salāmān va Absāl* in which he expects Ya'qūb to fulfill his noble legacy by, among other things, adopting the laudable character of his father.⁹⁷

The *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī* by Muḥyī Gulshanī (d.1026/1617), a hagiography written in Ottoman Turkish honoring Shaikh Ibrāhīm Gulshanī (d. 940/1534), eponymous founder of the Gulshanī branch of the Khalvatī Sufi order and close advisor to Ya'qūb, is an especially rich source for

⁹⁴ Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī b. Ḥusain Vā'iz Kāshifī, *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt*, ed. 'Alī Aṣghar Mu'īniyān, 2 vols. (Tehran: Bunyād-i Nikūkārī-yi Nūriyānī, 1356/1977).

⁹⁵ See Jo-Ann Gross, “The Economic Status of a Timurid Sufi Shaykh: A Matter of Conflict or Perception?” *Iranian Studies* 21, nos. 1–2 (1988): 85–104; “Naqshbandī Appeals to the Herat Court: A Preliminary Study of Trade and Property Issues,” in *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, ed. Devin DeWeese (Bloomington, IN: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Indiana University, 2001), 113–28; and Jo-Ann Gross and Asom Urunbaev, *The Letters of Khwaja 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar and His Associates* (Leiden: Brill, 2002). See also Jürgen Paul, *Die politische und soziale Bedeutung der Naqshbandiyya in Mittelasien im 15. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991); and Jürgen Paul, “Forming a Faction: The *Himāyat* System of Khwaja Ahrar,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 4 (1991): 533–48.

⁹⁶ Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī, *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* 2:263.

⁹⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 395, line 88; See also the description by Jāmī of a dream he had in which he encountered Ūzūn Ḥasan, Jāmī, *SA*, 404, line 253.

Āq Qoyūnlū history.⁹⁸ As this study will demonstrate, the Persian poetry cited in it contains unique insights into a contentious power matrix at the court of Ya'qūb involving Ibrāhīm Gulshanī, Qāzī 'Īsā, and Qāzī 'Īsā's cousin, Shaikh Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd (d. ca. 898/1493), an intriguing figure who served as head of the chancery (*parvanchī*) and was an intimate (*muqarrab*) of Ya'qūb's royal household.⁹⁹

Finally, several biographical details concerning Ya'qūb, including allusions to a sense of despair that appears to have permeated his court, will be cited from the notice on Ya'qūb in the *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, the biographical dictionary of Sufi mystics written by Gāzurgāhī (d. ca. 909/1503–4), a Sufi and official responsible for religious affairs and pious endowments under the Timurid ruler Sulṭān-Husain Bāyqarā (r. 875–911/1469–1506).¹⁰⁰

Literary Anthologies

Besides shedding light on the literary tastes and ambiance of the Āq Qoyūnlū court, poetic anthologies (pl. *tazkirāt*) such as the Persian translation and expansion of the Chaghatay Turkish *Majālis al-naḡā'*s of 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī (d. 906/1501) by Ḥakīm Shāh-Muḥammad b. Mubārak Qazvīnī (d. 966/1559)¹⁰¹ and the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī* by Sām Mīrzā Ṣafavī (d. 984/1576),¹⁰² yield remarkable information about the nature of the relationship between

⁹⁸ Muḥyī Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülšenī*, ed. Tahsin Yazıcı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1982).

⁹⁹ For a description of the duties of the *parvanchī* within the medieval Iranian bureaucratic hierarchy, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "parwānāci" (by G. Herrmann). On the privileges conferred upon the *muqarrab* (often referred to as *ichki* [insider] in the Timurid household), including the right of unfettered access to the ruler, see Maria E. Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition: Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 34, 68, 84, and 95.

¹⁰⁰ Amīr Sayyid Kamāl al-Dīn Husain Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-'ushshāq: tazkira-i 'urafā'*, ed. Ghulāmriżā Ṭabāṭabā'ī Majd (Tehran: Zarrīn, 1375/1996); and Storey, *Persian Literature* 1:961. For a reference to the role of Kamāl al-Dīn Gāzurgāhī as trustee (*mutavallī*) of the shrine of Khvāja 'Abd Allāh Anṣārī (d. 481/1089) in Gāzurgāh, see Maria E. Subtelny, "The Cult of 'Abdullāh Anṣārī under the Timurids," in *Gott ist schön und Er liebt die Schönheit/God is Beautiful and He Loves Beauty: Festschrift für Annemarie Schimmel*, ed. Alma Giese and J. Christoph Bürgel (Bern: Peter Lang, 1994), 400–401.

¹⁰¹ 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī, *Tazkira-i Majālis al-naḡā'*s: *Two 16th century Persian translations*, ed. 'Alī Aṣghar Ḥikmat (Tehran: Kitābkhāna-i Manūchihri, 1363/1984–85). The Persian interpolation by Qazvīnī is quite unlike the unembellished Persian translation of the same Chaghatay original by Sulṭān Muḥammad Fakhri Haravī, the *Laṭā'if-nāma*. For this translation, see Maria Eva Subtelny, "The Poetic Circle at the Court of the Court of the Timurid, Sulṭān Husain Baiqara, and its Political Significance," (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1979).

¹⁰² Sām Mīrzā Ṣafavī, *Tazkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, ed. Rukn al-Dīn Humāyūn Farrukh (Tehran: Shirkat-i Sahāmī-yi Chāp va Intishārāt Kutub-i Irān, 1936).

Ya'qūb and Qāzī Īsā not found in other normative historical sources.¹⁰³ Qazvinī completed his translation of the *Majālis al-naḡā'is*, entitled as *Hasht bihisht*, in 929/1522–23 for the Ottoman sultan Selim “the Grim” (d. 926/1520). What is particularly significant is that he appended forty notices on poets associated with Ya'qūb and his court, thus making this an indispensable source for the history of the literary life of Āq Qoyūnlū Tabriz.¹⁰⁴

Another contemporary *tazkira* is the *Tazkirat al-shu'arā'* by Daulatshāh b. 'Alā' al-Daula Bakhtīshāh al-Ghāzī Samarqandī (d. 900/1494–95),¹⁰⁵ a selection of entries on ancient Arab and Persian poets up to the reign of Sultān Ḥusain Bāyqarā. Completed in 892/1487, the *Rauzāt al-salāṭīn* by Sultān Muḥammad Fakhri Haravī (d. ca. 962/1555) is a collection of biographical entries on rulers who composed poetry.¹⁰⁶ It is useful for helping to establish the date of composition of *Salāmān va Absāl*, and includes poems of Ya'qūb's own composition.¹⁰⁷

Letters of Personal Correspondence

Another important source, in terms of primary sources written in prose, is the personal correspondence (*tarassul; inshā'*; or *ikhwanīyyat*) between Jāmī and a range of contemporary rulers, including Ūzūn Ḥasan and his son Ya'qūb. Particularly relevant to this study are four letters addressed by Ya'qūb to Jāmī, as well as one reply by Jāmī to Ya'qūb (see Appendix 1), which is particularly revealing.¹⁰⁸ These provide a glimpse into the nature of their relationship, which appears to be that of a master and disciple—a dynamic evinced in the constant requests by Ya'qūb for the counsels (*naṣā'ih*) of Jāmī. One of the letters sent to Jāmī by Ya'qūb is especially telling, for it indirectly refers to the poem *Salāmān va Absāl* by way of

¹⁰³ For a discussion of the utility and limitations of biographical dictionaries as historical sources, see Humphreys, *Islamic History*, 174–79.

¹⁰⁴ Navā'ī, *Tazkira-i Majālis al-naḡā'is*, 300–12, henceforth cited as Qazvinī, *Hasht bihisht*.

¹⁰⁵ Daulatshāh Samarqandī, *The Tadkiratu 'sh-shu'arā' ("Memoirs of the Poets") of Dawlatshāh bin 'Alā'u 'D-Dawla Bakhtīshāh al-Ghāzī of Samarqand*, ed. Edward G. Browne (London: Luzac, 1901).

¹⁰⁶ Sultān Muḥammad Fakhri Haravī, *Tazkira-i Rauzāt al-salāṭīn*, ed. 'Abbās Khayyāmpūr (Tabriz: Dānishgāh-i Tabriz, 1345/1966). The *Rauzāt al-salāṭīn* was in fact dedicated to a ruler in Sind, Abū al-Faṭḥ Shāh Hasan Ghāzī.

¹⁰⁷ Fakhri Haravī, *Rauzāt al-salāṭīn*, 65–66.

¹⁰⁸ For a collection of about 433 letters by Jāmī, including those he exchanged with Ya'qūb, see 'Asam al-Din Urunbaev and Asrar Rahmanov, eds., *Nāmāh va munsha'āt-i Jāmī* (Tehran: Mirās-i Maktūb, 1378/1999), 302–7, esp. 281 (Jāmī's reply).

an allusion to Ibn Sīnā's version of the tale.¹⁰⁹ Most significant is the fact that, in this letter, Ya'qūb considers the poem to be a work of advice and not, as is generally assumed, merely a romantic tale. This correspondence, despite its dense, almost cryptographic, idiom, supports the contention that Jāmī's poem was understood by the Āq Qoyūnlū rulers themselves to be a mirror for princes.

Statement of Purpose

Salāmān va Absāl was written at the end of Jāmī's prolific literary career during an era that was dominated by the cultural achievements of the Timurids. It was dedicated however to an Āq Qoyūnlū patron. Serious studies by modern scholars of the religious, political, and literary dynamics of the Āq Qoyūnlū court—especially that of Ya'qūb—have failed to give it the attention it deserves.¹¹⁰

The aim of the present study is to contextualize *Salāmān va Absāl* historically and to examine it as a mirror of advice for the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler to whom it is dedicated. This will be achieved by exploiting the above-mentioned historical sources and by a textual analysis of the poem.

In conclusion, a hypothesis will be presented to explain the multi-layered esotericism of *Salāmān va Absāl* by examining how it at once operated as traditional guide to governance, a heuristic vehicle for mystical contemplation, and a veiled account of the *dramatis personae* at the court of Ya'qūb.

¹⁰⁹ Ya'qūb to Jāmī, in Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 306–7 (letter no. 18).

¹¹⁰ Namely, the analyses of V. Minorsky, Hans R. Roemer, Jean Aubin, and John Woods, whose contributions are cited throughout this study.

CHAPTER TWO

POLITICAL ADVICE FOR RULERS AND MYSTICAL GUIDANCE FOR SUFIS IN *SALĀMĀN VA ABSĀL*

Religion is good advice.

Religion is good advice.

Religion is good advice.

—Ibn Taimiyya, *Kitāb al-siyāsa al-sharʿiyya*¹

The Perso-Islamic Tradition of Advice and Advice Literature

The tradition of giving advice to rulers, statesmen, and other officials on how to comport themselves according to religious and ethical ideals while expediently achieving their political, military, or administrative aims is rooted in Late Antiquity. It was not until the fourth/tenth century however, during the early ʿAbbasid caliphate, that the genre of advice literature crystallized around Arabic translations of prose works in Pahlavī (e.g., *Advices of Ardashīr*, *Anūshīrvān*, and *Buzurjmihr*; the *Letter of Tansar*), ancient Greek (e.g., the *Secretum Secretorum*), and Sanskrit (e.g., *Arthashastra*; *Panchatantra*) concerning ethics and statecraft.² The literature of advice (*andarz* or *pand*)—particularly that ascribed to the Sasanians—had the most significant bearing on the subsequent development of Perso-Islamic mirrors for princes.

The Sasanian model of kingship, and the didactic literature it spawned in medieval Islam, is reflected in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* of al-Ghazālī, in which he recommends that the ruler “follow the precepts (*barnahād*) and methods (*ravish*) of the kings who preceded him (i.e., the Sasanians), and govern like them. He must also read their books of counsel (*pand-nāma*),

¹ In Arabic: *al-dīn naṣīḥa*, *al-dīn naṣīḥa*, *al-dīn naṣīḥa*. A prophetic *ḥadīth* mentioned by Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) and quoted by Ibn Taimiyya (d. 728/1328) in his *Kitāb al-siyāsa al-sharʿiyya*. For references, see Henri Laoust, *Le traité de droit public d'Ibn Taimīya*, *Traduction annotée de la Siyāsa sharʿiyya* (Beirut: Institut Français de Damas, 1948), 173; and A. J. Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition, Alphabetically Arranged* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1927), 204.

² C. E. Bosworth “Mirrors for Princes,” in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, ed. Julie Scott Meisami and Paul Starkey, 2 vols. (New York: Routledge, 1998), 2:527.

for these predecessors lived long lives, went through many experiences, and learned by experience to distinguish good from bad.”³

For his part, Nizām al-Mulk devotes chapter 18 of the *Siyar al-mulūk* to the importance of “Consulting with wise (*dāniyān*) and experienced men (*pīrān*).”⁴ But instead of harkening back to Sasanian models, Nizām al-Mulk justifies the need for the ruler to seek advice in Islamic terms by quoting a Qur’anic verse (3:159) in which God commands the Prophet to “consult (*shāwir*) them in affairs!”⁵

It should be noted that the association of the Prophet Muḥammad with ethical advice was not novel. According to a canonical *ḥadīth*, the Prophet stated, “Religion is counsel (*naṣīḥat*).”⁶ An interlocutor asked for whom, to which Muḥammad purportedly answered, “For God, His Book, and His Messenger; for the leaders of the Muslims and their community.”⁷ Another tradition suggests that giving good advice (or pious admonition) is a religious duty for Muslims, alongside prayer (*ṣalāt*) and giving alms (*zakāt*).⁸

Added to these Perso-Islamic justifications for counseling rulers is the fact that the *‘ulamā’* and leaders of Sufi mystical orders, despite their occasional ambivalence to involving themselves in temporal affairs of the state were, alongside *vazīrs*, important transmitters of moralizing advice. By the second-half of the ninth/fifteenth century, this meant Sufi mystics, notably members of the Naqshbandī order like ‘Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār, exerted considerable influence over Timurid rulers in Transoxiana and eastern Iran.⁹ With their doctrine of “solitude within society” (*khalvat dar anjuman*), an ethic asserting that inward (spiritual) devotion was best achieved through outward activity (that is, within society), the Naqshbandis justified their

³ al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 112 (trans. 63). The injunction is followed by anecdotes about Anūshīrvan’s own interest in moralizing stories about earlier rulers.

⁴ Nizām al-Mulk, *Siyar al-mulūk* [*Siyāsāt-nāma*], ed. Ja’far Shī’ār (Tehran: Kitābhā-yi Jibī, 1348/1969), 138–40 (trans. 95–96).

⁵ In Arabic: *wa shāwirhum fī al-amri*.

⁶ For the *ḥadīth*, see A. J. Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition, Alphabetically Arranged* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1927), 204. Quoted in Hamid Algar, “Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History,” in *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et situation actuelle d’un ordre mystique musulman/Historical Developments and Present Situation of a Muslim Mystical Order, Actes de la Table Ronde de Sèvres/Proceedings of the Sèvres Round Table 2–4 mai/2–4 May 1985*, ed. Marc Gaborieau, Alexander Popovic, and Thierry Zarcone (Istanbul: l’Institut Français d’Études Anatoliennes d’Istanbul, 1990), 149 n. 118.

⁷ Wensinck, *Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, 173.

⁸ Wensinck, *Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, 173.

⁹ For a description of the extensive landholdings and agrarian activities of ‘Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār, see Gross, “Economic Status of a Timurid Sufi Shaykh,” 84–104.

service to rulers in religious terms.¹⁰ ‘Ubaid Allāh Ahrār for example, is credited with inspiring Sultān-Abū Sa‘īd’s (873/1469) defeat of ‘Abd Allāh Khān and facilitating Sultān-Abū Sa‘īd’s accession to the Timurid throne in 855/1451 after the prince had assured Ahrār that he would personally uphold the *sharī‘a*.¹¹ Later, ‘Ubaid Allāh Ahrār intervened with Sultān-Abū Sa‘īd on behalf of the sedentary Muslim populations of Samarqand and Bukhara and secured the abolition of the *tamghā* (an old Mongol tax levied on all commercial transactions)¹² by arguing that such a toll was a heretical innovation (*bid‘a*) and not in accordance with Islamic law.¹³

It has been argued that, because of their rigorous adherence to the *sharī‘a* and their staunchly Sunni identity, the Naqshbandīs were disposed to serving the Timurid and Ottoman administrations.¹⁴ For example, they trace their spiritual genealogy or *silsila* back to the first caliph, Abū Bakr (d. 13/634). It has been speculated that their reputedly anti-Shī‘ite polemics and hostility to antinomian dervish groups would have won them support from the traditional *‘ulamā’*.¹⁵ As Hamid Algar, Paul, and Dina Le Gall

¹⁰ For a discussion of the strictly spiritual aspects of this doctrine, see Jürgen Paul, *Doctrine and Organization. The Khwājagān/Naqshbandīya in the First Generation after Bahā‘uddīn* (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 1998), 30–34.

¹¹ On the differing accounts of this and other events involving ‘Ubaid Allāh Ahrār’s dealings with Timurid rulers, see Jo-Ann Gross, “Multiple Roles and Perceptions of a Sufi Shaikh: Symbolic Statements of Political and Religious Authority,” in *Naqshbandis: Chemineements et situation actuelle d’un ordre mystique musulman/Historical Developments and Present Situation of a Muslim Mystical Order, Actes de la Table Ronde de Sèvres/Proceedings of the Sèvres Round Table 2–4 mai/2–4 May 1985*, ed. Marc Gaborieau, Alexander Popovic, and Thierry Zarcone (Istanbul: l’Institut Français d’Études Anatoliennes d’Istanbul, 1990), 109–21.

¹² Originally a Chaghatay Turkish word for the tribal brand on livestock, this term is described in detail in Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung älterer neupersischer Geschichtsquellen, vor allem der Mongolen- und Timuridenzeit*, 4 vols. (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1963–67), 2:554–65.

¹³ For a discussion of ‘Ubaid Allāh Ahrār’s influence on Timurid policies of taxation, see Paul, *Die politische und soziale Bedeutung*, 221–32. See also Paul, “Forming a Faction,” 533–48. On the *tamghā* tax in medieval Iran, see M. Minovi and V. Minorsky, “Našīr al-Dīn Tūsī on Finance,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 10, no. 3 (1942): 773 and 781–82.

¹⁴ For a discussion of how traditional scholarship overemphasizes the political characteristics of the Naqshbandī order, see Algar, “Political Aspects,” 123–24 and 152. On what Jürgen Paul describes as the relative quietism of pre-Ahrār Khwājaganīs (later Naqshbandīs), see his “Solitude within Society,” 137–63, esp. 144. For exceptions to this quietism, especially while at Herat, see Jürgen Paul, “The Khwājagān at Herat during Shāhrukh’s Reign,” in *Horizons of the World: Festschrift for Isenbike Togan*, ed. İlker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kılıç-Schubel (Istanbul: İthaki, 2011), 217–50.

¹⁵ For the problems associated with viewing the Timurid and early Ottoman Naqshbandīs as “anti-Shī‘ite,” see Dina Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandīs in the Ottoman World, 1450–1700* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), 141–42;

have demonstrated, however, royal patrons directed their attention to individual Naqshbandīs for several reasons, including their reputations as purveyors of Persian literary culture and as interpreters of the theosophical ideas of Ibn al-ʿArabī.¹⁶ Perhaps more importantly, their observation of the principle of *khalvat dar anjuman* indicates that the Naqshbandīs attached their own spiritual progress to engaging in public activities and vocations that would theoretically benefit all Muslims.

This last explanation is at the heart of an aphorism attributed to ʿUbaid Allāh Ahrār which encapsulates the order's ethos of community service: "A good *khvāja* (i.e., Naqshbandī)," he is reported to have said, "must benefit Muslims and he must also mingle with *amīrs* and sultans so that his pious being encourages them to occupy themselves with the good of the people and avoid injustice and oppression."¹⁷ Elsewhere in the same source, ʿUbaid Allāh Ahrār points to the activism that distinguished Naqshbandīs from other Sufi groups, saying: "We have been assigned a different task, which is to guard the Muslims from oppression, and to this end one must mingle with kings and conquer their souls."¹⁸ In other words, being a Naqshbandī required one to engage to some degree in politics, and this political activity—at least within the framework of royal patronage of a Sufi shaiḥ—amounted to giving a ruler good advice.

This idea was apparently not uncommon in late ninth/fifteenth century Iran. For example, a similar if not more explicit opinion relating mystical progress to court service is expressed in the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*. According to Davānī, whose interest in Sufism prompted him to associate with the Murshidiyya, a circle of dervishes in Kazarun centered around a pupil of Amīn al-Dīn al-Balyānī (d. 745/1344–45), "the masters of the mystical path (*mashā'ikh-i ṭariqat*) have said that [the custom of] following the Sufi

and Hamid Algar, "Naqshbandīs and Safavids: A Contribution to the Religious History of Iran and Her Neighbors," in *Safavid Iran and Her Neighbors*, ed. Michel Mazzaoui (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2003), 7–48.

¹⁶ This was particularly the case with the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II. For a discussion of the Naqshbandīs as transmitters of Persian *belles-lettres* and Akbarian metaphysics to the early Ottomans, see Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 35 and 123–57.

¹⁷ This saying is attributed to ʿUbaid Allāh Ahrār by Burhān al-Dīn Samarqandī (also referred to as Maulānā Muḥammad Qāzī), *Silsilat al-ʿarifin wa tazkirat al-ṣiddiqin* (Tashkent: Institut Vostokovedeniia, no. 4452/I, fol. 101a–101b), quoted in Gross, "Multiple Roles," 109.

¹⁸ Samarqandī, *Silsilat al-ʿarifin*, fol. 163b, quoted in Gross, "Authority and Miraculous Behavior," 163. In another hagiographical source, ʿUbaid Allāh Ahrār reportedly said: "Helping the faith and the *umma*, upholding the religion and others, are more effectively done from the rank of kingship than any other one." See Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Avval Nishāpūrī, *Majālis-i ʿUbaid Allāh Ahrār* (India Office DP 8090), ff. 90a–90b., quoted in Gross, "Authority and Miraculous Behavior," 163.

path (*sulūk-i ʿarīqat*) will not attach (*ta'alluq*) [itself] to a person who is not in the service of rulers."¹⁹ He goes on to explain that, because the ruler is the shadow of God (*ẓill Allāh*), observing proper etiquette at the royal assembly breaks the ego (*nafs*) and leads one to adhere to the customs of the Sufi way (*rusūm-i ʿarīqat*).²⁰ Although he attributes this to unnamed shaiḫs (in order to both legitimize and distance himself from such a position), Davānī endorses the notion that associating with rulers was a prerequisite for the spiritual advancement of Sufi mystics. The fact that he expressed such sentiments in a manual of advice addressed to the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler, suggests that the dynasty's court was already populated by Sufis who traditionally cultivated a taste for mystico-didactic literature.

The concept of advice, especially the idea that the good counsel of a father or sage ultimately determines the success of a prince, is a central theme in Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl*. As already noted, the story includes the repeated admonitions given by the King and the Sage to convince Salāmān to renounce his beloved Absāl and devote himself entirely to inheriting his father's throne. For example, "a year and a month" into the affair, the King and Sage resolve to summon Salāmān and give him "good counsel" (*naṣīḥat*) since, in an obvious allusion to the *ḥadīth* mentioned earlier, "No deed is better than dispensing good advice."²¹ It is through good advice that the deficient become perfect, and those who have retreated become those who now advance.²² Jāmī goes on to explain that the original proponents of good counsel (*nāṣiḥān*) were the prophets and that, through their advice, the affairs of reason and religion (*'aql va dīn*) were made right. In fact, for anyone who "drew the breath of prophecy" (*har ki az paighambarī dam zad*), he concludes, nothing but good advice (*naṣīḥat*) descended on him from heaven. Two vignettes follow, one in which the King gives counsel (*pand*) to Salāmān, and another where the Sage provides *naṣīḥat*.²³

¹⁹ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 149–50. On the extent of Davānī's association with the Mursīdiyya, a *ṭarīqa* linked to Abū al-Najīb 'Abd al-Qāhir Suhrawardī (d. 563/1168), and thus the Suhrawardī order, but whose origins trace back to Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Kāzarūnī (d. 426/1035), hence the group's variant name, Kāzarūniyya (also Ishāqiyya), see Reza Pourjavady, *Philosophy in Early Safavid Iran: Najm al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Nayrizī and His Writings* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 6–7.

²⁰ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 149–50. The statements appear in a chapter on the proper etiquette (*ādāb*) of royal attendants, intimates of the ruler's household (*muqarrabān*), and grantees of the state (*arbāb-i daulat*).

²¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 426, line 683. In Persian: *kaz naṣīḥat nīst bihtar hič kār*.

²² Jāmī, *SA*, 426, line 684.

²³ Jāmī, *SA*, 426–28, lines 684, 688–702, and 718–32.

Salāmān reflects on their admonitions but again abandons them in favor of Absāl. Besides illustrating Salāmān's defiance, these episodes can be interpreted as representing an attempt by Jāmī to address Ya'qūb by presenting him with vivid justifications for the prince/ruler's need to be guided by good advice, that is, the kind of wise counsel which, it is clearly implied, is contained in his *Salāmān va Absāl*. In doing so, Jāmī upholds the Naqshbandī tradition articulated by 'Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār and represents the advice-giving Sufi who, by way of his didactic tale, fulfills the abovementioned requirement to "mingle" with rulers so that tyranny can be avoided.

It is important to mention that Ya'qūb was not the only ruler to whom Jāmī addressed his didactic poetry. The Naqshbandī poet is more generally known for his long association with Timurid rulers, a rapport that appears to have started with Abū al-Qāsim al-Bābur (d. 861/1457), the great-grandson of Temūr (d. 807/1405).²⁴ However no single ruler (Timurid or otherwise) is more justifiably associated with Jāmī than Sulṭān-Ḥusain Bāyqarā, whom the poet-mystic initiated into the Naqshbandī *ṭarīqa*.²⁵ In addition to dedicating numerous panegyric *qaṣīdas* and *ghazals* to Sulṭān-Ḥusain, Jāmī mentions the Timurid ruler in the introduction to his *Bahāristān*, a moralizing work in mixed prose and verse patterned after the *Gulistān* of Sa'dī (d. 691/1292).²⁶ Also, three of the seven *maṣnavīs* comprising Jāmī's *Haft aurang*, namely *Lailī va Majnūn*, *Subḥat al-abrār*, and *Khīrad-nāma-i Iskandarī*, were dedicated to Sulṭān-Ḥusain.²⁷ Another *maṣnavī*, the *Silsilat al-zahab*, which bears multiple dedications and is divided into three distinct books (*daftar*s), praises Sulṭān-Ḥusain in between prescriptions directed at Naqshbandī adepts (*murīds*).²⁸

²⁴ Hikmat, *Jāmī*, 19. For Abū al-Qāsim al-Bābur, see *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Bābor, Abū'l-Qāsem Mirzā b. Bāysonqor b. Šāhroḡ" (by M. E. Subtelny).

²⁵ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Mīr 'Alī Shīr Nawā'ī" (by M. E. Subtelny). This would be in addition to what Algar counts as Jāmī's only three disciples: Raḏī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ghafūr Lārī (d. 912/1506), author of *Takmila-i Nafaḥat al-uns*, a biography of Jāmī appended to his *Nafaḥat al-uns min ḥazarāt al-quds*; his own son, Khvāja Ziyā' al-Dīn Yūsuf (d. 919/1513); and the poet Maulānā Shahīdī Qumī. Algar, "Naqshbandīs and Safavids," 42 n. 95. On the likelihood that Jāmī initiated others, see *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Jāmī iii. Jāmī and Sufism" (by Hamid Algar).

²⁶ For the *qaṣīdas* and *ghazals* addressed to Sulṭān-Ḥusain, see Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Dīvān-i Jāmī*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan (Tehran: Mu'assasa-i Intishārāt-i Nigāh, 1380/2001), 18, 22, 54, 57, 80, 92, 96, 107, 309, and 668. Jāmī dedicated *Bahāristān* to his ten-year-old son, Ziyā' al-Dīn Yūsuf, in 892/1487.

²⁷ Hikmat, *Jāmī*, 27–29.

²⁸ Although holding himself aloof from court life, Jāmī nevertheless dominated the literary scene and the galaxy of poets attracted to the court of Sulṭān-Ḥusain in Herat.

Other non-Timurid rulers either had didactic compositions dedicated to them by Jāmī or were objects of his panegyrics. For example, around 869/1465, he dedicated his *Lavā'ih*, a short philosophical tract mixing poetry and prose on the nature of existence (*vujūd*), to Jahānshāh (d. 872/1467), the leader of the Qarā Qoyūnlū (Black Sheep) tribal confederation.²⁹ Jāmī also arranged for his *Kullīyāt* to be delivered to Farrukh Yasār Shīrvān-shāh (d. 906/1501), ruler of the Shīrvān vassal state in eastern Transcaucasia whose destiny, on account of a double marriage alliance with the Āq Qoyūnlū, became entwined with the shifting fortunes of Ya'qūb and his descendants.³⁰

It was the Ottoman sultans however, who would prove to be the most tenacious in trying to associate themselves with the famed poet of Herat. Between 875/1470 and 890/1485, the Ottomans made a series of unsuccessful attempts to lure Jāmī away from his Timurid patrons in Herat to the Ottoman court at Istanbul. One of the more ambitious attempts, which is described in the *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* and the *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī*,

Adding to his aura of inviolability were unique fiscal privileges he enjoyed, particularly his status as immune to taxation (termed *tarkhānī*) and the numerous grants (*suyūrghāl*) of *mortmain* land invested to him by Timurid rulers. For details of Jāmī's unassailable authority and financial independence, see Subtelny, "Poetic Circle," 111; and Maria Eva Subtelny, "Socioeconomic Bases of Cultural Patronage under the Later Timurids," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20, no. 4 (1988): 483–84.

²⁹ Afṣaḥzād, *Naqd va bar rasī-yi āsār va sharḥ-i aḥvāl-i Jāmī*, 175. The lack of reference to Jahānshāh's name in the opening address (*khuṭba*) of the book, together with the historical rivalry between the Timurid and Qarā Qoyūnlū dynasties, has led some scholars to doubt that Jāmī would dedicate such a work to the adversary of his main patron. This opinion was posited by Iraj Afshar in 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Sih risāla dar taṣavvuf*, ed. Iraj Afshār (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Farhang-i Irān-i Zamīn, 1359/1980), 4. It should be noted however that Jahānshāh was himself a relatively skilled poet who apparently sent Jāmī a copy of his own *divān*. Jāmī's response included a *qit'a* (verse fragment) addressing the Black Sheep ruler as the "true king" or *shāh-i ḥaqīqī* (also a reference to Jahānshāh's *nom de plum* "Ḥaqīqī"). See Urunbaev and Rahmanov, eds., *Nāmāh va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 271–72 (letter no. 412); and Hikmat, *Jāmī*, 35. For a discussion of Jahānshāh's poetic acumen, see Vladimir Minorsky, "Jihān-shāh Qara-Qoyunlu and His Poetry (Turkmenica, 9)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 16, no. 2 (1954): 271–97.

³⁰ Farrukh Yasār was the father of both Ya'qūb's principal wife, Gauhar-Sultān Khānum, and Ya'qūb's brother-in-law, Ghazī Khān, who was betrothed to the daughter of Ūzūn Ḥasan, Shāh-Beg Khātūn, in a double alliance. For a description of the origins and durability of the Shīrvānshāh dynasty, see Vladimir Minorsky, *A History of Sharvān and Darband in the 10th–11th Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958); see also *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Shīrvān Shāh" (by W. Barthold; C. E. Bosworth); and C. E. Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties: A Chronological and Genealogical Manual* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 140–42.

occurred during Jāmī's return trip from the *hajj* in 878/1473.³¹ Upon hearing that the poet-mystic was transmitting *ḥadīth* with the renowned traditionist, Qāzī Muḥammad Ḥaiṣarī (date of death unknown), in Damascus, the Ottoman sultan Meḥmed II (d. 886/1481) dispatched a certain Khvāja 'Aṭā' Allāh Kirmānī with instructions to offer Jāmī 5,000 gold *ashrafi* coins and the promise that 100,000 more awaited him if he diverted his travel to Istanbul.³² Suggesting that Jāmī had no interest in the proposal, the *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* recounts how he left Aleppo for Āq Qoyūnlū-administered Tabriz "without delay" after learning that Ottoman messengers were pursuing him.³³

Although unsuccessful, Meḥmed II did nevertheless win a book dedication from Jāmī. In response to the Ottoman ruler's request that he compose a treatise adjudicating the positions of theologians, Sufis, and philosophers on eleven fundamental questions, Jāmī dedicated his *al-Durra al-fākhirā* to him.³⁴ Completed in 886/1481, the *al-Durra al-fākhirā* presents the Sufi approach to knowledge as a rational and clearly superior alternative to the sciences of scholastic/speculative theology (*ilm al-kalām*) and philosophy (*falsafa*).³⁵

Moreover, when Meḥmed II's son and successor, sultan Bāyazīd II (d. 918/1512), ascended the throne, Jāmī dedicated a mirror for princes to him.³⁶ Comprising the third book (*daftar*) of Jāmī's *Silsilat al-ṣahab*, this mirror was written sometime after 896/1490. Based partly on the *Chahār maqāla* of Niẓāmī 'Arūzī (d. ca. 552/1157), this work addresses such perennial concerns as civic politics (*siyāsat-i madanī*), justice ('*adl*), Islamic law (*sharī'a*), and the need to obtain *naṣīḥat* from religious scholars and *vazīrs*.³⁷

³¹ Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī, *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* 1:262–63; and Niẓāmī Bākharzī, *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī*, 183.

³² Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī, *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* 1:262; and Niẓāmī Bākharzī, *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī*, 183. The forty-five day stay by Jāmī in Damascus included visits with local Naqshbandīs, especially Maulānāzāda 'Abd Allāh Utrārī, a disciple of 'Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār who was propagating the order in Syria. On 'Abd Allāh Utrārī, see, *Culture of Sufism*, 19–20; and Hamid Algar, "Tariqat and Tariq: Central Asian Naqshbandīs on the Roads to the Haramayn," in *Central Asian Pilgrims: Hajj Routes and Pious Visits between Central Asia and the Hijaz*, ed. Alexandre Papas, Thomas Welsford, and Thierry Zarcone (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2012), 46.

³³ Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī, *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* 1:262.

³⁴ Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *The Precious Pearl: al-Jāmī's al-Durrah al-Fākhirā, with the Commentary of 'Abd al-Ghāfir al-Lārī*, trans. Nicholas L. Heer (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1979), 5–6; and Hikmat, *Jāmī*, 48–9.

³⁵ Jāmī, *Precious Pearl*, 7.

³⁶ On the reasons for the increase, see Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 35.

³⁷ Afṣaḥzād, *Naqd va bar rasī-yi āṣār va sharḥ-i aḥvāl-i Jāmī*, 210 ;and Niẓāmī 'Arūzī, *Chahār maqāla*, ed. Muḥammad Qazvīnī and Muḥammad Mu'in (Tehran: Kitābforūshī-yi

Like the classic mirrors for princes, this book of the *Silsilat al-zahab* contains aphorisms attributed to, or anecdotes about, rulers from previous dynasties who were idealized as model sovereigns. For example, references to such Sasanian, Ghaznavid, Saljuq, and Ilkhanid rulers as Khusrau Anūshīrvān (d. 579), Maḥmūd of Ghazna (d. 421/1030), Sultan Sanjar, and Ghāzān Khān (d. 703/1304), are cited throughout the text.³⁸ Jāmī also addresses the importance of *vazīrs* to the prosperity of the realm through references to statesmen like the Saljuq *vazīr* Nizām al-Mulk and the Barmakid family of ‘Abbasid-era bureaucrats.³⁹ It is interesting to note that this *daftar* also contains a eulogy of Ya’qūb in an anecdote that at once praises his justice and makes subtle reference to his moral laxity.⁴⁰ Like *Salāmān va Absāl*, it can be classified as a Perso-Islamic manual of ethico-political advice in the *maṣnavī* poetic form. Granted, it does not share the allegorical narrative or esoteric intricacies of *Salāmān va Absāl*. Nevertheless, when considered alongside Jāmī’s other ethical works, such as the *Bahāristān*, *Khirad-nāma-i Iskandarī*, and *Salāmān va Absāl*, it is significant, for it establishes Jāmī as a dominant purveyor of Persian wisdom to rulers in the late ninth/fifteenth century Islamic world.

Political Advice for Muslim Rulers in Salāmān va Absāl

As already indicated, the tradition of writing works of ethical and political advice—collectively referred to as “mirrors for princes” by modern scholars, who translated the Latin phrase *specula regis* from a medieval European context—dates back to antiquity.⁴¹ According to most historians,

Zavvār, 1334/1955). For an English translation, see Nizāmī ‘Arūzī, *Revised Translation of the Chahār maqāla (Four Discourses) of Nizāmī ‘Arūdī, Followed by an Abridged Translation of Mīrzā Muhammad’s Notes to the Persian Text*, trans. E. G. Browne (London: Luzac, 1921).

³⁸ Jāmī, *Silsilat al-zahab*, 328–30, lines 5306–48, 352–53, lines 5780–800, and 354–55, lines 5822–35 (Anūshīrvān); 337–39, lines 491–515 and 346–47, lines 5658–89 (Maḥmūd Ghaznavī); 339–41, lines 5529–72, 355, lines 5836–53 (Sanjar); and 342–43, lines 5588–604 (Ghāzān Khān).

³⁹ Jāmī, *Silsilat al-zahab*, 366, lines 6054–80, and 357–58, lines 5886–914.

⁴⁰ Jāmī, *Silsilat al-zahab*, 364, lines 6015–33. Ya’qūb is referred to in the past tense, which helps date the text after 896/1490.

⁴¹ Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 149. For the difference between Perso-Islamic “advice literature” and “mirrors for princes,” see Louise Marlow, “The Way of the Viziers and the Lamp of the Commanders (*Mīnhāj al-wuzarā’ wa-sirāj al-umārā’*)” of Aḥmad al-Ḥṣṣābādī and the Literary and Political Culture of Early Fourteenth-Century Iran,” in *Writers and Rulers: Perspectives on Their Relationship from Abbasid to Safavid Times*, ed. Beatrice Gruendler and Louise Marlow (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2004), 169.

the medieval Persian incarnation of this literary genre, which integrated ancient Greek, Iranian, and Indian conceptions of statecraft into Islamic notions of ethics and morality, can be traced back to the Sasanian *andarz-nāma* or *āyīna-nāma* tradition in which kings and Zoroastrian priests gave moral advice and injunctions on proper court etiquette to their sons and courtiers.⁴² This idea of refining one's character, and the body of advice literature that accompanied it, was eventually incorporated into the Islamic tradition under the banner of *adab* (literary refinement) and *akhlāq* (practical ethics).⁴³

In terms of content, the central concept in Perso-Islamic manuals dealing with political ethics was justice ('*adl* or '*adālat*').⁴⁴ The mirrors-literature uniformly tells us that justice was not a legal abstraction but the maintenance of an equilibrium, or balance (the Aristotelian *mesotēs* [golden mean] or ancient Iranian *paimān*), between the various socioeconomic groups, such that each class in a hierarchically-structured society depended on and benefited the other.⁴⁵ This commonwealth, or "circle

⁴² Lambton, "Islamic Mirrors for Princes," 421; and *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Andarz, i. Andarz and andarz Literature in Pre-Islamic Iran" (by S. Shaked). Much has been made of the syncretistic qualities of medieval advice literature. On its Greek and Indian influences, see Saïd Amir Arjomand, "Medieval Persianate Political Ethic," *Studies on Persianate Societies* 1 (2003): 3–28; and idem, "Perso-Indian Statecraft, Greek Political Science and the Muslim Idea of Government," *International Sociology* 16, no. 3 (2001): 455–73.

⁴³ *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Adab, i. Adab in Iran" (by Dj. Khalegi-Motlagh). For early works of Arabic *adab*, see Ira M. Lapidus, "Knowledge, Virtue, and Action: The Classical Muslim Conception of *Adab* and the Nature of Religious Fulfillment in Islam," in *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam*, ed. Barbara Daly Metcalf (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 39–61. The Persian tradition of mirror-writing even reached the Malay-Acehnese court where translations and adaptations of such works as the *Naṣīhat al-mulūk*, *Sīyar al-mulūk*, and Ḥusain Vā'iz Kāshif's *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī* began to appear in the early eleventh/seventeenth century. For a reference, see Jelani Harun, "*Bustan al-Salatin*, 'The Garden of Kings': A Universal History and *Adab* Work from Seventeenth-Century Aceh," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 32, no. 92 (2004): 44–52.

⁴⁴ Lambton, "Justice in the Medieval Persian Theory of Kingship," 92–93. For a bibliography of medieval and early-modern mirrors written in Persian and Arabic, see Mohammad-Taqi Danishpazhouh, "An Annotated Bibliography on Government and Statecraft," trans. Andrew Newman, in *Authority and Political Culture in Shi'ism*, ed. Saïd Amir Arjomand (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988), 213–39.

⁴⁵ On the problem of determining whether this concept was originally Greek or Zoroastrian, see Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship: Power and the Sacred in Muslim, Christian, and Pagan Politics* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1997), 87. For a discussion of social hierarchy in medieval Perso-Islamic manuals of advice, see Louise Marlow, *Hierarchy and Egalitarianism in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 128–39.

of justice" as it came to be known in the secondary literature, was presented as the basis for the stability of the medieval Islamic state.⁴⁶ It envisaged the realm as an organic yet rigidly stratified whole in which, to quote the *Qābūs-nāma*: "Kingship (*jahān-dārī*) is made possible by means of the army, the army is maintained by means of gold, gold is derived from [agriculturally] developing the land (*ʿimārat*), and developing the land occurs through justice and equity (*dād va ʿadl va inṣāf*)."⁴⁷ A slightly modified version of this circular formula appears in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, but instead of kingship, al-Ghazālī begins the schema with religion (*dīn*), that is to say, "Religion depends on kingship (*pādshāhī*), kingship on the army, the army on provisions (*khvāsta*), riches on cultivating the land (*ābādānī*), and cultivating the land on justice (*ʿadl*)."⁴⁸ Reflecting Ṭūsī's concept of the ideal city, Davānī inserts an expanded circle, thought to have been devised by Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, which incorporates eight elements, and which situates the *sharīʿa* and the punitive capacity (*siyāsāt*) of the ruler as its catalysts:⁴⁹

⁴⁶ For a discussion of the long history of this concept, see Linda T. Darling, "Do Justice, Do Justice, For That Is Paradise: Middle Eastern Advice for Indian Muslim Rulers," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 22, nos. 1–2 (2002): 3–19. See also Subtelny, *Le monde est un jardin*, 58–65, esp. 63 for a graphic representation of the circle of justice. On the source of the circle, see J. Sadan, "A 'Closed Circuit' Saying on Practical Justice," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 10 (1987): 325–41.

⁴⁷ Kay Kāʾūs, *Qābūs Nāma*, 125 (trans. 213).

⁴⁸ al-Ghazālī. *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 100 (trans. 56).

⁴⁹ Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, *Jāmiʿ al-ʿulūm*, ed. Muḥammad Khān Malik al-Kuttāb (Bombay: Maṭbaʿa-i Muṣaffarī, 1905), 207; and Subtelny, *Le monde est un jardin*, 62. For discussions of *siyāsāt* as it relates to punishment in accordance with the *sharīʿa*, see Bernard Lewis, "Siyasa," in *In Quest of an Islamic Humanism: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Memory of Mohamed al-Nowaihi*, ed. A. H. Green (Cairo: American University of Cairo Press, 1984), 3–14. As early as the fourth century BCE, Indian elaborations of statecraft included the ruler's prerogative to punish (Sanskrit: *danda*) as an essential principle of governance. The idea that this principle influenced or was integrated into later Persian manuals of advice is corroborated by a sixth/twelfth century Persian translation of Bidpai's Indian fables, the *Kalīla wa dimna*, which attributes to Ardashīr the following: "There is no kingdom except through men, and no men except through wealth and no wealth except through cultivation (*ʿimāra*) and no cultivation except through justice and punishment (*siyāsāt*)." On the similarities between *danda* and *siyāsāt*, see Arjomand, "Perso-Indian Statecraft," 457 and 462. Mirrors such as the *Baḥr-i favāʾid* and *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī* go so far as to warn that without *siyāsāt*, men would "devour each other." For references, see Julie Scott Meisami, trans. and ed., *The Sea of Precious Virtues (Baḥr-i favāʾid): A Medieval Islamic Mirror for Princes* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1991), 96; and Subtelny, "A Late Medieval Summa on Ethics," 607. It should be noted that this idea is traced back to ʿAmr al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868). For a reference, see Helmut Ritter, *The Ocean of the Soul: Man, the World, and God in the Stories of Farid al-Dīn ʿAttar*, trans. John O'Kane and ed. Bernd Ratke (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 127.

The world is a garden whose irrigator is the state; the state is a sultan whose chamberlain is the *sharīʿa*; the *sharīʿa* is coercive power whose maintainer is kingship; kingship is a city whose existence is brought about by the army; the army is maintained by state revenues; state revenues are produced by the subjects; the subjects are made slaves of justice; justice is the pivot of the well-being of the world.⁵⁰

Though the circle of justice does not appear in Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl*, the concept of justice forms an integral part of the explicit advice Jāmī gives concerning temporal rule. In fact, the ancient Persian idea relating justice to order and material prosperity appears conspicuously in a section of *Salāmān va Absāl* entitled, "Commencing with the discourse by explaining the facts of the case (*ṣūrat-i ḥāl*) of Salāmān and Absāl."⁵¹ It is important to note that the phrase *ṣūrat-i ḥāl* has a double meaning, one of which alerts the reader to the fact that Jāmī intended his *Salāmān va Absāl* to be read allegorically. Specifically, it can be read as Jāmī's indication that his poem is also an "image" (*ṣūrat*) or representation of the spiritual state (*ḥāl*) of the Sufi whose transformation is symbolized in the tale *Salāmān va Absāl*. As if to announce that the tale can be read as a traditional mirror of advice, Jāmī's opening description of the "*ṣūrat-i ḥāl*" of Salāmān and Absāl is capped with an axiomatic expression contained in nearly all Perso-Islamic manuals of statecraft: "It is justice (*ʿadl*) not religion (*dīn*) [that] keeps kingship (*mulk*) stable."⁵² An infidel (*kufr*) [ruler] who proceeds with justice (*ʿadl*)," he states, "is better for kingship (*mulk*) than a tyrant who is pious."⁵³ The ruler who maintains equipoise between societal groups, regardless of his personal piety or religious confession, will enjoy a prosperous realm and long reign. In the case of medieval Iran, such a notion privileged a centralized regime based on the Sasanian model of a patrimonial monarchy.⁵⁴ This system was based on keeping

⁵⁰ Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī, *Nusakh-i mutaṣannif bi-bi ʿadilī va bi-misālī lubb-i jarīda-i āfāq musammā bih Lavāmīʿ al-ishrāq va maʿrūf bih Akhlāq-i Jalālī* (Lucknow: Munshi Nawal Kishor, 1873), 33; Darling, "Do Justice," 4; and Subtelný, *Le Monde est un jardin*, 62–63.

⁵¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 405, lines 278–91.

⁵² Jāmī, *SA*, 405, line 290. In Persian: *ʿadl dārad mulk rā qāyīm na dīn*.

⁵³ Jāmī, *SA*, 406, line 291. In Persian: *kufr kishī kū bih ʿadl āyad farih mulk rā az zālīm-i dīndār bih*. Later, in the King's testament to Salāmān regarding the appointment of a *vazīr* (p. 445), the opposite view is taken: "In the distinguished eyes of the intelligent, it is not recommended that an infidel (*kāfir*) exercise authority (*ḥukm*) over Muslims." As for the practical history of the former expression, it reportedly appeared in a *fatwa* exacted from the *ʿulamāʾ* of Baghdad by the Mongols shortly after they took the city in 656/1258 and may have helped mitigate the city's completed destruction. For a reference, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Baghdād" (by A. A. Duri).

⁵⁴ Subtelný, *Le monde est un jardin*, 73.

the peasantry occupied with cultivating the land so that the bureaucratic state could levy agricultural land and produce in order to outfit and salary the military.⁵⁵

It was understood that the maintenance of equipoise also applied to the ruler's own constitution. In the *Naṣīhat al-mulūk*, al-Ghazālī states that inner equilibrium is a precondition for societal justice and that no ruler can achieve harmony among his subjects unless he first observes justice within himself.⁵⁶ He goes on to explain that justice is the restraining of tyranny (*ẓulm*), lust (*shahvat*), and anger (*khashm*) in order to make them the prisoners of reason and religion (*'aql va dīn*). Otherwise, it is the ruler's reason that becomes imprisoned by tyranny, lust, and anger.⁵⁷ In the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, Davānī warns that anyone who is unable to harmonize (*iṣlāḥ*) his own condition and [who] is powerless to effect justice (*'adālat*) in his own body, will not be able to make justice (*'adālat*) prevail among his people.⁵⁸ Davānī adds that only after the ruler observes justice over the body and its powers by abstaining from excess or deficiency, will he become the true caliph of God (*khalīfa-i khudā*).⁵⁹ Achieving what might be termed "true justice," therefore, had macrocosmic and microcosmic implications. This is something that esoteric (or mystical) mirrors for princes, like Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl*, were apt at addressing.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ For more on the salience of agricultural production in Perso-Islamic theories of governance, see Ann K. S. Lambton, "Reflections on the Role of Agriculture in Medieval Persia," in *The Islamic Middle East, 700–1900: Studies in Economic and Social History*, ed. A. L. Udovitch (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1981), 283–312; and Maria E. Subtelny, "A Medieval Persian Agricultural Manual in Context: The *Irshād al-zirā'a* in Late Timurid and Early Safavid Khorasan," *Studia Iranica* 22, no. 2 (1993): 167–217.

⁵⁶ al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīhat al-mulūk*, 37 (trans. 24).

⁵⁷ al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīhat al-mulūk*, 37 (trans. 24). He goes on to say: "Oh sultan of this world, you should know that justice (*'adl*) springs from the perfection of the intellect (*'aql*) and that perfection of the intellect means that you see affairs as they [really] are and perceive their verities (*ḥaqīqat*) and inner reality (*bāṭin*) without being deceived by their outward appearance (*ẓāhir*)."

⁵⁸ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 56.

⁵⁹ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 56.

⁶⁰ But see the *Qābūs-nāma* where Kay Kā'ūs writes: "God, then, created human beings (*tan-i mardum*) from all manner of different constituents, so that you are equally correct whether you call man the macrocosm (*'ālam-i kullī*) or the microcosm (*'ālam-i juzvī*). The reason is that each constituent body (*tan-i ādamī*), whether deriving from the natures (*tabā'ī*), the heavens (*aflāk*), the stars (*anjum*), essence (*unṣūr*), matter (*haiyulā*), form (*ṣūrat*), spirit (*naḥs*) or mind (*'aql*), is itself an independent world (*'alā-hida 'ālamī*)." Kay Kā'ūs, *Qābūs Nāma*, 140 (trans. 240). For a discussion of the Indo-Iranian origins of macro-microcosmic speculation, see Geo Widengren, "Macrocosmos-Microcosmos Speculation in the *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa* and some Hurufi Texts," *Archivio di Filosofia* 1 (1980): 297–312.

As for the statement concerning a just infidel, it is also contained in the *Siyar al-mulūk*, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, and the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* where it appears in Arabic as: *al-mulk yabqā ma'a al-kufr wa lā yabqā ma'a al-ẓulm* ("kingship endures with unbelief [but] does not endure with tyranny").⁶¹ Nizām al-Mulk attributes the maxim to unnamed sages, but al-Ghazālī classifies it as a prophetic *ḥadīth*.⁶² Regardless of origin, the statement became an essential aphorism in Persian manuals of statecraft, appearing in mirrors for princes written as late as the thirteenth/nineteenth century.⁶³

Jāmī cites a similar version of the maxim in a chapter of his *Bahāristān* devoted to the subject of equity (*niṣfat*) and justice (*ʿadālat*), in which he writes that "Justice (*ʿadl*) and equity (*inṣāf*), not unbelief (*kufr*) or religion (*dīn*), are those things that are effective in the preservation of the kingdom. For the ordering of this world, justice without religion (*ʿadl bī dīn*) is better than the tyranny of a pious (*dīndār*) king."⁶⁴ In terms of *Salāmān va Absāl*, Jāmī indirectly acknowledges the aphorism's Iranian origin by following it with a homily in which God commands the Prophet David and his community (*ummat*) to respect the ancient kings of Iran (*ʿAjam*). God informs David that although their religion was fire-worship (*ātishparastī*, i.e., Zoroastrianism), their custom (*āyīn*) was [based on] justice (*ʿadl*) and rectitude (*rāstī*): "For centuries the world flourished because of them; the darkness of tyranny (*ẓalamat-i ẓulm*) was far from their subjects. At ease from the torment of worry, [the subjects] reposed on account of their justice (*ʿadl*)."⁶⁵ It is interesting to note that the same homily also appears in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*. According to al-Ghazālī, God said: "Oh David, tell

⁶¹ Nizām al-Mulk, *Siyar al-mulūk* [*Siyāsat-nāma*], 15 (trans. 12); al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 82 (trans. 46); and Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 138.

⁶² As F. R. C. Bagley has noted, this and other purported sayings do not appear in any of the canonical collections of *ḥadīth*. For a reference, see Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Ghazālī's Book of Counsel for Kings* (*Nasihat al muluk*), trans. F. R. C. Bagley (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), lvii.

⁶³ Ann K. S. Lambton, "Some New Trends in Islamic Political Thought in Late 18th and Early 19th Century Persia," *Studia Islamica* 39 (1974): 120. Another prophetic maxim on justice found in advice manuals, though one which does not appear in Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl*, claims: "One day of just rule by a sultan is better than sixty years of worship (*ʿibādat*)," or "A century of unjust rule (*jaur*) by sultans will not cause as much damage as one hour of injustice (*jaur*) of the subjects to one another." See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 124 (trans. 71–72) and 131 (trans. 77).

⁶⁴ Nūr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Bahāristān va rasāʾil-i Jāmī: Mushtamil bar risālahā-yi musīqī, ʿarūḏ, qāfiya, Chihil ḥadīs, Naiya, Lavāmiʿ, Sharh-i Taiya, Lavāyih va Sarʾrishta*, ed. Aʿlā-Khān Afshāhzād, Muḥammad Jān ʿUmarov, and Ẓuhūr al-Dīn Abū Bakr (Tehran: Mirās-i Maktūb, 1379/2000), 52–53.

⁶⁵ Jāmī, *SA*, 406, lines 295–96.

your folk (*qaum*) not to speak ill of the people of Iran (*ahl-i 'Ajam*), for it is they who developed the world so that My slaves (*bandagān*) might live in it.”⁶⁶ Like Jāmī, al-Ghazālī places the purported revelation immediately after the maxim which states that kingship can endure with unbelief but not with injustice. This suggests that the concept was recognized as an ancient Iranian idea.

The fact that key aphorisms concerning the most important concept in the traditional mirrors-literature appear in *Salāmān va Absāl* supports the contention here that Jāmī's tale was intended as a mirror for princes. Another indication is seen with a segment describing the “Four characteristics which are necessary conditions for rule.”⁶⁷ According to Jāmī, four things (*chahār chīz*) are necessary for kingship: wisdom (*ḥikmat*), chastity (*ʿiffat*), courage (*shajāʿat*), and generosity (*jūd*):

Wisdom is not that which, following the abject carnal soul,
Turns the noble man into the plaything of a woman's orders.
It is not on account of chastity that the conscientious man
Defiles himself for an unworthy lover.
It does not belong to courage that he is rendered a captive,
Dragged by a whore outside the collar of manliness.
It is not a mark of generosity that he is not able to pass
Around his circle nothing except meanness.
Whoever is not a friend of these four conditions
Is not entitled to the fruit of the bride of kingship,
For the one who happens to be deficient in all four,
How will the King give him a place in his heart?⁶⁸

A similar quartet of virtues is described in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, and the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*. In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, al-Ghazālī relates a story about how Yūnān the Minister (Dastūr) wrote a letter to Anūshīrvān advising him of the four things (*chahār chīz*) he must always retain: justice (*ʿadl*), wisdom (*khīrad*), patience (*ṣabr*), and modesty (*sharm*).⁶⁹ In a section of the *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī* entitled “Enumeration of the classes of virtues to which the excellences of disposition refer,” Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī lists the four virtues (*fazāʾil*) which a good ruler is required to possess as: *ḥikmat*, *shajāʿat*, *ʿiffat*, and *ʿadālat*.⁷⁰ These same four virtues are enumerated in

⁶⁶ al-Ghazālī. *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 82–83 (trans. 46).

⁶⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 437, lines 897–904.

⁶⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 437, lines 897–903.

⁶⁹ al-Ghazālī. *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 139 (trans. 83). On the identity of Yūnān-i Dastūr and his association with the figure of Buzurjmihr, see Bagely, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, lxvi–lxviii.

⁷⁰ Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, 109–11 (trans. 80–81).

the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* by Davānī as necessary conditions for good kingship.⁷¹ It should be noted that the cardinal virtues described by Ṭūsī and Davānī are in fact Platonic in origin; they appear twice in *The Republic* and probably entered Islamic tradition through Ibn Miskawaih's *Tahzīb al-akhlāq*.⁷²

It is interesting to note that whereas Ṭūsī and Davānī describe justice as the fourth virtue, Jāmī's fourth condition is generosity (*jūd*), which, according to Miskawaih, is a special virtue that falls under temperance (*iffā*).⁷³ This fourfold division also serves as a didactic rhetorical device in the *Tuhfat al-mulūk* (also called *Tuhfat al-vuzarā'* and *Tuhfat al-salāṭīn*), a manual of advice attributed to the Hanbalite scholar and Sufi mystic of Herat, 'Abd Allāh Anṣārī (d. 481/1089). This work is divided into forty chapters, each of which lists "*chahār chīz*" (four things) the ruler must do in order to maintain his kingship.⁷⁴ It is important to note that Anṣārī's works enjoyed a renaissance in late ninth/fifteenth century Timurid Herat. This popularity, reflected by the fact that Jāmī revised and expanded several works attributed to him (such as his *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, which became Jāmī's *Nafaḥāt al-uns*), makes it very likely that Jāmī wrote this section of his *Salāmān va Absāl* with Anṣārī's apothegmatic writings in mind.⁷⁵

Another instance of an association between Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl* and the genre of mirrors-literature occurs near the end of the tale when the King, having commanded his retinue to obey Salāmān, delivers his final testament (*vaṣīyyat*) to him. Before continuing, it is worth mentioning that similar testaments (or "advice," as *vaṣīyyat* is sometimes translated) are contained in the *Qābūs-nāma*, *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī*, and *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*. In the *Qābūs-nāma*, Anūshīrvān gives advice (*pand*) to his son, while

⁷¹ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 27.

⁷² Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, trans. Francis MacDonald Cornford (London: Oxford University Press, 1945), 121–29 and 139–43. For Miskawaih's role in the transmission of these virtues into Perso-Islamic advice literature, see R. Walzer, "Some Aspects of Miskawaih's *Tahdhib al-Akhlāq*," in *Studi Orientalistici in Onore di Giorgio Levi Della Vida*, 2 vols. (Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente, 1956), 2:606–7.

⁷³ Walzer, "Some Aspects," 2:606.

⁷⁴ See the edition and Russian translation in Z. N. Vorozheikina, "«Tukhfat al-muluk» — srednevekovyi svod nravstvennykh zapovidei," *Pis'mennye pamiatniki Vostoka* (1973): 17–21. For example, in one of the chapters 'Abd Allāh Anṣārī describes the four things necessary for the stability of the sultanate as a series of paired virtues: '*adālat va shajā'at*, *murūvat va futūvvat* (manliness and chivalry), *sakhāvat va 'aṭīya* (generosity and [giving] gifts), *marhamat va shafaqat* (mercy and compassion).

⁷⁵ Anṣārī's *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya* is a Persian translation and expansion of the Arabic *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, which was written by Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Sulamī (d. 412/1021). On the popularity of 'Abd Allāh Anṣārī in the Timurid period, see Subtelny, "Cult of 'Abdullāh Anṣārī," 377–406, esp. 401.

at the end of Ṭūsī's *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī* Plato delivers his *vaṣāyā* to Aristotle.⁷⁶ Davānī, for his part, concludes his *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* with the *vaṣāyās* of both Plato and Aristotle to Alexander the Great.⁷⁷

In the case of Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl*, the King's *vaṣīyyat* begins with an injunction to Salāmān to take "religion-acquiring reason" (*'aql-i dīn-andūz*) as his guide, since every task needs science (*'ilm*) and every effort gains currency through knowledge (*dānish*).⁷⁸ Whatever you do not know, the King enjoins Salāmān, go and ask "learned men" (*dānishvarān*) about it. Mindful of the importance of the *sharī'a* and the ruler's observation of its strictures, specifically the equitable dispersal of conquered lands and booty to the Muslim community, Jāmī hints at the perils associated with greed. Thus, the King advises Salāmān to limit his acquisitions and dispensations to that which is permissible according to "religious law" (*ḥukm-i dīn*). More generally, Salāmān is told that his every motive and act ought to be in accordance with *ḥukm-i dīn*, since failing to do so is to turn away from the "straight paths" (*rāhhā-yi mustaqīm*) which are, according to the King, the "rules of the ancient [Iranian] kings" (*dastūr-i shāhān-i qadīm*). That the metaphor of the straight path, which is often used in connection with the *sharī'a*, is equated with norms epitomized by the Zoroastrian Sasanians is significant, for it suggests that Jāmī regarded, to some degree at least, ancient Iranian ethical concepts and Islamic morality as complementary—something most mirrors only imply.

Next Jāmī echoes a theme common to other mirrors for princes by comparing the ruler to a shepherd and his subjects to a flock of sheep:

You are a shepherd, and the subjects are like a flock of sheep,
In your shepherding, keep far from trouble.
In your shepherding, do not adopt other customs,
And regard your own ability as superior to actual shepherds.⁷⁹

According to Niẓām al-Mulk and al-Ghazālī, this idea comes from a *ḥadīth* and is related to the divine punishment that is said to await unjust rulers in the next world.⁸⁰ It is also contained in the *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī* and *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* where, like al-Ghazālī's *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the Prophet is cited as

⁷⁶ Kay Kā'ūs, *Qābūs Nāma*, 30–32 (trans. 45–48); and Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, 341–44 (trans. 258–60).

⁷⁷ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 161–64.

⁷⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 444, line 1034.

⁷⁹ Jāmī, *SA*, 444, lines 1048–49.

⁸⁰ Niẓām al-Mulk, *Sīyar al-mulūk* [*Sīyāsat-nāma*] (Shī'ār ed.), 11 (trans. 13); and al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 22 (trans. 17–18).

having said: "On resurrection day God will say to holders of authority (*vālīyān*): 'You were shepherds of My sheep,'"; or as Nizām al-Mulk has it: "You are all shepherds, each responsible for your flock."⁸¹ The analogy also appears in the *Qābūs-nāma* but in relation to the need of the ruler to protect his royal subordinates.⁸²

Jāmī's use of the analogy of the shepherd not only links his *Salāmān va Absāl* to the traditional mirrors for princes, it also introduces another major idea found in Persian works of political advice, namely the indispensability of an effective *vazīr* who plays a pivotal role in administering the financial branch of government.⁸³ So vital was the *vazīr* perceived to be to the sustainability of the medieval Iranian state that the *Āṣār al-vuzarā'*, a Timurid manual on the vizierate written in 883/1478–79 by Saif al-Dīn 'Uqailī for the Timurid *vazīr* Nizām al-Mulk Khvāfi (d. 903/1498), claims that the very foundation of the sultanate is the *vazīr*.⁸⁴

It is interesting to note that Jāmī prefaces his discussion of the vizierate by conflating it with its military counterpart. He specifically alludes to the dangerous, yet unavoidable, reliance all rulers have on military commanders (*sarhangān*) because of their capacity to ensure that the flock remains in accord with them. For example, the King tells Salāmān that commanders are like sheepdogs (*sag-i gala*) who need to be leashed and properly trained so that their hostility is directed at wolves (i.e., external enemies) and not sheep (i.e., the subjects).⁸⁵ He goes on to explain that utter calamity (*balā*) ensues for the flock when the sheepdog is a friend (*yār*) of the wolf. This parable is not original and resembles a story about Bahrām Gūr and his *vazīr*, Rāst-ravishn, which is recounted both in the *Siyyar al-mulūk*

⁸¹ Tūsi, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, 208 (trans. 155); Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 145; al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 22 (trans. 17–18); and Nizām al-Mulk, *Siyyar al-mulūk* [*Siyyasat-nāma*] (Shi'ār ed.), 11 (trans. 13).

⁸² Kay Kā'ūs, *Qābūs Nāma*, 131–32 (trans. 225).

⁸³ For an overview of the *vazīr*'s role in the administration of the pre-modern Iranian (especially Saljuq) state, see Ann K. S. Lambton, "Personal Service and the Element of Concession in the Theory of the Vizierate in Medieval Persia," in *Essays in Honor of Bernard Lewis: The Islamic World from Classical to Modern Times*, ed. C. E. Bosworth, Charles Issawi, Roger Savory, and A. L. Udovitch (Princeton: Darwin, 1989) 175–91, esp. 175–76. For a study of an Ilkhanid manual of advice written for *vazīrs*, see Louise Marlow, "Way of the Viziers," 169–93. According to many Perso-Islamic advice manuals, the archetypal *vazīr* was the Sasanian minister Buzurjmihr. On the prevalence of this legendary figure in works of political advice, see Roxanne D. Marcotte, "Anūshīrvān and Buzurgmihr—the Just Ruler and Wise Counselor: Two Figures of Persian Traditional Moral Literature," *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 51, no. 2 (1998): 69–90.

⁸⁴ See Subtelny, *Le monde est un jardin*, 70–71.

⁸⁵ Jāmī, *SA*, 444, lines 1051–52.

and in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*.⁸⁶ The story recounts how Bahrām Gūr, anxious over his depleted treasury, went horseback riding and came upon a shepherd who had hung his sheepdog from a gibbet. The shepherd told Bahrām Gūr that he killed the dog after seeing him mount a she-wolf and then fall asleep while the she-wolf poached the shepherd's flock.⁸⁷ Astonished at hearing this, Bahrām Gūr returned to his court, reviewed the daily account books (*rūz-nāma*), and discovered that Rāst-ravishn (literally, "the one honest in conduct") had been fleecing the peasantry. This prompted Bahrām Gūr to hang him on account of his treachery.⁸⁸ In a similar vein, the King tells Salāmān in *Salāmān va Absāl*:

There is no escape for kings from the need for *vazīrs*,
 But the *vazīr* must be one who is knowledgeable and trustworthy.
 He must know the affairs of the realm completely,
 So that he may order them in the best form.
 He must know that he is trusted with the wealth of the king,
 And is not preparing an ambush for seizing more than his rightful share,
 That he does not take more than [what] he needs from the subjects,
 And that which is the rightful portion of the king and his retinue.⁸⁹

The King notes that in addition to being benevolent (*mīhrbān*) and compassionate (*mushfiq*) toward the poor, the *vazīr* must know that his graciousness (*luṭf*) applies a "salve to every wounded breast."⁹⁰ At the same time, however, Salāmān is told that while the *vazīr* should direct his severity (*qahr*) at every oppressor (*ẓulm-kish*), but he must not himself be of a wicked disposition (*sīrat*), resembling a filthy mongrel who does not mind having his paws defiled.⁹¹

Standing at the head of the financial bureaucracy (*dīvān-i a'lā*) as the preeminent representative of the "men of the pen" (*ahl-i qalam*), the *vazīr* usually had the final word in financial matters, especially the collection of tax revenues (*māl*).⁹² The *vazīr* was often responsible for supervising

⁸⁶ Niẓām al-Mulūk, *Siyar al-mulūk* [*Siyāsāt-nāma*] (Shi'ār ed.), 30–42 (trans. 24–32); al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 155–56 (trans. 93–94). The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* features Gushtāsh, not Bahrām Gūr, as the ruler.

⁸⁷ Niẓām al-Mulūk, *Siyar al-mulūk* [*Siyāsāt-nāma*] (Shi'ār ed.), 31 (trans. 25); al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 155 (trans. 94).

⁸⁸ Niẓām al-Mulūk, *Siyar al-mulūk* [*Siyāsāt-nāma*] (Shi'ār ed.), 38–42 (trans. 26–32); al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 155 (trans. 94).

⁸⁹ Jāmī, *SA*, 444, lines 1054–57.

⁹⁰ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, lines 1058–59.

⁹¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, lines 1060–61.

⁹² Ann K. S. Lambton, *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia: Aspects of Administrative, Economic and Social History, 11th–14th Century* (Albany, NY: Bibliotheca Persica, 1988), 28–30.

assignments of land or tax exemptions granted to prominent military officials, civilian administrators, and religious leaders by the ruler.⁹³ These assignments of land usually gave grant-holders the legal right to collect specified levies in cash and kind in agricultural or urban districts that would otherwise be directed to the state treasury.⁹⁴ It is therefore not surprising to find that most mirrors, including Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl*, admonish the ruler to be suspicious of the *vazīr* and his capacity to misappropriate revenues or tyrannize the subjects.⁹⁵ According to the *Qābūs-nāma*, the *vazīr* should not be able to take a drink of water without the ruler knowing about it.⁹⁶ The King therefore warns Salāmān:

As for that person who is afraid of the *vazīr*,
Do not leave his interrogation up to the *vazīr*,
Investigate the matter yourself as well,
And you will make the rank of good fortune lofty.
As for he who acts competently on your behalf,
But who tyrannizes the cities and districts,
That is not being competent, that is causing calamity,
It is bundling together the kindling of hell;
Competence indeed! And it is not beyond him,
In the end, to convert his ten into two hundred.
When the extent of this 'competence' increases,
His carnal soul will rebel, and he will become an infidel.⁹⁷

It is therefore essential, Jāmī explains, that Salāmān appoint a true sage, that is to say, a guide or mentor capable of rendering expert counsel. "You must have an admonisher (*munahhī*)," he tells Salāmān, "to guide you wherever you go."⁹⁸ This admonisher, the King adds, must be clear-sighted, disposed to sincerity, and of excellent discernment; moreover, he should "convey the hidden of everything and relate the good and bad deeds of everyone."⁹⁹ In short, the King concludes, Salāmān must entrust all his religious and worldly affairs to none other than the sages (*dānāyān*).¹⁰⁰ A

⁹³ Lambton, *Continuity and Change*, 37.

⁹⁴ For the historical development of such grants, see the following articles by Ann K. S. Lambton, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Eqṭā'"; "The Evolution of the Iqṭā' in Medieval Iran," *Iran* 5 (1967): 41–50; and *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.vv. "Soyūrghāl," "Tiyūl."

⁹⁵ See for example, Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyar al-mulūk* [*Siyāsāt-nāma*] (Shī'ar ed.), 30 (trans. 23).

⁹⁶ Kay Kā'ūs, *Qābūs Nāma*, 137 (trans. 235).

⁹⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, lines 1065–70.

⁹⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, line 1063.

⁹⁹ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, line 1064.

¹⁰⁰ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, line 1074.

similar idea is contained in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* where the Sasanid king Ardashīr (d. 241) describes the ideal friend of the ruler as a well-principled (*dastūr-i nīk*), wise (*khiradmand*), benevolent (*mīhrbān*), and trustworthy (*amīn*) *vazīr* with whom opinions can be exchanged and to whom secrets can be confided.¹⁰¹

Being the Shadow of God on Earth

The idea of the temporal ruler as the shadow of God on earth is frequently encountered in Perso-Islamic treatises on statecraft. Encapsulated by such expressions as *al-sultān ḡill Allāh fī al-arḡ* in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, and *pādishāh ḡill Allāh dar zamīn* in the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, “the shadow of God” is often attributed to the Prophet, despite the fact that the saying does not appear in any of the canonical collections of *ḥadīth*.¹⁰² It is therefore not surprising that it is also found in *Salāmān va Absāl*. In fact, Jāmī bases his philosophical definition of kingship on it.¹⁰³ Without question, this saying was *de rigueur* for writers of political advice manuals, for it instantly legitimized the ruler’s authority, since he was considered the earthly manifestation of the hidden divine Reality. Stated differently, the expression implies that the ruler embodied the attributes of an unknowable divine essence.¹⁰⁴ In his description of the ruler as shadow of God, Jāmī also

¹⁰¹ al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 176 (trans. 106). Later he attributes another comparable maxim to the Prophet, whom al-Ghazālī reports as saying: “When principedom (*amīrī*) or office (*kārī*) is granted to a man, God Almighty, if He wishes that man well, will give him a pious (*parsā*) truthful (*rāst-guy*) and right-doing (*nikūravī*) *vazīr*, to remind him if he forgets anything of his duty towards the subjects, and to assist him if he remembers.” For a reference, see *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 183 (trans. 111). In the *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, Ṭūsī says there is no harder task than to be the *vazīr* (*vizārat*). The *vazīr*’s best weapons (*silāḥ*), he adds, are integrity and rectitude (*siḥḥat va istiḡāmat*). See Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, 318 (trans. 240–41).

¹⁰² al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 81 (trans. 45); and Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 134 and 143. There is some doubt as to whether the Prophet would have used the term sultan. For example, see the comments of F. R. C. Bagley in al-Ghazālī, *Ghazālī’s Book of Counsel for Kings*, 14 n. 2. See also Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, “Political Thought of Jalal al-Din Dawwani,” *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 25 (1977): 139–49, who argues that the term sultan, as it appears in both the *ḥadīth* literature and the Qur’ān (some thirty-seven times), refers to the delegation of God’s authority to rule earth to a collective of believers. It has wrongly been understood, he claims, to mean a king. On the ubiquity of these phrases in Islamic literature and the Iranian provenance of the idea they convey, see Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship*, 73.

¹⁰³ The expression appears in a section praising (*madḥ*) Ya’qūb. Jāmī, *SA*, 394–95 lines 70–99.

¹⁰⁴ In addition to the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* and *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, the prophetic expression is also contained in the *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, 134 (trans. 108). While it does not appear in Nizām

mentions the idea of the “just ruler” and makes an allusion to the ancient Iranian concept of divine glory (New Persian, *farr*, Middle Persian, *farra*, and Avestan, *khvarna*) as part of his reasoning for conceptualizing the perfect ruler as a manifestation of God.¹⁰⁵ According to Jāmī, divine command (*ḥukm*) produces a special bounty; bounty is the existence (*vujūd*) of a just ruler (*shāh-i ‘ādil*). The just ruler is in turn nothing but God’s shadow and a refuge for mankind.¹⁰⁶

However much glory (*shukūh*) may adorn the ruler, his glory is merely a likeness (*miṣl*) of that which exists in the shadow.¹⁰⁷ Jāmī adds that it is for this reason that the shadow, i.e., the just ruler, is the source or eye (*‘ain*) of the shadow-holder, i.e., God.¹⁰⁸ If we recognize that the word *‘ain* can also mean “itself” or “essence,” then the shadow *is* to be equated with the shadow-holder *Himself*. In either interpretation, the correlation of the source of temporal sovereignty with the Divine is sufficient to prompt this warning: “Be careful that you do not look [with] contempt (*khvār*) upon the shadow, since the shadow is a reflection of the essence (*zāt*) of the One, meaning God, who is the master of the shadow (*sāhib-i sāya*).”¹⁰⁹ Aside from its theosophical significance, such a statement has considerable political implications, for it endorses the view put forward by the classic mirrors that disobedience to a political authority who governs according to God’s command is a sin. To justify their position, writers of advice literature quoted the Qur’anic verse (4:59): “Oh you believers! Obey God, obey the Prophet, and those in authority among you (*ūlī al-amrī*

al-Mulk’s *Sīyar al-mulūk*, the expression was included in a compilation of aphorisms attributed to Nizām al-Mulk and his son known as the *Vaṣāyā-yi Nizām al-Mulk*. On the authenticity of this work, see Harold Bowen, “The *sar-gudhasht-i sayyidnā*, the ‘Tale of the Three Schoolfellows’ and the *wasāya* of the Nizām al-Mulk,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 4 (1931): 771–82. al-Ghazālī punctuates the saying (in Arabic) with a Persian translation equating the ruler with the shadow of God’s awe: *al-sultān ḡill Allāh fī al-arḍ sultān sāya-i haibat-i khudāst bi-rū-yi zamīn*.

¹⁰⁵ Jāmī, *SA*, 394–95, lines 71–72 and 78. In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, al-Ghazālī enumerates sixteen things *farr-i ‘izādī* is expressed in on earth—see his *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 127–28 (trans. 74).

¹⁰⁶ Jāmī, *SA*, 394, line 73.

¹⁰⁷ Put differently, God’s bounty is manifested in a just ruler who is nothing other than His shadow. The glory that comes from being the manifested shadow (the just ruler) is nothing other than God’s glory, a glory only found in the shadow. Thus, bounty, just ruler, shadow, and glory all owe their individual and collective existences to God.

¹⁰⁸ The word *‘ain* can also denote “eye” as in the esoteric idea that he (the shadow, i.e., the true vicegerent or Perfect Man) is the eye by which the shadow-holder (*sāya-dār*, i.e., God) sees Himself.

¹⁰⁹ Jāmī, *SA*, 394, line 75.

minkum)!" with the understanding that it applied to the reigning political authority.¹¹⁰

Later, in a paradoxical statement that calls to mind the speculative theosophy based on Ibn al-ʿArabī's doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (Oneness of Being),¹¹¹ Jāmī uses an extended metaphor to describe how the shadowholder exists by means of the master of the shadow: "The shadow is full of substance from the attributes (*ṣifāt*) of His (i.e., God's) essence. Although in His essence (*zāt*) He is concealed, through His attributes (*ṣifāt*) He becomes apparent in every region [of this world] through His shadow."¹¹² In other words, God manifests His names or attributes (the Merciful, the Wrathful, etc.) through phenomenal caliphs, kings, sultans, and *imāms*, whose God-given glory (*farr-i ilāhī*) evinces their having received divine favor to rule (*daulat*).¹¹³ Because it was believed that this favor could be passed down as a patrimony, Ya'qūb's own claim to *farr* was based on his being the son of Ūzūn Ḥasan, something which Jāmī explains by way of a pun on the word *ḥasan* or "good." Thus, after praising his justice, Jāmī relates that the good morals (*khulq-i ḥasan*) of Ya'qūb's father are his son's true inheritance (*mīrās*).¹¹⁴ Jāmī's approbation goes so far as to declare that anyone who does not believe that this *farr*, or glory, is manifested on earth, should simply gaze upon "that sovereign (*jahāndār*) Shāh Ya'qūb, on account of whose loftiness the zenith of the heavens is humbled."¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ On the various interpretations of the phrase *ūlī al-amrī* ("those with authority"), by early Muslim exegetes, see Marlow, *Hierarchy and Egalitarianism*, 137–38 n. 107. For an example of how later political writers cited this verse to justify unequivocal obedience to royal authority, see Lambton, "Sufis and the State," 26.

¹¹¹ On the origin and development of the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, see William C. Chittick, "Rūmī and *waḥdat al-wujūd*," in *Poetry and Mysticism in Islam: The Heritage of Rūmī*, ed. Amin Banani, Richard Hovannisian, and Georges Sabagh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 88–91. For the influence of Ibn al-ʿArabī's doctrines on Jāmī, see Chittick, "Perfect Man," 135–57, esp. 139–40.

¹¹² Jāmī, *SA*, 394, lines 76–77.

¹¹³ For concise explications of *daulat* as it relates to political power and the inscrutability of fate, see Roy Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 132 and 185; and Arjomand, "Medieval Persianate," 15–16.

¹¹⁴ Jāmī, *SA*, 395, line 88.

¹¹⁵ Jāmī, *SA*, 395, lines 79 and 81.

On Heeding the Prayers of the Sufis

The next major section of *Salāmān va Absāl* is significant in that it emphasizes the need for rulers to heed the advice proffered by Sufi mystics.¹¹⁶ Professedly written as an expression of Jāmī's inability to give due praise to the temporal ruler (i.e., Ya'qūb), this section in fact represents an esoteric interpretation of the concept of perfect kingship. Before proceeding, it is important to note that Jāmī bases much of this description on the idea that the ruler's fate depends upon the prayers of the Sufis.¹¹⁷ Because the ideal ruler is considered the locus of divine manifestation, the divine transcendence is mirrored in the limitless virtue (*faẓl*) of the [perfect] king. As a consequence, praising his (God's, and by implication the ruler's) incalculable excellence is impossible except to "those with penetrating insight" (i.e., Sufis) who recognize that this in itself constitutes religion (*dīn*).¹¹⁸ This secret (*sirr*), he adds, is the real meaning of the well-known *ḥadīth*: "I cannot count Your praises!" (*lā uḥsī thanā*).¹¹⁹ Jāmī explains that praising Him who transcends praise requires a steadfast (*qarār*) method of prayer, one that is delivered through the heart of the Sufi and not, as Jāmī implies, by the tongues of the literal-minded.¹²⁰

Not a prayer that comes from any feeble-minded person
Limited to the power of this [temporal] palace.
On the contrary, a prayer of the people of the heart,
Filled with the blessings of God.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Jāmī, *SA*, 396–97, lines 112–24.

¹¹⁷ The section is entitled, "Manifestation of the inability to effect praise and the raising of the hand of weakness in the pronouncement of prayer."

¹¹⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 396, line 114.

¹¹⁹ Jāmī, *SA*, 396, line 114. The full canonical *ḥadīth*, which illustrates the paradoxes of divine mercy and wrath, reads: "Oh Lord I take refuge in Your good pleasure from Your wrath and in Your pardons from Your punishments. I take refuge in You from You. I cannot count the praises for You. You are as You have praised Yourself." For a reference, see William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1983), 331.

¹²⁰ An apparent allusion to the silent *zikr* performed by Naqshbandis. For a discussion on *zikr*, see Hamid Algar, "Silent and Vocal *dhikr* in the Naqshbandi Order," in *Akten des VII. Kongresses für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft*, Göttingen 15–22 August 1974 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1976), 39–46; J. Fletcher, "The Naqshbandiyya and the Dhikr-i arra," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (1977) 113–19; and Stéphane Ruspoli, "Réflexions sur la voie spirituelle des Naqshbandi," in *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et situation actuelle d'un ordre mystique musulman/Historical Developments and Present Situation of a Muslim Mystical Order, Actes de la Table Ronde de Sèvres/Proceedings of the Sèvres Round Table 2–4 mai/2–4 May 1985*, ed. Marc Gaborieau, Alexander Popovic, and Thierry Zarcone (Istanbul: l'Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes d'Istanbul, 1990), 95–108.

¹²¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 396, lines 116–17.

By differentiating this prayer from the benedictions offered by members of the clerical class, Jāmī not only expresses the belief that Sufi mystics could effect changes in a dynasty's political fortunes, he also asserts that Ya'qūb was the beneficiary of such blessings.¹²² Far from being ritualistic, these prayers could be efficacious. These were offered in order to elicit the ruler's spiritual devotion (*irādat*) to the Sufi(s), according to the writings of certain Naqshbandīs, but they were also meant to connect the ruler's well-being to the well-being of the entire *umma* through his implementation of the moral and legal precepts of the *sharī'a*.¹²³ This charisma (*baraka*) was not frivolously given away, but was part of a larger reciprocal relationship.¹²⁴ Considered alongside *himmat*, namely the concentrated creative energy of the Sufi's heart, *baraka* theoretically invested Sufi mystics with the ability to change dynastic fortunes. Such a proposition would not have been entirely foreign to the Āq Qoyūnlū. We might note, for example, that Davānī's *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* (which was dedicated to Ūzūn Ḥasan) contains a poem that unambiguously characterizes Sufis as capable of influencing the fortunes of a dynasty:

At the tavern door sit rogue [mystics],
 Who give and take away the crown of kingship.
 When a brick is your pillow, you find the seven stars (i.e., saints) over your
 head,
 Behold the [real] hands of power and their high place of nobility!¹²⁵

¹²² Leonard Lewisohn, "Overview: Iranian Islam and Persianate Sufism," in *The Heritage of Sufism*, Vol. 2, *The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism (1150–1500)*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn (Oxford: Oneworld, 1999), 30–31. For a general survey of the politically active Sufi groups in pre-modern Iran, see Lambton, "Sufis and the State," 19–36. On the sometimes complicated rapport between Sufi orders and Muslim rulers, see Lawrence G. Potter, "Sufis and Sultans in Post-Mongol Iran," *Iranian Studies* 27, nos. 1–4 (1994): 78–102; and Simon Digby, "The Sufi *Shaykh* and the Sultan: A Conflict of Claims to Authority in Medieval India," *Iran* 28 (1990): 71–81.

¹²³ Paul, *Die politische und soziale Bedeutung*, 219–21.

¹²⁴ Omid Safi, "Bargaining with *Baraka*: Persian Sufism, 'Mysticism,' and Pre-modern Politics," *The Muslim World* 90, nos. 3–4 (2000): 259–87. A larger study of the interplay between religion and political authority in Saljuq Iran can be found in Omid Safi, *The Politics of Knowledge in Premodern Islam: Negotiating Ideology and Religious Inquiry* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

¹²⁵ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 136. The poem also appears in Davānī's *ʿArz-sipāh-i Ūzūn Ḥasan* ('*Arz-nāma*'), an eyewitness review to a parade of local civil and military officers of Fars in 881/1476 that he dedicated to Ya'qūb's elder uterine brother Sulṭān Khalīl. See Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī, *ʿArz-sipāh-i Ūzūn Ḥasan*, ed. İraj Afshār (Tehran: Dānishkāda-i Adabiyāt, 1335/1956), 3. The first couplet is a derivation of a verse by Ḥāfiẓ: *bar dar-i maikada rindān-i qalandar bāshand, kai sitānand va dahand afsar-i shāhanshāhī*. For the original poem, see *Divān-i Ḥāfiẓ*, ed. Parvīz Nātil-Khānlārī (Tehran: Bunyād-i Farhang-i Īrān, 1359/1980–81), 974. Davānī also composed several commentaries (*sharḥ*) on the *ghazals* and couplets of Ḥāfiẓ entitled, *Sharḥ-i ghazal-i Ḥāfiẓ* and *Sharḥ-i baitī az Ḥāfiẓ*. For a description, see

Such reciprocal support between rulers and religious elites was common before the advent of Islam. Indeed, the Sasanian rulers conceived of religion and kingship as inseparable. This key idea was encapsulated in a motto attributed to the first Sasanian king, Ardashīr, which maintained that “religion and kingship are two [or twin] brothers (*dīn va daulat du barādarand*),¹²⁶ one cannot exist without the aid of the other.”¹²⁷ A dynasty’s endurance, the thinking went, depended on the ruler’s sustained patronage of religious figures and institutions which, in the medieval Islamic context, meant descendants of the Prophet, members of the *‘ulamā*, specifically jurists and theologians, as well as individuals affiliated with mystical and popular Islamic movements, e.g., Sufi shaiḫs, their disciples, charismatic dervishes, and Sufi saints (*auliyā’*). In terms of institution-building, rulers were called upon to apportion funds or land from their personal property (*khāṣṣ*) for the creation of pious endowments (*vaqf*, pl. *auqāf*), which facilitated the construction and upkeep of mosques, theological colleges, and Sufi hospices.¹²⁸ According to this

Muḥammad Barakāt, *Kitābshināsī-yi maktab-i falsafī-yi shīrāz* (Shiraz: Bunyād-i Fārs-shināsī, 1383/2004), 99–102. See also, Carl W. Ernst, “Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī’s Interpretation of Ḥafīz,” in *Hafiz and the Religion of Love in Classical Persian Poetry*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010), 198.

¹²⁶ The word “*dīn*” has in fact two separate etymologies: judgment or retribution (Hebraeo-Aramaic root, *dīn*); debt or money owing (Arabic root, *DYN*); and revelation or religion (Middle Persian, *dēn*). See *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. “*dīn*” (by L. Gardet); and Maria E. Subtelny, “Visionary Rose: Metaphorical Application of Horticultural Practice in Persian Culture,” in *Botanical Progress, Horticultural Innovation and Cultural Change*, ed. Michel Conan and W. John Kress, Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture, 28 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2007), 31 n. 82.

¹²⁷ The maxim is ubiquitous, appearing in each of the following advice manuals: Rāzī, *Jāmi’ al-‘ulūm*, 204; al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 106 (trans. 59); Nizām al-Mulk, *Sīyar al-mulūk* [*Siyāsāt-nāma*] (Shi’ār ed.), 87 (trans. 63); Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, 285 (trans. 215); and Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 53. Davānī also cites a Syriac rock-inscription declaring that kingship (*mulk*) and justice (*‘adl*) are brothers. For a reference, see Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 165. In the *Baḥr-i favā’id*, an anonymous Persian mirror for princes addressed to Nūr al-Dīn Zangī (d. 569/1174), it is “the pen and the sword” that are brothers. For a reference, see Meisami, *Sea of Precious Virtues*, 294. On the association of the motto with Ardashīr, see J. Duchesne-Guillemin, “Zoroastrian Religion,” in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 3, *The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 877. For the transmission of this Sasanian idea into Islam, see Shaul Shaked, “From Iran to Islam: Notes on Some Themes in Transmission,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 4 (1984): 31–67.

¹²⁸ On the institution of pious endowments (*vaqf*) in medieval Iran, see Ann K. S. Lambton, “*Awqāf* in Persia: 6th–8th/12th–14th Centuries,” *Islamic Law and Society* 4, no. 3 (1997); Subtelny, *Le monde est un jardin*, 77–100; and R. D. McChesney, *Vaqf in Central Asia: Four Hundred Years in the History of a Muslim Shrine, 1480–1889* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

arrangement, neglecting religious institutions was considered an act of oppression (*ẓulm*), leading the divine will to effect a turn in dynastic fortune (*daulat*) and topple the ruler in accordance with the Qur'anic (3:26) statement: "Thou givest kingship (*mulk*) to whom Thou wilt, and Thou taketh kingship (*mulk*) away from whom Thou wilt."¹²⁹

Unlike the *Siyar al-mulūk* and *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī*, the *raison d'être* of Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl* appears to be the ruler's awakening to his own spiritual self. According to the tale, this awakening is manifested only through the prayers of the Sufis which "place religion (*dīn*) in the heart of the ruler, making God-fearing governance (*daulat-i dīndār*) his practice (*āyīn*)."¹³⁰ A spiritually enlightened ruler, whose heart is receptive to the *himmat* of a Sufi shāikh, would therefore garner the *baraka* and instruction (*tadbīr*) of spiritual men, making him both a beneficiary and benefactor of religion. Stated differently, the Sufis' *baraka* would sanctify and legitimate a ruler's temporal reign, in turn producing expectations that he would be responsive to the mystics' guidance, since such direction would theoretically benefit all Muslims. As a result, the ruler would be invested with the ability to manifest God's will.

This reciprocal relationship is alluded to throughout the section of *Salāmān va Absāl* concerning Sufi prayer. Interestingly, Jāmī uses financial terms associated with contracting a debt or settling accounts. Thus words like *istifā'* (receiving what is due), *idā'* (quittance), and *shumār* (counting), together with a variant reading of the line above in which *dīn* may be read *dāin* or "debt," seem to suggest that in exchange for their support, the ruler was politically and/or spiritually liable to the mystics. According to this variant reading, the prayer of the Sufis "contracts a debt (*dāin kunad*) on the heart of the ruler, making the fate of being a debtor (*dāindār*) his way."¹³¹ The description of *dīn* or *dāin* being impressed upon the heart of the ruler is also reminiscent of a practice associated with Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband, the eponymous founder of the Naqshbandī order. In the *Asrār-i Qāsimī*, a late ninth/fifteenth or early tenth/sixteenth century treatise on the occult sciences, its author, Ḥusain Vā'iz Kāshifī, mentions Bahā' al-Dīn's skill in the science of talismans (*'ilm-i ṭilismāt*),

¹²⁹ For example, see Meisami, *Sea of Precious Virtues*, 3, 52, and 214.

¹³⁰ Jāmī, *SA*, 397, line 119.

¹³¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 397, line 119. As a derivation of the Arabic root *DYN*, the term *dīn* (religion) originally signified "obligation" or "judgment," as in the Qur'anic "Day of Judgment" (*yaum al-dīn*). For a discussion of its ancient Arabic meaning, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "dīn" (by L. Gardet).

and explains his sobriquet, “*naqshband*,” as denoting one who draws talismanic figures and binds others by means of these figures.¹³² He thereby provides an explanation of the origin of the *ṭarīqa*’s name. Bahā’ al-Dīn purportedly fashioned amulets for a variety of princes in order to help them ward off enemies and rival contenders for the throne while also influencing their spirits through “magical” actions. In return, Bahā’ al-Dīn and his disciples could very well have been awarded some degree of support by the ruler. Thus, this tangible bestowal of *baraka* could be an early indication of what later became the historically documented relationship between Naqshbandī shaikhs and temporal rulers.

To take Kāshifī’s explanation even further, the mere act of tying or binding a talisman to the ruler can be more fully appreciated when we consider the similarities between this concrete gesture and the mystical technique, often associated with the Naqshbandiyya—though not unique to the *ṭarīqa*—known as *rābiṭa* (literally, “bond”), by which the Sufi shaikh transmits spiritual energy to a disciple (*murīd*) by fixing his image (*ṣūrat*) in his heart.¹³³ We therefore cannot discount the possibility that when Jāmī speaks of “placing religion (*dīn*) in (literally, ‘on the face of’) the king’s heart,” he is alluding to the ruler’s (i.e., Ya’qūb’s) receptivity to Sufi influences.¹³⁴ As a result of this Sufi blessing, Jāmī suggests, the ruler comes to realize his role as the locus of divine manifestation, becoming a true *khalīfat Allāh* as it were:

[The king’s] task is to become he who makes royal decrees obligatory,
And to become the origin of everlasting good fortune.
So that this azure dome
Becomes the place of manifestation for the eastern sun.
May the royal throne be the place of manifestation of the King,
May he always be mindful of the secrets of the Faith.¹³⁵

Jāmī states that when the ruler is conscious of his role in carrying out the divine will, he will be succored at every moment, or breath (*dam*), by God’s eternal grace (*faḏl*), thereby earning him a place in the “kingdom

¹³² See Pierre Lory, “Kashifī’s *Asrār-i Qāsimī* and Timurid Magic,” *Iranian Studies* 36, no. 4 (2003): 536–37.

¹³³ Just as the Sage impressed the image of Venus (*zuhra*) on Salāmān’s heart in the tale of *Salāmān va Absāl*. See Jāmī, *SA*, 442, lines 1002–03.

¹³⁴ Although there is no direct evidence in the historical sources to suggest that Ya’qūb was initiated into the Naqshbandī order, the letters he exchanged with Jāmī contain several allusions to spiritual techniques normally associated with the Naqshbandis. See 107, 110 of the present study.

¹³⁵ Jāmī, *SA*, 397, lines 120–22.

of paradise.”¹³⁶ The Sufi prayer of Jāmī is therefore a “silent blessing, a harbinger of eternal life which dawns in the heart,” revealing to the ruler the secret of his pontifical role as the locus of the manifestation of God’s attributes on earth. The pivotal role of the heart in this manifestation is apparent when we consider that *takht* or throne (‘*arsh* in Arabic), as in the divine Throne, often denoted the heart (*dil*, in Arabic *qalb*, *fu’ād*, *sirr*, *lubb*) in the medieval Islamic literary imagination.¹³⁷ This idea is reflected in a prophetic statement wherein Muḥammad reportedly said, “The heart of the believer is the Throne of the Merciful.”¹³⁸ A ruler’s throne (*takht-i shāhī*), and by way of metaphor, the heart of the perfect ruler, is therefore called upon to be the “place” of God’s manifestation (*jilvagāh*).

The political implications of this idea were perhaps best expressed in the Illuminationist doctrine of Shihāb al-Dīn Yaḥyā Suhrawardī, whose schema of Eastern Wisdom (*ḥikmat al-ishrāq*) bore heavily upon the theosophical speculations of late ninth/fifteenth century philosophers writing in Iran.¹³⁹ According to Suhrawardī’s political philosophy, rulers must possess a sign of divine inspiration (*waḥy*); specifically, a perceivable relation or link to an unseen realm (*‘ālam al-ghaib*) interposed between the worlds of sense perception and pure being or light.¹⁴⁰ Only a ruler capable of receiving divine commands (*amr*) through this hidden realm, which Sufis

¹³⁶ Jāmī, SA, 397, line 123.

¹³⁷ William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-‘Arabī’s Metaphysics of Imagination* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989), 107; and Henry Corbin, *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism*, trans. Nancy Pearson (New Lebanon, NY: Omega Publications, 1994), 66 and 72–73.

¹³⁸ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “The Heart of the Faithful Is the Throne of the All-Merciful,” in *Paths to the Heart: Sufism and the Christian East*, ed. James S. Cutsinger (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, 2002), 32–45. The saying does not appear in the canonical collections of *ḥadīth*.

¹³⁹ Specifically Davānī, and the father-son duo of Ṣadr al-Dīn Dashtakī (d. 903/1498) and Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Dashtakī (d. 948/1541–42). On how their theosophical disputations (constituting the so-called “School of Shiraz”) facilitated a renaissance in Safavid-era philosophy, epitomized by Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, see Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy from Its Origin to the Present: Philosophy in the Land of Prophecy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006), 193–208. See also Hossein Ziai, “Recent Trends in Arabic and Persian Philosophy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, ed. Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 417–18; and Aḥad Qarāmulkī, “Mukātabahā-yi Davānī va Dashtakī dar ḥall-i mu‘ammā-yi jazr-i aṣamm,” *Khīradnāma-i Ṣadrā* 8–9 (1376/1997–98): 95–101.

¹⁴⁰ Hossein Ziai, “The Source and Nature of Authority: A Study of al-Suhrawardī’s Illuminationist Political Doctrine,” in *The Political Aspects of Islamic Philosophy: Essays in Honor of Muhsin S. Mahdi*, ed. Charles E. Butterworth (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 306–7.

refer to as the eighth clime (*al-iqlīm al-thāmin*), is legitimate and worthy of true vicegerency.¹⁴¹

The perfect ruler is thus the epitome of God's investiture of Adam, whose deputyship is affirmed in the Qur'ān (2:30) when God informed the angels: "I will create a vicegerent (*khalīfa*) on earth."¹⁴² This investiture will occur only if the ruler becomes a true slave (*'abd*), delivered from illusory ego to the extent that God "becomes" the ruler's very being.¹⁴³ On this subject Ibn al-'Arabī was led to say, "He [the man] is not truly the deputy (*nā'ib*) of God unless He who has made him His lieutenant and His substitute is his hearing, his sight, and his hand and all his faculties."¹⁴⁴ True legitimacy, and we can assume divine favor, can only be invested in a temporal ruler of exceptional spiritual perfection, a so-called Perfect Man (*insān-i kāmīl*) or saint, and whose appearance is reflected in the notion shared by Ibn al-'Arabī and Twelver, or Imāmī, Shī'ites that the ideal sovereign is in occultation and will only manifest himself at the end of time as the justice-dispensing divinely-appointed guide (*mahdī*).¹⁴⁵

Short of spiritual perfection, a temporal ruler was—if we are to accept Jāmī's Sufi prayer and the importance of *baraka* in medieval Islamic polities—beholden to the wishes of Sufi saints (*auliyā*). These "friends of God" were not accidents of history, as Michel Chodkiewicz notes, but directors of it.¹⁴⁶ In his axial position as the *quṭb*, or pivot, of the cosmic order, a Sufi saint was, according to Ibn al-'Arabī (and following him, Jāmī), "the real head of the community of his epoch," and therefore the true arbiter of divine favor.¹⁴⁷ Short of becoming a saint himself, it was therefore incumbent upon the ruler to be deferential to the *auliyā* in order to earn their blessings. As this study will demonstrate, however, while addressing the need to be guided by Sufis, Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl* is ultimately

¹⁴¹ Ziai, "Source and Nature of Authority," 307.

¹⁴² For the importance of Adam as an archetypal figure in medieval Islamic political thought, see Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship*, 154–55.

¹⁴³ Michel Chodkiewicz, "The Esoteric Foundations of Political Legitimacy in Ibn 'Arabī," in *Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabī: A Commemorative Volume*, ed. Stephen Hirtenstein and Michael Tiernan (Shaftesbury: Element, 1993), 193–94. The passage appears in chapter 360 (of 570) of *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* where Ibn al-'Arabī describes various degrees of substitution (*nīyāba*) within the context of *valāyat*.

¹⁴⁴ Chodkiewicz, "Esoteric Foundations," 194. The statement is an allusion to a well-known *ḥadīth qudsī*.

¹⁴⁵ Chodkiewicz, "Esoteric Foundations," 195.

¹⁴⁶ Chodkiewicz, "Esoteric Foundations," 195.

¹⁴⁷ Chodkiewicz, "Esoteric Foundations," 194.

concerned with providing instructions on how Ya'qūb himself can become the perfect spiritual saint, and thus the true *khalīfat Allāh*.

Implicit Spiritual Advice for Rulers and Sufi Mystics

Understanding what is meant by true vicegerency entailed recognition of the symbolic significance of the characters, settings, and events depicted in *Salāmān va Absāl*. Without such recognition, Jāmī's tale remains precisely what its modern critics have dubbed it: a bizarre romance.¹⁴⁸ Failing to apprehend the significance of the work's semiotics is therefore to neglect the didactic intent of its author. Focusing on the perturbations between the King, the Sage, and Salāmān, or the incestuous affair between Salāmān and Absāl as an indiscretion on the part of an heir-apparent, is to understand the tale in its most literal sense. As mentioned earlier, these characters, and the dynamics between them, symbolize fundamental elements in the process of the purification of the individual soul often associated with the mystical path.¹⁴⁹ They are therefore integral to the second level of the tale's didacticism, namely the implicit advice it provides on subduing the carnal self (*nafs*) through penitence, austerity, and pious devotion in order to realize the state of perfection epitomized by Adam as the vicegerent of God.¹⁵⁰

Jāmī himself explains that *Salāmān va Absāl* was to be read allegorically. The intention of the tale, it will be remembered, was not its "outer form" (*ṣūrat*) but its inner "meaning" (*ma'nā*).¹⁵¹ To this end, Jāmī states that in the *ṣūrat* of every tale a certain portion of its *ma'nā* is meant for those with "discerning vision" (*khurdabān*), or mystics.¹⁵² Once the outer form of the tale has been understood, he adds, it is necessary for the reader to seek the hidden meaning.¹⁵³ The juxtaposition of *ṣūrat* and

¹⁴⁸ See Browne, *Literary History of Persia*, 3:523; Arberry, *FitzGerald's Salaman and Absal*, 39; and Rypka et al., *History of Iranian Literature*, 287.

¹⁴⁹ For a discussion of the alchemy of the soul in the original Greek version of the tale of *Salāmān and Absāl*, see Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 209 and 220.

¹⁵⁰ On the unique investiture of Adam and his status as the prototypical Perfect Man in Sufi tradition, see Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 188–89.

¹⁵¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, lines 1075–83.

¹⁵² Jāmī, *SA*, 445, line 1075.

¹⁵³ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, line 1076.

ma'nā is commonplace in Sufi writings.¹⁵⁴ The idea of understanding the reality behind the *ṣūrat* also has a special meaning for the Naqshbandīs. For example, part of the order's initiatory practices require a disciple to retain the image (*ṣūrat* or *naqsh*) of a shaikh in his mind through the technique of *rābiṭa*, which was believed to bind the heart of the *murīd* to the shaikh.¹⁵⁵

Jāmī explains that divulging the story's hidden meaning is the task of a Sufi shaikh (referred to as a "knower of the path" or *rāh-dān*), since it necessarily leads to the "secret" (*sirr*) of the Sufi path itself.¹⁵⁶ He then alludes to the goal of the mystical experience by noting that, in demonstrating this deeper significance, distinctions like "We" and "You" disappear and the secret (*sirr*) of mystical union, which Jāmī describes as the spiritual state (*ḥāl*) of "We and You," will be unveiled (*kashf*).¹⁵⁷ Through the spiritual advice of a Sufi shaikh—that is to say Jāmī in his *Salāmān va Absāl*—the adept acquires the rudiments of mystical perception (*ẓauq*) which are necessary to contemplate divine transcendence (*tauḥīd*) and to realize that being a shadow of God is to be a perfect Sufi.

Advice on Illuminating the Intellect

According to Jāmī, the goal (*maqṣūd*) of *Salāmān va Absāl* is the discovery of what he calls "ancient secrets" (*asrār-i kuhan*).¹⁵⁸ As the conclusion of the tale indicates, these secrets, that is to say, the allegorical meaning of *Salāmān va Absāl*, are largely explainable through the theory of Neo-Platonic emanationism and its concept of the hierarchy of

¹⁵⁴ For thorough discussions of this idea, see the following studies by William C. Chittick, *Sufi Path of Love*, 19–23; "Rūmī and *waḥdat al-wujūd*," esp. 92–94; and "The Paradox of the Veil in Sufism," in *Rending the Veil: Concealment and Secrecy in the History of Religions*, ed. Elliot R. Wolfson (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 1999), 59–85. It is interesting to note that Ibn al-'Arabi rarely juxtaposed form and meaning. On this, see Chittick, *Self-Disclosure of God*, 27.

¹⁵⁵ On the history and importance of this meditative technique to Naqshbandīs, see Fritz Meier, *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Naqṣbandīyya. I. Die Herzensbindung an den Meister. II. Kraftakt und Faustrecht des Heiligen* (Istanbul: Franz Steiner, Stuttgart, 1994), 111–52.

¹⁵⁶ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, line 1077.

¹⁵⁷ On "*sirr*" constituting a particular stage in mystical progression during which man abstracts himself from his appetitive faculty (according to the Illuminationist theosophical system of Suhrawardī), see B. A. Dar, "Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī and Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī," in *A History of Muslim Philosophy, with Short Accounts of Other Disciplines and the Modern Renaissance in Islam Lands*, ed. M. M. Sharif (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963), 364.

¹⁵⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 447, line 1118.

intelligences.¹⁵⁹ A poet of considerable learning in both the formal and speculative sciences, Jāmī would have been familiar with the metaphysics of al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, Suhrawardī, and Ṭūsī which, among other aims, sought to integrate the Greek peripatetic philosophical system into Islamic cosmology. It is therefore not surprising to find Jāmī pointing out that the King in his tale represents the Tenth or Active Intellect (*‘aql-i fa‘āl*), the Sage represents supernal emanation (*faiz-i bālā*), Salāmān represents the Rational, or Speaking Soul (*nafs-i gūyā*), Absāl represents the lust-worshiping body (*tan-i shahvat-parast*), and Venus represents the perfections (*kamālāt*) of a celestial body.¹⁶⁰ The image of Venus, usually understood as being negative in medieval Persian thought, is depicted positively in *Salāmān va Absāl*. It is possible that Jāmī integrates an element of Zoroastrian tradition, which associates the planet Venus with the goddess Anāhitā (Middle Persian, Anāhīt, Anāhid, New Persian, Nāhid), or “the Immaculate One,” into his version of the tale.¹⁶¹ What emerges from this inventory of symbols is an implicit call for the ruler to be governed by the Active Intellect, for according to emanationist thinking, the Active Intellect is a well-spring of divine revelation (*waḥy*) and inspiration (*ilhām*) accessible through the faculty of imagination.¹⁶² In theory, then, by adhering to the Active Intellect, the ruler becomes divinely-guided and thus a true vicegerent of God on earth.

Jāmī describes how, before creating the world, God created the First Intellect (*‘aql-i arval*) and followed it with a chain of Ten Intellects (*silki ‘uqūl*), the last of which makes its effect (*mu’sir*) known in this world as the Tenth, or Active Intellect (*‘aql-i fa‘āl*).¹⁶³ Consistent with the ideas of the emanationist school, Jāmī notes that this Tenth Intellect effuses (*muftiz*) good and evil in the world and is responsible for abundance and

¹⁵⁹ For a brief explication of this hierarchy, see Oliver Leaman, *An Introduction to Classical Islamic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 18 and 21. On the expressions of Neo-Platonism contained in medieval Islamic and Jewish allegory, see Hughes, *Texture of the Divine*, 86–112.

¹⁶⁰ Jāmī, SA, 446–47, lines 1093, 1095–96, 1099, and 1115.

¹⁶¹ On the association of Ardwīsūr Anāhid (Old Persian, Arədvī Sūrā) with the Greek goddess Anaitis and the Babylonian divinity Ishtar, as well as information on the cult of Anāhitā in Sasanian Iran, see Boyce, *History of Zoroastrianism*, 1:71–74, 2:29–31, 2:202–4, and 2:217–19.

¹⁶² Ibrahim Madkour, “Al-Fārābī,” in *A History of Muslim Philosophy, with Short Accounts of Other Disciplines and the Modern Renaissance in Islam Lands*, ed. M. M. Sharif (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963), 464; and Leaman, *Introduction to Classical Islamic Philosophy*, 19.

¹⁶³ Jāmī, SA, 446, lines 1075–76.

deficiency on earth.¹⁶⁴ It is not, Jāmī explains, related to the corporeal (*jismānī*) realm or to the body (*jism*); rather it is a treasure completely free in both essence (*zāt*) and activity (*fi'l*) from such a material “talisman” (*ṭilism*). He goes on to say that the spirit of man (*rūḥ-i insān*) is a “son,” or product, of the Active Intellect, while man’s animal soul (*nafs-i ḥaivān*) is its plaything. Both the *rūḥ* and the *nafs*, he adds, are under the command (*farmān*) of the Active Intellect.¹⁶⁵

In a series of couplets Jāmī suggests that the Active Intellect is the command-giving king (*shāh-i farmān-dih*), while the others (a reference to temporal rulers) are command-carriers (*farmān-barān*) [who are] under the decree (*farmān*) of the Active Intellect.¹⁶⁶ Because the temporal king is adorned with the title of kingship (*naʿt-i shāhī*), this spiritual guide (i.e., Jāmī) really intends “it” (i.e., the Active Intellect) when speaking of the King.¹⁶⁷ Speaking as a guide who is “experienced in the wonders of the world” (*rāh-dān-i bū ʿ-ʿajab*), Jāmī posits that the supernal emanation (*faiz-i bālā*) of the Active Intellect, which falls onto this world and thus onto the temporal king, is known by the title “*ḥakīm*” (sage).¹⁶⁸ In turn, pure spirit (*rūḥ*) was named “*nafs-i gūyā*” (Rational Soul) and is born of this (Active) intellect (*ʿaql*) without the fetters of corporeality.¹⁶⁹ Its existence without bodily connection, Jāmī explains, is what is implied by the idea that the Rational Soul is “born of a father without a mate” (*az pidar bī juft zād*). A human soul or off-spring (*zāda*) that has come into the world “clean-skirted” without the blemish of sexual union is thus named as “*Salāmān*,” literally, “the unblemished one.”¹⁷⁰

Absāl, on the other hand, represents the lust-worshipping body (*tan-i shahvat-parast*) that acts according to the laws of nature (*aḥkām-i ṭabīʿat*). Jāmī makes it clear that the body lives by way of the soul, and through the body the soul derives pleasure through the faculty of sense-perception

¹⁶⁴ Jāmī, SA, 446, line 1077.

¹⁶⁵ Jāmī, SA, 446, line 1090.

¹⁶⁶ Jāmī, SA, 446, line 1092.

¹⁶⁷ The two couplets read:

*ū shāh-i farmānda-ast va dīgarān zīr-i farmān-i vai az farmānbarān
chun bi naʿt-i shāhī ū ārastast rāhdān az shāh ū rā khvāstast*

¹⁶⁸ Jāmī, SA, 446, line 1095. The idea that a wayfaring sage or *pīr* is a symbol of divine emanation is also expressed in Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī’s treatise, *ʿAql-i surkh*. For a reference, see Shihāb al-Dīn Yahyā al-Suhrawardī, *The Philosophical Allegories and Mystical Treatises: A Parallel Persian-English Text*, ed. and trans. Wheeler M. Thackston, Jr. (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda, 1999), 22.

¹⁶⁹ Jāmī, SA, 446, line 1096.

¹⁷⁰ Jāmī, SA, 447, line 1098.

(*maḥsūsāt*).¹⁷¹ As for the sea in which Salāmān and Absāl experience unison (*viṣāl*), it is the sea of sensual lusts (*baḥr-i shahvathā-yi ḥaivānī*) and the abyss of carnal pleasures (*laẓẓāt-i naḥsānī*).¹⁷² Salāmān's return to the King and his appreciation of glory and dignity represents the inclination of the soul toward noetic pleasures (*laẓẓathā-yi 'aqlī*), whereafter the soul is brought to what Jāmī calls the intellectual (*'aqlī*) kingdom.¹⁷³ The fire into which Salāmān and Absāl leap represents stern ascetic discipline (*riyāzāthā-yi sakht*), which sets fire to the human nature (*ṭabī'at*) and cleanses the "hem of animal lusts" until only the pure spirit remains.¹⁷⁴ Jāmī points out that, because Salāmān had grown accustomed to Absāl (just as the carnal soul becomes preoccupied with the pleasures of the flesh), he was pained by his separation from her. The Sage alleviated his grief by means of descriptions of the beauty of Venus.¹⁷⁵ Jāmī explains that, through these descriptions, the Sage joined the soul (*jān*) of Salāmān to his love (*mihr*) for Venus until he was freed from his despair over Absāl.¹⁷⁶ As for the significance of Venus, she represents the lofty perfections (*kamālāt-i buland*) through which the soul becomes noble (*arju-mand*) and the intellect is made luminous (*nūrānī*). On account of this illumination, he concludes, the soul becomes the ruler of the kingdom of man (*pādishāh-i mulk-i insānī*).¹⁷⁷

The Role of Repentance in Attaining Mystical Enlightenment

The overriding theme of *Salāmān va Absāl* is the need for *tauba*, or repentance. While *tauba* literally means "turning" or "returning," it is better understood as "repentance" from sin in this and other works of a religious nature.¹⁷⁸ Repentance being an essential element of *Salāmān va Absāl* is not at all surprising if we remember that Jāmī's allegorical romance is in fact a spiritual tale about the purification of the soul; moreover, it was dedicated to a ruler given to wine-drinking.

¹⁷¹ Jāmī, SA, 447, line 1100.

¹⁷² Jāmī, SA, 447, line 1103.

¹⁷³ Jāmī, SA, 447, line 1109.

¹⁷⁴ Jāmī, SA, 447, lines 1110–11.

¹⁷⁵ Jāmī, SA, 447, line 1113.

¹⁷⁶ Jāmī, SA, 447, line 1114.

¹⁷⁷ Jāmī, SA, 447, line 1116.

¹⁷⁸ From the Latin *paenitere*, meaning "to be sorry, to grieve, to regret." It is equivalent to the Hebrew *tēshūbāh* or Aramaic *tethūbah*.

The very act of repentance or “(re)turning one’s face toward God,” is presented in the classic Sufi manuals as the first step, or spiritual station (*maqām*), on the mystical path. It occupies a fundamental place in such well-known Sufi manuals as the *Kashf al-mahjūb* by Hujvīrī (d. 464/1071) and *al-Risāla al-Qushayrīyya* by Qushairī (d. 465/1072).¹⁷⁹ The association of *tauba* with the initial step of the mystical path is also noted in Jāmī’s *Salāmān va Absāl*. In an anecdote about a “wine-worshipper” (*may-parast*) who seeks the advice of a saint, Jāmī relates how the drunkard took the path of repentance (*rāh-i tauba*) and, “from this repentance (*tauba*), he achieved lofty stations (*maqāmāt-i buland*), and the quarry of sainthood (*vilāyat* or *valāyat*) came within his lasso.”¹⁸⁰ The Sufi adept, in other words, can achieve perfection only through *tauba*.¹⁸¹

The issue of *tauba*, especially its practical benefits and/or mystical meaning, appears to have been a special concern of other writers of didactic literature in late ninth/fifteenth century Iran. For example, Ḥusain Vā‘iz Kāshifi dedicated his mirror for princes, the *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī*, to the Timurid ruler Sulṭān-Ḥusain Bāyqarā and his son Abū al-Muḥsin Mīrzā on the occasion of the latter’s public repentance (*tauba*) from wine-drinking at his father’s court in Herat.¹⁸² In a similar vein, the *Subḥat al-abrār*, a didactic *maṣnavī* written by Jāmī for Sulṭān-Ḥusain, contains a chapter entitled “*Maqām-i tauba*” which describes *tauba* in terminology that is especially relevant to the Naqshbandī.¹⁸³ The same relevance is detected in *Salāmān va Absāl* where, in describing God’s role in granting *tauba*, Jāmī alludes to the Naqshbandī commitment to “act with strictness” (*al-‘amal bi al-‘azīma*), a formula which is usually taken to refer to the order’s strict

¹⁷⁹ ‘Alī b. ‘Uthmān al-Jullābī Hujvīrī, *The Kashf al-Mahjūb: The Oldest Persian Treatise on Sūfism*, by ‘Alī b. ‘Uthmān al-Jullābī al-Hujwīrī, trans. Reynold A. Nicholson (London: Luzac, 1970), 294; and Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Hawāzin Qushairī, *Al-Qushayrī’s Epistle on Sufism: Al-Risāla al-qushayrīyya fī ‘ilm al-tasawwuf*, [*al-Risāla al-Qushayrīyya*], trans. Alexander D. Knysh (Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing, 2007), 111. The positioning of *tauba* at the beginning of the mystical quest is also attested to in the *Ihyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn* by al-Ghazālī and the *Kitāb sirat al-auliya’* of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥakīm Tirmizī (ca. 295/905). For references, see M. S. Stern, “Notes on the Theology of al-Ghazzālī’s Concept of Repentance,” *Islamic Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (1979): 82; and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad Tirmizī, *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism: Two Works by Al-Ḥakīm Al-Tirmidhī*, trans. Bernd Radtke and John O’Kane (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1996), 44.

¹⁸⁰ Jāmī, *SA*, 403, line 238.

¹⁸¹ On the semantic ambiguity of the terms *vilāyat* and *valāyat* and how they relate to the larger topic of Muslim sainthood, see Vincent J. Cornell, *Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998), xvii–xxi.

¹⁸² Subtelny, “A Late Medieval Persian *Summa*,” 604.

¹⁸³ Jāmī, *Subḥat al-abrār*, 597, lines 838–876. See also 600, lines 892–901.

fidelity to the *sharīʿa*.¹⁸⁴ In the view of a mystic like Jāmī, directing a young ruler to a life of sobriety was to bring him closer to God, since, according to a prophetic tradition cited in both the *Kashf al-mahjūb* and *al-Risāla al-Qushairiyya*, “There is nothing dearer to God than a repentant youth.”¹⁸⁵ This sentiment is partly echoed in a section of *Salāmān va Absāl* which, in praising Yaʿqūb’s abstinence (*ijtināb*) from prohibited things (*manāhī*), Jāmī declares: “Oh excellent is a king who, in the time of [his] youth, finds benefits from repentance (*tauba*), just like the aged do.”¹⁸⁶

It should be mentioned, however, that the two sections of *Salāmān va Absāl* that deal most directly with *tauba* address it in terms that are not exclusively Naqshbandī but rather consistent with the general Sufi precepts described in *Kashf al-mahjūb* and *al-Risāla al-Qushairiyya*. For example, like Hujvīrī and Qushairī, who prioritize the three conditions for sound *tauba* as remorse (*nadam*), abandonment (*tark*) of the sin, and the resolve (ʿ*azm*) not to sin again, Jāmī says *tauba* is “to be penitent (*pashīmān*) over the past and in the present to abandon (*ḥāliyā bugzashtan*) disobedient acts, and to resolve (ʿ*azm kardan*) that, in the future, you will be successful in overcoming acts of disobedience.”¹⁸⁷ He then explains how success in repentance depends on the penitent’s determination (ʿ*azīma*) to allow Divine will/predestination (*qazā*) to act through him:

Repentance is like a glass bottle, Divine decree like a rock,
How can a glass bottle do battle with a stone?
When Divine decree becomes the agent
Repentance will be solidly founded.
And if Divine decree does not become its (i.e., repentance’s) agent,
There is no happiness except in acquiescing to His judgments.
The repentance-granter and the repentance-breaker are both Divine decree,
Attributing these things to oneself is to sin.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ On the importance of this formulation to Naqshbandī devotional regimens, see Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 110–13. On the legal significance of “*azīma*,” see Hamid Algar, review of *A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandis in the Ottoman World, 1450–1700*, by Dina Le Gall, *Journal of Islamic Studies* 18, no. 3 (2007): 418. See also *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. “*Azīma*” (by I. Goldziher).

¹⁸⁵ Hujvīrī, *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, 294; and Qushairī, *Al-Qushayrī’s Epistle on Sufism*, 111. On the fact that this *ḥadīth* is non-canonical, see Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd-al-Karīm b. Hawāzin Qushairī, *Das Sendschreiben al-Quṣayrīs über das Sufitum*, trans. and commentary Richard Gramlich (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1989), 146.

¹⁸⁶ Jāmī, *SA*, 401, line 199.

¹⁸⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 402–03, lines 231–32.

¹⁸⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 402, lines 226–29. The image of breaking the bottle of *tauba* with a rock appears frequently in the *ghazals* of Ḥāfiz. See for example, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad

The idea that a believer is incapable of fulfilling the divine command to repent without divine initiative, i.e., only when God “turns” toward the penitent servant, is not original to Jāmī. In fact the notion that God is the first to “repent” is something which formed the basis of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s radical interpretation of *tauba*.¹⁸⁹ According to Ibn al-‘Arabī, justification for this paradoxical arrangement is found by inverting the situation presented in Qur’anic verse 24:31 so that it is “He (God) [who] turned towards them [the believers] in order that they might turn [toward Him].”¹⁹⁰ This view of *tauba* is supported by the narrative of *Salāmān va Absāl*. For example, it is only after the King himself uses his *himmat* to separate Salāmān from Absāl that Salāmān “returns” to the King: “His [Salāmān’s] face, in fear of his awe-inspiring father, repentant (*tauba*), apologetic, and seeking forgiveness.”¹⁹¹ To believe that *tauba* can be initiated by the individual is, according to Jāmī, to fall into the “mire of sin” (*gunah*). He therefore exhorts the reader to resolve (*‘azm kun*) to always be in communion (*damsāz*) with *tauba*.¹⁹²

Advice on Subduing the Carnal Soul

The need for repentance is necessitated by the ego-soul or lower-self’s (*nafs*) base instincts which allow blameworthy acts and sins, such as lust (*shahvat*) in the case of Salāmān. According to the ascetic tradition in Sufism, the physical appetites of this faculty, articulated in Qur’anic terms as the soul which incites to commit evil (*al-nafs al-ammāra bi-al-sū’*), must be subdued and purified through the restraining influence of the accusing soul (*al-nafs al-lawwāma*), which roughly corresponds to the moral conscience.¹⁹³ Described in the prophetic tradition and Sufi literature as the “greater holy war,” or *al-jihād al-akbar*, this psychological struggle involves constant self-mortification (*mujāhada*) and discipline (*riyāza*) so that

Ḥāfiẓ, *Dīvān-i Ḥāfiẓ*, ed. Rashīd ‘Ivāzī and Akbar Bihruz (Tabriz: Intishārāt-i Mu’assasa-i Tārīkh va Farhang-i Irān 2536[1977]), 18 line 7, 25 line 7, and 26 line 2.

¹⁸⁹ Atif Khalil, “Ibn al-‘Arabī on the Three Conditions of *Tawba*,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 17, no. 4 (2006): 403–16. On the prevalence of Ibn ‘Arabī’s metaphysics in the works of Jāmī, see Sajjad H. Rizvi, “The Existential Breath of *al-raḥmān* and the Munificent Grace of *al-raḥīm*: The *Tafsīr Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* of Jāmī and the School of Ibn ‘Arabī,” *Journal of Qur’anic Studies* 8, no. 1 (2006): 65–67.

¹⁹⁰ Khalil, “Ibn al-‘Arabī,” 404. The verse in the Qur’ān, reads: “And turn all together to God, O you believers; happily so you will prosper.”

¹⁹¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 436, line 877.

¹⁹² Jāmī, *SA*, 403, line 235.

¹⁹³ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 112. See Qur’ān 12:53 and 75:2.

the *nafs*, which is often compared in Perso-Islamic literature to a restive horse, a stubborn mule, a dog, or a camel, is purified and made obedient to the commands of the intellect.¹⁹⁴ Only by resisting the lower soul and engaging in self-mortification, Hujvīrī writes in the *Kashf al-mahjūb*, can man find the way to God. Submission to the *nafs* and its passions (*havā*), he warns, results in man's destruction; resistance to it, on the other hand, entails his salvation.¹⁹⁵ Once sublimated, the *nafs* becomes the soul at peace (*al-nafs al-muṭma'inna*) and according to the Qur'ān, it is called "home" to its Lord.¹⁹⁶ It is at this point that repentance (*tauba*), or the act of (re)turning toward God, occurs.

These three aspects of the soul—the soul inciting to commit evil, the blaming soul, and the soul at peace—are all personified in the character of Salāmān by way of three major events which happen to him. First, Salāmān's descent into the evils of carnality on account of his love for Absāl is a representation of the soul's first condition. Later, the third condition is depicted when Salāmān repents and returns to his father's court in order to assume his place on the royal throne. However, it is the second condition, the intervening and transformative state, during which the soul is in a state of blame *al-lawwāma* that is most interest to us here. This represents the pivotal stage where the soul reproaches itself (by way of the Active Intellect) for its attraction to the sensory pleasures of the temporal realm; it is also at this stage that the blaming soul receives advice on how to renounce its base instincts.

In the case of *Salāmān va Absāl*, this defining event occurs when the King and Sage give advice to Salāmān, symbol of the soul, for his infatuation with Absāl, symbol of the body.¹⁹⁷ The King prefaces his advice to Salāmān by invoking the image of the rose and the rose-gardener to express his own sense of having been abandoned by Salāmān. Like the rose who draws its "hem," or petals, away from the gardener's hand, the King accuses Salāmān of forsaking him, an offense he likens to a rose that greets the gentle palm of the gardener with "the thorn of cruelty." The notion that Salāmān has forsaken his roots is reinforced by Jāmī when, during the King's admonishment, he interjects the story of Khusrau II Parvīz (d. 628), the Sasanian king and husband of Shīrīn, whose son Shīrūya

¹⁹⁴ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 112–13. See also Hujvīrī, *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, 200–201.

¹⁹⁵ Hujvīrī, *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, 196–97.

¹⁹⁶ "O thou soul at peace! Return to thy Lord, pleasing and well-pleased! Enter thou among My bondsmen! Enter thou My garden!" Qur'ān 89:27–28.

¹⁹⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 427, lines 688–702 and 718–32.

committed parricide only to die of the plague himself.¹⁹⁸ The King therefore warns Salāmān against forsaking the crown of good fortune (*afsar-i daulat*) and kicking the throne of majesty (*takht-i shaukat*) like a mount in pursuit of earthly beloveds.¹⁹⁹ Instead, Salāmān is advised to gallop into the hippodrome of the material world with his “Rakhsh”—Rustam’s famed horse in the *Shāh-nāma* epic but taken here to mean Salāmān’s tamed *nafs* or lower soul—under his command.²⁰⁰ He is encouraged to leap among the ranks of heroes since, as the King says, it is better to gird yourself among men worthy of the title “real man” (*mardān-mard*) than to lay your neck before the “womanly sword” (*shamshūr-zanī*).²⁰¹ It ought to be noted that *mardān*, *rijāl*, or *fityān* (part of the larger Perso-Islamic concept of chivalry or *javānmardī*; or *futuwwat*) often connotes the class of “spiritual champions” who make up the ranks of Sufi saints.²⁰² The King’s admonishment here is thus an appeal to Salāmān to join the fraternity of virtuous men whose society is open only to those who have subjugated their *nafs*. In response, Salāmān claims that the capacity to liberate himself from what he acknowledges is a “calamity” (*balā*) is beyond his own means. He explains that this is because, when his eyes fall upon that “full moon” (*māh*), namely Absāl, his face turns away from the “two worlds.” After seeing the cheeks of that “heart-pleaser,” he admits, “no good counsel (*naṣīḥat*) or any wise advice (*pand*) remains in my memory.”²⁰³

In characterizing Salāmān’s preoccupation with Absāl as a calamity (*balā*), Jāmī is alluding to the pun on the affirmative “*balā*,” or “verily,” by which the Qur’ān states that human souls answered God on the primordial Day of the Covenant (*rūz-i alast* or *rūz-i mīsāq*) by agreeing to endure the tribulations (*balā*) of serving Him.²⁰⁴ By implication then, Salāmān

¹⁹⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 427, lines 703–5.

¹⁹⁹ Jāmī, *SA*, 427, lines 693–96.

²⁰⁰ For another, more detailed, instance in which a prominent Naqshbandī author, in this case Makhdūm A’zam Aḥmad Kāsānī (d. 949/1542–43), equated the untamed *nafs* to a horse, see Alexandre Papas, “No Sufism without Sufi Order: Rethinking *Tarīqa* and *Adab* with Ahmad Kāsānī Dahbidī (1461–1542),” *Kyoto Bulletin of Islamic Area Studies* 2, no. 1 (2008): 7–8.

²⁰¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 427, line 700. This is a homonymic pun (*tajnīs*) on the phrase “a sword-wielder” (*shamshūr-zanī*).

²⁰² For a study on how one ninth/fifteenth century (Naqshbandī) treatise on *adab* relates virtuous displays of manliness to inner spiritual perfection, see Arley Loewen, “Proper Conduct (*Adab*) Is Everything: The *Futuwwat-nāmah-i Sulṭānī* of Husayn Va’iz Kashifī,” *Iranian Studies* 36, no. 4 (2003): 543–70. For another interpretation of the treatise and its author, see Lloyd Ridgeon, *Morals and Mysticism in Persian Sufism: A History of Sufi-futuwwat in Iran* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 92–108.

²⁰³ Jāmī, *SA*, 427, line 713.

²⁰⁴ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 136–37. The well-known verse (7:172) reads: And when thy Lord took from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their seed, and made

embodies the plight of humanity and the struggle of the soul to return to its primordial divine origin. Jāmī uses the parable of the fox and its cub to further demonstrate his point here.²⁰⁵ The fox, having led its cub to an enclosed orchard, cautions it to consume meagerly, for overindulging its appetite will render it incapable of escaping the jaws of a prowling guard-dog. Fully aware that its nature presupposes overindulgence, the cub resigns itself to fate, and, like Salāmān, says: “How can I carry out this plan? Greed for fruit will be like a veil (*parda*) over my awareness (*hūsh*), and I will be negligent of the bite of the dog.”²⁰⁶

It should be noted that the excuses of Salāmān and the fox-cub serve an important didactic purpose. Implicit in them is the idea that the transformation of the *nafs* from the condition of *ammāra bi-al-sū* to one of *mutma’inna* involves an awakening, by way of the conscience (*al-nafs al-lawwāma*), to the reality of the soul’s powerlessness vis-à-vis an omnipotent Creator. In other words, Jāmī uses these episodes to underline the determining role of the divine actor in the soul’s progression from evil to purity. The anecdotes therefore suggest that advancing along the spiritual path requires the individual to realize that the decision to act in accordance with, or in defiance of, the reproaching soul, belongs to God alone. Furthermore, Jāmī’s verses indicate that an adept on the path should also realize that *al-nafs al-lawwāma* is unique to mankind and thus signifies man’s special status amongst the hierarchy of created things.

The idea of man’s superior rank is emphasized by the Sage who admonishes Salāmān for not realizing his ontological status as God’s highest manifestation on earth, and does so by invoking the creation of Adam:

Oh you, who are the sprout of the primordial garden,
The most recent image from the pen of ‘Be!’
Letter-reader of the ledger book of the seven [heavens] and the four
[elements],
Decipherer of the pages of night and day,
It is you who are the keeper of the treasure of Adam,
It is you who are the comprehensive book of the cosmos.
Realize your worth and do not count yourself foolishly,
For you are superior to whatever I speak of!²⁰⁷

them testify to themselves, ‘Am I not your Lord?’ (*alastu birabbikum*) They said, ‘Yes, we testify’ (*balā shahidnā*).

²⁰⁵ Jāmī, SA, 427, lines 714–17.

²⁰⁶ Jāmī, SA, 427, lines 716–17.

²⁰⁷ Jāmī, SA, 428, lines 719–22.

As the descendant of Adam, Salāmān is thus God's perfect and final creation, the last *naqsh* issued from the primordial Pen which, acting on the divine commandment "*kun! fa fayakūn*" (Qur'ān 16:40), engraved the destinies of men on the Well-preserved Tablet (*al-lauh al-mahfūz*).²⁰⁸ The Sage indicates to Salāmān that he (like all of Adam's descendants) is the microcosm, namely a mirror which is poised at the interstices of the seven heavens and the four elements, astride the supernal light of day and night, and thus a copy (*nuskha*) therefore of the entire universe.²⁰⁹ Implicit in addressing Salāmān as the custodian of Adam's treasure is the Sufi idea—preserved in a well-known *ḥadīth qudsī*—that God, in His eternal loneliness, wished to be known and therefore created man whom He graced with knowledge of His most beautiful Names (*al-asmā' al-ḥusnā*).²¹⁰ These names, epitomized by the greatest (*ism-i a'ẓam*) and all-encompassing (*ism-i jāmi'*) Name, "Allāh," are keys to the treasury of universal wisdom; according to Sufi mystical tradition, the universe is nothing but the theophanic manifestation (*tajallī*) of the Names of God.²¹¹ When Adam was taught "the names of things" (Qur'ān 2:31), he became the locus (*mazhar*) of divine manifestation in the world. This knowledge was accordingly deposited in his heart (*dil* or *qalb*), the organ of spiritual perception akin to the mind (*khirad*), whose visionary capacity is often captured by medieval Persian writers and mystics in the metaphor of the mirror (*āyina*).²¹² The mirror (or eye) of the heart (*chashm-i dil*) is in constant need of "polishing," since its capacity to reflect is distorted by the carnal soul (*nafs*), which mystics compare to dust or verdigris on a metallic mirror. This, in turn, promotes asceticism (*zuhd*) aimed at taming the soul's base appetites by purging the *nafs* of its blameworthy attributes and replacing them with praiseworthy counterparts.²¹³ Not surprisingly, then,

²⁰⁸ An allusion to the central theme of Qur'anic mythology, the act of creation when the divine Pen (*al-Qalam*) wrote the realities of all things (*ḥaqā'iq*) on the Well-preserved Tablet, also considered the primordial Qur'ān.

²⁰⁹ Regarding how Adam refers to all men, or at least men in their state of (spiritual) perfection, see Chittick, "Perfect Man," 144. See also Jāmī's *Silsilat al-zahab* where Adam is described as "a book embracing all verses and signs, his being is the goal of all goals." Quoted in Chittick, "Perfect Man," 155–57.

²¹⁰ For a discussion of how this *ḥadīth* ("*kuntu kanzan makhfiyyan*") inspired Persian poets like Rūmī, see Annemarie Schimmel, *Triumphal Sun: A Study of the Works of Jalāloddin Rumi* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993), 224–47. See also the *ḥadīth qudsī*: "But for thee did I create the heavens."

²¹¹ Chittick, "Perfect Man," 143.

²¹² See Subtelny, *Le monde est un jardin*, 137–44; especially as it pertains to Rūmī's *Maṣnavī* and Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār's (d. 617/1220) *Mantīq al-ṭayr*.

²¹³ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 112.

the Sage tells Salāmān to renounce the fleeting pleasures of the sensory realm and acquire true knowledge through his heart:

He whose almighty hand mixed your clay,
And who transcribed the word 'wisdom' onto your pure heart,
For His sake purify your breast of the image of external forms,
And turn that mirror toward Reality,
So that your breast may be the treasure of inner meanings,
Your mirror flooded with the light of gnosis!²¹⁴

According to Muslim tradition, the secret of these inner meanings was not revealed even to the angels. As a consequence, their position in relation to primordial man is secondary. This belief also stems from the notion that angels do nothing but worship God in perfect obedience, whereas mankind suffers the choice, albeit within the confines of predestination, between obedience and rebellion.²¹⁵ In this choice lies the superiority of man, for he accepted the burden of the divine attributes and essences as part of the *amāna*, or "trust" (Qur'ān 33:72), a responsibility which the heavens, earth, and mountains could not bear.²¹⁶ But, like Adam, who rebelled and ate what was forbidden to him, Salāmān neglected this oath by indulging his lust for Absāl. As a consequence, the Sage implores Salāmān to veil his eyes from the face of [that] beauty (*ṭal'at-i shāhid*)—taken here to mean women—and warns him against succumbing to passion (*havās*) and spilling his sperm (*nutfa*), since doing so will lead him beyond the pale of chastity (*ḥarīm-i 'āfiyat*) and into the darkness of materiality:

In the beginning, you were of lofty rank,
Your star was in the highest heaven.
But now the lust of your carnal soul has dropped you low,
It has fettered you tightly in the nadir of the earth.²¹⁷

²¹⁴ Jāmī, *SA*, 428, lines 723–25.

²¹⁵ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 188.

²¹⁶ On how this trust has been variously interpreted by Persian mystic poets, see Annemarie Schimmel, *A Two-Colored Brocade: The Imagery of Persian Poetry* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 58.

²¹⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 428, lines 731–32. This fall into carnal pursuits and materiality is reminiscent of several verses of Rūmī's *Maṣnavī* which are contained in "The tale of the evil Jewish king who persecuted Christians," i.e., *Maṣnavī*, bk. 1, lines 537–38:

The Spirit was bearing you to the highest celestial sphere.
[Instead] you went toward the water and clay, among the lowest
You transformed/disfigured yourself through this fall,
From that [state of] existence that was the envy of the [spiritual] intelligences.

Jāmī draws a parallel between Adam and a rooster to illustrate the depths to which the natural condition of the soul has fallen.²¹⁸ The rooster (*khurūs*, in Arabic *dīk*) has traditionally been held in high regard by medieval Muslim writers. This is probably because of the numerous statements attributed to Muḥammad in which the bird is commended as a praiseworthy animal for its mastery of time, its daily crowing which summons believers to prayer, its capacity to see angels, and its notoriety as the animal Iblis (the Devil) hates most.²¹⁹ For example, one particular tradition (*ḥadīth*) claims that God sent Adam a white rooster with the ability to hear the *tasbīḥ* of the angels in order to prevent him from forgetting the times of prayer.²²⁰ Perhaps it is not surprising then that we find a *mu'azzin* praising the rooster for its knowledge of time.²²¹ However, the *mu'azzin* is also puzzled as to why, with this wisdom, the rooster does not sit perched atop the divine Throne (*'arsh*), but instead frets over a hen and walks in circles around dung-heaps. The rooster meets the *mu'azzin's* inquiry with a confession by which Jāmī certainly intended to remind readers of Adam's fall into corporality and his desire to be reunited with his celestial "self":

At first there was a lofty rank for me,
But the lust of the carnal soul cast me down to this lowliness.
If I were able to pass by the carnal soul and its lust,
Why would I saunter into the pit of every dung-heap?

²¹⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 428–29, lines 733–39.

²¹⁹ On the elevated position of roosters in early Islamic literature, see Roberto Tottoli, "At Cock-Crow: Some Muslim Traditions About the Rooster," *Der Islam* 76 (1999): 139–47. Another report, which does not appear in the canonical collections of *ḥadīth*, describes how God keeps a white rooster near the divine Throne, while others purport that it is in fact an angel in disguise. For a reference, see Tottoli, "At Cock-Crow," 142–43. It is interesting to note that in Zoroastrianism, the white rooster is a holy animal and is associated with the angel of prayer, Surūsh (Middle Persian, *Sraoša* or *Srōsh*), who, together with the rooster Parodarsh (literally, "one who sees ahead"), is believed to be responsible for rousing humanity to the revelations of Mazda. For a reference, see G. Kreyenbroek, *Sraoša in the Zoroastrian Tradition* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), 118 and 172. See also Boyce, *History of Zoroastrianism*, 3:60–63 and 3:226–27. On the significance of the rooster, as symbol of Surūsh, in Persian renditions of Muḥammad's *mī'rāj*, or heavenly ascension, especially in its connection to Zoroastrian conversions to Islam in medieval Iran, see Maria E. Subtelny, "Zoroastrian Elements in the Islamic Ascension Narrative: The Case of the Cosmic Cock," in *Medieval and Modern Iranian Studies: Proceedings of the 6th European Conference of Iranian Studies, Held in Vienna on 18–22 September 2007 by the Societas Iranologica Europaea*, ed. Maria Szuppe (Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniennes, 2011), 193–212.

²²⁰ Tottoli, "At Cock-Crow," 144.

²²¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 428, line 734.

I would be admitted to the gardens of Paradise,
I would be a companion of the Celestial Cock.²²²

What emerges from the advice of the King and the Sage, along with the symbolic vignettes about *Shirūya*, the fox-cub, and the rooster is a call for *Salāmān* to eventually achieve a state of perfection which Sufi mystical doctrine conceptualizes as “the Perfect Man.”²²³ The prerequisite of attaining this lofty degree of existence is repentance, followed by the abandonment of blameworthy traits, most notably lust. These sections of *Salāmān va Absāl* imply that, only through determined asceticism, can a person subdue his carnal nature and contemplate the full reality of being the *khalīfat Allāh*.²²⁴ As *Salāmān* indicates in his response to the Sage’s counsel, a paradoxical element in this process is the acknowledgment on the part of the one repenting that the act of *tauba*, though done with sincerity and single-mindedness, is ultimately determined by God. We therefore find *Salāmān* telling the Sage:

But it is surely clear to your enlightened view
That free will is beyond me.
The power of the agent depends on the ability of the recipient,
Its agency is not the product of the producer.
Whatever it is that I have had a capacity for from the beginning,
How can I break from it in the end?
Nay, it is outside the power of the agent
To have an effect contrary to that.²²⁵

On the surface, *Salāmān*’s response appears to be a stubborn act of defiance. In the context of the esoteric and mystical significance of the tale, however, it represents the soul’s awakening to the reality that its attraction to, embodiment within, and struggle to escape its material form is part of what has already been characterized as the “divine wish,” namely God’s desire that each soul should experience and thus recreate the drama of Adam. With every enlightened soul’s desire to return to its Creator, God’s wish to be known is fulfilled.

While it is impossible to determine whether Ya’qūb and members of the Āq Qoyūnlū court acted on the mystical significance of *Salāmān va*

²²² Jāmī, *SA*, 428–29, lines 737–39.

²²³ See chapter 1 of this study, note 54.

²²⁴ For examples of how the institutions of kingship were used to illustrate Sufi ideas, namely the tendency to conflate the Perfect Man and the vicegerent of God with the sultan and the shadow of God respectively, see Lambton, “Sufis and the State,” 23.

²²⁵ Jāmī, *SA*, 429, lines 745–48.

Absāl, particularly its implicit advice to rulers on how to achieve a degree of spiritual perfection akin to Sufi sainthood, we shall now turn our attention to the dynasty's interest in Sufism. The following chapter discusses instances in which Ūzūn Ḥasan and Ya'qūb associated with individual dervishes and Sufi organizations. The apparent inclination of Āq Qoyūnlū rulers toward Sufism is thus presented here in order to support the notion that Ya'qūb and his courtiers would have at least recognized mystical elements in *Salāmān va Absāl*.

CHAPTER THREE

THE RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL INFLUENCES OF SUFIS AT THE ĀQ QOYŪNLŪ COURTS OF ŪZŪN ḤASAN AND YA'QŪB

*Oh you full moon, as long as the light of your face is the sun of Tabriz,
The qibla of Jāmī, just like [Rūmī], is none other than Tabriz!*

—Jāmī, *Dīvān*¹

The abovementioned verse, whereby Jāmī uses paranomasia to liken his devotion to a beloved in Āq Qoyūnlū Tabriz, taken here to be Ya'qūb, to the devotion of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī for his companion and muse, Shams al-Tabrīzī (d. 645/1247), is consistent with how historical sources depict the unique relationship between the poet of Herat and Ya'qūb, his patron in Tabriz. Their rapport, which in many respects resembled the archetypal master-disciple (*murshid-murīd*) relationship characteristic of medieval Sufi mystical brotherhoods, will be contextualized by exploring several facets of Āq Qoyūnlū history.

To this end, this chapter will examine the political activities of Sufi mystics—especially Naqshbandīs—at the royal court and civil administrations of Ūzūn Ḥasan and his son, Ya'qūb. Historical information about these activities will be drawn from the *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, *Kitāb-i Dīyār-Bakriyya*, *Akhlaq-i Jalālī*, *Menākib-i Gülşenī*, *Rauzāt al-jinān wa jannāt al-janān*, and the *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt*. The personal correspondence between Jāmī and Ya'qūb will also be mined for information on the nature of their relationship, the details of which will be compared with data from the official chronicle by Khunji-Iṣfahānī (i.e., the *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*).

What emerges from these inquiries suggests that members of the Naqshbandī order, Jāmī in particular, played a more significant religious-political role in the Āq Qoyūnlū administrative and personal affairs of Ya'qūb than has previously been acknowledged. This chapter will also demonstrate that, while *Salāmān va Absāl* represents the finest example of Ya'qūb's sustained patronage of Persian *belles-lettres*, it was in fact just one aspect of the interest of the Āq Qoyūnlū court in dervishes and Sufis and the esoteric or mystical writings they produced.

¹ Jāmī, *Dīvān*, 221 (no. 305).

*Dervishes, Sufi Mystics, and
the Political Legitimacy of Ūzūn Ḥasan*

In his study of the political history of the Āq Qoyūnlū confederation, John Woods concludes that, of all the Sufi groups attached to Ya'qūb in Tabriz, it was the Khalvatī order that enjoyed the greatest influence. Its association with the Āq Qoyūnlū began during the reign of Ya'qūb's father, Ūzūn Ḥasan, when he welcomed the Khalvatī shaikh Dada 'Umar Raushanī (d. 892/1487) to Tabriz around 864/1470. The shaikh was a native of Laranda in Anatolia and at the time was the successor (*khalīfa*) of Sayyid Yaḥyā Shīrvānī, the second founder (*pīr-i thānī*) of the Khalvatī order.² 'Umar Raushanī may have been invited by associates of Ūzūn Ḥasan for the simple fact that he offered an alternative, more moderate form of Sufism to Ūzūn Ḥasan, whose preoccupation with an ecstatic shaman-like dervish, named Tāj al-Mujāzīb (also referred to as Tāj al-Majzūbīn) Bābā 'Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī (d. before 896/1490), must have been unsettling to the urban traditionalists in his retinue.³ It should be noted that 'Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī was not affiliated with any of the established Sufi mystical brotherhoods, thus making him a liability in the eyes of state officials who may have been keen to exploit the political advantages associated with patronizing leaders of the major, urban-centered *ṭarīqas*. Instead, as Woods suggests, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī personified the type of popular religion practiced by the rural and tribal populations of western Iran, northern Iraq, and eastern Anatolia during the second-half of the ninth/fifteenth century.⁴

That Ūzūn Ḥasan held 'Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī in high esteem is indicated by an allusion in the *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, where in praising Ūzūn Ḥasan's patronage of Sufis, Khunjī-Iṣfahānī uses the term *majzūbī*, which is a word-play on 'Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī's *laqab*, Tāj al-Mujāzīb:

That majestic presence (Ūzūn Ḥasan), his blessed habit was such that he joined the eye of insight from every sitting corner and with a mighty wave was raising the heads [of those] without heads and feet (i.e., Sufis). He was

² *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Gulshanī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Shihāb al-Dīn" (by Tahsin Yazici).

³ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 141. Despite being perhaps the single best source for biographical information on 'Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī, the *Rauzāt al-jinān* simply says that he died during the reign of Ya'qūb. For a reference, see Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:472.

⁴ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 83.

favoring every ecstatic (*majzūbī*) for beloved places and every frenzied lover (*shūrīda*, i.e., Sufi) was seeing the light of [his] eyes.⁵

The *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya*, also contains many references to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī. Among them is the description by Ṭihirānī-Iṣfahānī of a bizarre incident in which an entranced ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī lept atop a banquet table and predicted Ūzūn Ḥasan’s victory in a major battle.⁶

The strength and longevity of the relationship between Ūzūn Ḥasan and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī is reflected in a document dated about fifteen years later (876/1471) in which Ūzūn Ḥasan awarded ‘Abd al-Raḥmān a *suyūrghāl*.⁷ As with most *suyūrghāl* documents, the conditions of this grant would have awarded the beneficiary, in this case ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī, partial or complete immunity from certain taxes and would theoretically have ensured that such land(s) remained free from administrative and judicial interference by the central government. Under this arrangement, agents of the state were expressly prohibited from trespassing upon such lands (a condition typically stipulated in the circumlocution: “*qalam va qadam kutāh va kashida dāshta*”).⁸ In the introduction to the *suyūrghāl*, Ūzūn Ḥasan credits Sufis with his rise to power:

⁵ Khunji-Iṣfahānī, *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 266–67; Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 252 n. 78.

⁶ According to the *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya*, while encamped north of Ruha at Akziyarat in 861/1456, Ūzūn Ḥasan held a banquet for officers of his royal body guard and confederate chiefs in order to discuss the likelihood of an invasion by their Qarā Qoyūnlū foes. Suddenly, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī burst in and snatched up the sword of an officer. He struck a serving-bowl, unfastened his waistband and, in a symbolic gesture of investiture, bound the sword and belt to the waist of Ūzūn Ḥasan. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Shāmī then swiped a goblet from an astonished guest, passed it to Ūzūn Ḥasan, and ensured all present that divine assistance would intercede on behalf of the Āq Qoyūnlū by proclaiming, “Drink and do not fear! For all shall be yours!” For a reference, see Ṭihirānī-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya* 1:253; and Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 82–83.

⁷ A description of the unpublished *suyūrghāl* document can be found in Nazan Ölçer, *Kilims [Türk ve İslâm Eserleri Müzesi]*, trans. William A. Edmonds (Beyölu-Istanbul: Eren, 1989), no. 2200. For information on the Bābā Maḥmūd hospice erected in honor of Bābā ‘Abd al-Raḥmān in Mardin, see Nejat Göyünç, *Onaltıncı yüzyılda Mardin sancağı* (Istanbul: İstanbul Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1969), 119–21.

⁸ Literally, they are “to keep their pens away and their feet withdrawn.” On this document see Halil İnalcık, “Autonomous Enclaves in Islamic States: *Temliks*, *Soyurghals*, *Yurdluk-Ocaqluks*, *Mâlikâne-Mukâta’as* and *Awqāf*,” in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer, Sholeh A. Quinn, and Ernest Tucker (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 123 n. 52, who indicates that the document will be treated in a forthcoming study by John Woods. For a discussion of the Āq Qoyūnlū use of *suyūrghāl* grants, see Vladimir Minorsky, “A Soyūrghāl of Qāsim b. Jahāngir Aq-qoyunlu (903/1498),” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 9, no. 4 (1937–39): 927–60.

From the dawn of the morning of our sultanate and the first appearance of the signs of our caliphate, we have recognized that the doors of victory and conquest which were opened upon the countenance of our good fortune, and the portents of ascendancy and prosperity which became evident and manifest upon the pages of the felicitous circumstances of our aspirations, were due to the benevolence of the sublime spiritual energies (*himam-i 'aliyya*) of the dervishes and to the beneficence of their lofty fervor.⁹

Other Sufi mystical figures are also mentioned in connection with Ūzūn Ḥasan's rise to power. For example, according to the *Raużāt al-jinān wa jannāt al-janān*, the Ḥusainī *sayyid* 'Abd al-Ghaffār Ṭabāṭabā'ī (d. ca. 895/1490) had prophesized Ūzūn Ḥasan's conquest of Azerbaijan well before its occurrence in 872/1467.¹⁰ In fact, on the eve of the conquest, Ūzūn Ḥasan is reported to have dreamed that all the dervishes and saints of Azerbaijan had assembled in order to seat him on the throne of Tabriz.¹¹ As a reward for his good auguries, Ūzūn Ḥasan named 'Abd al-Ghaffār Ṭabāṭabā'ī to the office of *shaikh al-Islām* of Azerbaijan—a post later inherited by his son Mīr Sirāj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Vahhāb (d. ca. 930/1524).¹² The appreciation of Ūzūn Ḥasan for 'Abd al-Ghaffār also manifested itself in grants of land. For example, Jean Aubin identified 'Abd al-Ghaffār Ṭabāṭabā'ī as the Rafī' al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ghaffār, who is named as the beneficiary of a hereditary *suyūrghāl* in the district of Rūdiqāt in a *farmān* issued by Ūzūn Ḥasan in 875/1471.¹³

Support for Ūzūn Ḥasan's claim to rule came from other quarters as well. Amīr Badr al-Dīn Aḥmad Lāla'ī (d. 912/1506), the founder of the Azerbaijani

⁹ Quoted and translated in Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 83. The word *himam*, which Woods translates as “efforts,” is the plural form of *himmat*, and thus an important Sufi technical term related to the idea that Sufis could effect changes in fortune.

¹⁰ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Raużāt al-jinān* 1:214–15.

¹¹ Ṭihrānī-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya*, 476, 485; and Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Raużāt al-jinān* 1:381, 440.

¹² Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Raużāt al-jinān* 1:214–15; and Jean Aubin, “Études safavides. I. Šah Ismā'il et les notables de l'Iraq persan,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 2, no. 1 (1959): 56. Abd al-Ghaffār Ṭabāṭabā'ī was a follower of the Persian poet and Ḥurūfī mystic, Šah Qāsim al-Anvār (d. 836/1433–34), and was versed in *ilm-i jafr* (the esoteric science of letters). For information on the life and works of Qāsim al-Anvār, see Browne, *Literary History of Persia* 3:473–87. For a description of the position of *shaikh al-Islām* in ninth/fifteenth century Iran, see Khvāja 'Abd Allāh Marwārid, *Staatsschreiben der Timuridenzeit*, ed. and trans. H. R. Roemer (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1952), 57–58; and Shiro Ando, “The Shaykh al-Islām as a Timurid Office: A Preliminary Study,” *Islamic Studies* 33, nos. 2–3 (1994): 253–80.

¹³ Aubin, “Études safavides,” 56 n. 2. For an edited version of the *suyūrghāl*, see Jamāl Turābi Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Nasab-nāma-i shākhā'ī az Ṭabāṭabā'ihā-yi Tabriz* (Tabriz: Sāzmān-i Asnād-i Milli-yi Īrān, Mudiriyyāt-i Mantāqa-i Shumāl-i Gharb, 1376/1997), 19.

branch of the Kubravī order, acknowledged the legitimacy of Ūzūn Ḥasan in 876/1471 when he publicly declared that Qur'anic verse (4:59) exhorting believers to "Obey God, the Prophet, and those in authority *among you* (*minkum*)" applied to Ūzūn Ḥasan.¹⁴ Aḥmad Lāla'ī based his endorsement on the fact that, according to the *abjad* system of Arabic letter numerology, the phrase "*minkum*" (among you) has the same numerical value (150) as Ūzūn Ḥasan's name, "Ḥasan Beg."¹⁵ The Āq Qoyūnlū ruler also won the blessings of Shāh Na'im al-Dīn Ni'mat Allāh al-Thānī (d. ca. 906/1501), the great-great grandson of the founder of the Ni'mat Allāhī order, Shāh Ni'mat Allāh Nūr al-Dīn b. 'Abd Allāh Vālī (d. 834/1431). According to several historical sources, Shāh Ni'mat Allāh II expressed his support for the regime of Ūzūn Ḥasan by consecrating the silk covering (*maḥmil*) for the Ka'ba that the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler dispatched to the Hijaz.¹⁶

¹⁴ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 107. On the relationship of Aḥmad Lāla'ī and the Āq Qoyūnlū, see Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Raużāt al-jinān* 2:152–54.

¹⁵ See Vladimir Minorsky, "A Civil and Military Review in Fārs in 881/1476," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 10, no. 1 (1940–42): 148. Likewise, in the introduction to the *Akhḫāq-i Jalālī*, Davānī justifies the legitimacy of Ūzūn Ḥasan's rule by noting that the name "Ḥasan Beg" is numerically equal to the word "*sultān*." See Davānī, *Akhḫāq-i Jalālī*, 103–4. See also the attempts to legitimate Ūzūn Ḥasan's rule, based on numerological interpretations of Qur'anic phrases, in a victory proclamation (*fath-nāma*) Ūzūn Ḥasan addressed to the Mamluk sultan, Qāyit Bāy (d. 901/1496), in Matthew Melvin-Koushki, "The Delicate Art of Aggression: Uzun Hasan's *Fathnama* to Qaytbay of 1469," *Iranian Studies* 44, no. 2 (2011): 211–13.

¹⁶ Ṭīhrānī-Isfahānī, *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya*, 476, 485, 553–54, and 560–61. On the religious-political significance of the Āq Qoyūnlū *maḥmil*, see Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 107–8. It is interesting to note that Shāh Ni'mat Allāh II initially refused to recognize the political legitimacy of Ūzūn Ḥasan and sided with Sulṭān-Abū Sa'īd during the ill-fated campaign by the Timurid ruler against the Āq Qoyūnlū. Rather than malign the Ni'mat Allāhī shaiikh, Ūzūn Ḥasan invited him to Shiraz where the ruler and his retinue had decamped. According to a hagiography composed by a descendant of Shāh Ni'mat Allāh II, the invitation of Ūzūn Ḥasan was prompted by rumors that the wife of Ni'mat Allāh II, who happened to be a Qarā Qoyūnlū prince, had hidden a large cache of jewels and other valuables at the couple's domicile in Taft. Shāh Ni'mat Allāh II was summoned to the royal *majlis* whereupon Ūzūn Ḥasan appointed him to lead the assembly in prayer. When Shāh Ni'mat Allāh II recited the testimony of faith (*shahāda*) Ūzūn Ḥasan suddenly collapsed. He awoke one hour later and told Ni'mat Allāh II that the Prophet had appeared to him in a dream and scolded him, saying, "We made you ruler and we made kings submit to you, and yet you, with your lies, have caused problems for our child (i.e., Shāh Ni'mat Allāh II)!" The vision so shocked Ūzūn Ḥasan that he allegedly confessed his true intentions to the shaiikh and apologized. As a recent study has suggested, this potentially apocryphal account was written well into the reign of the Safavids and may therefore represent an attempt to discredit the Āq Qoyūnlū while also erasing any suspicion that Shāh Ni'mat Allāh II maintained relations with the descendants of Ūzūn Ḥasan. For a fuller description of the preceding episode, see Michael Paul Connell, "The Nimatullahi Sayyids of Taft: A Study of the Evolution of a Late Medieval Iranian Sufi Tariqah," (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2004), 127–28.

Despite his interest in a number of individual mystics and dervishes, however, Ūzūn Ḥasan's patronage of Sufis does not appear to have been indiscriminate. Evidence of this is contained in a letter that Ūzūn Ḥasan addressed to the Ottoman sultan, Bāyazīd II, in Rabī' I 875/September 1470.¹⁷ In the letter, which was clearly intended to promote the nascent Āq Qoyūnlū confederation as worthy defenders of the *sharī'a*, Ūzūn Ḥasan mentions the achievements his administration had made in abolishing such abominable practices as sodomy, prostitution, wine-drinking, and gambling.¹⁸ Ūzūn Ḥasan also claims that his forces successfully eradicated local heretical and antinomian dervish groups, specifically the Qalandarīs and Ḥaidarīs. If true, such a position tempers the view expressed by Khunjī-İşfahānī that Ūzūn Ḥasan "favor[ed] every ecstatic."¹⁹

The Role of the Akhlāq-i Jalālī

It appears that, in recognizing the political importance of Sufi mystics, Ūzūn Ḥasan was first and foremost upholding the advice given to him by Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī in the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*. As the chief religious figure and advisor of the Āq Qoyūnlū empire, Davānī advocated the creation of a polity based on what Woods has dubbed a "Turko-Iranian Sunni-Sufi synthesis."²⁰

The emphasis on Sufism is evident in a chapter of the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* entitled, "On the government of kingship and the proper comportment of kings." In it, Davānī classifies society in a hierarchical sequence that, while according a high status to representatives of normative Islam, nevertheless gives the highest ranking to their mystical counterparts, the Sufis. At the top of this schema are those people Davānī says have a good natural disposition (*bi-ṭab'ī khair*), specifically scholars of the religious law (*'ulamā-yi sharī'a*), the leaders of the Sufi brotherhoods (*mashā'ikh-i*

¹⁷ Tâci-zâde Sa'dî Çelebi, *Mecmû'a-yi münşeât*, ed. Necâti Lugal and Adnan Sadik Erzi (Istanbul: Mat ba'a-i İstânbûl, 1956), 24–29. The contents of the letter have been translated by Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 106.

¹⁸ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 106. Ūzūn Ḥasan claims such offenses flourished throughout the same districts under the previous, that is to say, Qarā Qoyūnlū regime.

¹⁹ For a discussion of the provocative activities of the Qalandarīs and Ḥaidarīs, see Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200–1550* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1994), 65–70.

²⁰ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 9. The *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* went on to become required reading at the Mughal court of Jahāngīr (d. 1035/1626) and shaped Ottoman conceptualizations of medieval Islamic governance. For a reference, see Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy*, 321 n. 27.

tarīqat), and the gnostics who know the divine Reality (*ʿurafā-yi ḥaqīqat*).²¹ According to Davānī, members of this last group are not only the elite worshippers of God, they also represent the goal of existence (*ghāyat-i ʿjād*). In fact, the other divisions of society, he writes, have entered the “inn of being” (*miḥmānkhāna-i vujūd*), which is to say the material world, as intruders (*ṭufail*).²² Considering such opinions, it is hardly surprising that elsewhere in the same chapter Davānī posits that the well-being of the ruler (i.e., Ūzūn Ḥasan) depends on receiving help and good counsel from these elite holy men:

The master of good fortune finds security from the scorching wind of the calamities of fate, [when] he finds refuge in the pure interior (*bāṭin-i pāk*) of the pure hearts (*ṣāfi dīl*) of the dervishes, and he assists in attaining the goal of the intentions and desire of those with spiritual power (*himmat*). For, at the time of facing journeys and undertaking dangers and risks, having sought a shield from the thoughts of the residents of the mosques and dwellers in Sufi hospices (*sākinān-i khānaqāh*), the crown of rulership finds existence on the head of the man who seeks direction from the minds of the crown-bestowing headless and footless ones (i.e., Sufis). The throne of the caliphate is the permanent residence of a king who begs divine grace (*faiẓ*) from the minds of the beggars with puissant hearts.²³

It is interesting to note that this passage is found (almost verbatim) in the introduction to Davānī’s *ʿArż-i sipāh-i Ūzūn Ḥasan* (usually referred to as the *ʿArż-nāma*), which he wrote as an eyewitness of the review of local civil and military officers in Fars in 881/1476.²⁴ Also noteworthy is the inclusion of the term *himmat*. As has already been mentioned, *himmat*, or the creative power of the heart, had special relevance for the Naqshbandīs, who used the term to denote the capacity of the shaikh to control the psychological state (*ḥāl*) of a disciple. Its use here, while doing little to establish either Davānī or Ūzūn Ḥasan as Naqshbandīs, does at

²¹ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 139.

²² Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 139–40. This fourth “glimmer” has been rendered into English by Carl W. Ernst, “Flashes of Illumination on Praiseworthy Ethics, or, the Jalālī Ethics, *Akhlāq-i jalālī*: The Fourth Flash, On the Politics of Kingship and the Manners of Kings,” in *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia. Volume Four, From the School of Illumination to Philosophical Mysticism*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Mehdi Aminrazavi, with the assistance of M. R. Jozi (London: I. B. Tauris in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2012), 119–33.

²³ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 135–36.

²⁴ Davānī, *ʿArż-i sipāh-i Ūzūn Ḥasan*, 3. The fact that the review was dedicated to Sulṭān-Khalīl is another indication that the advice of the author, namely that the Āq Qoyūnlū patronize Sufi mystics, was not limited to Ūzūn Ḥasan.

least suggest that the lexicon of Sufism was known at the highest echelons of the Āq Qoyūnlū administration.

In this same section of the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, Davānī goes so far as to indirectly associate Ūzūn Ḥasan with Khidr, the protean guide or “Green Man” whom Islamic legend identifies as the mysterious companion of Moses and conveyor of divinely inspired knowledge (Q 18:65–82).²⁵ After expounding on the qualities of human perfection (*kamāl-i insānī*), Davānī implicitly equates Ūzūn Ḥasan’s command of the virtues of perfect kingship with the unique ability of Khidr to perceive the divine mysteries.²⁶

[The insight of the ruler] has acquired the subtle customs of the sultanate, the realities of the proper conduct of having dominion and governing, the secret obscurities of wisdom, and the extraordinary commandments of religion, from divinely-inspired instruction (*talqīn-i mulhim-i qudsī*) and the gift of divine emanation (*faiz-i faẓl*), without the intermediary of acquired learning and human effort, his sacred soul has attained the lofty rank of “And whom we had taught knowledge from Our own presence” (Q 18:65) and origin.²⁷

According to mystical tradition, Khidr was viewed as the archetypal Sufi shaykh who, in addition to aiding wayfarers and pilgrims, initiated masterless aspirants into the mystical path.²⁸ His appearance here is interesting, especially in connection with the term *talqīn*, for in addition to its more mundane meaning, *talqīn* is a Sufi technical term for the spiritual

²⁵ For a detailed study of the protean prophet-saint, see Patrick Franke, *Begegnung mit Khidr: Quellenstudien zum Imaginären im traditionellen Islam* (Beirut: Franz Steiner, 2000). See also Irfan Omar, “Khidr in the Islamic Tradition,” *Muslim World* 83, nos. 3–4 (1993): 270–95.

²⁶ For another instance of a Persian poet equating an earthly ruler, in this case Fakhr al-Dīn Bahrāmshāh (d. ca. 617/1220), the Mengüček sultan of Erzinjan, with Khidr, see Nizāmī Ganjavī, *Kulliyāt-i Khamsa-i Ḥakīm Nizāmī Ganjavī. Makhzan al-asrār, Khusrāu va Shīrīn, Lailā va Majnūn, Haft paikar, Iskandar-nāma* (Tehran: Mu’assasa-i Āmīr Kābir, 1351/1972), 26. In a similar vein, certain Mongol-era writers equated Chinggis Khān (d. 624/1227) with Khidr. To be specific, some Sufis justified the havoc wreaked by Chinggis Khān and the Mongols as the manifestation of the will of God which, much like the destructive acts of Khidr in the Qur’ān (e.g., scuttling a boat, murdering a youth, and toppling a wall), ultimately had a hidden and justifiable purpose. On this topic, see Devin DeWeese, “Stuck in the Throat of Chingiz Khān: Envisioning the Mongol Conquests in Some Sufi Accounts from the 14th to 17th Centuries,” in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer, Sholeh A. Quinn, and Ernest Tucker (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 36–42.

²⁷ Davānī, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, 147. The entire verse (Q 18:65) reads, “So they found one of our servants, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Ourselves and whom We had taught Knowledge from Our own presence (*‘allamnāhu min ladunna ‘ilman*).”

²⁸ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 105–6.

impartations of a master to his disciple, especially with regard to the performance of *zīkr*.²⁹ For Naqshbandīs, *talqīn* was at the core of their unique rites of initiation.³⁰ According to Naqshbandī tradition, Muḥammad gave Abū Bakr instruction (*talqīn*) in the performance of a silent form of *zīkr* (*zīkr-i khaṭī*) when the two eluded Meccan forces in a cave during the Prophet's *hijra*.³¹ This practice has historically distinguished Naqshbandīs who justify it by pointing to the Qur'anic (7:55) expression: "Call on your Lord in humility and in private (*khufyatan*)."³² What is more, Naqshbandī tradition maintains that the order's adoption of the silent *zīkr* was based on instructions (*talqīn*) received by the Khvājagānī forefather of the order, 'Abd al-Khālīq Ghijduvānī, when he was reportedly visited by Khidr in a dream-vision.³³ While mentioning Khidr and *talqīn* in connection with his description of Ūzūn Ḥasan's unique qualifications to rule does not imply that he was a Naqshbandī initiate, it does nevertheless lead one to suspect that the influence of the order at court was greater than has heretofore been acknowledged. Finally, it is interesting to note that Ūzūn Ḥasan was not the only Āq Qoyūnlū ruler mentioned by Davānī in connection with Khidr. In the *Arz-nāma*, Davānī attributes the agricultural prosperity of Fars to the mere presence of its Āq Qoyūnlū governor, Sulṭān-Khalīl. Referring to him as the "Second Solomon," Davānī describes Sulṭān-Khalīl as a luminous, "Jesus-like" figure, capable of breathing life into the ancient ruins of Persepolis, known as *Takht-i Jamshīd*, and compares him to the immortal Khidr, who "makes everything surrounding him verdant."³⁴

²⁹ In a related sense, *talqīn* also refers to the Muslim tradition of reciting "*La ilāha illā Allāh*." It should be noted that Davānī dedicated a mystical treatise explicating the hidden significance of the attestation ("There is no god but God") to Ūzūn Ḥasan. The first section gives a literal interpretation of the utterance, while the second is an esoteric exposition based on the "concealed sciences" (*ulūm-i bāṭinī*) of "unveiling" (*kashfī*) and "witnessing" (*shuhūdī*). For a published edition of the treatise, see Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī, *Tahlīlīyya (sharḥ-i lā ilāh illā Allāh)*, ed. Firishta Farīdūnī Furūzanda (Tehran: Sāzmān-i Intishārāt-i Kaihān, 1373/1994). See also Barakāt, *Kitābshināsī-yi maktab-i falsafī-yi shīrāz*, 78.

³⁰ Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 168.

³¹ An event related in Qur'ān 9:40.

³² See Algar, "Silent and Vocal *dhikr*," 15–22; Fletcher "Naqshbandiyya and the Dhikr-i arra," 113–19; and Ruspoli, "Réflexions sur la voie spirituelle," 95–108.

³³ Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 14 and 117. In the Naqshbandī literature, Ghijduvānī is generally referred to as *sar-silsila-i khvājagān* ("the first link in the chain of the Khvājagān") and is credited with formulating a set of eight spiritual principles (*kalimāt-i qudsiyya*) that later became the hallmarks of Naqshbandī doctrine, namely: *hūsh dar dam*, *naẓar dar qadam*, *saḡar dar vaṭān*, *khalvāt dar anjuman*, *yād kard*, *bāz gasht*, *niḡāh dāsht*, and *yād dasht*.

³⁴ Davānī, *Arz-sipāh-i Ūzūn Ḥasan*, 18. For a discussion of the esoteric features of the *Arz-sipāh-i Ūzūn Ḥasan*, see A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, "Le royaume de Salomon," *Le monde*

Khalvatī Influence on Āq Qoyūnlū Affairs

While in many cases it is necessary to make inferences from the historical sources regarding the role of the Naqshbandīs at the Āq Qoyūnlū court, no such measures are needed when discussing the Khalvatī order. As mentioned earlier, several members of Khalvatī *ṭarīqa* wielded considerable influence over successive Āq Qoyūnlū administrations. Foremost among these influential holy men was Ibrāhīm Gulshanī (d. 940/1534), whose thirty-eight year-long association with the Āq Qoyūnlū spanned the reigns of Ūzūn Ḥasan, Sulṭān-Khalīl, and Ya'qūb.³⁵

First introduced to the court by Maulānā Ḥasan, the chief magistrate (*qāẓī al-quḏāt*) of Ūzūn Ḥasan and himself a mystic, Gulshanī was soon appointed to the prestigious position of keeper of the royal signature seal (*tauqīṭ*).³⁶ According to the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gūlshenī*, a hagiographical account of the life of Gulshanī, he quickly gained the favor of Ūzūn Ḥasan and was dispatched to conclude a peace treaty with Sulṭān-Ḥusain Bāyqarā in Herat where he became acquainted with Jāmī.³⁷ Acting on the orders of Ūzūn Ḥasan, Maulānā Ḥasan then sent Gulshanī to escort the pre-eminent Khalvatī shāikh, Dada 'Umar Raushanī, from Qarabagh

iranien et l'islam 1 (1971): 1–41. The influence of Davānī over Āq Qoyūnlū affairs decreased during the reign of Ya'qūb. Nevertheless, Davānī dedicated at least two major works to Ya'qūb which survive today as MSS. The first is a (untitled) treatise on justice (*adālat*) which begins with an exposition on the “deputyship of man” (*khlāfat-i insān*), and which is followed by a discussion on the different types of justice according to Aristotle. The second work is a treatise on speculative theology (*kalām*) in Arabic entitled, *Hāshīya qadīm bar sharḥ-i tajrīd*. For references to these MSS, see Danishpazhouh, “Annotated Bibliography on Government,” 221–22; and Barakāt, *Kitābshīnāsī-yi maktab-i falsafī-yi shīrāz*, 84–87. But see also, Pourjavady, *Philosophy in Early Safavid Iran*, 11 n. 63. For an uncritical edition of the treatise on justice, see the serial, *Tahqīq dar mabda'-i āfarīnīsh*, 8 (1343): 13–23.

³⁵ Ibrāhīm Gulshanī's association with the Āq Qoyūnlū lasted from 874/1469 to 913/1507.

³⁶ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.vv. “Gulshanī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Shihāb al-Dīn” (by Tahsin Yazici) and “tawḳī” (by F. Babinger; C. E. Bosworth). Gulshanī, it would appear, held other key administrative positions, including, scribe of royal orders (*nishānchī*) and diplomatic envoy (*ilchī*), and was awarded the privileges of a *tarkhān*, an individual who enjoyed unrestricted access to the ruler. But see Side Emre, “Ibrāhīm-i Gūlshenī (ca. 1442–1534): Itinerant Saint and Cairene Ruler,” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2009), 53 and 56–57.

³⁷ Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gūlshenī*, 23–25, 30–31; *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. “Golshani, Ebrāhīm b. Moḥammad b. Ebrāhīm b. Šehāb-al-Dīn” (by Tahsin Yazici). Another notable meeting involved the introduction of Gulshanī to Davānī in Shiraz while the former was serving as Ūzūn Ḥasan's envoy to Sulṭān-Khalīl, then the provincial ruler of Fars. For a reference to their encounter, see Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gūlshenī*, 33–34, and 41–43.

to the the Āq Qoyūnlū court in Tabriz.³⁸ Becoming a disciple (*murīd*) of ‘Umar Raushanī, Gulshanī assiduously attended the latter’s sermons in Tabriz and was eventually designated his successor (*khalīfa*).

In addition to Ibrāhīm Gulshanī, it is very likely that ‘Umar Raushanī counted members of the royal family among his disciples. For example, the principal wife of Ūzūn Ḥasan, Saljūqshāh bt. Kūr Muḥammad Begum (d. 896/1490), reportedly made a pious endowment (*vaqf*) in favor of ‘Umar Raushanī by granting him a hospice (*zāviya*) near Bāgh-i Shamāl, which came to be known as the Muḥaffariyya.³⁹ Moreover, the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülšenī* states that ‘Umar Raushanī initiated Ūzūn Ḥasan’s brother Idrīs into the Khalvatī order.⁴⁰

Besides members of the royal household, the Khalvatīs had supporters at the highest levels of the civil and military administration. One such individual was Sayyid ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī Baihaqī, who eventually relinquished his position as chief magistrate (*qāzī al-quḍāt*) for Ūzūn Ḥasan so that he could pursue Khalvatī-related activities full-time.⁴¹ His absence from official duties must not have lasted long, however, for according to the *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, the newly-enthroned Sulṭān-Khalīl sent ‘Alī Baihaqī to Istanbul with the news of the death of his father, a gesture aimed at improving relations with the Ottomans.⁴²

Not everyone, it seems, took a liking to ‘Umar Raushanī’s brand of mysticism or his influence. During the reign of Ya’qūb, the Khalvatī shaiikh was brought before Qāzī Īsā in Tabriz, and according to the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülšenī*, he was made to defend himself against charges that he was a “Fuṣūṣī,” that is, an adherent of the complex metaphysics expounded by Ibn al-‘Arabī in his *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. The accusations were apparently

³⁸ B. G. Martin, “A Short History of the Khalwati Order of Dervishes,” in *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500*, ed. Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), 295.

³⁹ Martin, “Short History,” 279. For a brief description of the Muḥaffariyya hospice, which used to be attached to the (Great) Blue Mosque in Tabriz, see ‘Abd al-‘Alā’ Karang, *Tārīkh-i Tabriz*, ed. and trans. Vladimir Minorsky (Tabriz: Kitābfurūshī-yi Tīhrān, 1958), 40 and 85 n. 1. According to the *Dānishmandān-i Āzarbāijān*, a modern study on important figures from Azerbaijan’s past, the mother of Ya’qūb (i.e., Saljūqshāh Begum) was especially inclined (*irādat-i khāṣṣi*) to ‘Umar Raushanī. For a reference, see Muḥammad ‘Alī-Khān Tarbiyat, *Dānishmandān-i Āzarbāijān* (Tabriz: Maṭba’a-i Majlis, 1314/1935), 320.

⁴⁰ Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülšenī*, 48.

⁴¹ Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauḍāt al-jinān* 1:476–77.

⁴² Khunji-Iṣfahānī, *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī* (1957), 29. In addition to the administrative title of *ṣadr*, ‘Alī Baihaqī is referred to in the *Arz-sipāh-i Ūzūn Ḥasan* as a “great spiritual master” (*mashāyikh-i kibār*). For a discussion on the mystically symbolic role he played at a civil and military parade in Fars, see Melikian-Chirvani, “Le Royaume de Salomon,” 28.

made by strict exotericists among the ‘*ulamā*’ who wanted to brand ‘Umar Raushanī an infidel.⁴³ Ibrāhīm Gulshanī apparently persuaded Qāzī ‘Īsā to dismiss the accusations against his spiritual master and forced those who had initiated the investigation to ask ‘Umar Raushanī for his forgiveness.⁴⁴ Besides illustrating that the writings of Ibn al-‘Arabī remained controversial in late ninth/fifteenth century Iran and that his ideas may have been a flashpoint for tensions between the strict traditionalists and the Sufis, the incident also suggests that Gulshanī exercised considerable influence over members of the Āq Qoyūnlū administration.⁴⁵

Another indication of his influence was an incident described in the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī* in which Gulshanī stifled a plot by the Türkmen ‘*ulamā*’ (*terākime ‘ulemāsinden*) who did not speak Persian, to have the Persian-speaking Qāzī ‘Īsā deposed as Ya‘qūb’s *vazīr*. According to the report, thirty-four religious scholars convinced the *amīr*, Sulaimān Beg Bījan (d. 897/1492), to ensure that Qāzī ‘Īsā was ousted. The conflict was resolved when Gulshanī secured the appointment of a Turkish-speaking scribe (*kātib*) to act as a liaison between the Turkish ‘*ulamā*’ and Qāzī ‘Īsā.⁴⁶ It should be pointed out that the incident, which suggests that there were serious ethno-linguistic tensions between Turkish and Persian members of the religious intelligentsia, does not appear in the other

⁴³ Alexandra Whelan Dunietz, “Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī of Yazd: Representative of the Iranian Provincial Elite in the Late Fifteenth Century,” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1990), 136–37. On the controversies relating to the speculative theosophy of Ibn al-‘Arabī, see Alexander D. Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabī in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999). See also Michel Chodkiewicz, “Le procès posthume d’Ibn ‘Arabī,” in *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, ed. Frederick de Jong and Bernd Radtke (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 93–123.

⁴⁴ Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, 88–89; and Dunietz, “Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī,” 137.

⁴⁵ Another example of Qāzī ‘Īsā’s intervention on behalf of ‘Umar Raushanī and Ibrāhīm Gulshanī occurred during a violent dispute over the estate of the late Raushanī. Shortly after the death of Raushanī in 892/1487, state officials tortured his children in an effort to extort their inheritance, and obtained some 170,000 *karaca akça* in the process. When news of the attack reached Ibrāhīm Gulshanī, he raced from Tabriz to Ya‘qūb’s winter encampment (*qishlaq*) in Qarabagh and presented the case to Qāzī ‘Īsā who conferred with the ruler. As compensation, Ya‘qūb dispatched a high ranking Turkic commander who, in addition to returning the inheritance, presented the aggrieved descendants of Raushanī with lavish gifts and textiles. Assurances were made that fiscal authorities would never again interfere with the family or the regular pension (*razqat*) granted to them by the state. The episode is contained in Gulshānī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, 176–78. See also Dunietz, “Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī,” 139.

⁴⁶ Dunietz, “Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī,” 137.

historical sources, leaving open the possibility that the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī* exaggerated the influence of Gulshanī (and thus of the Khalvatī) over Āq Qoyūnlū administrative affairs.

Shaikh Ibrāhīm Gulshanī at the Court of Ya'qūb

The Persian historical sources have little to say about Ya'qūb's personal or political involvement with Sufi mystics. For instance, the official account of his reign by Khunji-İşfahānī is virtually silent about his patronage of Sufis or his personal interest in mysticism. It is only in the *Rauzāt al-jinān* by Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī that we find an indication that Ya'qūb made frequent visits to the *zāviya* of 'Umar Raushanī.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the relative dearth of royal edicts granting administrative and fiscal immunities to prominent Sufis could be an indication that the centralizing measures undertaken by Qāzī 'Īsā to curb all such awards did not spare members of the Sufi elite.

At the same time, however, the very issue of recouping state revenues by cancelling *suyūrghāls* gave the author of the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī* a chance to recount the conflict between Qāzī 'Īsā and Gulshanī over these very grants. Apparently, Gulshanī personally warned Ya'qūb of the impending peril that would face the empire if the bureaucratic interests of Qāzī 'Īsā were to supersede what the hagiographer of Gulshanī characterizes as "the principles of the *sharī'a*."⁴⁸ This despite the fact that the administrative measures proposed by Qāzī 'Īsā were themselves part of a larger "back to the *sharī'a*" campaign of fiscal and social reform. Remarkably, the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī* suggests that Gulshanī successfully persuaded Ya'qūb to make up for the deficit in the treasury by repossessing the private incomes of members of the civil and military establishment.⁴⁹ Although no other historical sources confirm whether this unprecedented idea was actually implemented, the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī* nevertheless insists that Ya'qūb and prominent figures within the Āq Qoyūnlū administration relinquished one-third of their incomes for a period of several years.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:602.

⁴⁸ Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, 120–21; and Dunietz, "Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī," 140.

⁴⁹ Dunietz, "Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī," 140.

⁵⁰ Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, 120–21, 111–12, and 113–14; and Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 140–41. The absence of any supporting documents, coupled with the fact that Qāzī 'Īsā eventually initiated sweeping reforms to the *suyūrghāl* system in 894–96/1489–90, indicates that the solution described in the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī* was ignored, or at most, short-lived.

The influence of Ibrāhīm Gulshanī over Ya‘qūb, Qāzī ‘Īsā, and Najm al-Dīn Mas‘ūd is reflected in a *maṣnavī* which is attributed to Ḥakīm al-Dīn Idrīs Bidlīsī (d. 926/1520), Ya‘qūb’s secretary (*muvaqqī‘*) in the *dīvān* and scribe of royal orders (*nishānchī*), and cited in the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gūlšenī*.⁵¹

Who is the spiritual guide of that ancient path?
 Shaikh Ibrahīm, master of the dawn.
 Through his respirations Gulshanī is the one who
 Made the garden of the world of Egypt like the garden of Paradise.
 At that time he was the master of righteous guidance,
 For his sake, Shāh Ya‘qūb was obedient (*munqād*),
 [And Qāzī] ‘Īsā [Sāvajī] and Najm [al-Dīn Mas‘ūd] were in his service.⁵²

Curiously, despite his close relationship with Ya‘qūb, Gulshanī is not mentioned in Khunji-Iṣfahānī’s history. The omission of Gulshanī is even more conspicuous in light of the fact that approximately one-half of Gulshanī’s hagiographical work consists of anecdotes involving Ya‘qūb and senior members of his court, especially Qāzī ‘Īsā. This could be explained by the fact that the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gūlšenī* exaggerates the influence of Gulshanī in royal affairs over other Āq Qoyūnlū figures, including Ya‘qūb himself.⁵³ Exaggerations notwithstanding, the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gūlšenī* does at least suggest that Ya‘qūb engaged in morally questionable

⁵¹ On Idrīs Bidlīsī, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Bidlīsī, Idrīs, Mawlānā Ḥakīm al-Dīn Idrīs b. Mawlānā Ḥusām al-Dīn ‘Alī al-Bidlīsī” (by V. L. Ménage); and *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. “Bedlīsī, Mawlānā Ḥakīm-al-Dīn Edrīs b. Ḥosām al-Dīn ‘Alī” (by Cornell H. Fleischer). Bidlīsī is primarily known for his chronicle of the Ottoman Empire (in Persian) entitled, *Hasht bihisht*. He also wrote commentaries on the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikām* by Ibn al-‘Arabī and the *Gulshan-i rāz* by Maḥmūd Shabistarī, as well as a Persian ethical advice manual entitled, the *Qānūn-i shāhanshāhī*. For reference to this mirror for princes, see Sara Nur Yıldız, “Persian in the Service of the Sultan: Historical Writing in Persian under the Ottomans during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,” *Studies on Persianate Societies* 2 (2004): 155.

⁵² Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gūlšenī*, 82.

⁵³ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 229. Omission aside, Gulshanī was reportedly present as Ya‘qūb took the field and commanded his *ghāzī* warriors against infidel forces at the siege of Akhisqa (Akhāl-Tsikhe) in 890/1485. The raid apparently yielded much booty, which Ya‘qūb distributed to members of the religious establishment of whom we might adduce Gulshanī was a constituent member. This is not to suggest however, that Ibrāhīm Gulshanī willingly accepted royal favors; for according to the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gūlšenī*, Gulshanī refused a *suyūrghāl* on private crown lands (*khāṣṣa*) in Barda‘a. Gulshanī’s refusal was greeted with disbelief, a view most vociferously expressed by Qāzī ‘Īsā’s elder brother, ‘Alī Sāvajī, who reportedly ridiculed the shaikh for his eccentricity. For a description of the above-mentioned siege, see Khunji-Iṣfahānī, *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 43–44, and 218–25. On the reaction to Gulshanī’s refusal of the *suyūrghāl*, see Dunietz, “Qādi Ḥusayn Maybudī,” 141.

conduct, which apparently prompted Gulshanī to ask that Ya'qūb repent for his deeds.⁵⁴

Naqshbandīs at the Āq Qoyūnlū Court, Tabriz, and Its Environs

By the second half of the ninth/fifteenth century, the Naqshbandī order had emerged as the preeminent Sufi brotherhood in Timurid Khurasan and Transoxiana.⁵⁵ The ascendancy of the order and the political influence it exerted on members of the Timurid ruling family were largely the result of the propagative efforts of the spiritual leader of the *ṭarīqa*, 'Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār.⁵⁶ As Algar has demonstrated, several disciples of 'Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār, most notably Khvāja Muḥammad Amīn Bulghārī (d. before 902/1497), Bābā Ni'mat Allāh b. Shaikh Maḥmūd Nakhchivānī (d. 920/1514), and Mīr Sirāj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Vaḥhāb, who was Ya'qub's *shaikh al-Islām*, are known to have resided in Tabriz during the heyday of the Āq Qoyūnlū.⁵⁷

It is interesting to note, however, that their proximity to the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler did not translate into an attempt on the part of 'Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār and the Naqshbandīs to replicate in Tabriz the political influence the order had achieved in the Timurid domains. If anything, the three Ahrarian Naqshbandīs appear to have shared a disinclination to openly propagate the *ṭarīqa*.⁵⁸ Instead, Bulghārī, Nakhchivānī, and 'Abd al-Vaḥhāb are noted for their relations with leaders of the Kubravī and Khalvatī brotherhoods. For example, according to the *Rauzāt al-jinān*, Bulghārī often accompanied the Kubravī shaikh Badr al-Dīn Aḥmad Lāla'ī and was authorized to use Badr al-Dīn's personal retreat at a *khānaqāh*

⁵⁴ John J. Curry, "'Home Is Where the Shaykh Is': The Concept of Exile in the Hagiography of Ibrahim-i Gülşeni," *Al-Masāq* 17, no. 1 (2005): esp. 53–54 and 60 n. 31.

⁵⁵ For a detailed examination of the Naqshbandī political activities and geographic distribution during the ninth/fifteenth century see, Paul, *Politische und soziale Bedeutung*, passim.

⁵⁶ On the impact of the "grand missionary effort" of 'Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār, see Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 20.

⁵⁷ Algar, "Naqshbandīs and Safavids," 8–9; and *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Aḥrār, K̲vāja 'Obaydallāh b. Maḥmūd" (by J. M. Rogers).

⁵⁸ Algar, "Naqshbandīs and Safavids," 8–10. Not to be confused with the *khānaqāh* of the same name established by the Timurid, Zayn al-Dīn Abū Bakr Khvāfī (d. 838/1435), in the Gudara region of Khurasan. See Ludwig W. Adamec, *Historical Gazetteer of Iran*, 4 vols. (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1976), 1:47.

near the village of Darvīshābād.⁵⁹ For his part, Maḥmūd Nakhchivānī (also referred to in the sources as Shaikh ‘Alvān) enjoyed collegial relations with ‘Umar Raushanī and reportedly visited the Khalvatī master on his deathbed.⁶⁰ By all indications, Nakhchivānī was given to withdrawal and social isolation, which would have been at odds with the Naqshbandī tenet of *khalvat dar anjuman*. Instead, his Naqshbandī orientation found expression in the composition of an Arabic exegesis of the Qur’ān and in the commentaries he wrote on such well-known Sufi works as *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* by Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Lama’āt* by Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Irāqī (d. 688/1289), and *Gulshan-i rāz* by Maḥmūd Shabistārī (d. ca. 720/1320).⁶¹

It is also interesting to note that the third disciple of ‘Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār, Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Vahhāb, also does not appear to have used his official position as *shaikh al-Islām* to propagate the order.⁶² According to Hamid Algar, this could be explained by the fact that the true sympathies of ‘Abd al-Vahhāb were with Twelver Shī‘ism. Algar points to the eagerness with which ‘Abd al-Vahhāb embraced the rule of Shāh Ismā‘īl Ṣafavī (d. 930/1524) and the antagonism he showed Ibrāhīm Gulshanī on account of what the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülšenī* describes as the “*rāfiẓī*” (i.e., Shī‘ite) tendencies of ‘Abd al-Vahhāb.⁶³ The mutual animosity boiled over at court when Gulshanī sabotaged an attempt by ‘Abd al-Vahhāb and his protégé Qāzī Ḥusain Maibudī (d. ca. 910/1505), a former student of Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī and chief *qāzī* of Yazd, to undermine his explication of the Qur’anic verse (2:152) “Remember Me and I will remember you” to Ya‘qūb.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Karbalā‘ī-Tabrizī, *Rauḏāt al-jinān* 1:416; and Algar, “Naqshbandīs and Safavids,” 8. On the interest of Naqshbandīs, particularly ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī (d. 896/1491), best known for propagating the order in Anatolia, and ‘Abd al-Ghafūr Lārī, in texts attributed to Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, author and disciple of Abū al-Janāb Aḥmad Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 617/1220), eponym of the Kubraviyya, see Hamid Algar, “*Tariqat* and *Tariq*: Central Asian Naqshbandīs on the Roads to the Haramayn,” in *Central Asian Pilgrims: Hajj Routes and Pious Visits between Central Asia and the Hijaz*, ed. Alexandre Papas, Thomas Welsford, and Thierry Zarcone (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2012), 25 n. 10.

⁶⁰ Algar, “Naqshbandīs and Safavids,” 8.

⁶¹ All three works survive as MSS. Also extant are the treatise on existence (*vujūd*) by Maḥmūd Nakhchivānī and a general tract on Sufism. For references, see Algar, “Naqshbandīs and Safavids,” 34 n.12.

⁶² Algar, “Naqshbandīs and Safavids,” 9.

⁶³ For a full discussion of the ambiguous loyalties of ‘Abd al-Vahhāb, see Algar, “Naqshbandīs and Safavids,” 12–13.

⁶⁴ Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülšenī*, 104–6; and Algar, “Naqshbandīs and Safavids,” 10. It is worth mentioning that the collected letters of Qāzī Ḥusain Maibudī include an epistle addressed to Khvāja Muḥammad Yaḥyā, who was the son of ‘Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār, which indicates that Maibudī intended to join the Naqshbandī order. For a reference see, Algar, “Naqshbandīs and Safavids,” 35 n.15; and Aubin, “Études safavides,” 55.

It is tempting to speculate that the rivalry between Gulshanī and ‘Abd al-Vahhāb may have reflected the competition between the Khalvatī and Naqshbandī orders for disciples and royal patronage. However, there is nothing in the sources to suggest that such rivalry existed. In fact, the *Rauẓāt al-jinān*, which is considered to be the most reliable source of information on Sufis in pre-Safavid Tabriz, describes the abovementioned *khānaqāh* of Badr al-Dīn Aḥmad Lāla’ī as an ecumenical venue where prominent Sufis, irrespective of *ṭarīqa* affiliation, gathered and retreated for the purpose of mystical contemplation.⁶⁵ Among those who attended such retreats were ‘Umar Raushanī, the aforementioned Khvāja Bulghārī, and the intriguing figure of Ṣun‘ Allāh Kūzakunānī, who unlike Bulghārī, was a Naqshbandī from a non-Ahrarian lineage and who actively undertook the propagation of the order in Azerbaijan.⁶⁶ With respect to the *khānaqāh*’s ecumenical outlook, the *Rauẓāt al-jinān* says:

Many of the excellent and pious ones, dervishes, shaikhs, ‘*ulamā*’, grantees, and common folk made appearances at that place, such as: Khvāja ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Jāmī; Khvāja Muḥammad Amīn Bulghārī; Maulānā ‘Alī Rūmī; Darvīsh Ya’qūb Rūmī; Dada ‘Umar Rūmī (i.e., ‘Umar Raushanī); Maulānā Ṣun‘ Allāh Kūzakunānī; Khvāja ‘Alī Kujujī, and others. That heart-ravishing place is in reality the place of divine emanation (*faiz*) and purity. The *faiz* of the excellent ones’ secret arrival is manifested and made apparent in that place. [Interjecting poem] In the Lāla *khānaqāh*, which is known to be in Darvīshābād, and in which many [Sufis] sit for the purposes of forty-day ascetic retreats of contemplation (*arba’ināt*), several of the excellent ones—for whom it is a place of asylum and firm belief—have agreed that when they choose the accommodations of that place (i.e., the cells within the Lāla *khānaqāh*), the horizons seize their public fame.⁶⁷

The reference to two Naqshbandīs (Bulghārī and Ṣun‘ Allāh) as frequenting the Darvīshābād *khānaqāh* suggests that the ambivalence which traditionally marked the attitude of the order to such institutions as *tekke*, *zāviya*, *khānaqāh*, for the performance of devotional rites and spiritual instruction, did not necessarily preclude its members from visiting facilities stewarded by other *ṭarīqas*.⁶⁸ Le Gall notes that whereas earlier Naqshbandīs

⁶⁵ Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 2:151.

⁶⁶ Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:98–105. See also the notice on Ṣun‘ Allāh in Ziyā’ al-Dīn Sajjadi, *Kū-yi surkhāb-i Tabriz va maqbarat al-shu‘arā’* (Tehran: Anjumān-i Āsār va Mafākhir-i Farhangī, Mu’assasa-i Nashr va Virāyish, 1375/1996), 186–89.

⁶⁷ Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 2:151.

⁶⁸ For a discussion of the proliferation of *khānaqāhs* in post-Mongol Iran, see George Lane, *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Iran: A Persian Renaissance* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 242–46.

in Transoxiana largely adhered to the advice of ‘Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduvānī, which was to eschew building or living in *khānaqāhs*, later Naqshbandīs, particularly in Ottoman Anatolia, were not averse to such practices.⁶⁹ It should be noted, however, that there is no evidence to suggest that this change in attitude resulted in the construction of Naqshbandī hospices or shrine complexes in Āq Qoyūnlū territories. In fact, no references to the commissioning or maintenance of Naqshbandī religious edifices exist in either the *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya* or the *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*.

It would therefore appear that the only discernable Naqshbandī edifice in late ninth/fifteenth century Tabriz, at least according to the *Rauzāt al-jinān*, was a mosque (*maṣjid*) built by Ṣun‘ Allāh adjacent to his own residence in the Naubar district of Tabriz.⁷⁰ Given the Naqshbandī proclivity to engage in devotional practices and spiritual instruction in private residences, mosques, and theological colleges, it might be reasonable to conclude that the mosque of Ṣun‘ Allāh served as the hub for the nascent Naqshbandī activities in Tabriz, thereby making Ṣun‘ Allāh the de facto standardbearer for the order in Azerbaijan.⁷¹

It is important to note that Ṣun‘ Allāh, who was a man known for his strict piety, elicited what Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī describes as “the assiduous attention (*mulāzamat*) of the rulers of the age (*salāṭīn-i rūzgār*).” This statement could be taken as an indication that Ṣun‘ Allāh associated with members of the Āq Qoyūnlū administrative elite or with Ya‘qūb himself.⁷²

⁶⁹ Ghijduvānī reportedly told his disciples: “Do not build *khānaqāhs* and do not live in them.” Quoted in Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 163. The testament of Ghijduvānī is found in Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Alī, *Rashahāt-i ‘ain al-hayāt* 1:47. See also Paul, *Doctrine and Organization*, 61.

⁷⁰ Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:100.

⁷¹ For a discussion of the Naqshbandī tradition of promulgating the order without the benefit of *khānaqāhs* and their rejection of the idea that leadership of such lodges was a matter of hereditary succession, see Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, esp. 43–47, 79–85, and 162–65.

⁷² Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:100. Given that Ṣun‘ Allāh died a peaceful death in 929/1522–23 in Tabriz, this statement by Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī could be understood to mean the Safavids. But such reasoning would have to account for the fact that Ṣun‘ Allāh initially fled to Bitlis when Shāh Ismā‘īl took Tabriz 907/1501, which suggests that Ṣun‘ Allāh had some misgivings about the fervent *ithnā ‘asharī* Shī‘ism that was espoused by the Safavids and *ghuluv* Islam of their Qizilbāsh supporters. For differing views on the problem of Safavid persecution of the Naqshbandīs see, H. Algar, “Naqshbandi Order: A Preliminary Survey of Its History and Significance,” *Studia Islamica* 44 (1976): 123–52; Saïd Amir Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order, and Societal Change in Shi‘ite Iran from the Beginning to 1890* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 109–21; and Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 23–33. For a discussion that is specific to the unfavorable climate encountered by Naqshbandīs in Safavid-controlled Herat, see Maria E. Subtelny, “Art and Politics in Early 16th Century Central Asia,” *Central Asiatic Journal* 27, nos. 1–2 (1983): 121–48.

Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī adds that Ṣun' Allāh's prestige was such that he was able to intercede with rulers "in speech, deed, and writing" on behalf of victims of injustice, and that Ṣun' Allāh came to expect their deference to him as a matter of course.⁷³ Ṣun' Allāh's reputation amongst the rank-and-file of Tabriz was probably earned when he refused to vacate the capital during an outbreak of the plague and instead chose to remain in the city in order to care for the sick and bury the dead.⁷⁴

Before establishing himself in Tabriz and promoting the Naqshbandī cause, Ṣun' Allāh had traveled to Khurasan in search of a spiritual master.⁷⁵ According to the *Rauzāt al-jinān*, while in Herat, Ṣun' Allāh attached himself to Jāmī and took up residence in a *madrassa* affiliated with the poet, serving as its congregational prayer leader (*imām*).⁷⁶ Despite their close association, Jāmī was reluctant to act as Ṣun' Allāh's spiritual master and directed him to receive his spiritual training (*tauba va inābat*, literally, "repentance and return to God") from Maulānā 'Alā' al-Dīn Ābīzī Maktabdār (d. 892/1487), who like Jāmī was initiated into the Naqshbandī brotherhood by Sa'd al-Dīn Kāshgharī (d. 860/1456).⁷⁷ Before moving to Tabriz, Ṣun' Allāh performed the *hajj* and remained in Mecca for a year, where he worked as an attendant (*mujāvir*) in a mosque.⁷⁸ The disintegration of Āq Qoyūnlū authority after the death of Ya'qūb and the turmoil created by the Safavids appears, on balance, to have had little impact on Ṣun' Allāh. He lived out the remainder of his life in Tabriz, relatively

⁷³ Algar, "Naqshbandis and Safavids," 14.

⁷⁴ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:101; and Algar, "Naqshbandis and Safavids," 14.

⁷⁵ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:98; and Algar, "Naqshbandis and Safavids," 13. For biographical information on Ṣun' Allāh see, Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Qazvīnī, *Silsila-nāma-i khwājagān-i Naqshband*, a diagrammatic biography of prominent Naqshbandī shaikhs written in 978/1570, MS, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Suppl. persan 1418, 18b. See also the biography of Ṣun' Allāh's son in 'Aṭā' Allāh Niv'izāda 'Aṭā'ī, *Ḥadā'ik ul-ḥakā'ik fi tekmlat iṣ-ṣakā'ik*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1852), 1:207–8.

⁷⁶ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:98–99.

⁷⁷ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:99; Algar, "Naqshbandis and Safavids," 13; and Martin van Bruinessen, "The Naqshbandī Order in 17th-Century Kurdistan," in *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et situation actuelle d'un ordre mystique musulman/Historical Developments and Present Situation of a Muslim Mystical Order, Actes de la Table Ronde de Sèvres/Proceedings of the Sèvres Round Table 2–4 mai/2–4 May 1985*, ed. Marc Gaborieau, Alexander Popovic, and Thierry Zarcone (Istanbul: l'Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes d'Istanbul, 1990), 354, n. 43. In reference to Maktabdār's intense interest in the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, see Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 218 n. 89. For the subtle though important distinctions between *tauba* and *inābat*, see Paul Nwyia, *Exégèse coranique et langage mystique: Nouvel essai sur le lexique technique des mystiques musulmans* (Beirut: Dar el-Mashreq, 1970), 300–301.

⁷⁸ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:100.

unmolested by Safavid authorities, a fact that is alluded to in the *Ḥabīb al-siyar* by Khvāndamīr:

From the early days of the reign of Ya'qūb Mīrzā down to the present day, he [Ṣun' Allāh] has been seated on the carpet of piety and abstemiousness in the noble city of Tabriz and is celebrated among the people of that region for the purity of his soul and the clarity of his spirit.⁷⁹

The Murder of Darvīsh Qāsim

Not all Naqshbandīs in Tabriz shared the happy fate of Ṣun' Allāh. For example, a certain Darvīsh Sirāj al-Dīn b. Qāzī 'Umar Qāsim fell victim to Ya'qūb's volatile temperament in a brutal incident that is recorded in several Persian and European sources.⁸⁰ The incident, which began with an isolated act of intercommunal violence, escalated into a major challenge to the authority of Ya'qūb and probably dampened any hopes the Naqshbandīs might have had of establishing a presence in Tabriz to match their success in Herat. According to the *Rauzāt al-jinān*, Darvīsh Qāsim was executed by Ya'qūb in 891/1486 as punishment for his role in inciting a mob after word spread that the ruler had personally ordered the arrest and dismemberment of a Tūrkmen soldier accused of killing a local Armenian merchant.⁸¹ Before continuing with a description of the events leading up to the killing of Darvīsh Qāsim and its aftermath, it is important first to examine what the sources indicate about Qāsim's role in serving kings and his standing amongst the Āq Qoyūnlū.

According to the *Rauzāt al-jinān*, Darvīsh Sirāj al-Dīn Qāsim had devoted the twenty-two years before his death to a life of strict piety; the last ten of these years he is said to have engaged in spiritual wayfaring (*sulūk*) and Sufism (*taṣavvuf*).⁸² Born in 840/1436–37 to Khvāja 'Umar, the chief *qāzī* of

⁷⁹ Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-siyar* 4:609. Quoted in Algar, "Naqshbandis and Safavids," 14, who mentions the refusal of Ṣun' Allāh to fully prostrate himself before Shāh Ismā'īl, a gesture contravening court protocol, yet one which reportedly left the sovereign impressed.

⁸⁰ For a synopsis of these accounts, see Sajjadi, *Kū-yi surkhāb-i Tabrīz*, 177–84.

⁸¹ Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:92–95. The merchant, a certain Mīrak, is referred to in the *Rauzāt al-jinān* as both "*tarsā*" (Christian) and "*Gabr*," which is a pejorative applied to Zoroastrians and synonymous with *mugh* (*magus*) or *ātishparast* (fire-worshipper). See *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "gabr" (by Mansour Shaki); and 'Alī Akbar Dihkhudā, *Lughāt nāma*, ed. Muḥammad Mu'īn and Ja'far Shahīdī, 15 vols. (Tehran: Mu'assasa-i Intishārāt va Ḥāp-i Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān bā Hamkāri-yi Intishārāt-i Rauzāna 1993–94), 11:16,722–26, s.v. "gabr."

⁸² Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:92.

Diyar-Bakr, Darvīsh Qāsim sought to emulate his father's career in government and entered the service of Mirzā Yūsuf, the son of the Qarā Qoyūnlū ruler Jahānshāh (r. 843–72/1439–67).⁸³ The *Rauzāt al-jinān* describes how Darvīsh Qāsim became a companion (*ham-rāh*) of Mirzā Yūsuf to whom he remained loyal (*fidā-dār*) for nearly twenty years. When Mirzā Yūsuf was killed by Āq Qoyūnlū forces in 872/1467, Darvīsh Qāsim changed allegiances and sought to enter the service of Ūzūn Ḥasan.⁸⁴

According to Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, Darvīsh Qāsim tried to ingratiate himself to the new regime by traveling to Qum where Ūzūn Ḥasan was staying at the time. Shortly after arriving, Qāsim fell victim to the deceptions of an "envious and slanderous" group of people, and was forced to flee.⁸⁵ Darvīsh Qāsim was captured, brought before Ūzūn Ḥasan, and condemned to execution, but he was spared at the urging of the *vazīr*, Qāzī Ḥasan Ṣadr. The report in the *Rauzāt al-jinān* explains how the Queen Mother (*vālida-i pādishāh*), Sarāy Khātūn, rebuked Ūzūn Ḥasan for detaining the "son of Khvāja 'Umar" and recommended that Darvīsh Qāsim be released. She pointed out that as *qāzī* of Diyar-Bakr, Khvāja 'Umar had delivered legal decisions that protected the interests of the Bāyandur clan.⁸⁶ For the sake of Khvāja 'Umar's blessing (*barakat*), the Queen Mother recommended that Darvīsh Qāsim be considered worthy of the trust of the royal family. Following his mother's wishes, Ūzūn Ḥasan ordered that Darvīsh Qāsim be released and awarded him the post of chief of protocol (*mihmāndār*).⁸⁷

⁸³ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:89. No detailed study of the Qarā Qoyūnlū exists in English. The most salient work to date is the monograph by Faruk Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular, Başlangıçtan Cihan-Şah'a kadar* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1967). See also Faruk Sümer, "Kara-Koyunlular," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1940–70), 9:292–305. For studies in English see, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Qarā-Qoyunlu" (by F. Sümer); Hans Robert Roemer, "The Türkmen Dynasties," in *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6, *The Timurid and Safavid Periods*, ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 147–87. See also the following studies of Vladimir Minorsky, "The Clan of the Qara Qoyunlu Rulers," in *The Turks, Iran, and the Caucasus in the Middle Ages* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1978), 391–95; "Jihān-shāh Qara-Qoyunlu and His Poetry," 271–97; and "The Qara-Qoyunlu and the Qutb-Shāhs (Turkmenica, 10)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17, no. 3 (1955): 50–73.

⁸⁴ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:89.

⁸⁵ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:89.

⁸⁶ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:90. The use of the word "*zimma*" or "*dhimmat*" by Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī could be an indication that legal decisions involving the non-Muslim members of the royal family—perhaps the Christians from Trabzon (i.e., relatives of Ūzūn Ḥasan's wife, Theodora Komnene)—were rendered at some point.

⁸⁷ For a description of the duties of the *mihmāndār*, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Mihmindār" (by A. Saleh).

After demonstrating an aptitude for courtly duties, Darvīsh Qāsim was promoted to the rank of *parvanchī* (head of the chancery). He eventually became a confidant (*maḥram*) of Ūzūn Ḥasan's, and in the words of the *Rauzāt al-jinān*, "there was no one, other than him [Darvīsh Qāsim] who was privy to the king's secrets."⁸⁸ The report adds that Ūzūn Ḥasan readily accepted the counsel of Darvīsh Qāsim on important matters and often heeded his advice to act with benevolence.⁸⁹ Following a series of skirmishes between Āq Qoyūnlū and Ottoman forces, Ūzūn Ḥasan sought to make peace by dispatching Darvīsh Qāsim as a diplomatic envoy (*ilchī*) to the Ottoman court.⁹⁰ So favorable an impression did Darvīsh Qāsim make that sultan Meḥmed II wrote a letter to Ūzūn Ḥasan requesting that any future Āq Qoyūnlū diplomatic missions include him. According to a description of the contents of the letter, Meḥmed II prized the blessings (*barakat*) of Darvīsh Qāsim which, he claimed, could make enmity turn into friendship.⁹¹

The fact that Darvīsh Qāsim had a prominent position at the Āq Qoyūnlū court is also supported by the *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt*. In its description of the celebrated arrival of Jāmī in Tabriz in 878/1473, it states that the poet was officially welcomed by three of Ūzūn Ḥasan's dearest boon-companions (*aqrab-i nudamā'*). The welcoming party reportedly included, Qāzī Ḥasan, Abū Bakr Ṭihrānī-İsfahānī, and Darvīsh Qāsim.⁹²

Another illustration of the fealty that existed between Ūzūn Ḥasan and Darvīsh Qāsim appears in the *Rauzāt al-jinān* where the ruler, afflicted with a terminal illness, asked for Qāsim to whom he offered a death-bed confession.⁹³ According to Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, Ūzūn Ḥasan confided to Darvīsh Qāsim that one of his great mistakes was not building a burial tomb (*maqbara*), Sufi hospice (*zāviya*), or mosque (*masjid*) on his behalf.⁹⁴ After telling Darvīsh Qāsim that no individual had ever garnered as much trust of the ruler as he had, Ūzūn Ḥasan implored the Naqshbandī shaikh

⁸⁸ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:90.

⁸⁹ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:90.

⁹⁰ For a description of the duties of the *ilchī*, see *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Elčī" (by David O. Morgan); and Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente* 2:203–7.

⁹¹ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:90. As mentioned, the eagerness of Meḥmed II to receive Naqshbandī shaikhs could be explained by their reputation as experts in the teachings of Ibn al-'Arabi and their knowledge of the *Maṣnavī* by Rūmī. On this, see Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 35.

⁹² Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī, *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt* 1:263.

⁹³ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:90.

⁹⁴ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:90.

to abandon his court duties and oversee the establishment of a mosque and hospice adjacent to what would become Ūzūn Ḥasan's tomb.

The chaos generated by the death of Ūzūn Ḥasan, which is to say, the ensuing struggle for succession between Sulṭān-Khalīl and a teen-aged Ya'qūb, not only postponed construction on the late ruler's tomb complex, but also necessitated the continued service of Darvīsh Qāsim as a diplomatic envoy. Evidence of the continued employment of Darvīsh Qāsim can be found in an official letter (dated 883/1478–79) from the newly-coronated Sulṭān-Khalīl to a provincial military governor (*beglerbegī*) in Anatolia, in which the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler suggests that the two empires establish a *détente*.⁹⁵ As part of his peaceful overtures, Sulṭān-Khalīl announced that Darvīsh Qāsim, a favorite of the Ottoman court and “trusted pillar of the state,” was specifically chosen to convey these sentiments.⁹⁶

With the assassination of Sulṭān-Khalīl and the enthronement of Ya'qūb, the loyalties of Darvīsh Qāsim shifted to the new ruler, who the *Rauzāt al-jinān* says exhibited nothing but “boundless grace and unlimited compassion” to the Naqshbandī shaikh.⁹⁷ Despite their later troubles, Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī makes it clear that Darvīsh Qāsim was resolute in his commitment to Ya'qūb, even quoting the Naqshbandī as having told his new king that “Whatever you say and whatever you command I hold as a favor in my heart and soul.”⁹⁸ Darvīsh Qāsim fulfilled the death-bed request of Ūzūn Ḥasan and oversaw the construction of a tomb complex, the Naşriyya, which included a Sufi hermitage, in the gardens of Şāhibābād on the outskirts of Tabriz, and which took some seven years to complete, whereupon Qāsim was appointed trustee (or head, *kulāh*) of the shrine.⁹⁹

As for the spiritual development of Darvīsh Qāsim, the *Rauzāt al-jinān* mentions that when he was twenty-nine years old, and thus fourteen years before the death of Ūzūn Ḥasan (i.e., 869/1464), he went on pilgrimage

⁹⁵ See the edited letter contained in L. Fekete, *Einführung in die persische Paläographie: 101 persische Dokumente*, ed. G. Hazai (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977), 225–28. The military governor is a certain Sinān Pasha. For information on the duties of the *beglerbegī*, see *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. “beglerbegī” (by Peter Jackson); and Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente* 2:406–10.

⁹⁶ Fekete, *Einführung in die persische Paläographie*, 226.

⁹⁷ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:91.

⁹⁸ Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:91.

⁹⁹ For a description of the dedication ceremony at which Ya'qūb donned his father's exquisite robes in an obvious gesture of royal investiture, see Karbalā'ī-Tabrizī, *Rauzāt al-jinān* 1:91. On the construction, functions, and eventual demolition of the Naşriyya complex, see Charles Melville, “Historical Monuments and Earthquakes in Tabriz,” *Iran* 19 (1981): 171.

(*ziyārat*) to several Shīʿī holy sites in Iraq.¹⁰⁰ While there, Darvīsh Qāsim is said to have repented (*tauba karda*) and henceforth dedicated his life to ritual worship, never neglecting any of the traditional Islamic customs (*sunān*).¹⁰¹ It is interesting to note that other than the decade in which Darvīsh Qāsim occupied himself with the traditions of *sulūk* and *taṣawwuf*, the *Rauẓāt al-jinān* lacks specific information on his formal spiritual training. That is to say, nowhere in the report by Karbalāʾī-Tabrīzī on Darvīsh Qāsim is specific reference made to his association with a Sufi master, Naqshbandī or otherwise. At the same time, the *Rauẓāt al-jinān* gives no indication that Darvīsh Qāsim was a so-called “*Uvaisī*” Sufi, which is to say, a mystic who took instruction from the spirit of a deceased or physically absent master.¹⁰²

While the notice on Darvīsh Qāsim provides little concrete information on the spiritual training and pedigree of Qāsim, it does contain vivid details of his deadly encounter with Yaʿqūb. As mentioned earlier, Darvīsh Qāsim was summoned by Yaʿqūb on a Friday night in Rabiʿ I 891/March 1486 and accused of inciting riots throughout Tabriz after Āq Qoyūnlū troops killed and mutilated a young Türkmen soldier accused of murdering a local merchant.¹⁰³ According to the *Rauẓāt al-jinān*, Darvīsh Qāsim

¹⁰⁰ Karbalāʾī-Tabrīzī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:92. The sites that Darvīsh Qāsim visited included the Ḥāʾirī enclosure at the shrine of Ḥusain in Karbala, the Kāẓimain shrine complex near Baghdad which honors the Seventh *Imām*, Mūsā al-Kāẓim, and his grandson, the Ninth *Imām*, Muḥammad al-Taqī, and the ‘Askarain shrines in Samarra honoring ‘Alī al-Ḥādī, the Tenth *Imām*, and his son, Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, the Eleventh *Imām*. For a description of these shrines and their significance to Shīʿism, see Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shiʿi Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shiʿism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), xx, 40, and 44.

¹⁰¹ Karbalāʾī-Tabrīzī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:92.

¹⁰² For a study of *Uvaisiyya* Sufis, see Julian Baldick, *Imaginary Muslims: The Uwaysi Sufis of Central Asia* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993). See also A. S. Husaini, “Uways al-Qaranī and the Uwaysī Sufis,” *The Moslem World* 57 (1967): 103–114. For a critique of Baldick’s thesis and his use of the term “*Uvaisī*” see the following studies by Devin DeWeese, *An ‘Uwaysī’ Sufi in the Timurid Mawarannahr*; and “The *Tadhkira-i Bughrā-khān* and the ‘Uwaysī’ Sufis of Central Asia: Notes in Review of *Imaginary Muslims*,” *Central Asiatic Journal* 40, no. 1 (1996): 87–127. There is no reason to discount the possibility that Darvīsh Qāsim may have claimed to have received his spiritual training remotely. As J. Ter Haar has observed, “Many a Naqshbandī is reported to have been an Uwaysī, that is a mystic who was not (only) initiated by a living, physically present Shaykh, but (also) by the ‘spirituality’ or ‘spiritual presence’ (*rūḥaniyyat*) of a deceased Shaykh or even by Khidr.” Ter Haar also notes that according to Khvāja Muḥammad Pārsā (d. 822/1420), who was a disciple of Bahāʾ al-Dīn Naqshband, many Naqshbandī shaiḥs walked “the path of the *Uvaisis*” (*ṭarīqa-i Uvaisiyyān*). For a reference, see Johan G. J. Ter Haar, “The Importance of the Spiritual Guide in the Naqshbandī Order,” in *The Heritage of Sufism*, Vol. 2, *The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism (1150–1500)*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn (Oxford: Oneworld, 1999), 312.

¹⁰³ Based on the description given by Karbalāʾī-Tabrīzī, the Türkman (*az ṭāʾifa-i turkmān*) soldier could have been a Qizilbāsh tribesman. For example, the *Rauẓāt al-jinān*

was brought before Ya'qūb after he was observed at the vanguard of the soldier's funeral procession and inciting his fellow mourners with the rallying cry: "Who will die on behalf of me?" Having roused the anger of the mob, Darvīsh Qāsim led the procession toward the royal palace.¹⁰⁴ Ya'qūb, who had spent the night drinking wine, became enraged upon hearing that residents were defying his authority and focused his anger on Darvīsh Qāsim who, he was informed, was solely responsible for the display of civil disobedience.¹⁰⁵ According to the *Rauẓāt al-jinān*, Darvīsh Qāsim was apprehended and brought before Ya'qūb, whom Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī describes as "drunk and witless" (*mast va lā-ya'qil*). Ya'qūb, the report continues, promptly unsheathed his sword as Darvīsh Qāsim uttered "the prayer of martyrdom."¹⁰⁶ The besotted ruler then struck "several fatal blows" before inviting his attendants to finish the execution.¹⁰⁷

The slaying of Darvīsh Qāsim and the marketplace incident that triggered it are also mentioned in a letter attributed to the Venetian ambassador Giosafat Barbaro (d. 900/1494).¹⁰⁸ Originally sent by Venice in 876–7/1473 to enlist the support of Ūzūn Ḥasan against the Ottoman Empire, Barbaro became a fixture at the Āq Qoyūnlū court.¹⁰⁹ His memoir, which was first published in 950/1543, provides not only valuable historical information on intrigues at the Āq Qoyūnlū court, but also includes the first ever reference in a European historical source to an individual Naqshbandī Sufi.¹¹⁰ According to the account of Barbaro, which it should be mentioned, is based on the testimony of fellow-traveler Pietro di Guasco, a certain "Darviscassun" (i.e., Darvīsh Qāsim), who is referred to as the guardian of the burial tomb of King "Assambei" (i.e., [Ūzūn] Ḥasan Beg) and the director of its hospice, was brought before Ya'qūb.¹¹¹ Barbaro relates that Darvīsh Qāsim was a man of account and [good] reputation who served

says that local residents nick-named the soldier "Mahdī" because of his exaggerated passion (*ghuluv-i jazba*) and for his ecstatic ravings (*shaṭṭ*) which frequently lead him to declare: "I am [the] Mahdī!" For a reference, see Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:92–93.

¹⁰⁴ Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:94. In Persian: *kū az barāyi man in tūr margi?*

¹⁰⁵ Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:94.

¹⁰⁶ Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:95.

¹⁰⁷ Karbalā'ī-Tabrīzī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:95. In Persian: *padishāh bi dast-i khūd zakhmi chand bi vay mīzanad*.

¹⁰⁸ Giosafat Barbaro, *I viaggi in Persia degli ambasciatori veneti Barbaro e Contarini*, ed. L. Lockhart et al. (Rome: Instituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1973), 170. For an English translation, see "Travels of Josafa Barbaro," trans. William Thomas, in *Travels to Tana and Persia*, ed. Lord Stanley of Alderley (New York: Burt Franklin, 1873), 100.

¹⁰⁹ *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.vv. "Barbaro, Giosafat" (by A. M. Piemontese) and "Italy, iv. Travel Accounts" (by Michele Bernadini).

¹¹⁰ An observation first made by Algar, "Present State of Naqshbandī Studies," 45.

¹¹¹ Giosafat Barbaro, *I viaggi in Persia*, 100.

as “treasurer” (*thesauriero*) for the previous king.¹¹² Incidentally, none of the Persian historical sources refer to Darvish Qāsim as having served as either *vazīr* or *mustaufī* (comptroller), which leaves open the possibility that Barbaro was writing figuratively and in reference to the position of the Naqshbandī shaiḫ as a close confidant of the ruler’s.¹¹³ Whatever esteem Darvish Qāsim enjoyed from his days with Ūzūn Ḥasan apparently counted for naught that night since Barbaro has Ya’qūb condemning Qāsim with the words: “You dare issue a command contrary to my commandment? Well, let him die.”¹¹⁴ To which Barbaro reports that Darvish Qāsim “was summarily executed.”¹¹⁵

Accounts of what occurred next vary among the sources. According to the *Rauẓāt al-jinān*, the Muslims of Tabriz, who were overcome with sorrow, cursed Ya’qūb after he reportedly prohibited anyone, including family members of Darvish Qāsim, from removing his corpse from the roadway where it was dumped.¹¹⁶ However, the *Rauẓāt al-jinān* also relates how, at daybreak, Ya’qūb returned from “the world of inebriation to the world of sobriety” (*az ‘ālam-i mastī bi ‘ālam-i hushyārī*) and was unable to face the consequences of his outburst.¹¹⁷ “Ridden with guilt,” Ya’qūb ordered his officials to arrange for a proper burial ceremony for Darvish Qāsim in the Ḥaẓrat-i Bābā Mazīd district of Tabriz.¹¹⁸

Barbaro’s version of the ensuing events differs from that in the *Rauẓāt al-jinān* in that he suggests that the residents of Tabriz were made to suffer for their open defiance of royal authority. According to Barbaro, Ya’qūb ordered his forces to ransack the city for a period of three to four hours, provoking what Barbaro called “marvelous fear” among its residents.¹¹⁹ The plundering ceased only after Ya’qūb levied a heavy indemnity on the

¹¹² Giosafat Barbaro, *I viaggi in Persia*, 100.

¹¹³ The reference could thus be understood in the sense of “the treasurer of the private matters of the king.”

¹¹⁴ Giosafat Barbaro, *I viaggi in Persia*, 170. In Italian: “Te basta l’animo di comandar contra el mio comandamento? Orsù, che’l sia morto.”

¹¹⁵ Giosafat Barbaro, *I viaggi in Persia*, 170. In Italian: “. . . et subito fu morto.”

¹¹⁶ Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:95.

¹¹⁷ Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:95.

¹¹⁸ Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī, *Rauẓāt al-jinān* 1:95. Before concluding his notice on Darvish Qāsim, Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī puts a cabalistic twist on the *hijrī* year, 891, of the death of the Naqshbandī shaiḫ by mentioning the fact that Darvish Qāsim prefaced all his written correspondances with the pious invocation (*da’vat*) “*huwwa al-fayyāz*” (He is the Effulgent one), which also happened to be Darvish Qāsim’s nick-name (“*Fayyāz*”). The word *fayyāz*, Karbalā’ī-Tabrizī notes, has a numerical value of 891.

¹¹⁹ Giosafat Barbaro, *I viaggi in Persia*, 170.

populace.¹²⁰ It would seem that the killings generated such animosity among the residents of Tabriz that Ya'qūb all but abandoned the capital. As Woods has noted, during the next five years, the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler spent less than twelve months in his newly-completed Hasht Bihisht palace in Tabriz.¹²¹ In fact, his final four month-long stay in the city in 894/1488 was the occasion for his public repentance from wine-drinking and his declaration of the prohibition against the consumption of alcohol by residents of the city.¹²²

The Spiritual Relationship between Jāmī and Ya'qūb

Given the apparent volatility of Ya'qūb, it may have been advantageous for Jāmī to advise the young ruler from afar.¹²³ Although he never visited Tabriz during the twelve-year reign of Ya'qūb, Jāmī did nevertheless take more than a casual interest in advising him about the moral and ethical responsibilities that went along with kingship. If the letters Ya'qūb addressed to Jāmī are any indication, it might also be fair to say that, in spite of his temperament, Ya'qūb had an enduring interest in receiving such moderating advice.

In at least one of these letters Ya'qūb justifies his request for Jāmī's blessings (*barakāt*) by portraying himself as a supporter of Sufi mystics.¹²⁴ The letter contains a number of Sufi technical terms (*suḥbat*, *himmat*, *vilāyat*, *ṭarīqa*, etc.) and an allusion to the Naqshbandī custom of binding the heart of the disciple to his shaikh, which suggests that Ya'qūb was familiar with at least one of the key doctrines of the order.¹²⁵ After addressing him by a series of honorific titles, Ya'qūb tells Jāmī that following his regime of praiseworthy ethics (*akhlāq-i ḥamīda*) has given him unique insights into the concept of *himmat*.¹²⁶ Ya'qūb adds that it is no secret that he enjoys

¹²⁰ Giosafat Barbaro, *I viaggi in Persia*, 170. The indemnity was an unspecified sum of gold. See Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 141.

¹²¹ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 141. On the ostentatiousness of the Hasht bihisht palace, see the numerous references given by Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 272 n. 53.

¹²² Any offender caught by the officers of the *sharī'a* (*shihna-i sharī'at*) was to have "molten lead poured down his throat." For a reference, see Khunji-Iṣfahānī, *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 325.

¹²³ A distance of some 920 miles (1,500 kilometers).

¹²⁴ Ya'qūb to Jāmī, in Urumbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmahā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 303–4 (letter no. 15).

¹²⁵ It is debatable whether this was part of a larger interest on the part of Ya'qūb in the Naqshbandī *ṭarīqa* or if it was simply a means of ingratiating himself to Jāmī.

¹²⁶ Ya'qūb to Jāmī, in Urumbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmahā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 304.

the companionship (*suḥbat*) of Sufis, whom he indirectly refers to as those people who know the true meaning of the expressions, “My saints are under My domes,” and “He has written faith in their hearts.”¹²⁷ Implicitly equating his own spiritual rebirth to the creation of Adam who was fashioned by God out of clay, Ya‘qūb states that his relationship with the Sufis has “leavened the fine clay of his majesty.”¹²⁸

The letter effuses with praise for Jāmī, whom Ya‘qūb credits with making hearts luminous until they become mirrors of the Divine verities and gnoses (*mir’āt-i ḥaqāyiq va ma‘ārif*).¹²⁹ This transformation of the heart, Ya‘qūb writes, is the way in which a person acquires good ethical qualities (*akhlāq-i ḥamīda*) and divine favor (*in‘āyat-i ilāhī*), which, he notes, will lead him to “high places” in this world and the hereafter.¹³⁰ With its frequent references to spiritual transformation, the letter reads as though Ya‘qūb were in fact a disciple of Jāmī.

The possibility that the two had an informal spiritual bond is lent further credence in an epistolary reply that Jāmī addressed to Ya‘qūb. It would seem that rather than write letters in response to Ya‘qūb, Jāmī’s habit was to send panegyric odes (*qaṣā’id*) to the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler.¹³¹ However, one surviving letter that Jāmī addressed to Ya‘qūb is noteworthy for the light it casts on the nature of their relationship (see Appendix 1).¹³² It is also unique in that, unlike other letters Jāmī addressed to kings and *amīrs*, it does not open with the conventional string of honorific titles. Ya‘qūb is not given the lofty epithets that Jāmī accorded his father, Ūzūn Ḥasan, whom Jāmī refers to as: “King who is the Refuge of the World,” “Ruler of the Warriors for the Faith,” and “Prince who is characterized by Justice.”¹³³

¹²⁷ The phrase, *aulyā’i taḥt qibābī*, is an abbreviated *ḥadīth qudsī* which reads, “Verily My saints are under My domes, and only I know them.” On how this *ḥadīth* reflects God’s reluctance to reveal the identities of His saints, see Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 202–3. The second expression is drawn from the Qur’anic verse (58:22): *aulā’ika kātaba fī qulūbihum al-īmān*, and is especially relevant in light of the Naqshbandī practice of binding a Divine name onto (the heart of) a ruler.

¹²⁸ See Qur’ān 38:71.

¹²⁹ Ya‘qūb to Jāmī, in Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha’āt-i Jāmī*, 304.

¹³⁰ Ya‘qūb to Jāmī, in Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha’āt-i Jāmī*, 304.

¹³¹ Fourteen of Jāmī’s *qaṣīdas* that are contained in his *Divān* were replies to Ya‘qūb. For a reference, see Jāmī, *Divān-i Jāmī*, 1:680.

¹³² Jāmī to Ya‘qūb, in Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha’āt-i Jāmī*, 281 (letter no. 422).

¹³³ Jāmī to Ūzūn Ḥasan, in Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha’āt-i Jāmī*, 239–40 (letter no. 385). In Persian: *padishāh-i jahān-panāh*; *sultān al-ghuzāt wa al-mujāhidīn*; and *shahryār-i ma’dalat shī’ār*, respectively. In addition to Ūzūn Ḥasan and Ya‘qūb, Jāmī addressed personal letters to Jahānshāh Qarā Qoyūnlū, Sultān-Ḥusain Bāyqarā, Mehmed II,

Although differences in age could explain the lack of honorifics (Jāmī was a septuagenarian while Ya'qūb was in his twenties), it could also be an indication that theirs was a personal and/or spiritual relationship.

In a show of feigned modesty, Jāmī begins the letter by claiming that, despite his reputation as Sufi master, he is better-suited to anonymity and that, in fact, it is Ya'qūb's heart that turns into the center of the "ambit of astonishment" (*muḥīt-i taḥayyur*) and the pivot of the "circle of contemplation" (*dāyira-i tafakkur*).¹³⁴ Jāmī expresses regret for not corresponding more frequently to Ya'qūb, a rhetorical statement of contrition typical of medieval Persian epistolary writing, but also manages to excuse himself by making what could be a subtle reference to the notorious intemperance of the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler. Jāmī says that only the imprudent would dare to challenge the king's majesty (*haibat*) and awefulness (*hishmat*) by carelessly entering his presence. Doing so, Jāmī adds, would assuredly prompt Ya'qūb to unsheathe "the sword of *siyāsat*" (literally, "the sword of punishment").¹³⁵ To emphasize his powerlessness, Jāmī breaks into verse, casts himself as a speck of dust, and asks (rhetorically): "When the brilliant sun (i.e., Ya'qūb) becomes manifested, how is it that a [mere] mote appears equal [to it]?" Instead of answering, Jāmī inverts the hierarchy established in the introduction of the letter by elevating his own spiritual authority over the political power of Ya'qūb and by implying that he is, in terms of spiritual matters, Ya'qūb's superior. To introduce this point, Jāmī appears to suggest that his support of the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler is not unconditional. It is only after Ya'qūb pursues the habit of "keen-hearing" and "sharp-wittedness," he writes, and retracts [his tongue] into the palate of silence, that Ya'qūb's soul will be seized by Jāmī's "entreaties of sincerity" (*davā-ī-yi ikhlāṣ*) and the allurements of affection and privilege.¹³⁶

Bāyizīd II (d. 918/1512), and Shams al-Dīn Lashkarī Muḥammad (d. 886/1482), leader of the Bahmanid kingdom in the Deccan. See Urumbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 239–40 (letter no. 385); 269–70 (letter no. 409); 271–74 (letters no. 412, 413); 278–79 (letters no. 417, 418); 281–82 (letter 424); 281–83 (letters no. 423, 425).

¹³⁴ On how the center of a circle symbolized key aspects of medieval Sufi thought, see William C. Chittick, "The Circle of Spiritual Ascent According to Al-Qūnawī," in *Neoplatonism and Islamic Thought*, ed. Parviz Morewedge (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992), 179–209, esp. 188–92.

¹³⁵ Jāmī to Ya'qūb, in Urumbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 281.

¹³⁶ It is difficult to imagine that this statement is not an allusion to silent *ẓikr* (or *ẓikr-i khaft*), a hallmark of Naqshbandī devotional practice, and the importance of the 112th chapter of the Qur'ān, *sūrat al-ikhlāṣ*. This importance is reflected in the fact that among the proto-Naqshbandīs (i.e., the Khvājagān), *sūra* 112 was to be recited 1,001 times as part of their daily *ẓikr* exercises. For a reference, see Meier, *Zwei Abhandlungen*, 194 and 195 n. 1.

To emphasize his point, Jāmī again resorts to verse, casting himself as a raincloud and Ya'qūb as a delicate lily, the symbol of the silent worshipper in Persian poetry.¹³⁷ “When the cloud reaches effulgence (*faiz*),” he says, “it is not pleasant for the lily, since all its petals (*zabān*, literally “tongue”), in [their] search of praise, do not retreat [from the deluge].”¹³⁸ The intention appears to be to convey to Ya'qūb that he, like a flower in need of nourishment, can withstand (or benefit from) a deluge of “spiritual guidance” only after he “withdraws” from view and exercises silent introspection. That is to say, Ya'qūb must close the “petal” of his speech in order for the “downpouring” of Jāmī’s spiritual guidance to issue forth, which, in turn, might occasion a state of “mutual contemplation” (*mulāḥaẓa-i jānibain*) between the two parties, that is, Jāmī and Ya'qūb. Using a homographic pun—specifically, an imperfect homonym (*tajnīs-i nāqis*) on the doubled word *bain*—Jāmī suggests that this reciprocal concentration creates a path or channel of “inner vision” (*ṭarīq-i bain* [or *bīn*] *bain*) through which the poet, in his capacity as shaikh, could transmit his spiritual blessings or energy to Ya'qūb.¹³⁹

Such expressions are reminiscent of *rābiṭa*, a mystical technique employed by various Sufi groups but often associated with the Naqshbandiyya, and the belief that a shaikh could transmit spiritual energy to a disciple without being physically present—a complex method Fritz Meier referenced to as “Herzensbindung an den Meister.”¹⁴⁰ Although it is impossible to prove that Jāmī’s letter, with its allusions to Sufi spiritual techniques, especially those associated with the Naqshbandiyya, indicates that he and Ya'qūb had a shaikh-*murīd* rapport, it does nevertheless suggest that the two had a unique, if not intimate connection, and that the vernacular used in their communications was very consciously mystical.

¹³⁷ On the frequent use of cloud imagery by Jāmī, see Reza Feliz, “Le symbolisme de la nuée (*al-‘amā’*) dans le soufisme d’après un texte inédit de Jāmī,” *Luqmān* 15, no. 2 (1999): 57–64. On the image of the lily as a representation of a Sufi engaged in silent *ẓikr*, see Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 172 and 308.

¹³⁸ Jāmī to Ya'qūb, in Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmahā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 281.

¹³⁹ Jāmī to Ya'qūb, in Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmahā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 281. In Persian: *nā-khāmush na-gūyā chū kūh az šadā*.

¹⁴⁰ Meier, *Zwei Abhandlungen*, 42. The unity between master and *murīd* is described in the *Kashf al-mahjūb* by Hujvīrī where a shaikh tells his adept: “To traverse distance is child’s play: henceforth pay visits by means of thought; it is not worthwhile to visit any person, and there is no virtue in bodily presence.” Hujvīrī, *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, 225; and Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 206.

CHAPTER FOUR

POETRY AT THE COURT OF YA'QŪB AND ITS BACKGROUND IN ESTABLISHING AN HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR *SALĀMĀN VA ABSĀL*

*I see little certainty in the world,
With all of its joy I see thousands of sorrows.
It is like an old frontier way station, since from all its sides,
I see a path to the desert of non-existence.*

—Ya'qūb, cited in Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-'ushshāq*¹

After Ya'qūb murdered the leader of the Naqshbandī order in Tabriz, Darvish Qāsim, in Rabī' I 891/March 1486, it must have become apparent to members of the Āq Qoyūnlū court that Ya'qūb's volatile temperament needed restraining. The arrival at the Āq Qoyūnlū court of *Salāmān va Absāl*, with its ethical and moral advice, would, we might rightly assume, have been an anticipated event. Determining, however, if the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler fully grasped—much less acted on—its message is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, by examining the literary activities at the court of Ya'qūb and its taste for Persian *belles-lettres*, it can be reasonably assumed that the esoteric intricacies of *Salāmān va Absāl* and its didactic message would have been understood at the Āq Qoyūnlū court and discussed by its literati in attendance. By exploring the caliber of poets at the Āq Qoyūnlū court (along with the Āq Qoyūnlū interest in Sufi mystics), it would not be implausible to conclude that Ya'qūb and/or his entourage recognized that *Salāmān va Absāl* was in fact a complex mirror for princes which contained multiple planes of mystical and political meaning.

In order to support this contention, a description will be given of the Persian literary milieu in late ninth/fifteenth century Tabriz, with particular attention devoted to the group of professional poets and literati who were patronized by Ya'qūb and his *vazīr*, Qāzī 'Īsā Sāvajī. Some of the poets and their works will be highlighted, as will biographical entries contained in selected literary anthologies which contain allusions to events at the Āq Qoyūnlū court. One event in particular, namely a romance between Qāzī 'Īsā, a representative of the sedentary Tajik (i.e., Persian) population,

¹ Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, 324. These verses also appear in Sām Mīrzā, *Tazkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, 25; and Fakhrī Haravī, *Tazkira-i Raużāt al-salāṭīn*, 65.

and the sister of Ya'qūb, who belonged to the ruling Türkmen clan, will be used as evidence to suggest that the repercussions of a socially and politically unacceptable relationship—as it is depicted in *Salāmān va Absāl*—would have been recognized by members of the royal Āq Qoyūnlū household.

Literary Activities in Āq Qoyūnlū Tabriz

The circle of poets at the court of Ya'qūb included such luminaries as Ahlī Shīrāzī, Kamāl al-Dīn Banā'ī Haravī, Shahīdī Qumī, and Bābā Fighānī. They all addressed encomiums (*qaṣīdas*), lyrical odes (*ghazals*), and/or romantic and didactic *masnavīs* to Ya'qūb.² Before examining the contributions each of these poets made to the literary life of Āq Qoyūnlū Tabriz, it is worth pointing out that Jāmī's maternal nephew, 'Abd Allāh Ḥātifi (d. 927/1520), who was an accomplished poet in his own right, spent some five years (890–95/1485–90) at the Āq Qoyūnlū court during Ya'qūb's reign.³ It could therefore be argued that Ḥātifi kept his uncle in Herat informed of Āq Qoyūnlū internal affairs, which might explain why the tale of *Salāmān va Absāl* so vividly reflects key personalities at the Türkmen court.

Ahlī Shīrāzī, who was a master of all literary genres and an unsurpassed practitioner of rhetorical devices, dedicated an allegorical *masnavī* on love entitled *Sham' va parvāna* to Ya'qūb and supreme military commander (*amīr-i aẓam*), Shāh Qulī Beg.⁴ The poem is unique in that its emphasis is not so much on the typical suffering lover (namely, the allegorical moth) but rather on the affection that the beloved (the allegorical candle) develops for the afflicted lover. Keeping this novel twist in mind, it is interesting to note that Ahlī implicitly casts Ya'qūb as the candle and royal fortune as the moth:

² It should be noted that Ahlī Shīrāzī probably never left his native Shiraz. See *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Ahlī Shīrāzī, Mowlānā Moḥammad" (by W. Thackston).

³ Losensky, "Shahīdī Qumī," 282. For a detailed study of the life and literary output of Ḥātifi, see 'Abd Allāh Ḥātifi, *I Sette Scenari*, ed. Michele Bernardini (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale Napoli, Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, 1995), 11–20.

⁴ The primary collected work of Ahlī Shīrāzī is the *Kulliyāt-i ash'ār-i Maulānā Ahlī Shīrāzī*. For biographical information on Ahlī, see Sām Mīrẓā, *Tazkira-i Tuhfa-i Sāmī*, 177. See also the following modern studies: Kausar, "Ahlī Shīrāzī," 115–39; Ehsan Yar-shater, "Timurid Poetry in the Timurid and Safavid Periods," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 6, *The Timurid and Safavid Periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 985; and Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, 160–64, 260–65, and 267–74. On Shāh Qulī Beg, see Davānī, *Arż-sipāh-i Ūzūn Ḥasan*, 28–29; Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Ālam-ār-ye amīnī*, 388.

The grace of God brought forth the luminous sun,
 The Solomon of the age, Ya'qūb sultan.
 Like a man of perspicacity, he is from the divine light (*nūr-i ilahī*),
 He is the prince (*khudāvand*) of white and black (i.e., both worlds).
 When the candle of kingship turns into the sun,
 The *humā*-bird circles like a moth around the orbit of its (Ya'qūb's)
 head—
 A candle so wonderous that through the eye of favor,
 The moth becomes its star of felicity.⁵

Ahlī also composed a *Dīvān* which contains many poems dedicated to members of both the Āq Qoyūnlū and Safavid dynasties. In addition to the panegyrics he wrote for Ya'qūb, Ahlī wrote chronograms (*tārīkh*) commemorating the deaths of Ya'qūb's rebellious half-brother Maqṣūd b. Ūzūn Ḥasan Bāyandur (d. 883/1478) and his older uterine brother, Sulṭān-Khalīl.⁶ Ahlī also wrote *qaṣīdas* in honor of the provincial governor of Fars, Qāsim Beg Pūrṇāk (d. 904/1498), which suggests that the cultural patronage activities of the Āq Qoyūnlū were not limited to Tabriz but extended to provincial capitals like Shiraz.⁷

It is worth mentioning that *Salāmān va Absāl* was not the only ethical *masnavī* dedicated and addressed to Ya'qūb. Kamāl al-Dīn Banā'ī Haravī, a native of Herat and familiar face amongst the Timurid nobility, dedicated a 5,000-verse poetic narrative, entitled *Bahrām va Bihrūz* (also referred to as *Bāgh-i Iram*), as well as numerous *qaṣīdas*, to the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler.⁸ Banā'ī (also variously Bannā'ī and Binā'ī), whose *takhallus* reflected his background as the son of an architect-builder (*bannā'*), arrived at Tabriz after leaving Herat and fell under the discipleship of Shaikh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Lāhijī (d. 922/1516), who was the head of the Nūrbakhshī order in Shiraz, and who was held in high regard by both Davānī and Jāmī.⁹

⁵ Ahlī, *Kulliyāt*, 575, lines 11509–11512. This could also be an allusion to Ya'qūb's *muqarrarab* and boon companion (and cousin of Qāzī 'Isā Sāvajī), Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd.

⁶ Ahlī, *Kulliyāt*, 560.

⁷ The Pūrṇāk or "Pirnik" were the only Türkmen clan to intermarry with the paramount Bāyandur ruling house during the formative years of the empire. Ūzūn Ḥasan rewarded the loyalty of the Pūrṇāk by allowing them to monopolize provincial rule in Fars where Maṣṣūr Beg and his son, Qāsim Beg, ruled with virtual independence from 900/1494 to 907/1501. See Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 194–95.

⁸ In all likelihood, *Bahrām va Bihrūz* was composed after Banā'ī's service to Ya'qūb, since he speaks of the death of the ruler. See Storey, *Persian Literature: Bio-bibliographical Survey* 1:302.

⁹ On Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Lāhijī, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Lāhidjī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yahyā Gilānī" (by A. H. Zarrinkoob). For a discussion

It should be noted that the Nūrbakhshīs, who were a Shī'ite-oriented branch of the Kubravī *ṭarīqa*, were apparently on good terms with the Sunnī-oriented Āq Qoyūnlū. For example, Shāh Qāsim Faizbakhsh (d. 927/1520–21), the eldest son and designated successor of the eponymous founder of the order, Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh, was reportedly drawn to the court of Ya'qūb sometime between 885/1480 and 895/1490.¹⁰ The precise nature of his relationship with Ya'qūb is unclear.¹¹ What is certain is that Qāsim Faizbakhsh's stay was cut short by the arrival of a letter from Sulṭān-Ḥusain Bāyqarā, in which the ailing Timurid ruler requested that the shaikh travel to Herat in order to deliver his curative blessings.¹²

As for Banā'ī, the sources indicate that he achieved a high rank in service to Ya'qūb and remained in Tabriz until the latter's death.¹³ Banā'ī initially served at the court of Sulṭān-Ḥusain and established a reputation as one of the most colorful figures in the late Timurid period. In Herat he was embroiled in a long-standing dispute with Mīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī who, despite his praises for his talent and character, belittled Banā'ī for his resistance to recognizing Chaghatay (Eastern Turkish) as a literary language.¹⁴ It is interesting to note that this tension, which is described in *Bādayī' al-vaqāyī'*, a memoir of the Timurid poet, Zain al-Dīn Vaṣīfī, suggests the possibility that the poets of the rival Āq Qoyūnlū court, at least those who visited Herat, were well-regarded by Timurid littérateurs.¹⁵

Relatively little is known about Shahīdī Qumī, who, according to the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, was the poet laureate (*malik al-shu'arā*) at the Āq Qoyūnlū court under Ya'qūb.¹⁶ Attesting perhaps to his mercurial nature, the rather brief entry on Shahīdī Qumī, which describes him as conceited and head-

of the letters Lāhijī addressed to Āq Qoyūnlū notables, see Dunietz, "Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī," 148–49.

¹⁰ See Shahzad Bashir, "After the Messiah: The Nūrbakhshīyyeh in Late Timurid and Early Safavid Times," in *Society and Culture in the Early Modern Middle East: Studies on Iran and the Safavid Period*, ed. Andrew J. Newman (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 300–301.

¹¹ Bashir, "After the Messiah," 301.

¹² The letter of invitation is contained in 'Abd al-Ḥusain Navā'ī, *Asnād va mukātibāt-i tārikhī-yi Irān* (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1341/1962), 403–5.

¹³ *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Banā'ī Heravī, Kamāl-al-Dīn Shīr-'Alī" (by Z. Safa).

¹⁴ On how this dispute reflected the larger Perso-Turkic sociocultural concerns of the Timurids, see Maria E. Subtelny, "Scenes from the Literary Life of Timūrid Herat," in *Logos Islamikos: Studia Islamica in Honorem Georgii Michaelis Wickens*, ed. Roger M. Savory and Dionisius A. Aguis (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984), 147–48.

¹⁵ For a translation of the sarcastic retort of Banā'ī to Mīr 'Alī Shīr, see Subtelny, "Scenes from the Literary Life of Timūrid Herat," 148.

¹⁶ For references to a MS copy of the *Divān* of Shahīdī Qumī, which is held in the Dār al-Kutub in Cairo, see Losensky, "Shahīdī Qumī," 300.

strong (*khūd-pasand* and *khūd-rāy*), notes that Qumī was Ya'qūb's confidant and that his poetry "possessed a density no one could penetrate."¹⁷ Though Mīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī described Shahīdī Qumī in his *Majālis al-naḡā'is* as domineering, quarrelsome, and apparently unstable (*dīvāna*), the Persian revision by Qazvīnī of the same work (entitled *Hasht bihisht*) clarifies this assessment of Qumī and contends that his talent and strict abstemiousness incited the worldly people (*mardum-i dunyā*) around him to conclude that he was insane.¹⁸

For our purposes, it is important to note that Shahīdī Qumī twice traveled to Khurasan where, according to the *Hasht bihisht*, he entered the service of Jāmī, with whom, the entry adds, he frequently socialized.¹⁹ As Algar has suggested, the poet from Qum was in fact a literary and spiritual disciple of Jāmī, as well as a full-fledged member of the Naqshbandī order.²⁰ If true, it is possible that Shahīdī Qumī could have communicated key aspects of Naqshbandī doctrine and practice to Ya'qūb, either directly or through the medium of his poetry. In a similar sense, Shahīdī Qumī would have been an ideal candidate to explicate to Ya'qūb and his courtiers the most salient or allusive points of Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl*, especially those that utilize Naqshbandī terminology.²¹

The fourth and most checkered of the celebrity poets attached to the Āq Qoyūnlū court of Ya'qūb was Bābā Fighānī, a one-time knife-maker and fellow townsman of Ahlī Shīrāzī.²² According to the *Tuhfa-i Sāmī*, Fighānī's talent blossomed only after he entered the service of Ya'qūb.²³ An affable character, Fighānī acquired the nick-name *Bābā Shā'ir* or "father poet" but also managed to establish his reputation as someone who could not hold his liquor (*bad mast*), despite his proclivity to frequent local taverns.²⁴ He evidently also served as an informal talent scout who personally referred promising young poets to Ya'qūb's attention.²⁵ The entry adds that, soon

¹⁷ Sām Mirzā, *Tazkira-i Tuhfa-i Sāmī*, 185. See also Losensky, "Shahīdī Qumī," 285.

¹⁸ 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī, ['Alisher Navoi], *Mazholisun nafois* [*Majālis al-naḡā'is*], [Chaghatay], ed. Suiima Ghanieva (Tashkent: Ūzbekiston SSR Fanlar akademiiasi nashriëti, 1961), 190. See also Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, 23–24.

¹⁹ Qazvīnī, *Hasht bihisht*, 296.

²⁰ Algar, "Naqshbandīs and Safavids," 38 n. 44.

²¹ Like Banā'ī, Shahīdī Qumī remained in the service of Ya'qūb until the death of the latter in 896/1490, whereupon he left for India, settled in Gujarat, and died in 935/1528–29 at the age of 100. See Losensky, "Shahīdī Qumī," 283.

²² Fighānī's original *nom de plume* was Sakkākī, meaning "cutler."

²³ Sām Mirzā, *Tazkira-i Tuhfa-i Sāmī*, 176.

²⁴ Sām Mirzā, *Tazkira-i Tuhfa-i Sāmī*, 176.

²⁵ Sām Mirzā, *Tazkira-i Tuhfa-i Sāmī*, 193.

after the death of Ya'qūb, Fighānī settled in Khurasan where his wine drinking became the stuff of legend. Perhaps sensing his own mortality, Fighānī made a pilgrimage to the tomb of the eighth Shī'ī *Imām*, 'Alī al-Riżā, in Mashhad and died sometime during 925/1519.²⁶

Famous in the later *taẓkira* literature for his "fresh style" (*ṭarz-i tāza*) of poetry, Fighānī is credited with countering the supposedly simple poetry practiced at the Timurid court of Sultān-Ḥusain.²⁷ He is therefore celebrated as a seminal contributor to what later came to be known as the "Indian style" (*sabk-i Hindī*) of Persian poetry (alternatively, *sabk-i Isfahānī* and *sabk-i Ṣafavī*), which was made famous during the Mughal period.²⁸

It is interesting to note that whereas the *Hasht bihisht* and the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī* are silent about any connection between Fighānī and Jāmī, the later *taẓkiras* claim that, prior to joining the Āq Qoyūnlū, Fighānī left his native Shiraz for Herat where he joined the company and service of Jāmī.²⁹ According to Losensky, however, many of the later biographical entries on Fighānī contain apocryphal stories aimed at adding to his mystique. Keeping this possibility in mind, it is nevertheless tempting to speculate that Fighānī, like Shahīdī Qumī, achieved stardom at Ya'qūb's court after coming under the literary and spiritual influence of Jāmī.

Jāmī, the "Āq Qoyūnlū Poet"

It might be said that, because of his influence on a poet like Shahīdī Qumī (and perhaps Bābā Fighānī) along with the fact that he addressed his *Salāmān va Absāl* to Ya'qūb, Jāmī could also be considered an "Āq Qoyūnlū poet." Granted, Jāmī never visited Tabriz during the reign of Ya'qūb, but there is ample evidence in the *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī* and in the letters that Ya'qūb addressed to Jāmī to suggest that his influence on

²⁶ Sām Mīrzā, *Taẓkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, 176.

²⁷ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, 39.

²⁸ On the *sabk-i Hindī* movement and the rise of the neo-classical *bāzgasht-i adabī* or "literary return" movement in reaction to it, see Aziz Ahmad, "The Formation of Sabk-i Hindī," in *Iran and Islam: In Memory of V. Minorsky*, ed. C. E. Bosworth (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1971), 1–9; *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Bāzgašt-e Adabī," (by William L. Hanaway, Jr.); *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Sabk-i Hindī" (by J. T. P. de Bruijn); and Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, 3–7. On modern controversies surrounding the artistic merits of the poetry produced during this period, see Ehsan Yarshater, "Safavid Literature: Progress or Decline," *Iranian Studies*, 7 (1974): 217–70. Reprinted as "The Indian or Safavid Style: Progress or Decline?" in *Persian Literature*, ed. E. Yarshater (New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 1988), 249–88.

²⁹ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, 37, 41, and 45.

Āq Qoyūnlū literary tastes, and more germanely, on the moral and ethical outlook of Ya'qūb was significant.

Take, for example, the notice written by Khunjī-Iṣfahānī on the events of 892/1487, which has significant implications for determining the nature of Ya'qūb's relationship to Jāmī and to Sufi mysticism as a whole.³⁰ According to the *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, Ya'qūb wanted to secure the blessings of Jāmī whom he regarded as the "Master of the Gnostics" (*ustād al-'urafā'*). To be more specific, Ya'qūb wanted the same glory and good fortune that other men of state (*arbāb-i daulat*) had attained thanks to Jāmī's *himmat*. As if to justify the request of Ya'qūb and establish his *bona fides*, Khunjī-Iṣfahānī notes that the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler was a servant of "the sages of the spiritual path" who understood that the "throne of this world" was determined entirely by their *himmat*.³¹ Allegedly, Ya'qūb henceforth recognized that the perpetuation of the state "depends on the prayers of the Sufi saints (*auliyyā'*)," and that the guidance provided by their *himmat* would benefit him and his subjects. It is for this reason, Khunjī-Iṣfahānī writes, that whenever Ya'qūb found a Sufi weeping in a corner or in meditation (*khalvat*) he would inquire about his spiritual state (*ḥāl*).

Having described the deference of his patron to Sufi mystics and to Jāmī in particular, Khunjī-Iṣfahānī explains that Ya'qūb ordered that a certain Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Sharbatī be dispatched to Herat with 10,000 *Shāhrukhī* dinars as an offering to Jāmī.³² The notice relates that Ya'qūb hoped that the monetary gift would be sufficient to purchase more prayers from the "great saint" or "shadow of God" (*buzurg sāya*), i.e., Jāmī.³³

It is interesting to note that Khunjī-Iṣfahānī makes reference to the bulk of Jāmī's poetry, but not *Salāmān va Absāl*, which suggests that the poem in question was not written until after 892/1487. In fact, the only reference to *Salāmān va Absāl* in any of the Āq Qoyūnlū sources consulted for this study appears in an undated letter Ya'qūb sent to Jāmī. The letter is a valuable historical source as it indicates that a significant number of compositions by Jāmī had already been dispatched to the Āq Qoyūnlū court. Ya'qūb acknowledges in his letter that treatises (*rasā'il*), compositions (*muṣannafāt*), volumes (*kutub*), and compilations (*mu'allafāt*) by Jāmī

³⁰ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 250–51.

³¹ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 250.

³² Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 251. This same intermediary, Ḥāfiẓ "Shams al-Dīn" Muḥammad, is mentioned in a letter that Ya'qūb addressed to Jāmī, the gist of which is a request by Ya'qūb for more poetry from Jāmī. See Ya'qūb to Jāmī, in Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmahā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 306–7 (letter no. 18).

³³ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 251.

had already been received. Clearly appreciative of their didactic content, the young ruler praises Jāmī, and claims that the poet's "jewels of moral advice" occasioned several types of spiritual enlightenment (*futūḥāt*).³⁴

Near the conclusion of the letter, another detail emerges to suggest that *Salāmān va Absāl* was a work of political and ethical advice. In an allusion to the tale, Ya'qūb characterizes *Salāmān va Absāl* as a work of *naṣā'ih* or "good counsels" (pl. of *naṣīḥat*).³⁵ The title of the poem, whose arrival Ya'qūb eagerly awaits, is not actually named but alluded to through the use of a pun. Ya'qūb expresses his anticipation for the arrival of what he describes as the "*ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt*" of Jāmī.

In addition to meaning "intimations and admonitions," the phrase *ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt* could be an allusion to Ibn Sīnā's final masterpiece, the *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt*, which contains three tales that culminate in an allegorical romance entitled *Salāmān wa Absāl*.³⁶ We therefore find Ya'qūb closing his letter with the following words:

The affectionate gaze of the expectant one (i.e., Ya'qūb) is always seeking the announcement that the good counsels (*naṣā'ih*), which are full of guidance for us, and the good tidings of intimations and admonitions (*bashārāt-i ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt*) will be sent and received.³⁷

As chapter 1 of this study noted, the *Salāmān wa Absāl* by Ibn Sīnā, though somewhat different from the version by Jāmī, was nevertheless a logical inspiration for it, partly on account of the fact that it was the first major literary work in the Near East to feature characters named Salāmān and Absāl. It is therefore possible that while Ya'qūb was unaware of the title of the forthcoming *maṣnavī* by Jāmī, he may at least have been informed that it was patterned after one of Ibn Sīnā's visionary tales (the others being *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* and *Risālat al-ṭair*).

It would appear as though the mere act of receiving the poetry of Jāmī from Herat created excitement at the Āq Qoyūnlū court. For example, in another of Ya'qūb's letters we find reference to an embarrassing mishap involving a Timurid delegation to Tabriz that mistakenly presented Ya'qūb

³⁴ Ya'qūb to Jāmī, in Urumbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 307.

³⁵ Ya'qūb to Jāmī, in Urumbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 307.

³⁶ Ya'qūb to Jāmī, in Urumbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 307. For a judicious treatment of these visionary cycles, see Henry Corbin, *Avicenne et le récit visionnaire*, 2 vols. (Tehran, Paris: Institut Franco-Iranien, 1952–54).

³⁷ Ya'qūb to Jāmī, in Urumbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 307. In Persian: *hamvāra mutarāqīb naẓar-i maḥabba va i'tiqād ānka bi iblāgh-i naṣā'ih-i hidāyat āyat va irād-i bashārāt-i ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt in javānibrā mazkūr dārand*.

and Qāzī 'Īsā with a copy of *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyya* by Ibn al-'Arabī instead of what was supposed to be the *Dīvān* of Jāmī. A meaningful description of the event is all but obscured by the letter-writer's high-flown rhetoric and polite turns of phrase, so characteristic of the Persian epistolary style.³⁸ It does nonetheless provide yet another indication that Jāmī's poetry was coveted by members of the Āq Qoyūnlū court. Given the formality of the presentation, it also raises the possibility that such delegations played an important and hitherto unexamined role in diplomatic relations between the Timurids and the Āq Qoyūnlū.

The Hasht Bihisht and Its Roster of "Lesser-known" Āq Qoyūnlū Poets

The artistic vibrancy of Ya'qūb's court in Tabriz, which rivaled its Timurid counterpart in Herat, is reflected in the *Hasht bihisht* by Qazvīnī. The *Hasht bihisht* contains the names of some forty poets and dilettantes attached to the Āq Qoyūnlū court of Ya'qūb who do not appear in the Chaghatay *Majālis al-naḡā'is* of Mīr 'Alī Shīr.³⁹ Thus, the following list of poets was inserted by Qazvīnī into the 6th chapter, entitled, "The elegant, the graceful, and the remainder of the poets of the kingdoms whose poems reached Khurasan and the inhabitants of that place approved of their poetry":

Khvāja Muẓaffar Mi'mār [*kātib* in the *dīvān* of Ya'qūb]; Maulānā Bayānī; Maulānā Vafā'ī; Maulānā Unsi Kātib; Maulānā Khurramī; Maulānā Gharqī; 'Alī Khān Mirzā [senior *amīr*]; Kuchik Beg [*amīr*]; Maulānā Āgāhī; Maulānā Šifātī; Maulānā Ṭāhirī; Mīr Humāyūn; Shāh 'Ināyat Allah [*vazīr*]; Shāh Maḥmūd Jān [*vazīr* and uncle of another *vazīr*, Shāh 'Ināyat Allah]; Maulānā Mazharī; Maulānā Rafīqī; Maulānā Ḥaqīrī; Maulānā Juzvī; Maulānā Fidā'ī; Maulānā Shamsī; Maulānā Bāṭinī; Maulānā Halākī; Maulānā Shafīqī; Maulānā [Bābā] Fighānī; Maulānā Qabūlī; Maulānā Ḥairānī; Mīr Fanā'ī; Maulānā Ruḥī; Maulānā Ṭūṭī; Maulānā Khātami; Khvāja Maqṣūd Kāzarūnī; Maulānā Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Davānī Siddiqī [author of the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*]; [Name missing (but with a brief notice) in two MSS]; Khvāja Mas'ūd; Maulānā Sulamī; Maulānā Madīḥī; Maulānā Naṣībī; Maulānā Fathī; Mīr Dallāl; Khvāja 'Imād⁴⁰

³⁸ For a detailed account of the incident, which seems to have been a premeditated effort to discredit the leader of the delegation, Sayyid (also Amīr) Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥusain Abivardī, see Khvādamīr, *Ḥabīb al-siyar* 4:450–51. The collection is referred to as the "*Kulliyāt*" of Jāmī in the *Ḥabīb al-siyar*.

³⁹ Qazvīnī, *Hasht bihisht*, 297, 300–312 (nos. 339, 346–85).

⁴⁰ Qazvīnī, *Hasht bihisht*, 300–312. According to their notices, the following poets resided in Shiraz or other Āq Qoyūnlū territories: Maulānā Humā'ī; Maulānā Yārī; Maulānā Mīrakī

In addition to the poets cited by Qazvīnī, the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī* mentions several others associated with the Āq Qoyūnlū court, including Anṣārī Qumī, Maulānā Ḥabībī Bargshādī, and Dīvāna Naqqāsh Tabrizī.⁴¹ It is interesting to note that, in his Persian translation of the *Majālis al-naḥāʾis* (entitled *Laṭāʾif-nāma*), Fakhrī Haravī (d. 928/1521–22) mentions only five poets, including Yaʿqūb’s *vazīr*, Qāzī ʿĪsā, as being affiliated with the Āq Qoyūnlū: Darvīsh Dahakī (or Dehgī) Qazvīnī, Qāzī ʿĪsā, Shaikh Najm al-Dīn [Masʿūd], Khvāja Afzal, and Shahidī Qumī.⁴² As Losensky has suggested, the literati of Herat and Khurasan appear to have known surprisingly little about the poets of western Iran who did not visit their region.⁴³ Alternatively, this could be an indication that Timurid writers were indifferent to, if not disapproving of, Āq Qoyūnlū poets whose literary output they may have regarded as inferior to their own.⁴⁴ Be that as it may, it is interesting to observe that Qāzī ʿĪsā and his cousin, Najm al-Dīn Masʿūd, the *muqarrab* and boon-companion (*nadīm*) of Yaʿqūb, were themselves considered accomplished poets.

Qāzī ʿĪsā Sāvajī: Reform-Minded Vazīr, Poet, and Ill-fated Lover

Yaʿqūb’s official historian, Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, laments the fact that despite “having the reins of government entirely in his hands,” Qāzī ʿĪsā regularly neglected affairs of state by insisting on mingling with poets.⁴⁵ “Though the affairs of the world might reach the brink of calamity,” Khunjī-Iṣfahānī writes, “the *qāzī* would wait for the completion of a plaintive hemistich.”⁴⁶ According to the notice on him in the Persian translation of the *Majālis al-naḥāʾis* by Fakhrī Haravī, Qāzī ʿĪsā was melancholic by nature (*saudāʾī mizāj*) and so consumed (*mashghūf*) by poetry that he routinely composed at least ten *ghazals* a day.⁴⁷ Qāzī ʿĪsā’s interest in poetry was such

[or Mirkī]; Maulānā Faẓl Allah; Maulānā Muʾīn Miʾmārī [a relative of the Āq Qoyūnlū *kātib*, Khvāja Muzaffār (or Muzfir) Miʾmār]. For references, see Qazvīnī, *Hasht bihisht*, 298–99.

⁴¹ Sām Mirzā, *Tazkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, 251, 357–58, and 376. For a reference to a certain Khatāʾī Tabrizī, who dedicated a *maṣnāvī* in Azarī Turkish entitled, *Yūsuf va Zulaikhā*, to Yaʿqūb, see, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. “Azerbaijan, x. Azeri Turkish Literature in Iran” (by H. Javadi; K. Burrill).

⁴² Fakhrī Haravī, *Laṭāʾif-nāma*, 118–20.

⁴³ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, 24.

⁴⁴ For reference to this antagonism in the later *tazkiras*, see Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, 34.

⁴⁵ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *ʿĀlam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 352.

⁴⁶ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *ʿĀlam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 352.

⁴⁷ Fakhrī Haravī, *Laṭāʾif-nāma*, 119.

that an anthology (*dīvān*) of *ghazals* was attributed to him, a copy of which is held in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.⁴⁸

It should be noted that the negative statement by Khunjī-Iṣfahānī concerning Qāzī 'Īsā's preoccupation with poetry appears in a section of the *'Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī* in which the attitude of Khunjī-Iṣfahānī toward Ya'qūb's *vazīr* and chief *qāzī* is decidedly negative. This undoubtedly reflects the fact that it was around this time (894–95/1489) that Qāzī 'Īsā consolidated his near-absolute control of the Āq Qoyūnlū administration, along with his cousin, Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd, who in that year was appointed *amīr-i dīvān*, or deputy of the sultan.⁴⁹ The maneuver was part of an ambitious campaign by Qāzī 'Īsā to completely reorganize the empire along the lines of a traditional Perso-Islamic state based on a centralized bureaucracy and agriculturally-derived tax revenues. In order to effect these reforms, Qāzī 'Īsā sought the abolition of the Mongol-era *tamghā* commercial tax and the revocation of numerous *suyūrghāls* and tax immunities (*musallamiyāt*) that had been granted to influential civilian dignitaries, many of whom were members of the religious intelligentsia whose pious foundations (*auqāf*) relied on the revenues generated by such grants and tax-shelters.⁵⁰

As Khunjī-Iṣfahānī indicates, Qāzī 'Īsā's reforms were aimed at reestablishing the primacy of the *sharī'a* in matters of land-tenure and were framed as part of a larger "return to Islam" strategy that sought to curb the lingering influence of Turko-Mongol customary law (*yāsā-yi*

⁴⁸ Gustav Flügel, *Die arabischen, persischen, und türkischen Handschriften der Kaiserlich-Königlichen Hof-Bibliothek zu Wien*, 3 vols. (Vienna: K. K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1865), 1:575–76. The first twenty-six pages of the *Dīvān* contain *ghazals* by Qāzī 'Īsā while the remaining two pages include comments and a conclusion which was written in a different hand. A sketch portrait of Qāzī 'Īsā and Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd also appears in the MS, which contains the completion date of 912/1506, or fifteen years after the death of Qāzī 'Īsā. An edition of the *Dīvān*, based on a MS attributed to Idrīs Bidlīsī, along with the poetry of Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd, was recently published in Iran. See Idrīs b. 'Alī Bidlīsī, *Dīvān-i du sarāyanda az qarn-i nuhum: Qāzī 'Īsā Sāvajī va Shaikh Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd*, ed. Amīna Maḥallātī (Tehran: Kitābkhāna, Mūza va Markaz-i Asnād-i Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Islāmī, 1390/2012).

⁴⁹ Minorsky, "Aq-Qoyunlu and Land Reforms," 452. See also Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *'Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 357, where Khunjī-Iṣfahānī says that "the *qāzī* nearly reached the position of a king (*ṣāhib takht*). On the position *amīr-i dīvān* under the Āq Qoyūnlū, see *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Dīvān, iii. Government Office" (by C. Edmund Bosworth). See also, Ismā'il Ḥasan-zāda, *Ḥukumat-i Turkmānān-i Qarā Qoyūnlū va Āq Qoyūnlū dar Irān* (Tehran: Sāzmān-i Muṭāla'a va Tadvīn-i Kutub-i 'Ulūm-i Insānī-yi Dānishgāh-hā, 1379/2000), 181–83.

⁵⁰ Maria Eva Subtelny, "Centralizing Reform and Its Opponents in the Late Timurid Period," *Iranian Studies* 21, nos. 1–2 (1988): 128. See also Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 144. Subtelny draws parallels between the aborted Āq Qoyūnlū reforms of Qāzī 'Īsā and the similarly unsuccessful centralization attempted by the Timurid *vazīr*, Khvāja Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 899/1494).

Chingīz-khānī), particularly in the provinces.⁵¹ Despite its religious underpinning, the policy failed to persuade the landed *‘ulamā’*, who probably shared the view expressed by Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, namely that “the bad actions of the *qāẓī*” needed to be opposed.⁵² Khunjī-Iṣfahānī goes so far as to give mocking tribute to Qāẓī ‘Īsā’s sweeping powers in a series of rhyming couplets that call to mind the miracles attributed to Jesus (‘Īsā), the *vazīr*’s namesake:

Because of ‘Īsā, the religion of Islām exists,
 Because of ‘Īsā, the power of belief is improved,
 Because of ‘Īsā, the forearm of prosperity is strengthened,
 Because of ‘Īsā, deceased ancestors are enlivened,
 Because of ‘Īsā, the goblet of god-fearingness is purified,
 Because of ‘Īsā, chronic sickness is healed.⁵³

Elsewhere in the *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, Khunjī-Iṣfahānī quotes several lines of poetry attributed to Qāẓī ‘Īsā (in the form of fragments [*qit‘a*]; initial verses [*maṭla’*]; and a *ghazal*). These verses, which were probably not chosen at random, may have been selected because they suggest that Qāẓī ‘Īsā was an embattled and isolated figure who apparently suffered some sort of public disgrace. Some indication of this disgrace is evinced in the *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, where the following verse of Qāẓī ‘Īsā is recorded:

Surreptitiously people on every side laugh at my betrayal,
 I know it, [but] amazingly I make myself ignorant of what I know.⁵⁴

In another fragment quoted by Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, Qāẓī ‘Īsā likens his shame to an ignoble death:

Everywhere mourners are arranged in ranks, singing lamentations,
 I go there out of desire, since maybe they will speak for my sake.
 So completely have I been dishonored for your sake,
 That wherever two people sit together, they speak about me.⁵⁵

Exactly what these shameful circumstances could have been is not elucidated in the *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*. One possible explanation is contained in

⁵¹ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 355. On how this tension was also evident in the socioeconomic reforms of the Timurids, see Subtelny “Centralizing Reform,” 126–27 and 134–35.

⁵² Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 355. In a show of public protest, the chief *qāẓī* of Fars, Davānī, removed his white turban and refused to wear it again until the night of the death of Ya‘qūb. For a reference, see Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 145.

⁵³ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 356.

⁵⁴ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 352.

⁵⁵ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 353–54.

the notice on Qāzī 'Īsā in the *Hasht bihisht*, which provides another explanation why Jāmī dedicated his *Salāmān va Absāl* to the Āq Qoyūnlū.

According to the *Hasht bihisht*, Qāzī 'Īsā fell in love with and married one of Ya'qūb's sisters.⁵⁶ Their union was rejected, presumably by senior members of the Bāyandur clan—most importantly the Queen Mother, Saljūqshāh Begum—on the grounds that it was contrary to Turkish custom, which Qazvīnī describes as “the ignorance of the Turks” (*jāhiliyyat-i Turkān*).⁵⁷ This objection does not appear, however, to reflect a blanket prohibition by the Bāyandur elite against marrying outside the clan. For example, the Āq Qoyūnlū had no reservations about allowing Bāyandur females to marry a) leaders of the Ṣafavī Sufi order, b) heirs to the Shīrvānshāh principality, and c) Sufi personalities, such as the 'Abd al-Vahhāb *sayyids* of Tabriz.⁵⁸ In addition to these examples, the well-known marriages of Ūzūn Ḥasan's family to the Greek princesses of Trabzon (e.g., Theodora Komnene), further suggest that the Āq Qoyūnlū practiced exogamy.⁵⁹ And whereas the motives for scuttling Qāzī 'Īsā's marriage might be unclear, Qazvīnī appears to suggest that the union may even have produced a child:

Qāzī ['Īsā], the martyr, was entirely sweet-natured and amorous. He fell in love with a sister (*hamshīra*) of sultan Ya'qūb Khān, and in that affection the attributes of Lailī had been changed into Majnūn. Since sultan Ya'qūb

⁵⁶ Qazvīnī, *Hasht bihisht*, 294. In Persian: *bih hamshīra-i sulṭān Ya'qūb Beg Khān 'āshiqī mūnamūd*.

⁵⁷ Qazvīnī, *Hasht bihisht*, 294.

⁵⁸ The daughter of Ūzūn Ḥasan (i.e., Ya'qūb's sister), Ḥalīma Begī Āghā (also referred to in the sources as 'Ālamshāh Khātūn), was given in marriage to Shaikh Ḥaidar b. Junaid Ṣafavī. At the time, Ḥaidar was a young nephew of Ūzūn Ḥasan, but went on to transform the Safavids into a formidable corps of militant Sufis. As for the 'Abd al-Vahhāb *sayyids*, the daughter of Ya'qūb's younger brother, Yūsuf Mirzā, was betrothed to Mir Sirāj al-Dīn (also Nūr al-Dīn) 'Abd al-Vahhāb, who served as the *shaikh al-Islām* of Azerbaijan (Tabriz). For references, see Iskandar Beg Turkmān Munshī, *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*, ed. Iraj Afshār, 2 vols. (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1334/1955–56), 151, 153. For an English translation, see Eskandar Beg Monshī, *The History of Shah 'Abbas the Great: Tārīkh-e 'ālam-ārā-ye 'Abbāsī*, trans. Roger M. Savory, 2 vols. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), 241 and 244. See also Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-siyar* 4:608; Aubin, “Études safavides,” 57; and Maria Szuppe, “La participation des femmes de la famille royale à l'exercice du pouvoir en Iran safavide au XVI^e siècle,” pt. 2, *Studia Iranica* 24, no. 1 (1995): 62.

⁵⁹ In a similar case to that of Qāzī 'Īsā, Saljūqshāh Begum (mother of Ya'qūb), convened a council of princes of the blood in order to prevent the widow of her eldest son, Sulṭān-Khalīl, from remarrying. Her suitor was Ḥusain Chalabī, who was a disciple of the Khalvatī shaikh 'Umar Raushanī and the brother of Ūzūn Ḥasan's *vazīr*, Qāzī Ḥasan. According to the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülšenī*, the Queen Mother opposed the union because of Ḥusain Chalabī's rank as a “commoner” (*bir ra'iyat*) and conspired to have the couple murdered. See Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülšenī*, 93–94; cited in Woods, *Aqqayunlu*, 16.

desired a son free from blemish and vice (*ibn-i salām*), Laili was conveyed to Majnūn according to the prescribed way of Islam (*bar nahj-i Islām*), and he freed both of them from the confinement of separation. However, the protective prohibitions of the ignorant (*jāhiliyat*) Türkmen customs triumphed over him. He [Qāzī 'Isā] therefore abandoned [her]. During the time of his affection for that girl, the *qāzī* recited this *matla'*:

I depart for the sake of that friend, for whose sake I could die,
My life is a sacrifice to her name, her name [which] cannot be uttered.⁶⁰

An indication that Qāzī 'Isā was embroiled in scandal is also intimated in the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*. In the *maṣnavī* attributed to Idrīs Bidlīsī, which was quoted earlier in its connection to the nature of Ya'qūb and Ibrāhīm Gulshānī's relationship, Bidlīsī declares that the kingdom of Ya'qūb found order (*niẓām*) and beauty (*zibā*) through Qāzī 'Isā and Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd, respectively.⁶¹ He then alternates references to the two statesmen by contrasting each of their respective contributions to the Āq Qoyūnlū state. Qāzī 'Isā is identified as "that one" (*ān yakī*) in the first of several hemistichs, while Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd is addressed as "this one" (*in yakī*) in the second of these hemistichs. Thus Bidlīsī claims that "that one" (i.e., Qāzī 'Isā) led Ya'qūb with his *'ilm*, or religious knowledge, while "this one" (i.e., Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd) was a dear friend (*gham-gusār*) of the people on account of his *ḥilm* or forbearance.⁶² The next *bait* states that Qāzī 'Isā "revivified" the *sharī'a* for the sake of the king, while Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd infused "light and brilliance" (*nūr va ẓiyā*) into the kingdom. Like Christ (*'Isā*), Bidlīsī writes, Qāzī 'Isā breathed spirit (*rūḥī*) into the "eyes of religion." The impression left by Bidlīsī's poem is that Ya'qūb depended on Qāzī 'Isā to oversee religious and legal affairs while Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd tended to secular and administrative duties. As the following excerpt shows, their complementary influences and, it would seem, mutual dependency, put a personal touch on the interdependence of religion and state (*dīn va daulat*) which lies at the heart of the medieval Persian conception of the state:

⁶⁰ Qazvīnī, *Hasht bihisht*, 294.

⁶¹ Gulshānī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, 81.

⁶² Gulshānī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, 81.

On account of those two people, the Ya'qubian state
 Found order and arrangement to the utmost extent.
 That one (Qāzī 'Īsā) elevated the affairs of religion to the celestial spheres,
 This one (Najm al-Dīn) made luminous the star of kingship.
 'Īsā was at the forefront (*ṣadr*) of the heavens,
 Najm Mas'ūd was Jupiter-like.
 The *shāh* followed that one (Qāzī 'Īsā) on account of his *'ilm*,
 And this one (Najm al-Dīn) was a dear friend of the people on account of
 his *ḥilm*.
 'Īsā revived the religious law (*shar'*),
 On account of Najm, the state was full of light and radiance.
 'Īsā breathed spirit into the eye of religion,
 Which was illuminated by the star of the divine world (*najm-i 'ālam-i qudsī*).⁶³

Thus, the impression given by the poem of Bidlīsī is that Qāzī 'Īsā, in his official capacities as *ṣadr* and *qāzī al-quḏāt*, epitomized normative Islam, whereas Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd represented its mystical counterpart. That the two Sāvajīs respectively embodied the exoteric and esoteric aspects of Islamic religion finds support in the *'Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī* which describes a ceremony held on the eve of Ya'qub's campaign against his rebellious brother-in-law, Shaikh Ḥaidar Ṣafavī, in 893/1488.⁶⁴ According to Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, Āq Qoyūnlū forces gathered near Ardabil and staged a military review, after which auguries (*fāl*) were taken from the Qur'ān for the coming battle. The '*qāzī al-quḏāt*' (i.e., Qāzī 'Īsā) opened to Qur'ān 8:12 and Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd followed by reading a similar verse from the *Maṣnavī* (5:3677–89) of Rūmī.⁶⁵

Qāzī 'Īsā's Banishment from Court and His Tell-tale Poetry

The author of the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī* suggests that Qāzī 'Īsā fell in with "unorthodox" (*bad maḏhab*) individuals who caused him to neglect his prayers, and thus necessitating Ibrāhīm Gulshanī's intervention.⁶⁶ With the shaikh's assistance, Qāzī 'Īsā apparently regained his piety and

⁶³ Gulshanī *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, 81.

⁶⁴ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *'Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 293. See also the prevalence of mystical themes and terminology in the letters that Najm al-Dīn addressed to Jāmī, in Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 312–13 (letters no. 23, 24, 25, and 26).

⁶⁵ Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *'Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 293–94. For the passages from the *Maṣnavī*, see Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, bk. 5, lines 3677–89.

⁶⁶ Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, 68. Discussed in Dunietz, "Qāḏī Ḥusayn Maybudī," 135.

developed a deep attachment to Gulshanī. Accordingly, this bond became so great that the *qāzī* began to neglect his official duties, preferring instead to isolate himself with Ibrāhīm Gulshanī while the two engaged in extended periods of fasting and prayer.⁶⁷ Disturbed at his increasingly bizarre behavior, Qāzī ʿĪsā's relatives appealed directly to Ya'qūb, and claimed that he had "gone mad" (*dīvāna*). Gulshanī apparently acceded to the wishes of the Sāvajī family, tempering the zeal of Qāzī ʿĪsā and reportedly inducing him to return to his administrative duties by quoting to him the *ḥadīth*: "The justice (ʿ*adl*) of one hour [of a just ruler] is better than seventy years of religious worship (ʿ*ibādat*)."⁶⁸

Despite his hostility to Qāzī ʿĪsā, Khunjī-Iṣfahānī never mentions the spiritual or personal crisis that supposedly consumed him. Likewise, the official chronicles of the Timurid and Safavid periods, which would have gained nothing by concealing Āq Qoyūnlū foibles, are silent on the failings of Qāzī ʿĪsā and his alleged relationship with Ya'qūb's sister. As a result, further indications of Qāzī ʿĪsā's purported troubles can only be inferred from the *maṣnavī* of Bidlisī in the *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī* and by fragments of poetry attributed to Qāzī ʿĪsā in the *Hasht bihisht* and the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*. For example, Bidlisī, still addressing Qāzī ʿĪsā as "that one" and Najm al-Dīn Mas'ūd as "this one," suggests that a crisis led to the alienation of Qāzī ʿĪsā and Najm al-Dīn from the Āq Qoyūnlū court but that Ya'qūb eventually forgave them:

That one became a martyr on the path of a friend,
 Afterwards, the king did not at all draw near to this one.
 That one found the station of the martyrs,
 The other one became isolated like the guiding star (*najm-i hudā*).
 As the vicissitudes of bad faith and the crooked wheel of fate passed,
 My soul thought of their exile.
 The *shāh* and the notables, in such a separation,
 Turned life into sin (*tāvān*) right before my eyes.
 Making a connection to the world of sanctity,
 Idrīs is in prayer for the remembrance of those people.
 In the sublime [*Hasht*] *bihisht* garden, Shāh Ya'qūb
 Found commanding power atop the throne of forgiveness.
 That spirit is in every pillar of his sultanate,

⁶⁷ Dunietz, "Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī," 135.

⁶⁸ Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, 68; and Dunietz, "Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī," 136. In Arabic: *ʿadlu sāʾatin khairu min ʿibādati sabʿīna sanatin*. This *ḥadīth* is found in such Perso-Islamic mirrors for princes as Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 15 (trans. 14). It also appears in his *Kīmīyā-yi saʿādat* and the *Ihyāʾ ulūm al-dīn*. For references, see Ghazālī, *Ghazālī's Book of Counsel*, 14 n. 2.

Truth was conveyed in the shadow of his clemency.
 The wind of preservation opened their souls:
 [in Arabic] "The lover does not reveal the beloved."
 May the mausoleums of both [worlds] be full of light:
 [in Arabic] "The star (*al-najm*) does not appear to slumbering mortals."
 Thankful at this moment for the gracious patron,
 I remember the justice from those assemblies.⁶⁹

Glimpses of Ya'qūb and His Troubles

Qāzī 'Īsā was not the only figure in the Āq Qoyūnlū court whose travails may have been expressed through the medium of poetry. According to the *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, a collection of Sufi biographies compiled by the Timurid *ṣadr*, Kamāl al-Dīn Gāzurgāhī, Ya'qūb had himself acquired the "manner of an ['Umar] Khayyām" (*ṭaur-i khayyāmī*) and the capacity to string "jeweled letters."⁷⁰ To substantiate his claim, Gāzurgāhī quotes a *rubā'ī* that he attributes to Ya'qūb, which also appears in the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī* and the *Tazkira-i Rauḏāt al-salāṭīn*:

I see little certainty in the world,
 With all of its joy I see thousands of sorrows.
 It is like an old frontier way station (*ribāṭ*), since from all its sides,
 I see a path to the desert of non-existence.⁷¹

According to the *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, Ya'qūb composed the verses after recognizing that his earthly love (*'ishq-i majāz*) was in fact a sign of divine

⁶⁹ Gulshanī, *Menākib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gūlšenī*, 81–82. If we accept that such samplings reflect actual events, then the following verses of Qāzī 'Īsā, could be allusions to his marriage and the objections of certain members of the Bāyandur clan. Take, for example, the following *maṭla'* which is cited in the *Hasht bihisht* (p. 294):

In the tenth month of the solar year the friend gave [her] vow,
 And I stitched my eyes to the path.
 I made my heart like kabob,
 But [she] did not come, so I burned.

The six other *maṭla'*s quoted by Qazvīnī are similarly plaintive and reflect Qāzī 'Īsā's wish to be reunited with his beloved. See also this introductory verse from the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī* (p. 118):

I do not bring [her] name to my tongue, but when I speak of my heartache,
 Everyone knows that I speak of the injustice of that vow-breaker.

⁷⁰ Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, 324.

⁷¹ Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, 324; Sām Mīrzā, *Tazkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, 25; and Fakhri Haravī, *Tazkira-i Rauḏāt al-salāṭīn*, 65. Kamāl al-Dīn Gāzurgāhī claims that the verses were originally his. Also note that since Sufis use *ribāt* in the sense of a "Sufi lodge," there is a mystical significance to Ya'qūb's wandering in the "desert of non-existence" (i.e., the annihilation of the ego-self).

or true love (*‘ishq-i haqīqī*).⁷² Having discovered that this was his “real objective” (*maqṣūd*) in life, he apparently shunned the affairs of kingship (*umūr-i mulkī*) and became completely indifferent (*bī i’tibārī*) to worldly concerns.⁷³ It is not clear whether Ya‘qūb’s nonchalance was part of an ascetic Sufi doctrine, the result of his continued wine-drinking, or the deep despair that several sources agree incapacitated him after the deaths of his mother, Saljūqshāh Begum, and his younger brother Yūsuf in 896/1490.⁷⁴ Whatever the cause, the entry by Gāzurgāhī on Ya‘qūb—which is replete with images of wine-filled goblets and decanters—suggests that the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler struggled with depression throughout his twelve-year reign.⁷⁵

Gāzurgāhī, who was personally acquainted with Ya‘qūb and was awarded the Azerbaijani village of Bayābang by him as a *suyūrghāl*, hints at the psychological fragility of his patron by saying that many individuals reach manhood only to succumb to the pain (*dard*) and “bloody tears” created by their own jealousy (*rashk*).⁷⁶ In a more direct reference, Gāzurgāhī claims that Ya‘qūb’s love for others, taken here to be earthly beloveds, had become an impediment because it hung a “noose around the neck of his heart.”⁷⁷ The notice in the *Majālis al-‘ushshāq* indicates that Ya‘qūb’s distractedness (*shīfta* and *āshufta*) endured, even after the personal intervention of Gāzurgāhī.⁷⁸

The picture of Ya‘qūb presented by Gāzurgāhī is hard to reconcile with the image presented in the *Tazkira-i Rauzāt al-salāṭīn* by Fakhrī Haravī. Composed between 958–62/1551–55, the *Rauzāt al-salāṭīn* contains a sympathetic notice on Ya‘qūb in a chapter entitled, “Explaining the conditions of the sultans of Iraq and Rum who at one time had wholly busied themselves by turning their respectful attention to composing poetic verses.”⁷⁹ Fakhrī Haravī begins the entry by citing ‘Alīshīr Navā‘ī whom he quotes

⁷² Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-‘ushshāq*, 324.

⁷³ Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-‘ushshāq*, 324.

⁷⁴ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 145–47.

⁷⁵ For reference to an illustrated MS copy of the *Majālis al-‘ushshāq*, a miniature painting of which depicts a circle of courtiers weeping around Ya‘qūb, see B. W. Robinson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Paintings in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 102.

⁷⁶ Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-‘ushshāq*, 323. See also *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. “Gāzorgāhī, Mīr Kamāl-al-Dīn Ḥosayn” (by Shiro Ando). Kamāl al-Dīn Gāzurgāhī eventually left Āq Qoyūnlū territory for Herat where he lived as a dervish and studied under Jāmī.

⁷⁷ Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-‘ushshāq*, 324.

⁷⁸ Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-‘ushshāq*, 324.

⁷⁹ Fakhrī Haravī, *Tazkira-i Rauzāt al-salāṭīn*, 65–66.

as saying that Ya'qūb was a youth who was distinguished by his praiseworthy essence (*ẓāt*), laudable attributes (*ṣifāt*), dervish-like qualities, and self-effacing disposition (*fānī-mashrab*).⁸⁰ In addition to the morose *rubā'ī* quoted above, the *Rauẓāt al-salāṭīn* contains a *ghazal* attributed to Ya'qūb which has a dramatically different tune. Ya'qūb presents himself as ruler bent on conquest:

I will slay the army with a tear and raise the standard with a sigh,
 I will seize the earth with these troops.
 I snatched the belt from the King of the Egyptians (i.e., Mamluk sultan
 Qāyit Bāy),
 Caesar is my page, and the Creator (*khāliq*) is my refuge.
 As much as the *shāh* of Herat (i.e., Sulṭān-Ḥusain) is, with heart and soul,
 our friend,
 My desire is to strike at the throne of the Samarqand court.
 If the kings of India and the sultans of Zanzibar
 Are disobedient to me, their faces will be blackened with shame.⁸¹

Brotherly Discord in the Āq Qoyūnlū Household

By far the most informative notice on Ya'qūb is the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*. In addition to the information it contains on Ya'qūb's brief tenure as governor of Diyar-Bakr and the date of his enthronement, the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī* emphasizes the high regard Ya'qūb held for poets and their craft. For example, Sām Mīrzā asserts that during the reign of Ya'qūb, the "star of poetry rose to the zenith of the Pleiades," adding that poetry enjoyed a following much like the religion of the Sāmīrī magician did amongst the ancient Israelites.⁸²

It is interesting to note that while the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī* does not contain information suggesting that Ya'qūb was a drunkard or that he underwent a spiritual transformation, it does seem to suggest that fraternal tensions between him and his brother Yūsuf culminated in the death of the latter. According to the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, in 896/1490 the *shāh* (i.e., Ya'qūb) became a "prisoner of his own actions" and was "blinded [to or by] the beauty of the life of Yūsuf."⁸³ At the time, Ya'qūb would have been around

⁸⁰ Fakhrī Haravī, *Taẓkira-i Rauẓāt al-salāṭīn*, 65.

⁸¹ Fakhrī Haravī, *Taẓkira-i Rauẓāt al-salāṭīn*, 66; and Sām Mīrzā, *Taẓkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, 25. For evidence that the Āq Qoyūnlū, particularly Ūzūn Ḥasan, held the Mamluks, specifically Qāyit Bāy, as inferior, see Melvin-Koushki, "The Delicate Art of Aggression," 193–214.

⁸² Sām Mīrzā, *Taẓkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, 24.

⁸³ Sām Mīrzā, *Taẓkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, 24.

twenty-eight, while Yūsuf was fourteen years his junior. It is therefore entirely likely that the jealousy intimated by Kamāl al-Dīn Gāzurgāhī is a veiled reference to an intense rivalry that existed between the uterine siblings—something the poetry of Fighānī also hints at.⁸⁴ That this rivalry may have culminated in bloodshed appears to be suggested by Sām Mirzā, who in alluding to the Qurʾanic story of Joseph and his brothers, mentions that Yūsuf was said to have been “bound to the tip of the claw of the wolf.”⁸⁵

John Woods has observed how the historical sources give differing accounts of the deaths of Yūsuf and Yaʿqūb. While the *ʿĀlam-ārā-yi amīnī* attributes their deaths to an outbreak of the plague, Woods has noted that the majority of foreign and later Iranian sources (Mamluk, Italian, and Safavid chronicles) agree that their deaths were unnatural and involved either drunken rages or poisoning.⁸⁶ As if to indicate that Yūsuf was indeed felled in fratricidal rage, the entry by Sām Mirzā on Yaʿqūb contains a poem, that if read with the understanding that the term for liver in Persian, *jigar*, is a common epithet for an intimate or close relative, suggests that members of the Āq Qoyūnlū court were complicit in Yaʿqūb’s anger toward his brother:

Every treacherous thorn that the ill-wisher (*bad-khvāh*) places in your
(Yaʿqūb) path,
Becomes a dagger that will not puncture anything but your own liver.⁸⁷

Even Jāmī was aware of the brotherly plots and snares that appear to have strained Yaʿqūb. For example, the despair of the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler is readily apparent in a quatrain attributed to Jāmī which appears in the *Lubb al-tavārikh* by the Safavid historian Mīr Yahyā (Ḥusainī Saifi) Qazvīnī. The verses, which can be read as a reference to the Biblical story of Jacob and Joseph and which were written after the death of Yaʿqūb, also speak to the intimate nature of their (Yaʿqūb and Jāmī) long-distance rapport:

⁸⁴ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, 67–68.

⁸⁵ Sām Mirzā, *Tazkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, 24.

⁸⁶ One of the more salacious accounts is provided by the Mamluk chronicler Ibn al-Himsī, who alleges that a drunken Yaʿqūb killed the Queen Mother after she rebuked him for carrying on a homosexual affair. Wanting to avenge her murder, Yūsuf confronted Yaʿqūb but was slain as well. Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 145–47.

⁸⁷ Sām Mirzā, *Tazkira-i Tuḥfa-i Sāmī*, 24.

My heart throbbed a lifetime on account of the affection of Ya'qūb,
 Ya'qūb departed and [I] did not see the face of Jacob.
 The toil, which reached me through the sorrows of Ya'qūb,
 Never wrenched Jacob from despairing over Joseph.⁸⁸

Salāmān va Absāl as Art Imitating Life

As has been demonstrated, the *tazkira* literature depicts Ya'qūb and the Āq Qoyūnlū court in two different lights. On the one hand, Ya'qūb and Qāzī 'Īsā are presented as connoisseurs of Persian *belles-lettres*. They are thus statesmen whose fondness for poetry went beyond mere patronage and involved their own efforts as amateur poets. On the other hand, their appreciation for Persian poetry, which by the ninth/fifteenth century had reached the height of its rhetorical complexity, is contrasted in the *tazkira* literature with the depths to which their own lives had descended. It is not unusual, then, that some of their poetry should have reflected these issues. What is more, the notices in the literary biographies seem to indicate that the characters in *Salāmān va Absāl*, as well as the implicit advice it contains, would have been recognized by members of the Āq Qoyūnlū court as reflections of the personalities and tumultuous events surrounding them.

Stated differently, Ya'qūb's capriciousness and addiction to wine is allegorically concealed behind the narrative and principal characters of *Salāmān va Absāl*. As the next chapter will attempt to demonstrate, Jāmī achieved this while simultaneously communicating a theosophical message by, in turn, allegorically concealing its religio-mystical significance behind the very same narrative and characters. Thus Salāmān, Absāl, the King, the Sage, and Venus, at once become symbols for speculative interpretations of Sufi mystical transformation *and* symbols of actual people and events that dominated the life of the Āq Qoyūnlū court.

⁸⁸ Qazvīnī, *Lubb al-tavārīkh*, 365. It is interesting to note that the chronicle by Qazvīnī includes a eulogy to Ya'qūb that does not reflect the pejorative line usually espoused by the official Safavid histories.

CHAPTER FIVE

A THEOSOPHICAL INTERPRETATION OF *SALĀMĀN VA ABSĀL* AND ITS RELEVANCE TO ITS HISTORICAL SETTING

*There is, in the outer form of every tale,
A certain share of its meaning meant for those who are able to see fine points.
Given that the outer form of this tale has been completed,
You must now attain to that meaning.*

—Jāmī, *Salāmān va Absāl*¹

In his study of the visionary tales of Ibn Sīnā, Henry Corbin points out that it is a mistake to read the *Salāmān* and *Absāl* cycle as a “simple and banal” allegory. He goes on to explain the potency of the symbolism of the tale by first arguing that the Greek version of the story is, in the truest sense of the word, an “autobiography of the human soul.”² In other words, besides being a dramatic expression of the Neo-Platonic hierarchy of intellects, the tale of *Salāmān* and *Absāl* is really the story of the lonely efforts of the soul to return to the primordial abode from whence it came. As Corbin explains, this journey began in pre-existence, when the soul was torn from its roots and “born” into the material realm as a child of Reason, which is understood to be its father, and of Love, which is taken to be its mother. Conflicted about its dual nature, the soul struggles to recognize its unique position as the isthmus, or *barzakh*, between the realm of Reason, which is characterized by masculinity, logic, and deliberation, and the realm of Love, marked by the traits of femininity, premonition, and spontaneity.³ According to Corbin’s hermeneutics, the soul *qua* “mystical child” must reconcile these opposing traits if it is to recognize its noble origins and escape (temporarily at least) from a corporeal existence (*al-ḥayāt al-dunyā*), which Islamic tradition maintains is fraught with danger, illusion, and deception.

The union of these opposites (*conjunctio oppositorum*), namely the union of Reason and Love, is a major theme of *Salāmān va Absāl*, in that it describes the eventual absorption of all the characters in the tale

¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 445, lines 1075–76.

² Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 235.

³ Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 220.

into the person of Salāmān. The King and Absāl, for example, who could be theosophical symbols of Reason and Love (father and mother), and thus two opposing forces in the soul of every human being, disappear from the narrative as Salāmān is transformed from carnal to spiritual man. This transformation occurs when Absāl is consumed by the fire, and Salāmān inherits his father's throne. Another, more subtle transformation occurs when the Sage substitutes the memory of Absāl in Salāmān's heart with the image of Venus. Not only is Salāmān's loyalty to Absāl replaced by his newfound devotion to Venus, but his obedience to the Sage—who is none other than Salāmān's inner guide—is comparable to the Sufi aspirant who relinquishes all attachments and, as Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896) is reported to have said, surrenders to his spiritual master “like a corpse in the hands of its washer.”⁴ When Absāl, Venus, and the Sage amalgamate into Salāmān, who in turn absorbs his father, the King, during his investiture ceremony, Salāmān becomes the symbol of the perfect saint who has internalized his spiritual transformation. Not only does Salāmān become his own sage but also his own wet-nurse (*dāya*). The role of the wet-nurse in the attainment of enlightenment, though remarkable, is not a creation of Jāmī, and first appears in Persian poetry in a verse in book 1 of the *Maṣnavī* by Rūmī, in which Rūmī refers to the Sufi saint as a *dāya*, the milk of whose spiritual knowledge nourishes the Sufi adept.⁵

This centripetal movement calls to mind the Sufi adept who transcends his sense of selfhood by embarking on an inner voyage, which is to say a personal journey in which he contemplates the true reality of the one-ness of God (*tauḥīd*). According to mystical tradition, arriving at this “higher self” through the negation of the ego-self (*nafs*) usually involves the spiritual guidance of a Sufi shaiḥ, and in the case of *Salāmān va Absāl*, the shaiḥ is represented by the Sage (*ḥakīm*). The indispensable role of the *ḥakīm*, or shaiḥ in the spiritual transformation of an adept is a frequently discussed topic in classical Persian mysticism. In many cases, however, Sufi poets who wished to emphasize the esoteric nature of their knowledge or sought to shield themselves against the literalist ‘ulamā’ often avoided direct references to shaiḥs. Instead, the shaiḥ was cast in the role of a Zoroastrian sage (*pīr-i mughān*), a prophet (usually Solomon or

⁴ For a discussion of how this utterance underpinned much of the pre-Mongol Sufi rhetoric on master-disciple relations, see Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Formative Period* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 117.

⁵ Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, bk. 1, line 422.

Khidr), or metaphorically portrayed as a mirror or emerald.⁶ In Rūmī's *Maṣnavī*, the Sufi shaikh often takes the form of a divine physician or a saint (*valī*) who "heals the soul" through acts inspired by what Rūmī calls "the Divine Light."⁷

Salāmān va Absāl and the *Maṣnavī* of Rūmī

It is noteworthy that the "divine physician" (*ṭabīb-i ilāhī*) who facilitates the negation of the carnal soul of the adept is a central character in the first tale in book 1 of the *Maṣnavī*.⁸ As mentioned earlier, Reynold A. Nicholson was the first Western scholar to notice the similarities between this "peculiar" allegory (entitled as "The story of the king's falling in love with a handmaiden and buying her") and *Salāmān va Absāl*.⁹ The protagonists in Rūmī's tale are similar to the main characters in *Salāmān va Absāl*, inasmuch as they can be understood to be symbols of the individual soul struggling to purify itself.¹⁰ The most obvious indication linking *Salāmān va Absāl* with the *Maṣnavī* lies in the fact that both *maṣnavīs* were written in the same metre, *ramal musaddas maḥzūf*.¹¹ Another, more significant indication that Jāmī wrote his tale with an eye to Rūmī's allegorical tale

⁶ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 101–4.

⁷ On the subject of the Sufi shaikh or perfect saint in the poetry of Rūmī, see Schimmel, *Triumphal Sun*, 313.

⁸ Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, bk. 1, lines 236–46.

⁹ For a reference to these similarities, see Rūmī, *Mathnawī* 7:14. Jāmī, it is relevant to note, wrote a commentary, replete with terminology associated with Ibn al-ʿArabī and his followers, on the first two verses of the *Maṣnavī*, entitled, *Risāla-i nāʿiyya*, also known as *Nay-nāma*. For a study of the *Risāla-i nāʿiyya*, especially in its connection to Ibn al-ʿArabī and the Sufi conception of the Perfect Man, see Lloyd Ridgeon, "Naqshbandī Admirers of Rūmī in the Late Timurid Period," *Mawlana Rumi Review* 3 (2012): 146–56.

¹⁰ For a perceptive study of these peculiarities, especially as they "subvert" the mystical *maṣnavīs* of Ḥakīm Sanāʾī (d. ca. 1130) and ʿAṭṭār, see Dick Davis, "Narrative and Doctrine in the First Story of Rūmī's *Mathnawī*," in *Studies in Islamic and Middle Eastern Texts and Translations: In Memory of Norman Calder*, ed. G. R. Hawting, J. A. Mojaddedi, and A. Samely (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 93–104.

¹¹ *Maṣnavīs* written according to the various *ramal* metres were typically Sufi-themed and/or didactic. See Johannes T. P. de Bruijn, "The Individuality of the Persian Metre *khaff*," in *Arabic Prosody and Its Applications in Muslim Poetry*, ed. Lars Johanson and Bo Utas (Stockholm: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 1994), 37. See also ʿAbbās Māhyār, *ʿArūz-i fārsī: shīva-i nau barā-yi āmuzish-i ʿarūz va qāfiya* (Tehran: Nashr-i Qaṭra, 1373/1994), 61–62. *Salāmān va Absāl* also bears many similarities to Nizāmī's "Tale of Archimedes with a Chinese slave-girl," which appears in the *Iskandar-nāma* in the section entitled *Iqbāl-nāma*. According to Nizāmī's tale, the incurable obsession of a king for his slave-girl is alleviated by a mysterious teacher (traditionally understood to be Aristotle), who administers a potion to the girl and causes her beauty to vanish, thus allowing the king to regain his

occurs at the very heart of *Salāmān va Absāl*: here, Jāmī quotes a line from Rūmī in order to announce that, like the *Maṣnavī*, his own tale is meant to be read allegorically.¹² In other words, Jāmī invokes Rūmī in order to indicate (and justify) that the characters and events in *Salāmān va Absāl* are at once symbols of the process whereby a Sufi is spiritually purified and representations of actual historical figures. According to Jāmī, Rūmī's tale was intended for (and was about) "the Sufi elect" (*khāṣṣān*), who unlike the "common folk" (*ʿamm*), could appreciate the fact that his story had a symbolical meaning reserved just for them.¹³ Jāmī explains that his tale, too, contains a deeper meaning, one which is likewise concealed (*pushīda*) from those who are not familiar with what Jāmī refers to as "the secret" (*rāz*):

It is better to conceal the description of the elect from the common people,
May that gnostic (Rūmī), who said the following, be forever in his moment:
'It is better that the description of lovers (*vaṣf-i dilbarān*)
Be told in the garment of others (*dar libās-i digarān*).'¹⁴

The line quoted by Jāmī varies slightly from the usual edited versions of the *Maṣnavī*. The original verse by Rūmī states that it is better that the "secret" of the lovers (*sirr-i dilbarān*) be told in the tales of others (*dar ḥadīs-i digarān*).¹⁵ Jāmī substitutes *vaṣf* for *sirr*, and *libās* for *ḥadīs*, a purposeful alteration which strengthens the notion that the so-called *khāṣṣān* (elect) are at once an allusion to the Sufis and, as this study argues, to Ya'qūb and members of the Āq Qoyūnlū court. Since Jāmī employs this particular tale from the *Maṣnavī* to signal that *Salāmān va Absāl* has another (if not multiple) layer of meaning, it is necessary to explore how the two poems apparently relate to each other on the theosophical level.

The tale by Rūmī recounts the story of a king who enlists the powers of a physician-saint in order to cure his beloved of her love for another man.¹⁶

attentiveness to the affairs of state. See Niẓāmī, *Kulliyāt-i Khamsa-i Ḥakīm Niẓāmī Ganjavī*, 1193–96.

¹² Jāmī, *SA*, 491, lines 562–64. For the couplet in question, see Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, bk. 1, line 136.

¹³ Jāmī, *SA*, 419, lines 562 and 564. On the prevalence of intellectual elitism among medieval Muslim writers who tended toward esotericism, see Nikki Keddie, "Symbol and Sincerity in Islam," *Studia Islamica* 19 (1963): 27–63, esp. 33–34, 47–48.

¹⁴ Jāmī, *SA*, 419, lines 562–63.

¹⁵ Although *sirr* literally means "secret" it is often employed as a technical term in Sufism to denote an "innermost consciousness" or "innermost being." For a reference, see Shigeru Kamada, "A Study of the Term *Sirr* (Secret) in Sufi *Laṭā'if* Theories," *Orient* 19 (1983): 7–28.

¹⁶ Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, bk. 1, lines 36–77 and 169–201.

The suffering of the love-sick king is brought on by his beautiful slave-girl, who routinely ignores his affection on account of her own ongoing infatuation with a goldsmith in Samarqand. The tale begins with a description of how the king, while on a hunting expedition, falls in love with the maiden and has her purchased. Once in the king's possession, the girl is immediately stricken with a mysterious ailment. Desperate to see his beloved recover, the king runs weeping to the mosque, prays to God, and is visited in a dream (*ru'yā*) by a saint, referred to as *valī* and *pīr*, who assures him that a sage (*hakīm*) will arrive to diagnose the girl's illness and dispense a cure. A divine physician (variously referred to as *ṭabīb*, *ṭabīb-i ilāhī*, *valī*, and *hakīm*) enters the story and discovers the source of the slave-girl's infatuation; he asks that the girl's lover, the goldsmith, be brought from Samarqand so that they can be reunited. Once the health of the slave-girl improves, the divine physician gradually poisons the goldsmith in such a way that his beauty vanishes. The slave-girl eventually realizes that her beloved goldsmith is in fact "ugly, irksome, and deformed," at which point the goldsmith dies.

Unsettling as the conclusion may be, on the theosophical plane it represents the dénouement to a personal spiritual journey like that depicted in *Salāmān va Absāl*. In fact, the characters in the tale by Rūmī and the symbolism they project closely resemble the purported intention of *Salāmān va Absāl*. To be more precise, the king, the slave-girl, the goldsmith, and the divine physician correspond to a certain degree to the King, Salāmān, Absāl, and the Sage in Jāmī's tale. The king of the "spiritual and temporal realms" (*mulk-i dīn va dunyā*) in the tale by Rūmī may be understood to be a representation of the Divine Spirit in man, namely, the *rūḥ*, or in Neo-Platonic terminology, the Active or Tenth Intellect. Like Salāmān, the slave-girl may represent the Rational Soul, who, despite the love of the *rūḥ*, lusts after corporeal pleasure and is thus associated with the goldsmith; this in turn corresponds to the character Absāl in *Salāmān va Absāl*. Finally, as the apparent embodiment of the perfect saint (*valī*, *murshid-i kāmīl*), the divine physician can represent Universal Reason (*ʿaql-i kull*), who thus corresponds to the Sage in *Salāmān va Absāl*; likewise, he embodies the attributes of a saint-shaikh and who, according to Jāmī, represents an emanation of the Divine (*faiz-i ilāhī*).

The correspondence between the two tales extends beyond their characters and encompasses the mystical symbolism of each major event. The most obvious agreement occurs when the divine physician in the *Maṣnavī* administers the poison to the goldsmith, thus achieving a spiritual goal similar to the process in *Salāmān va Absāl* whereby a fire kills

Absāl and the Sage effaces her memory from the heart of Salāmān and replaces it with the image of Venus.¹⁷ In both cases, the pleasure-seeking soul, represented by the slave-girl's lust for the goldsmith, and Salāmān's lust for Absāl, are superseded by a desire for noetic pleasures, and in both instances this transformation is achieved through the intervention of a figure resembling a Sufi master. Another similarity appears in the explanation that both poets provide at the conclusion of their stories. Rūmī explains that the murder of the goldsmith was carried out according to "divine command and inspiration" (*amr va ilhām-i ilāh*; and elsewhere, *az qazā* or "according to God's will"). In a similar fashion, the epilogue to *Salāmān va Absāl* explains the semiotics of the tale and emphasizes the role of the divine Agent in the destruction of Absāl, symbol of the carnal soul. Thus, both poets reveal the "secret" of spiritual transformation, namely that the purification of the soul of the adept, though reliant on his own determination (*'azīmat*) and asceticism (*zuhd*), is ultimately dependent on the will of God. While Jāmī based his version of Salāmān and Absāl on the Greek antecedents of the tale (i.e., the Arabic translation by Ḥunain b. Ishāq and *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* by Ibn Ṭufail), it would appear that he also patterned key aspects of it on the first tale in the *Maṣnavī*.

Love and the Imprint of the Theosophy of Ibn al-ʿArabī

Fundamentally, these two tales are about the reciprocal love that Sufis believe exists between God and man, or between Creator (*al-Khāliq*) and creature (*al-khalq*). The ontological implications of this "higher" love were obviously developed by Ibn al-ʿArabī and the school of theosophy which emerged in his wake. Jāmī, himself a follower of the "Greatest Master" (*al-shaikh al-akbar*), Ibn al-ʿArabī, is credited with effectively synthesizing in his writings the thought of Ibn al-ʿArabī and the love mysticism of Rūmī.¹⁸ Acknowledging this, we wonder if the meaning of love in *Salāmān va Absāl* also reflects the theosophical writings of Ibn al-ʿArabī.

¹⁷ Fire is a pure and purifying element in Zoroastrianism. See Boyce, *History of Zoroastrianism* 2:51–53.

¹⁸ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Theoretical Gnosis and Doctrinal Sufism and Their Significance Today," *Transcendent Philosophy* 1 (2005): 16. See also Chittick, "Perfect Man," 140; and Hamid Algar, "Reflections of Ibn ʿArabī in Early Naqshbandī Tradition," *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ʿArabi Society* 10 (1981): 56; and Ridgeon, "Naqshbandī Admirers of Rūmī," 138, 145–46, and 152.

Central to the Akbarian concept of love is the idea that the Breath of the All-Merciful, *al-naḥas al-Raḥmānī*, was rather “a sigh” indicating the infinite loneliness of God and his longing to be known. Thus, the notion of a “pathetic” God formed the basis of what Ibn al-‘Arabī explained in his *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* as the three kinds of love: Natural (i.e., Physical) Love (*ḥubb ṭabī‘ī*), Spiritual Love (*ḥubb rūḥānī*), and Divine Love (*ḥubb ilāhī*).¹⁹ These are also the three modes of being, or the very reason for creation, which reveal God to Himself through His creation and are instrumental to the mystical experience. For our purposes, Ibn al-‘Arabī’s typology of love is discernable in *Salāmān va Absāl*, whereby the symbolism of the characters and their actions reflect the Natural, Spiritual, and Divine types of Love. The path to Divine Love, in other words, which is the key to the mystical experience, and which Ibn al-‘Arabī described as the union or joining of Natural Love and Spiritual Love, is demonstrated in the transposition of Salāmān’s love for Absāl (Natural Love) by his love for Venus (Spiritual Love).

To understand this better, it is worth examining how each type of love is manifested in *Salāmān va Absāl*. Natural Love, or *ḥubb ṭabī‘ī*, is a love in which the desire of the lover is simply to possess the beloved.²⁰ Stated differently, the lover seeks the satisfaction of its own desires without concern for the satisfaction of the beloved. Being the lowest form of love, this profane adoration, as it were, is by definition “selfish” and is epitomized in the tale by the love of Salāmān, the symbol of the soul, for the material delights embodied by his beloved, Absāl. As the events in *Salāmān va Absāl* suggest, *ḥubb ṭabī‘ī* is the love from which the Love for God proceeds, which is to say the path to mystical union necessarily starts with the love that is seated in the physical nature of the soul, i.e., Salāmān’s love for Absāl.

Contrasted with Natural Love is Spiritual Love, or *ḥubb rūḥānī*, which is situated in the adept who is always in search of the divine being whose image (*miṣāl*) or form (*ṣūrat*) he discovers in himself, or through which he discovers that he himself is the image/form. According to Ibn al-‘Arabī’s

¹⁹ For an exposition of the long chapter on love in the *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, i.e., chapter 178 (of 560), see William C. Chittick, “The Divine Roots of Human Love,” *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi Society* 17 (1995): 55–78. For a French translation of the chapter on love, see Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Traité de l’amour*, trans. Maurice Gloton (Paris: Albin Michel, 1986).

²⁰ Ibn al-‘Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, 4 vols (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1968), 2:327; and Henry Corbin, *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sūfism of Ibn ‘Arabi*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 149.

paradoxical formulation, *ḥubb rūḥānī* is love that has no other concern or goal than to be completely consumed by the will of the (divine) beloved; in other words, it is to negate the ego-self, to the extent that the temporal lover becomes the means through which the love of the divine Beloved is manifested as the love of the lover for the earthly (or spiritual) beloved.²¹ This kind of love appears to be depicted with Salāmān's love for, and his complete identification with, the image of Venus, which, if we proceed according to the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, is at once a sign of God and man.

The third type of love (or being), namely Divine Love (*ḥubb ilāhī*), is really the reciprocal love between the Creator and Himself.²² The first aspect of this type of love is the initial act of love manifested in God's wish that His Names and Attributes (of His unknowable Essence) be known or discovered in created beings, a sentiment captured in a well-known *ḥadīth qudsī* in which God describes Himself as a "hidden Treasure who desired to be known."²³ This first act in the dialogue of love is reminiscent of the King's longing for a son in *Salāmān va Absāl*. If we consider that the King may be the embodiment of the divine wish "to be known," then his creating a son and losing him to Absāl, is akin to God's desire for Adam and His creatures to resist earthly temptations and to acknowledge their divine origin. It is interesting to note that Jāmī draws a parallel between the melancholy of the King and his dramatic intervention with an anecdote on the jealousy of Khusrau Parvīz; here, he discovered that his beloved Shīrīn had secretly fallen in love with Farhād.²⁴ Keeping this analogy and the concept of *ḥubb ilāhī* in mind, the following passage of *Salāmān va Absāl* could be an indication that the King's sadness-turned-jealousy is in fact a symbolic expression of God's own jealousy (*al-ghaira al-ilāhiyya*).²⁵ The Sufi belief that this jealousy is stirred when human beings usurp God's

²¹ Ibn al-ʿArabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* 2:332; and Corbin, *Alone with the Alone*, 149. See also Chittick, "Divine Roots of Human Love," 64–65.

²² Ibn al-ʿArabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* 2:324 and 2:326; and Corbin, *Alone with the Alone*, 147 and 149.

²³ Ibn al-ʿArabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* 2:322. On this and other *ḥadīth* mentioned in connection with the writings of Ibn al-ʿArabī on love, see Claude Addas, "The Experience and Doctrine of Love in Ibn 'Arabī," *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society* 32 (2002): 32–33. See also Chittick, "Divine Roots of Human Love," 55–56.

²⁴ Jāmī, *SA*, 435, lines 856–62.

²⁵ On the paradox of God's jealousy (*ghairat*), out of which He smashes other objects of worship while maintaining veils which prevent others from knowing His essence, see Chittick, *Sufi Path of Love*, 304–5. See also Mahdi Tourage, *Rūmī and the Hermeneutics of Eroticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 47–51.

right to be the only object of worship is represented in Jāmī's description of Salāmān's veritable worship of Absāl:

The King of Greece saw how Salāmān
 Was comfortable in his union with Absāl,
 Lifetimes passed, and he did not refrain from this erring,
 Nor did he turn the face of the heart away from his error.
 His head remained empty of the crown of kingship,
 He instead turned, high-headed, to her crown.
 His fortune cast the royal throne beneath his feet,
 So that it was the throne that kissed his foot.
 Then, on account of his despair over this, a fire ignited within the King,
 Time passed unhappily for him on account of this unhappiness.²⁶

The second aspect of *ḥubb ilāhī* is the desire that the created entity experiences for God. According to Ibn al-ʿArabī, this desire is God's sigh epiphanized as a physical form or figure, which is to say a theophany (*tajallī*), that occasions a nostalgia in created beings, specifically in those, i.e., Sufis, who recognize that the form or figure, along with the longing it provokes, are the means by which God "returns" to Himself.²⁷ This second aspect of Divine Love, though outwardly manifested as the love of a being for God, is fundamentally the recognition that this desire is actually the sigh of God (*al-naḥas al-Raḥmānī*).²⁸ In other words, the being who sighs with longing is in fact the recipient of God's sighs. As Corbin noted, this sympathy or con-spiration (*ham-damī*) is the reconciliation of Natural Love and Spiritual Love; it is the marriage of both facets of the soul (Reason/father and Love/mother), whose offspring, Divine Love, or true compassion, is the goal of the mystical quest.²⁹

Aspects of the Visionary Experience in Salāmān va Absāl

According to Sufi theosophists, the synchronization between the three types of love occurs in the *imaginal* world (*ʿālam al-miṣāl*, the world of Idea-Images), rendered as *mundus imaginalis* by Corbin, which is the intermediate realm of mystical contemplation suspended between the physical world of sense-perception and the spiritual world of intellective

²⁶ Jāmī, *SA*, 435, lines 863–68.

²⁷ Ibn al-ʿArabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* 2:324; and Corbin, *Alone with the Alone*, 147.

²⁸ Ibn al-ʿArabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* 2:331; and Corbin, *Alone with the Alone*, 115 and 161. See also Chittick, *Sufi Path of Knowledge*, 127–30.

²⁹ Corbin, *Alone with the Alone*, 151.

intuition.³⁰ This inter-world of esoteric speculation, often described by medieval cosmographers as the “Eighth Clime,” represents another dimension of time and space, a place without place that inspired the formula attributed to Shihāb al-Dīn Yaḥyā Suhrawardī, *Nā-kujā-ābād*, i.e., “the land of No-where.”³¹

The organ or faculty that enables a mystic to penetrate and perceive the *‘ālam al-miṣāl* is the heart (*dil*).³² Poised between sensory and intellectual knowledge, the heart is the place of “No-place,” the *barzakh* where the invisible-spiritual world and visible-sensible worlds meet and manifest their conjunction in the form of a theophanic image.³³ According to the theosophists, this image can only be perceived by those, i.e., Sufis, who realize that the image present in their hearts is at once a sign or symbol of the desire of God to reveal Himself to Himself *and* the spiritualization or projection of a sensible being, such as an earthly beloved.³⁴ In other words, only in a condition of *ḥubb ilāhī* is the image manifested and likewise this only with the soul which has risen from the level of inciting evil (*al-naḥs ammāra bi-al-sū*) and blame (*al-naḥs al-lawwāma*) to a state of being at peace (*al-naḥs al-muṭma’inna*).³⁵

This visionary experience of the heart is symbolically depicted toward the end of *Salāmān va Absāl*.³⁶ It occurs after Salāmān subjects himself to a trial (*balā*) of forty-days of self-mortification and seclusion (i.e., *arba’in*; *chilla*); in turn, he becomes obedient to the Sage, who promises to remedy his condition by bringing Absāl back to him and making her an eternal companion (*dam-sāz*).³⁷ Using the image of the wine-cup (*jām*) as a metaphor for the heart, Jāmī describes how the Sage—who practices

³⁰ Subtelny, *Le monde est un jardin*, 129–30.

³¹ For a discussion of the “Eighth Clime” and the central place its highest peak, the cosmic mountain Qāf, occupies in mystical visions, see Henry Corbin, *The Voyage and the Messenger: Iran and Philosophy*, trans. Joseph Rowe (Berkeley and Los Angeles: North Atlantic Books, 1998), 73–84.

³² Subtelny, *Le monde est un jardin*, 152.

³³ Many Sufis associate the *‘ālam al-miṣāl* with the “meeting-place of the two seas” mentioned in the Qur’ān (18:60; 23:100; 25:53; and 55:20), while Twelver Shī’ites correlate it to the occult world (*‘ālam al-ghaib*) of the Hidden Imām. On this correlation, see Corbin, *Voyage and the Messenger*, 125; and Henry Corbin, *Temple and Contemplation*, trans. Phillip Sherrard and Liadain Sherrard (London: Islamic Publications, 1986), 266.

³⁴ Corbin, *Alone with the Alone*, 151, 154, and 156.

³⁵ A requirement discussed in the *Fawā’ih al-jamāl wa fawātiḥ al-jalāl* by Najm al-Dīn Kubrā. For a reference, see Corbin, *Man of Light*, 67, 151 n. 69.

³⁶ On the role of the senses in visionary experience, see Subtelny, “Visionary Rose,” 13–34, esp. 23–24.

³⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 441, lines 989–90.

techniques reminiscent of a Sufi shaikh but ultimately acts on behalf of the Active Intellect and stands as a symbol for the archangel Gabriel—accesses the heart of Salāmān (i.e., the adept) in order to initiate the mystical experience.³⁸ This event is conveyed by means of a well-known pun on the word *zauq*, which literally means “taste” but which in Sufism was a technical term for “direct mystical experience”:

[The Sage] poured the wine of good fortune into [Salāmān’s] cup,
He poured the honeycomb of wisdom onto his palate.
On account of the taste of that wine, his cup became rapturous,
On account of this honeycomb, his palate poured sugar.³⁹

As the spiritual transformation of Salāmān ensues, Absāl, the symbol of the inclination of the soul for carnal pleasures, appears in his memory and he finds himself complaining of their separation. Recognizing the psychological state (*hāl*) of Salāmān, the Sage fashions an image (*ṣūrat*) of Absāl through the power of his spiritual concentration (*himmat*) and holds it before Salāmān’s eyes, thus alleviating his grief.⁴⁰ As Salāmān “perfected his speech” (i.e., engaged in *zikr*), the Sage would interpose a description of the beauty of Venus, until these repeated descriptions (*aurād*, i.e., litanies) made Salāmān forget Absāl and yearn after her:

When the Sage perceived the significance of this for [Salāmān]
He increased the effect of Venus on him,
Until she manifested her beauty completely,
And it made an impression on the heart and soul of Salāmān.
He effaced the image of Absāl from his mind,
And the imprint of the face of Venus was mended to it.
He saw everlasting beauty (*husn-i bāqī*) and flew from the transitory (*fānī*)
world,
He favored eternal rapture (*‘aish-i bāqī*) over the temporal (*fānī*).⁴¹

That this penultimate event in *Salāmān va Absāl* is an allusion to the visionary experience in Sufism is supported by the juxtaposition of the words *fānī* and *bāqī*. In a non-mystical sense, *fānī* and *bāqī* simply mean “temporary” and “permanent,” but they also refer to the mystical states of

³⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 442, lines 997–1000.

³⁹ Jāmī, *SA*, 442, lines 999–1000. This calls to mind the image of the parrot, a favorite symbol in Persian mystical poetry for the disciple whose master teaches him to speak (the language of the birds) by situating a mirror (i.e., the mirror of the heart of the shaikh) in front of him. On this image in the poetry of Rūmī, see Schimmel, *Triumphal Sun*, 116 and 119.

⁴⁰ Jāmī, *SA*, 442, lines 1001–4.

⁴¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 443, lines 1014–17.

fanā' and *baqā'*. Their appearance at the end of Salāmān's dream-vision of Venus is an allusion to the final stages of the mystical path, when the ego-self of the adept is annihilated (*fanā'*) and the perfected Sufi abides (*baqā'*) in and through the knowledge of the one-ness of God.⁴² Further support for the idea that Jāmī alludes to the visionary encounter between Creator and creature is contained in the phrase, *husn-i bāqī dīd*. Since *al-bāqī*, or "the Everlasting One," is one of the ninety-nine beautiful names of God, the hemistich quoted above may also be read: "he (i.e., Salāmān) saw the beauty of the Everlasting One (*husn-i bāqī*) and flew as one who had experienced *fanā'*."⁴³ Finally, it seems fitting that the allusion to *fanā'* and *baqā'* should be followed by the enthronement ceremony for Salāmān, since *baqā'* has been described as the "station of vicegerency," namely the state of the perfect Sufi who returns to the phenomenal world in order to act as the representative or deputy (*khalīfa*) of God.⁴⁴ Considered in this light, the enthronement of Salāmān is a symbolic representation of the investiture of Adam, who according to Sufi tradition was created by God in His image (*'alā šūratihi*) in order to reflect God's qualities on earth. With the implication that the creation myth is associated with the investiture of Salāmān, and that this ceremony appears as the culminating event in his visionary experience, we find further evidence that *Salāmān va Absāl* is an allegorical expression of the transformation of the adept into the Adamic perfection characteristic of the Sufi saint (*valī*) and true vicegerent of God (*khalīfat Allāh*) on earth.

Salāmān va Absāl as an Historical Allegory

In addition to its theosophical significance, *Salāmān va Absāl* is also an historical allegory, which is to say that Jāmī intended the principal characters in his tale to be understood as representing actual historical figures at the Āq Qoyūnlū court. *Salāmān va Absāl* therefore falls within the two basic types of allegory described by literary theorists. The first type, which has been described as an "allegory of ideas," is a narrative whose characters are personifications or symbols of complex concepts, and whose

⁴² On the interpretations of the concept of *fanā' ba'd al-baqā'*, see Reynold A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 148–68.

⁴³ Jāmī, *SA*, 443, line 1017. In Persian: *husn-i bāqī dīd va az fānī parīd*.

⁴⁴ See William C. Chittick, *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn al-'Arabi and the Problem of Religious Diversity* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), 59.

general plot represents or allegorizes an abstract doctrine or thesis. As Northrop Frye has observed, the characters and plot of this type of allegory contain an additional set of ideas that can at once possess moral, philosophical, and religious meaning.⁴⁵ *Salāmān va Absāl* fits this first type of allegory insofar as the characters are a representation of the purification of the soul and the visionary mystical experience. Owing, however, to its multiple levels of interpretation, *Salāmān va Absāl* also falls into the second type of allegory, a sub-genre dubbed, "historical and political allegory." This second type of allegory is a narrative in which the characters of a given story and their actions represent real historical figures and the actual events (usually political) associated with them.⁴⁶

While Corbin, whose intention was to explicate the mystical hermeneutics of the tale of *Salāmān* and *Absāl*, was correct in stating that it was not a "trite" allegory about body and soul, this study nonetheless maintains that the hermeneutics of *Salāmān va Absāl* are not just mystical but historical, and that to restrict the poem solely to a mystical interpretation is to fail to appreciate its depth.⁴⁷ Granted, traditional historians, who, according to Hayden White, find it hard to accept that figurative discourse (read allegory), with its "ambiguousness" and "logical inconsistencies," produces any genuine historical knowledge, would hesitate to ascribe any historical significance to *Salāmān va Absāl* for the simple reason that it does not contain literal statements of fact.⁴⁸ But such an opinion, White argues, reflects the modern prejudice against allegory by traditional and socio-scientific historians who maintain that historical "truth" can only be expressed in literal language.⁴⁹ By contrast, this study accepts the notion that it is precisely through such figurativeness that *Salāmān va Absāl* yields a significant amount of historical data.

The polysemy of Jāmī's *Salāmān va Absāl* undoubtedly had a bearing on its audience. As Peter Heath noted in his discussion of Ibn Sīnā's use of allegory, a tale like *Salāmān* and *Absāl* was designed to be "both inclusive and exclusive in semantic accessibility and audience appeal."⁵⁰ While its

⁴⁵ Northrop Frye, "Allegory," in *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), 12.

⁴⁶ On the prevalence of this type of allegory in the late Middle Ages, see Ann W. Astell, *Political Allegory in Late Medieval England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

⁴⁷ Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 235.

⁴⁸ Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 48.

⁴⁹ White, *Content of the Form*, 49.

⁵⁰ Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy*, 193.

literal level of meaning, which is to say, the forbidden romance between a prince and his wet-nurse, is comprehensible to a wide spectrum of readers, its symbolism directs other levels of meaning, in this case mystical and historical, to select individuals or groups, which, this study contends, can be identified as the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler Ya'qūb and members of his court. The historical level of meaning in *Salāmān va Absāl* was therefore reserved for an elite audience who presumably were able to discern the text and recognize themselves in the characters and events depicted in the tale.

It is also important to mention that the poem itself provides clear indication that *Salāmān va Absāl* allegorizes persons and situations at the court of Ya'qūb. For example, just as the abovementioned line containing the phrase “in the garment of others” compels us to consider the theosophical interpretation of the tale, it likewise suggests that the “others” can be understood as historical figures, in this case, Ya'qūb and Qāzī Īsā.⁵¹ The fact that Jāmī embedded this clue in a section of *Salāmān va Absāl* in which he praises Ya'qūb is another indication that the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler was supposed to recognize himself in the narrative, particularly in the person of Salāmān, and that the tale's dramatic elements were really symbols of Ya'qūb's own struggle.⁵² In this way, *Salāmān va Absāl* fulfills the fundamental objective of the classic mirror for princes, namely, that the discerning ruler was supposed to internalize its contents to the extent that reading it was akin to holding a mirror up to himself.

Symbols of Ya'qūb and His Court in Salāmān va Absāl

The character of Absāl, who in the tale represents the “lust-worshipping body” (*tan-i shahvat-parast*), serves as a symbol for the libertine life of wine-drinking that Ya'qūb eventually abandoned. Moreover, the King and the Sage, who in the tale are associated with the Active Intellect (*'aql-i fa'āl*) and supernal emanation (*faiz-i bālā*) respectively, can also be interpreted as symbols of the ideal of kingship, and Ya'qūb's *vazīr*, Qāzī Īsā Sāvajī. Finally, the image of Venus, which is presented in *Salāmān va Absāl*

⁵¹ Jāmī's inclusion of a clue alerting his audience to read *Salāmān va Absāl* interpretively (i.e., historically) is consistent with the rhetoric of some allegorists who “conspire” with their elite or initiated audience by invoking the need to conceal the “true” significance of the secrets concealed in the tale. On the frequency of this practice, see Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy*, 198.

⁵² Jāmī, *SA*, 419, lines 555–64.

as an object of mystical contemplation, can be interpreted as a symbol of the Sufi shaikh; and more specifically, as an allusion to *rābiṭa*, a technique employed by Naqshbandīs (and other Sufis), according to which a spiritual master fixes the visual form (*ṣūrat* or *naqsh*) of himself in the heart of his disciple in order to effect his spiritual transformation.⁵³ The contention that all the characters in the tale, i.e., Salāmān, Absāl, the King, the Sage, and Venus, appear to be symbolic representations of actual historical figures and events at the Āq Qoyūnlū court is thus another indication that Jāmī dedicated *Salāmān va Absāl* at a later date and under different circumstances from those generally acknowledged.

Two key instances in *Salāmān va Absāl* provide evidence that Jāmī intended Salāmān to be a symbolic representation of Ya'qūb. First, there is a reference to the fact that it was in his fourteenth year that Salāmān became the king of the "dominion of excellence" (*mulk-i khūbī*) and that it was during this time that he made the "grandeur of kingship" (*shaukat-i shāhī*) his companion.⁵⁴ These references to kingship are contained in a section concerned with descriptions of the "youthful radiance" of Salāmān and his "spear-like stature." The overall impression they convey is that, once Salāmān turned fourteen, he was poised to become ruler. Ya'qūb was in fact fourteen when in 882/1478 his supporters proclaimed—in defiance of Ya'qūb's older uterine brother, Sulṭān-Khalīl—that Ūzūn Ḥasan had designated Ya'qūb to succeed him as leader of the Āq Qoyūnlū tribal confederation.⁵⁵ Therefore, the decision by Jāmī to cast the fourteen-year-old Salāmān in the role of a worthy heir appears to have been a deliberate attempt to allude to Ya'qūb, who was also fourteen when he came to the throne.

Another indication that Jāmī was alluding to Ya'qūb by way of Salāmān occurs in a section entitled, "Pointing to the fact that the object of these panegyrics is to praise the majestic presence of the felicitous ruler."⁵⁶ It follows a series of vignettes, each of which praises certain aspects of Salāmān, namely, the sharpness of his intellect, his skill at poetry and prose, the delightfulness of his royal banquets, his prowess at polo-playing, his expert bowmanship, and his generosity.⁵⁷ The fact that Jāmī's

⁵³ On the centrality of this spiritual technique to Naqshbandī doctrine and practice, see, Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet*, 134–38; and Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 159.

⁵⁴ Jāmī, *SA*, 415, lines 468 and 478, which is followed by references (line 479) to the "seal of [Ya'qūb's] kingship" and his "signet ring."

⁵⁵ See Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 125.

⁵⁶ Jāmī, *SA*, 419, lines 555–64.

⁵⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 416–18, lines 490–98, 499–511, 512–24, 525–34, and 535–44 respectively.

description of the virtues of Salāmān is followed by a section whose title states that the preceding praise was actually directed at Ya'qūb, suggests that Jāmī's intention was that Ya'qūb should recognize himself in the character of Salāmān and identify his own circumstances with the ethico-moral scenarios presented in *Salāmān va Absāl*. Any doubt that Salāmān was intended as a symbol for Ya'qūb is dispelled by the fact that, in this connection, Jāmī quotes the abovementioned line by Rūmī, in which he states that his tale was meant to be read allegorically, thereby alerting readers to its symbolical meaning. Thus, the statement that the "description of lovers" needs to be told "in the garment of [tales about] others," is an indication that the tale is also an allusion to Ya'qūb and his struggle against his own failings. In other words, the lovers Salāmān and Absāl are actually symbols of Ya'qūb and the object of his lustful appetite, namely wine. Salāmān's renunciation of his beloved Absāl is therefore a symbolic expression of Ya'qūb's foreswearing the pleasures of the body, especially wine-drinking.

In order to support the notion that Salāmān is a symbolic representation of Ya'qūb, it is necessary to establish that Absāl, who is cast in the role of a wet-nurse, is also a symbol of something irresistible to Ya'qūb but unsettling for the Āq Qoyūnlū court. According to a theosophical reading of *Salāmān va Absāl*, Absāl, who, on an allegorical level, stands for the appetitive faculty, represents Love, which is to say the Love that is counterpoised by Reason in the dual-natured soul of man. In a contextual reading of the tale, Absāl would symbolically represent the libertinism that Ya'qūb indulged in and that was viewed by his royal advisors as a threat to the long-term viability of his rule.⁵⁸

The first indication that Absāl was meant to symbolize sensual pleasure occurs in the section of *Salāmān va Absāl* in which Jāmī describes how Salāmān, upon reaching the age of fourteen, saw the beauty of Absāl "unveiled" before him.⁵⁹ According to the narrative, Absāl devises hundreds of stratagems (*mākṛ va ḥiyāl*) and uses "black magic" (*siyah-kārī*) in order to ensnare (*giriftār*) Salāmān and make him yearn for her.⁶⁰ Despite Salāmān's kingly glory (*farrkhundagī*), Absāl lures him from the "straight path," which is to say, from the life of piety and abstemiousness, into the "collar of servitude to her."⁶¹ On the verge of consummating his desire

⁵⁸ See, for example, Kay Kā'ūs, *Qābūs Nāma*, 128 (trans. 218).

⁵⁹ Jāmī, *SA*, 420–21, lines 577–604.

⁶⁰ Jāmī, *SA*, 421, lines 590 and 601.

⁶¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 421, lines 590 and 596.

for Absāl, which is seen here as an allusion to the point at which Ya'qūb began indulging his baser instincts, that is, his drinking habit, Salāmān ponders the possible consequences to his kingship of their sexual union:

God forbid that I should taste the meal of [sexual] union!
 Its flavor will become unwholesome to my soul.
 That taste will not stay with me, and for an entire lifetime
 I will remain far from my lofty rank and majesty.⁶²

The words “taste” and “meal” may be interpreted as referring to wine and they imply that Salāmān’s carnal union with Absāl is in fact a symbolic expression of Ya'qūb’s addiction to drink. Continuing the extended metaphor, Jāmī describes how Salāmān held Absāl “tightly to his bosom,” much like a drunkard cradles a wine goblet, whereupon “[Salāmān] (i.e., Ya'qūb) drank his soul’s desire.”⁶³ So completely were they “rubbing lip to lip together, that the cup of rapture overflowed for both of them,” which beyond its sexual connotation with respect to Salāmān and Absāl, could also be read as an allusion to Ya'qūb’s drinking wine and the state of inebriation it caused.⁶⁴

Another indication that Absāl symbolizes wine is contained in the description by Jāmī of the after-effects of Salāmān’s physical union with Absāl.⁶⁵ This account, which is set at daybreak, describes Salāmān as hung-over (*khumār*) and eager to cure his hangover with another “sip [of the dregs of]” (*jur'a'ī*) of Absāl.⁶⁶ The implication that Salāmān wanted to repeat the experience of the previous night with Absāl is clear; but the significance of Salāmān’s hangover and his desire to “drink” Absāl again, aside from its allegorical meaning, can also be understood on a symbolic level. It follows then, that the hangover and subsequent cravings

⁶² Jāmī, *SA*, 422–23, lines 623–24. According to Dick Davis, the implied horror of female sexuality, together with the poem’s florid descriptions of the beauty of Salāmān, suggests that *Salāmān va Absāl* suffuses a homoerotic subtext. For a reference, see Dick Davis, “Persian Literature,” in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 4, *Islamic Cultures and Societies to the End of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Robert Irwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 422. In a similar vein, Kamran Talattof characterizes Jāmī’s oeuvre as replete with negative generalizations of women; *Salāmān va Absāl*, he notes, best exemplifies Jāmī’s misogyny. See Kamran Talattof, “Nizami’s Unlikely Heroines: A Study of the Characterizations of Women in Classical Persian Literature,” in *The Poetry of Nizami Ganjavi: Knowledge, Love, and Rhetoric*, ed. Kamran Talattof and Jerome W. Clinton (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 69 and 73.

⁶³ Jāmī, *SA*, 424, line 642.

⁶⁴ Jāmī, *SA*, 424, line 644.

⁶⁵ Jāmī, *SA*, 424, lines 650–62.

⁶⁶ Jāmī, *SA*, 424, lines 653–54.

experienced by Salāmān could be allusions to Ya'qūb's alcohol dependency. Thus, the sexual innuendos used by Jāmī when he adds that "without interrupting" anyone, Salāmān summoned Absāl, "set her on the throne, opened her veil of modesty, and proceeded to repeat the pleasure of the previous night with her," may in fact be allusions to Ya'qūb's habit of consuming wine at court without the "interference" of a royal cup-bearer, in order to satisfy his craving for drink.⁶⁷

The illegality of Salāmān's engaging in sexual relations with his wet-nurse (Absāl) may also have alluded to Qāzī 'Īsā's marriage to a sister (*hamshira*) of Ya'qūb, which was annulled by members of the Bāyandur clan on grounds that it contravened Turkish custom. Milk-relations (*riḡā'*, *riḡā'a*), that is, the custom whereby non-related infants were suckled by the same wet-nurse, served to forge ties between prominent families in the medieval eastern Islamic world, but it also created legal barriers to marriage.⁶⁸ The sexual relationship between Salāmān and Absāl would thus have been regarded as incestuous according to Islamic law.⁶⁹ It seems that the illegality of the relationship between Salāmān and Absāl, which is to say, between a boy child and his wet-nurse, may have been a trope utilized by Jāmī for its shock value. Although *Salāmān va Absāl* contains no vulgar words or coarse imagery, the sexual passion between Salāmān and his wet-nurse may have been exploited by Jāmī in order to capture the audience's interest, the better to communicate his message of mystical and historical significance.⁷⁰ Jāmī may therefore have used the trope of incest to refer to the extra-tribal relationship between Qāzī 'Īsā and Ya'qūb's sister and to the fact that their union violated Āq Qoyūnlū customs that frowned upon marriages between members of the Turkic tribal elite and sedentary Persians (Tajiks).⁷¹

⁶⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 424, lines 655–56. Ya'qūb's habit of enjoying a "morning draught" (*jām-i ṣabūḥī*) is alluded to in Khunji-Isfahānī, *Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 322.

⁶⁸ On the long and detailed discussions of Muslim jurists concerning breastfeeding, see Avner Giladi, *Infants, Parents and Wetnurses: Medieval Islamic Views on Breastfeeding and Their Social Implications* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), esp. 68–114.

⁶⁹ Giladi, *Infants, Parents and Wetnurses*, 21–22, 70. See also Geert Jan van Gelder, *Close Relationships: Incest and Inbreeding in Classical Arabic Literature* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005), 93–96.

⁷⁰ On the subject of Sufi poets of medieval Persia utilizing bawdy tales and pornographic imagery to communicate ethical information and esoteric secrets, see Tourage, *Rūmī and the Hermeneutics of Eroticism*, 18–25 and 149–53.

⁷¹ Interpreting the trope of incest as an allusion to an embarrassing historical event follows the approach taken by Abolala Soudavar, who, in his study of the *Abū Sa'īd-nāma*, an illustrated copy of the *Shāh-nāma* written for the last Ilkhanid ruler, Abū Sa'īd Bahādur Khān (d. 736/1335), concluded that one of its images alludes to a "family secret," namely

If we accept that Salāmān is a symbolic representation of Ya'qūb, then it would be logical to suggest that Salāmān's father, who is referred to as the King of ancient Greece, symbolizes the ideal of kingship. The King, who corresponds to the Active Intellect and to Love's counterpart, Reason, is a symbol of what Jāmī probably hoped the conscience of Ya'qūb would become. In other words, the King of ancient Greece is Salāmān's inner conscience as it relates to kingship, which the tale of *Salāmān va Absāl* instructs Ya'qūb to heed and which is expressed through the admonitions of the King. The function of this inner sense, which is to say the chief concern of the King of ancient Greece and his historical counterpart, Ya'qūb's inner conscience, is to convince Salāmān, i.e., Ya'qūb, that his continued infatuation with Absāl, who is to be understood as the symbol of wine, will lead him to ruin and hasten the end of Ya'qūb's claim to the Āq Qoyūnlū throne. Thus, we find the King admonishing a repentant Salāmān in terms similar to those in which Ya'qūb's inner conscience might have been expected to admonish him:

Kingship is your private property, seize your kingship.
Do not pull kingship out of your lineage.
Remove your hand from the beautiful person you possess,
Kingship and worshipping the beautiful person do not go together.
Remove, from you hand, the henna of the beautiful person,
You must be either a king or a worshipper of beautiful people.⁷²

The last character in *Salāmān va Absāl* that is a symbolic representation of a member of the Āq Qoyūnlū court, is the Sage (*ḥakīm*). In addition to representing a divine emanation (*faiz-i ilāhī, faiz-i bālā*), the Sage is a symbol of Qāzī 'Īsā, who was Ya'qūb's preceptor, and whose official responsibilities as Ya'qūb's *vazīr* and *ṣadr* made him the de facto administrator of the Āq Qoyūnlū state.⁷³ Because of his profound involvement in Ya'qūb's affairs, Qāzī 'Īsā is represented in *Salāmān va Absāl* by the Sage who plays a decisive role in facilitating Salāmān's spiritual transformation. Indeed,

that Jöchi (d. 623/1226), the eldest "son" of Chinggis Khān and inheritor of the Qipchaq steppe territory, was a bastard child. See Abolala Soudavar, *Decoding Old Masters: Patrons, Princes and Enigmatic Paintings of the 15th Century* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008), 129–30; and Soudavar, "The Saga of Abu-Sa'id Bahādor Khān: The Abu-Sa'idnāmē," in *The Court of the Il-Khāns, 1290–1340: The Cultural and Intellectual Milieu*, ed. Julian Raby and Teresa Fitzherbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 101–2.

⁷² Jāmī, *SA*, 437, lines 894–96.

⁷³ On the multiple roles and titles ascribed to Qāzī 'Īsā in the sources, including *qāzī 'askar* (chief Islamic law judge) and *vakīl* (deputy to the ruler), see Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 269 n. 26.

just like Ya'qūb, who was by all indications tutored by Qāzī 'Īsā, Salāmān, upon hearing the good counsel (*naṣīḥat*) of the Sage, admits to him that "I am the lowliest apprentice (*shāgird*) in your court."⁷⁴ Salāmān adds that "I found the very essence of wisdom (*'ain-i ḥikmat*) in everything you said."⁷⁵ Thus, Salāmān's deference to the authority (*ikhtiyār*) of the Sage and his willingness to follow the Sage's direction of his affairs (*tadbīr*) corresponds to the power Ya'qūb granted Qāzī 'Īsā to manage Āq Qoyūnlū affairs, and the willingness of Ya'qūb to listen to the advice of Qāzī 'Īsā on personal matters.

The corresponding roles of the Sage in the tale and of Qāzī 'Īsā at the Āq Qoyūnlū court are best exemplified by the contribution each makes to Salāmān's repentance in *Salāmān va Absāl*, on the one hand, and to the public repentance of Ya'qūb at the Āq Qoyūnlū court in 893/1488, on the other. In other words, the Sage, who acts as the instrument of the King's *himmat* by directing Salāmān to renounce his lust for Absāl, symbolizes Qāzī 'Īsā, who, according to the *'Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, was the driving force behind Ya'qūb's renunciation of his licentious behavior. The equation of Qāzī 'Īsā with the Sage follows if we accept that Salāmān is a symbol of Ya'qūb and Absāl is a symbol of wine. The role of the Sage in Salāmān's renunciation of Absāl is therefore akin to Qāzī 'Īsā's in ensuring that Ya'qūb abandoned his wine-drinking. Khunji-Iṣfahānī informs us that Qāzī 'Īsā actually presided over the ceremony at which Ya'qūb publicly repented and issued his prohibition against wine-drinking in Tabriz.⁷⁶ The ceremony was held at the Naṣriyya tomb complex of Ūzūn Ḥasan, named after Ūzūn Ḥasan's *kunya*, Abū al-Naṣr. The account even mentions that Qāzī 'Īsā, who is characterized in other sources as having a melancholy disposition, was evidently buoyant at what must have been a somber occasion.⁷⁷

Allusions to Naqshbandī Spiritual Techniques in Salāmān va Absāl

Although not a character per se, Venus, who is referred to in *Salāmān va Absāl* as *zuhra*, is an important element in the historical symbolism of the tale. It will be recalled that the description of the image of Venus is

⁷⁴ Jāmī, *SA*, 429, line 743.

⁷⁵ Jāmī, *SA*, 429, line 744.

⁷⁶ Khunji-Iṣfahānī, *'Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 251.

⁷⁷ Khunji-Iṣfahānī, *'Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 251.

the object with which the Sage replaces the memory of Absāl as the focus of Salāmān's devotion.⁷⁸ Unlike the traditionally negative view of Venus in medieval Persian thought, which regards her as representative of the physical beauty of woman, carnality, and vanity, the image of Venus in *Salāmān va Absāl* is very positive.⁷⁹ The positive depiction is consistent, however, with the significance of the planet Venus in the Zoroastrian tradition where she is associated with the deity Anāhitā, who was venerated by the Achaemenids.⁸⁰ On a theosophical level, Salāmān's adoration of Venus, who represents a divine theophany, is an example of Spiritual Love, which is to say *ḥubb rūḥānī*, which Ibn al-ʿArabī indicates will lead the adept to Divine Love (*ḥubb ilāhī*), which is the goal of the Sufi mystical quest.⁸¹

Not unrelated to the theosophical significance of Venus is the symbolism of her image in terms of Sufi devotional practices, especially as this image relates to the mystical technique of *rābiṭa*, the process by which the Sage, by means of his *himmat*, impresses the image of Venus on the heart of Salāmān, thereby leading him to the spiritual state of annihilation (*fanāʾ*).⁸² The concept of *rābiṭa* was first mentioned by Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, in his *Fawāʾiḥ al-jamāl wa fawātiḥ al-jalāl* and by Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafs ʿUmar Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234), in his *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif*.⁸³ This spiritual technique, along with *murāqaba* (contemplation) and *zikr*, formed the basis of most Naqshbandī devotional regimens, especially during the ninth/fifteenth century.⁸⁴ The *Rashaḥāt-i ʿain al-ḥayāt* indicates that the Naqshbandī shāikh Khwāja ʿUdaid Allāh Aḥrār, who was often engaged

⁷⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 442, lines 1007–16.

⁷⁹ See Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, bk. 1, line 535, which reads:

When a woman became pale-faced on account of her vile deed,
God transformed her into [the planet] Venus (*zuhra*).

⁸⁰ Boyce, *History of Zoroastrianism* 1:71–74, 2:29–31, 2:202–4, and 2:217–19. See also *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. “Anāhīd” (by M. Boyce).

⁸¹ On the desire of the soul to assimilate itself with the Intelligence above it, just as a disciple seeks to assimilate himself with his shāikh, see Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 74.

⁸² See Meier, *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Naqšbandiyya*, 111–52.

⁸³ Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 114.

⁸⁴ Fritz Meier, *Meister und Schüler im Orden der Naqšbandiyya* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1995), 11; Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet*, 132. See also Dina Le Gall, “Kadizadelis, Nakšbendis, and Intra-Sufi Diatribe in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul,” *The Turkish Studies Association Journal* 28, no. 1–2 (2004): 13 n. 34. The first Naqshbandī figures to integrate *rābiṭa* (and thus *himmat*) into the order's repertoire of spiritual techniques were Alāʾ al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (d. 802/1400) and (to a lesser extent) Yaʿqūb-i Charkhī (d. ca. 851/1447). For a reference see Paul, *Doctrine and Organization*, 38–39, and 42–43. See also, Paul, “The Khwājagān at Herat,” 231.

in worldly affairs, relied heavily on *rābiṭa* and *himmat*, most probably because it allowed him to guide his disciples without being physically present. This penchant for using the techniques of *rābiṭa* and *himmat* is reflected in statements attributed to ‘Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār in the *Rashaḥāt-i ‘ain al-ḥayāt*. For example, according to ‘Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār, when it comes to effecting the spiritual enlightenment of an adept, *himmat* is superior to the traditional methods, which is to say, doing good deeds, engaging in asceticism, realizing one’s powerlessness, and humbling oneself before God.⁸⁵ When asked to explain the superiority of *himmat*, ‘Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār purportedly replied:

Seeking assistance through the *himmat* of the *pīr* and [his] spiritual concentration (*tavajjuh*) is superior because it is through [the *pīr*’s] spiritual concentration that the disciple (*ṭālib*) realizes his own powerlessness vis-à-vis God. The *pīr* then becomes [for him] the means of *tavajjuh* and of obtaining proximity to God. Attaining this result is closer [than the other methods]. For whatever the goal of the *ṭālib*, this method produces faster results since it is continually derived from the *himmat* of the *pīr*.⁸⁶

According to Naqshbandī writers, *rābiṭa* (also referred to as *taṣavvur-i shaikh*) involves the disciple impressing the visual form (*ṣūrat*) of the face of his shaikh in his mind. In so doing, the disciple annihilates his ego-self (*naḥs*) and assimilates his entire being to the virtuous qualities of his shaikh, who at this stage and by way of his implanted image, becomes a conduit for the infusion of divine energy (*faiz*).⁸⁷ The shaikh, according to ‘Ubaid Allāh Aḥrār, becomes the “*qibla*” of the self-naughted disciple.⁸⁸ This mutual concentration, which is referred to in Naqshbandī sources as *nisba* (literally, “relation”), produces a spiritual state (*ḥāl*) wherein the being of the disciple is transmuted into the perfect Sufi saint.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet*, 131.

⁸⁶ Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Alī, *Rashaḥāt-i ‘ain al-ḥayāt* 2:500–501. See also Meier, *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Naqshbandiyya*, 256; and Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet*, 131 n. 1. The superiority of *rābiṭa* (and thus *himmat*) is also attested to in a short treatise on the Naqshbandī order attributed to Jāmī. See Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Sar’rishta-i ṭariqa-i Khvājagān*, ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī (Kabul: Intishārāt-i Anjuman-i Jāmī, 1343/1964), 15.

⁸⁷ Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet*, 134–38.

⁸⁸ In Persian: *vay-rā qibla-yi tavajjuh-i khūd sāzad*. Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Alī, *Rashaḥāt-i ‘ain al-ḥayāt* 2:500. See also Michel Chodkiewicz, “Quelques aspects des techniques spirituelles dans la *ṭariqa* Naqshbandiyya,” in *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et situation actuelle d’un ordre mystique musulman/Historical Developments and Present Situation of a Muslim Mystical Order, Actes de la Table Ronde de Sèvres/Proceedings of the Sèvres Round Table 2–4 mai/2–4 May 1985*, ed. Marc Gaborieau, Alexander Popovic, and Thierry Zarcone (Istanbul: l’Institut Français d’Études Anatoliennes d’Istanbul, 1990), 70.

⁸⁹ Chodkiewicz, “Quelques aspects des techniques spirituelles,” 71.

Jāmī's allusion to this "televisual" Naqshbandī technique in *Salāmān va Absāl* indicates that, in addition to writing a Perso-Islamic mirror for princes that was a veiled account of *dramatis personae* at the court of Ya'qūb, Jāmī was communicating a core Naqshbandī doctrine to his Āq Qoyūnlū audience in Tabriz.⁹⁰ Considered alongside the personal letters and panegyric odes that Jāmī addressed to Ya'qūb, writings which are replete with terminology associated with Naqshbandī spiritual practices (e.g., *rābiṭa*, *nisba*, *ṣuḥbat*, *himmat*, *khalvat*), the tale of *Salāmān va Absāl* represents a subtle attempt by Jāmī to familiarize Ya'qūb with some of the doctrines of the Naqshbandiyya. One could even construe the message implied throughout these writings, namely that the adept of the Naqshbandī path can progress spiritually without the physical presence of a shāikh, thanks to the concept of *rābiṭa*, as Jāmī's invitation to Ya'qūb to place himself under his spiritual guidance from a distance.⁹¹ Although there is no evidence in the sources to suggest that Ya'qūb was a member of the Naqshbandī order, it does appear that *Salāmān va Absāl*, in addition to commemorating his public repentance, provided Ya'qūb with a glimpse into the state of being a Naqshbandī disciple.⁹²

The Date of Completion of Salāmān va Absāl

Until now, most scholars have held the view that Jāmī composed *Salāmān va Absāl* in 855/1480, and that he dedicated it to Ya'qūb to commemorate his accession to the throne.⁹³ There is, however, internal evidence in *Salāmān va Absāl*, as well as indications in contemporary sources that suggest Jāmī completed the work later than 855/1480 and that he dedicated it to Ya'qūb in commemoration of his public repentance from

⁹⁰ A term (televisual) borrowed from Shahzad Bashir, "Narrating Sight: Dreaming as Visual Training in Persianate Sufi Hagiography," in *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*, ed. Özgen Felek and Alexander D. Knysh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), 237.

⁹¹ On the political implications of the Naqshbandī belief that a shāikh could direct his disciples without being physically present, see Paul, *Doctrine and Organization*, 75–76.

⁹² The notion that reading one of Jāmī's *maṣnavīs*, in this case, *Yūsuf va Zulaikhā*, could provoke a mystical experience in the Sufi adept, is apparently attested to in the *Maqāmāt-i Maḥmūdīyya*, a hagiographical biography of Khwāja Khāwānd Maḥmūd (d. 1050/1642), a Naqshbandī in Mughal Kashmir, written by his son, Khwāja Mu'in al-Dīn (d. 1085/1674). For a reference, see David William Damrel, "Forgotten Grace: Khwāja Khāwānd Maḥmūd Naqshbandī in Central Asia and Mughal India," (PhD diss., Duke University, 1991), 49–50.

⁹³ For examples, see Hikmat, *Jāmī*, 190; and Afsharzād, *Naqd va bar rasī-yi āsār va sharḥ-i aḥvāl-i Jāmī*, 210–11.

wine-drinking, which took place in 893/1488.⁹⁴ This combination of internal and external evidence leads us to doubt that Jāmī's interest in Ya'qūb's spiritual and ethical development began with *Salāmān va Absāl*. Instead, we may conclude that this esoteric mirror for princes was the culminating gesture of an aging poet whose blessings and good counsel Ya'qūb had repeatedly sought in the past.

As mentioned in chapter 2, the dominant theme of *Salāmān va Absāl* is repentance (*tauba*), which is generally understood to be contrition for the commission of a sin. It also has a technical meaning in Sufism, denoting the first necessary step in the initiation of an adept into the Sufi path.⁹⁵ What emerges from our historical interpretation of *Salāmān va Absāl* is that, besides its theosophical significance, *tauba* has a profane meaning that clearly relates to Ya'qūb's repentance from wine-drinking. In the section in which Jāmī praises Ya'qūb's turning away from/renunciation (*ijtināb*) of things prohibited by Islamic law (*manāhī*), Jāmī is unambiguous in stating that Ya'qūb was a persistent drunkard:

For an entire lifetime you drank wine and were senseless,
 You became a slave of its good and bad edicts.
 From all that wine drinking and merriment,
 What have you gained, other than losses?
 If you spend another hundred years in such a way,
 You will arrive at something even more vexing than this.
 Acknowledge the concupiscence of last year,
 And compare the coming year with that previous one.⁹⁶

The suggestion that Ya'qūb had renounced wine-drinking at the time *Salāmān va Absāl* was completed is given several lines earlier when Jāmī says of Ya'qūb: "Though at first his lips were polluted with wine (*bāda*), in the end, he washed his lips of that [wine] with the water of repentance (*āb-i tauba*)."⁹⁷

⁹⁴ A view put forward but not developed in Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 274 n. 73. See also Māyil Haravī, *Jāmī*, 173–77, who reckons that it was probably written sometime after 889/1484–85.

⁹⁵ On the role of repentance (*tauba*) in the initiatory rituals of the Naqshbandīs, see Arthur F. Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet: The Indian Naqshbandīyya and the Rise of the Mediating Sufi Shaykh* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 158–59.

⁹⁶ Jāmī, *SA*, 401, lines 212–15.

⁹⁷ Jāmī, *SA*, 401, line 200. As if to testify to Ya'qūb's sobriety, the next two lines read:
 The wine-cup, with all its water of joy,
 Has remained dry-lipped and far from his assemblies.
 The wine-jug, its belly void of that which is forbidden,
 Betakes itself into a corner, just like ascetics of good repute.

Such backhanded praise, especially as it implies that Ya'qūb's wine-drinking lasted many years, hardly seems the stuff of a coronation gift, as has usually been assumed. The passage instead reads like a cautionary reminder of Ya'qūb's darker days, and its blunt accusation suggests that Jāmī and Ya'qūb were not, at the time, recent acquaintances, but that theirs was a relationship cultivated over time.

In an earlier section of *Salāmān va Absāl*, there is another, albeit minor, indication of a later date of composition; here, Jāmī relates that "for many years" (*sālḥā*) it had been his desire to be a panegyrist (*maddāḥ*) for Ya'qūb.⁹⁸ Elsewhere, in a section entitled "The reason for composing the book and the motive for submitting this discourse," Jāmī gives the impression that he wrote *Salāmān va Absāl* in order to praise Ya'qūb "again," that is, after he had already produced a sizeable corpus of literary works.⁹⁹ He claims that, with his *Salāmān va Absāl*, he is "innovating" (*nau'ī mīdaham*) the art of praising a ruler and introducing a new way of delivering a panegyric, but that proper recognition of its novelty was unimportant, since, as he tellingly puts it, "I have [already] created the [other] *maṣnavīs*."¹⁰⁰ Adding to the sense that these other *maṣnavīs* belonged to the past, Jāmī adds, "my mind is finished with the likes of them."¹⁰¹

Perhaps the most compelling indication that Jāmī composed and dedicated *Salāmān va Absāl* well after 855/1480, and thus during the twilight of his career, is his description of his own infirmity. Characterizing himself as toothless, blind, and hunchbacked, Jāmī, who died in 897/1492, sounds like a man at the end of his life. He says that his "life has passed," that his "soul is diminished, and death is near".¹⁰²

My mother is the earth, and I am its suckling,
It is not strange that a mother's inclination should be for her children.
Soon it shall be that, at rest from tribulation,
I will fall into my mother's bosom in an intoxicating sleep.¹⁰³

Jāmī's lament provides further evidence that *Salāmān va Absāl* was written and dedicated to Ya'qūb well after 855/1480 and closer to Jāmī's death in 897/1492.

⁹⁸ Jāmī, *SA*, 395, line 95. The couplet appears in a section entitled, "On praising the *pādshāh*, refuge of right religion, shadow of God in both worlds over the heads of the weak and dispossessed, may God, who is exalted, prolong his rule!"

⁹⁹ Jāmī, *SA*, 399–400, lines 170–89.

¹⁰⁰ Jāmī, *SA*, 400, lines 184–85.

¹⁰¹ Jāmī, *SA*, 400, line 185. See also, Māyil Haravī, *Jāmī*, 175.

¹⁰² Jāmī, *SA*, 398, line 141.

¹⁰³ Jāmī, *SA*, 398, lines 153–54.

This is corroborated by other sources, namely the *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī* by Khunji-Iṣfahānī and the *Tazkirat al-shu‘arā* by Daulatshāh Samarqandī. In his notice for the events of the year 892/1487, Khunji-Iṣfahānī does not mention *Salāmān va Absāl* in his albeit brief and rather vague description of Jāmī’s literary works. The entry, which proves that Ya‘qūb was acutely interested in Jāmī’s poetry, refers only generally to Jāmī’s *qaṣīdas*, his *Dīvān*, and his poems (*ash‘ār*).¹⁰⁴ This absence, together with the fact that Ya‘qūb dispatched a delegation to Herat in that same year in order to present Jāmī with 10,000 *Shāhrukhī* dinars, suggests that Jāmī had not yet completed *Salāmān va Absāl* at the time and that Ya‘qūb’s monetary offering may in fact have been an inducement to convince Jāmī to dedicate a work to him.

Daulatshāh does not mention *Salāmān va Absāl* either in his *Tazkirat al-shu‘arā*. Completed in 892/1487, the work is a contemporary Persian biographical anthology of poets. It profiles seven generations (*ṭabaqāt*) of Arabic and Persian poets, including seven contemporaries of the author.¹⁰⁵ Jāmī is among the living poets listed by Daulatshāh who were writing under the patronage of Sulṭān-Ḥusain Bāyqarā. One would expect that, had Jāmī completed his *Salāmān va Absāl* at the time, Daulatshāh would have mentioned it in his notice on him. This, however, is not the case. Besides a *qaṣīda* written in response to the *Baḥr al-abrār* by Amīr Khusrau (d. 725/1325), the entry only mentions Jāmī’s *Dīvān*, *Nafahāt al-uns*, personal letters (*munsha’āt*), treatises on poetic riddles (*mu‘ammā*), and unspecified books on Sufism (*taṣavvuf*); he lumps the remainder of Jāmī’s poetical works into *javābs*, or literary responses, to the works of Nizāmī, which are in the style of the *Khamṣa*.¹⁰⁶ It would therefore appear that the *maṣnavīs* that Jāmī patterned after the *Khamṣa*, namely, *Tuḥfat al-ahrār*, *Subḥat al-abrār*, *Yūsuf va Zulaikhā*, *Lailī va Majnūn*, and *Khīrad-nāma-i Iskandarī*, were all completed *before Salāmān va Absāl*, a tale which does not figure in Nizāmī’s *Khamṣa*.

¹⁰⁴ Khunji-Iṣfahānī, *‘Ālam-ārā-yi amīnī*, 251.

¹⁰⁵ On the *Tazkirat al-shu‘arā*, see Subtelny, “Poetic Circle,” 32–36.

¹⁰⁶ See Daulatshāh, *Tadkiratu ‘sh-shu‘arā*, 483–93 and esp. 494. The *Nafahāt al-uns* is a prose biography of Sufi saints and is patterned after the *Ṭabaqāt al-sūfiyya* of Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Sulamī. See also Johann Cristoph Bürgel, “Ġāmī’s Epic Poem on Alexander the Great: An Introduction,” *Oriente moderno* 15, no. 2 (1997): 419. Bürgel notes that in the *Khīrad-nāma Iskandarī*, Jāmī alludes to all of his other *maṣnavīs*, except *Salāmān va Absāl*.

Conclusion

Like earlier versions of the tale of *Salāmān* and *Absāl*, the rendition by Jāmī expresses, in the form of an allegory, the spiritual transformation of man. As this chapter has attempted to demonstrate, the characters and key events contained in *Salāmān va Absāl* are symbols of the purification of the soul and its attainment of its true, higher self. Accordingly, Jāmī's version of the tale reveals this theosophical plane of meaning through its subtle, yet unmistakable, indication that each character collapses into and is absorbed by the person of the chief protagonist, *Salāmān*, who in reconciling the constituent parts of his aggregate self, achieves gnosis, that is to say, mystical knowledge of the reality of the one-ness of God.

Jāmī was not the first Persian poet to express this theosophical concept by means of an allegorical tale. In addition to its Hellenistic and Avicennan roots, *Salāmān va Absāl* was patterned after the first tale in the *Maṣnavī* of Rūmī. This contention is supported by two observations. First, Jāmī quotes a pivotal line from Rūmī's tale in order to signal that *Salāmān va Absāl*, like the story of the king and handmaiden, is meant to be read allegorically. Second, and no less significantly, *Salāmān va Absāl* is written in the same metre as the *Maṣnavī* and plays on key words and concepts contained in it. Both tales describe the three types of love, which form the basis of the mystical quest and which were most extensively explicated in the speculative writings of Ibn al-ʿArabī. The culmination of this tripartite love is the visionary experience of the heart—an event captured at the end of *Salāmān va Absāl* and symbolically depicted by *Salāmān*'s accession to the throne—in which the spiritual adept actualizes the creation myth of Adam and becomes the true vicegerent (*khalīfa*) of God on earth.

In addition to explaining the theosophical significance of *Salāmān va Absāl*, this chapter also posits that the characters in the allegorical tale symbolize Yaʿqūb and prominent members of the Āq Qoyūnlū royal court. This assertion hinges on the premise that Jāmī intended Yaʿqūb to recognize that *Salāmān* was in fact a symbol of himself and that *Salāmān*'s love for and subsequent renunciation of his beloved *Absāl* was a symbolic expression of Yaʿqūb's addiction to alcohol and his public repentance from wine-drinking in 893/1488. Thus, Jāmī's citation of the line by Rūmī concerning the identities of "the lovers," though ostensibly referring to *Salāmān* and *Absāl*, refers, according to an historical reading of *Salāmān va Absāl*, to Yaʿqūb and wine. It appears that Jāmī composed and dedicated his *Salāmān va Absāl* to Yaʿqūb sometime between 893/1488 and 896/1490, which is to say that the poem was written in commemoration of Yaʿqūb's

repentance from wine-drinking, and not, as others have argued, as a gift honoring his accession to the throne in 855/1480. Support for this contention is found in *Salāmān va Absāl*, particularly the numerous allusions it contains to Ya'qūb's alcoholism. Ya'qūb would also have recognized that the King of ancient Greece and the Sage, who direct Salāmān away from Absāl and toward his kingly duties, were symbols of the ideal of kingship and Ya'qūb's *vazīr*, Qāzī 'Īsā, respectively. The vital role played by the Sage in convincing Salāmān to abandon Absāl appears to symbolize the role played by Qāzī 'Īsā in securing Ya'qūb's repentance. *Salāmān va Absāl* was thus dedicated to Ya'qūb *after* his public repentance in 893/1488 and it reflects the shaikh-like roles played by Jāmī and Qazī 'Isa in maintaining the sobriety of the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler and in fostering his abiding interest in Sufi mysticism. Finally, this chapter suggests that the means by which the Sage guides Salāmān toward the image of Venus, in order to attain mystical enlightenment can be viewed as an allusion to certain Sufi, specifically Naqshbandī, spiritual techniques.

CONCLUSION

Salāmān va Absāl might appear to be a grotesque tale as described by modern scholars of Persian literature. However, if we recognize that the repellent features of the narrative, namely the affair between a young prince and his wet-nurse, deemed incestuous according to Islamic standards, are precisely the means by which Jāmī reveals key mystical concepts while also communicating Perso-Islamic ideals of kingship, then the tendency to dismiss *Salāmān va Absāl* as one of Jāmī's lesser achievements is no longer tenable. This is even more the case if we acknowledge that *Salāmān va Absāl* also operates on the level of an historical allegory, which conveys valuable historical information about its addressee, the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler Ya'qūb, and members of his court. *Salāmān va Absāl* should be appreciated as a complex allegory that contains multiple planes of meaning. It is a highly-crafted Perso-Islamic manual of moral advice, or mirror for princes, which by way of its symbolic allusions, explicates the Sufi path of self-purification while also referring to the personal quest of a medieval Islamic ruler for sobriety from drink.

As this study has attempted to demonstrate, Jāmī was not the first Muslim intellectual figure to write an allegorical romance whose main characters were named Salāmān and Absāl. Ibn Sīnā's *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt* contains a trilogy of visionary tales of which *Salāmān wa Absāl* is the third and culminating one. Although the original text is lost, synopses of Ibn Sīnā's *Salāmān wa Absāl* are contained in the commentaries written on it by Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī and Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī. Implied in the hermeneutics of Ṭūsī is the notion that the Salāmān and Absāl story was originally Greek and that it entered Islamdom through an Arabic translation by Ḥunain b. Ishāq.

While recognizing the Avicennan and Greek provenance of the tale, this study hypothesizes that Jāmī based his own version more immediately on the first narrative in the *Maṣnavī-yi ma'navī* of Rūmī. By examining the numerous parallels between *Salāmān va Absāl* and Rūmī's tale about the king and his handmaiden, including the fact that they share the same *maṣnavī* form and metre, we posited that Jāmī uses the allegorical tale of Rūmī to indicate that his version of Salāmān and Absāl contains multiple levels of meaning. Evidence to support this claim is contained in *Salāmān va Absāl* itself, specifically in a line where Jāmī quotes Rūmī in order to suggest that the grotesqueness of the narrative is really a "garment" that

is meant to disguise its deeper meaning. As this study demonstrates, these other planes of meaning allow *Salāmān va Absāl* to operate simultaneously as a Perso-Islamic mirror for princes, a Sufi manual on the annihilation of the carnal self, and an historical account of Ya'qūb's repentance from wine-drinking.

In order to establish that these multiple meanings would have been recognized and appreciated by Ya'qūb, this study argues that the patronage of Persian poets was quite extensive and literary tastes were sophisticated at the Āq Qoyūnlū court. Moreover, by examining contemporary historical and literary sources, including poems addressed by Jāmī to Ya'qūb, personal letters, official chronicles, hagiographies, and literary anthologies, we concluded that Sufi mystics (esp. members of the Khalvatī and Naqshdandi orders) were politically important to the Āq Qoyūnlū. Their esoteric writings and presence at court ensured that the mystico-political advice contained in *Salāmān va Absāl* would not have gone unappreciated. Indeed, by highlighting key passages from several classic Perso-Islamic mirrors for princes, especially the *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* by Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī, and comparing them with the "advice" (*naṣīḥat*) contained in *Salāmān va Absāl*, our contention is that the ideals of medieval statecraft were often communicated to the Āq Qoyūnlū in the esoteric and mystical writings of the Sufis. A tale like *Salāmān va Absāl* was therefore intended to be a manual for Sufi aspirants and princes, or better still, for a Sufi-prince.

This combination of spiritual and political counsel is evinced throughout *Salāmān va Absāl*. It is grounded, however, in Jāmī's advice to Ya'qūb on being the true shadow, or vicegerent, of God on earth, which is to say, the Perfect Man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) who combines all the attributes of a Sufi saint (*valī*) and the qualities of a just ruler (*pādshāh-i 'ādil*). According to Jāmī, attaining this degree of perfection requires that the ruler heed the prayers of the Sufis, which according to this study is an indication that the Āq Qoyūnlū court of Ya'qūb was influenced by Sufi mystics whose spiritual insights and political opinions he seems to have coveted. Another requirement implied in *Salāmān va Absāl* is that the ruler must repent for his sins, just as an adept embarking on the first stage of the Sufi path is required to do. Part and parcel of this repentance (*tauba*) is the need for the ruler (i.e., Ya'qūb) to subdue his carnal soul (*nafs*) by transforming it from one that commands to evil (*al-nafs ammāra bi-al-sū'*) into one that blames itself (*al-nafs al-lawwāma*) for its sins. As has been demonstrated in this study, the process by which the soul abandons evil acts and reaches the purified state of being at peace (*al-nafs al-muṭma'inna*) is symbolized by the character of Salāmān, who, according to the commentary by Ṭūsī,

stands as a symbol of the rational soul (*nafs-i nāṭīqa*). Salāmān's repudiation of his beloved Absāl thus symbolizes the enlightened soul's renunciation of carnal pleasures. Although usually a prerequisite for mystical progress, the abandonment of base desires is also implied in *Salāmān va Absāl* as a precondition for the just ruler. As a result, we find that Jāmī puts a unique spin on the perennial Iranian idea about religion (*dīn*) and kingship (*daulat*) being twin-brothers. According to the implicit political advice of Jāmī, the true shadow, or vicegerent, of God is the ruler who unites *dīn* with *daulat* by having personally attained the rank of both a Sufi saint (*valī*) and a just king (*pādshāh-i 'ādil*).

The mystico-political significance of *Salāmān va Absāl* is reflected in the religious, which is to say, Sufi mystical atmosphere, and the political activities of the Āq Qoyūnlū court, which was its intended audience. The contemporary sources used in this study, including the *Ālām-ārā-yi amīnī*, *Kitāb-i Diyār-Bakriyya*, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī*, *Menākib-i Gülşenī*, *Raużāt al-jinān wa jannāt al-janān*, and the *Rashaḥāt-i 'ain al-ḥayāt*, indicate that itinerant dervishes and *ṭarīqa*-affiliated Sufis exerted considerable influence over the Āq Qoyūnlū rulers Ūzūn Ḥasan and his son Ya'qūb. In spite of this, among the few investigations into prominent religious figures attached to the Āq Qoyūnlū household, most have tended to focus on the roles of the Khalvatī Sufi shaiḥ Dada 'Umar Raushanī and his spiritual heir, Ibrāhīm Gulshānī, at the expense of other influential Sufis. By utilizing the above-mentioned primary sources, this study demonstrates that, despite its reputation as the un-official Sufi order of the Timurid dynasty in Herat, the Naqshandī brotherhood and several of its representatives, namely Darvīsh Qāsim and Şun' Allāh Kūzakunānī, propagated the order in western Iran (especially Tabriz) and were involved in the spiritual and political activities of the Āq Qoyūnlū royal court. Ironically, it was Jāmī, writing poetry and letters to Ya'qūb from his residence in Herat, who appears to have exerted the most lasting Naqshandī influence over the Āq Qoyūnlū. By examining the personal letters exchanged between Jāmī and Ya'qūb, it seems that the two had a virtual master-disciple relationship. In fact, we have argued that the Naqshbandī technique of *himmat*, coupled with the order's doctrine that a Sufi shaiḥ could direct his disciples without being physically present, suggests that Jāmī may indeed have served as Ya'qūb's shaiḥ, or spiritual master. The culminating point of their rapport was Jāmī's dedication of his *Salāmān va Absāl* to Ya'qūb to commemorate the latter's public repentance from wine-drinking in 893/1488.

It would therefore be appropriate to assert that the reception of *Salāmān va Absāl* capped a decade-long effort by Ya'qūb and his *vazīr*,

Qāzī ʿĪsā Sāvajī, to cultivate Persian *belles-lettres* at the Āq Qoyūnlū court. Although Tabriz never eclipsed the literary output of the Timurids under Sulṭān-Ḥusain Bāyqarā, the patronage of accomplished poets like Ahlī Shīrāzī, Kamāl al-Dīn Banāʾī, Shahīdī Qumī, and Bābā Fighānī by Yaʿqūb, is another indication that the literary tastes of the Āq Qoyūnlū were highly sophisticated. As a consequence, Yaʿqūb and his retinue would no doubt have recognized *Salāmān va Absāl* as an esoteric work to be understood on several different levels. Evidence in support of this contention is contained in near-contemporary poetic anthologies written in Persian, namely the *Hasht bihisht* by Shāh-Muḥammad Qazvīnī, which includes notices on some forty poets attached to the Āq Qoyūnlū court of Yaʿqūb. Along with the *Tuḥfa-i Sāmī* and the *Majālis al-ʿushshāq*, the *Hasht bihisht* yields valuable information on the personal lives of Yaʿqūb and Qāzī ʿĪsā, information which might explain why Jāmī addressed *Salāmān va Absāl* to the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler. For example, Qāzī ʿĪsā was banished from court because of his romance with Yaʿqūb’s sister, and Yaʿqūb himself, in addition to feuding with his uterine brother Yūsuf, was morose and constantly occupied with drinking.

As the final chapter of this study hypothesizes, the similarities between the narrative of *Salāmān va Absāl* and events at the Āq Qoyūnlū court can be interpreted as art imitating life. That is to say, in writing *Salāmān va Absāl*, Jāmī created an historical allegory whose characters symbolically represented Yaʿqūb and members of the Āq Qoyūnlū court, and whose plot symbolically recounted the renunciation by Yaʿqūb from his libertine habits and his apparent turn toward Sufi asceticism. In our reading of the text, Salāmān serves as a symbol for Yaʿqūb, Absāl is a symbol of wine, the King of ancient Greece is a symbol of the ideal of kingship, and the Sage is a symbol of Qāzī ʿĪsā. The killing of Absāl and the renunciation of her memory by Salāmān represents Yaʿqūb’s abandonment of wine-drinking and his public repentance. The pivotal role played by the Sage in the moral reformation of Salāmān reveals the pivotal role played by Qāzī ʿĪsā in the repentance of Yaʿqūb, a claim supported by the *ʿĀlām-ārā-yi amīnī* by Khunjī-Iṣfahānī. In recognizing the historical symbolism of *Salāmān va Absāl*, this study concludes that Jāmī dedicated his allegory to Yaʿqūb around 893/1488 in order to commemorate the public repentance of the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler and his prohibition of assorted vices in Tabriz. Our thesis maintains that the traditional wisdom that Jāmī dedicated *Salāmān va Absāl* to Yaʿqūb as a coronation gift in 885/1480 can no longer be supported by the available evidence, and that the historical symbolism of the tale indicates not only that it was written sometime between 893/1488 and 897/1492, but that it was one of Jāmī’s final and most complex works.

APPENDIX ONE

JĀMĪ'S EPISTOLARY REPLY TO YA'QŪB¹

Translation

After the presentation of supplication and the expression of humility and meekness, the petition of the devotee of the lofty threshold of—*He is still a refuge for the masses of created beings and for the entirety of creation*²—he who, this needy one, [which is to say, someone] deserving of anonymity and worthy of one's forgetfulness, praises and constantly calls to mind in an epistle, whose heart, like a point, turns into the center of the ambit of astonishment and the pivot of the circle of contemplation. If the lip of [this person's] imprudence opens and appears in the form of a written reply, the sword of punishment will be drawn on account of the lofty awfulness of that side (Ya'qub) and the terror inherent in his majesty and propitious fortune. Verse:

When the brilliant sun becomes manifested,
How is it that a mere mote appears equal to it?

And if he pursues the habit of keen-hearing and sharp-wittedness, and retracts the tongue of weakness into the palate of silence, from this side (Jāmī), the entreaties of sincerity and allurements of affection and privilege will seize the collar of his soul, because:

When the cloud reaches effulgence, it is not pleasant for the lily,
Since all its petals, in their search of praise, do not retreat from the deluge.

Out of necessity then, the contemplation of both sides has come into view and the middle path [of inner vision] has appeared. Verse:

Like an echo from the mountain, neither silent nor spoken,
This good tiding is unceasingly exclaimed:
"May God always enjoin good fortune and divine assistance upon his soul,
Peace!"

¹ For the transcribed and edited version of the letter, see Urunbaev and Rahmanov, *Nāmāhā va munsha'āt-i Jāmī*, 281 (letter no. 422).

² The phrase in Arabic, which is not Qur'ānic, is comparable to verses of the Hebrew Bible concerning Jacob (Ya'qūb), the Old Testament patriarch and Islamic prophet after whom Ya'qūb b. Uzūn Ḥasan was presumably named, specifically Psalm 46: 7 and 46: 11: "The God of Jacob is still our refuge."

APPENDIX TWO

SALĀMĀN VA ABSĀL

Translation

In praise of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Oh You, the memory of whom refreshes the souls of lovers,
The tongues of lovers are moistened by means of the water of Your grace.

From You, a shadow has fallen upon the world,
And become the very substance of the beautiful.

Lovers have fallen for that shadow,
They have remained melancholic, on account of that substance.

Only when the secret of Your beauty was manifested through Laili,
Could the love for her kindle a fire in Majnūn.

- 5 Only when You made the lips of Shīrīn like sugar,
Could the two lovers suffer, livers engorged with blood.

Only when 'Azrā became silver-cheeked, on account of You,
Could the eyes of Vāmiq cry mercury-colored tears.

All this talk of beauty and love is because of You, and nothing more,
The lover and the beloved are no one but You.

Oh You, for whom the beauty of the lovely ones is but the veil,
You have concealed Your face with the veil.

You nourish the veil through your own beauty,
From that, you give away the heart, like a veiled bride.

- 10 So completely is Your lovely face melded with the veil,
That one cannot differentiate the veil from Your face.

For how long then will You be a coquette in the veil?
A world love-plays with the form of the veil?

The time has come for You to loosen the veil in front of You,
To show Your own face, without the veil,

To make me selfless in my witnessing my true self,
And to free me from having to discern good and bad,

So that I may be a lover, made luminous for You,
My eyes sown shut and thus unable to gaze at others.

- 15 Oh You, the path to whom is manifested in all modes of divine reality,
There is nothing that concerns God's creatures, except You.

Though I became a witness to every divine manifestation,
I do not see any other, except You in this world.

You unveil Your self in the outer form of the world,
You are the All-Knowing One, wrapped in the garment of Adam.

Duality cannot enter into Your sacred precinct,
There is no talk there of particulars and universals.

My wish is that You will make me one out of this duality,
And thus give me a place in the spiritual station of unity,

- 20 So that, like the Kurd, I am delivered from duality,
And cry, "Oh God, am I me or You?"

If I am me, from where does this knowledge and power come,
And if it is You, from where does this impotence and weakness arise?

*The tale of the rustic Kurd, who, in the midst of a crowded town, fastened a
gourd to his foot in order not to get lost.*

There was a Kurd, who, on account of the vicissitudes of fate,
Traveled from the desert and mountain to the town.

He saw a city, full of clamor and loud cries,
Coming to a boil, on account of its throngs of people.

The restless of the world were everywhere,
Running here, there, and up against one another.

- 25 That one, on the outside, wanted to come in,
While that other one, who was inside, wanted to go out.

That one went from right to left,
That other one, thought it better to go to the right.

When the poor Kurd saw the toil and commotion,
He left its midst and betook himself into a corner.

He said: "If I made a place in the ranks of men,
I might lose myself in that place.

If I do not fashion a token for my sake,
How can I find myself again?"

- 30 There was, by chance, a gourd lying there for him,
He tied the gourd to his foot, so that it would be a token,

So that if he lost himself in the city and streets,
He could find himself again by looking at the gourd.

A clever person, one who quick to understand the importance of that secret,

Fell down in amazement, to the extent that the Kurd fainted right there.

At that moment he unfastened the gourd from the Kurd,
Tied it to his own body, and began to sleep.

When the Kurd awoke he saw the gourd
Tied onto the foot of the person in front of him,

- 35 He shouted at him: "Hey you weakling, get up,
For on account of you, I am confused by what I have done to myself!

Am I me or you? I do not know precisely,
If I am me, why is the gourd on your foot?

And if this is you, where am I? Who am I?
I am not being taken into account.

Oh God, I am the worthless Kurd,
My rank is lowlier than all Kurds.

Enlighten this poor Kurd through Your splendor,
Strain away these awful dregs through Your grace,

- 40 So that I am purified of that which contaminates vision,
And so that I become a salutatory draught for the People of the Heart,

Satisfying palates, one-by-one, like a wine cup,
If not by the jug, then at least by the cup.

And if this honor happens to befall me,
I will give praise to the Master of Both Worlds.

Praise of his Excellency, the Prophet Muḥammad, the ring of servitude to whom is like a string of pearls around the necks of the powerful, and the brand of slavery to whom is like a mark of the good fortune of the noble.

That master, for whom the cavalcade of kings are his servants,
And who have hung the earring of his law in their ear,

For those good-fortuned ones, His face is the *qibla* of the soul,
The dust of his laneway is the *ka'ba* of hope.

- 45 His laneway became the *ka'ba* of every pilgrim,
The *ka'ba* cannot do without a Zamzam well.

The Zamzam well is, in fact, his tear-soaked eyes,
The glistening of the Gnostics is on account of that Zamzam.

The cries of those who sprinkle Zamzam water on graves are, in fact, for him,
The cries of the waterwheels at the Zamzam well are, in fact, on account of him.

Before him, the *ka'ba* was full of stone idols,
It was narrow for the seekers of God in His sacred precinct.

Through his striving, they were extirpated, root-and-branch,
He cast them off into the desert of non-existence.

- 50 The path of religion was purified of its rocky terrain,
That path became a broad parade ground for the seekers of God.

The stepping ground of Abraham became perfect for him,
That station was exalted, on account of the auspiciousness of his arrival.

On the black stone of the *ka'ba* he placed the title, *Right Hand of God*,
On the *Right Hand of God*, he gave kisses in veneration.

Never on earth has the hand been given
A hand-kiss such as this for any person.

For all eternity he faced Marwa mountain near Mecca in purity,
Carrying out his praiseworthy efforts on both mountain and plain.

- 55 He is the exordium of the manuscript of both worlds,
All the people of the world are beggars, and he is the master.

We eat morsels from the banquet table of his generosity,
We carry away leftovers from the bounty of his offerings.

An entire people, draught-stricken from a lack of devotion to God,
Have hope that a bounty come from the palm of his hand.

Whoever gathers crumbs from the blessed banquet table,
What despair is there, for him, from the misfortune of famine?

The tale of the proud slave, who, on account of the authority of his master, was not afraid, and who did not care about starvation and hardship.

A famine arose in the region of Egypt, so terrible
That every person, on account of their fear, threw their belongings into the Nile river

- 60 Since they were not aware of a path to bread,
They threw the belongings of existence into water.

The value of each slice of bread was a life,
They continually cried "bread" and were giving up life.

A wise man saw a handsome slave,
Who was dragging the train of his hem in a glorious and coquettish way.

He had a mein, adorned like the orb of the sun,
His face was full-moon-like, undiminished from eating very little.

He was fresh-faced, full of laughter, and completely joyful,
Strutting proudly in every direction, like a cheerfully swaying branch

- 65 The wise man said to him: "Oh slave of glory and coquetry,
For how long will you be disobedient and arrogant?

An entire world is abject and downcast, on account of their despair for
bread,

Why are you this way, so carefree from sorrow?" To which he said:

"I keep a blessed master in my head,
I am swimming in his benefits.

His banquet table is full of bread and his house is full of grain,
The word 'famine' is missing from his household.

Why should I not be blithe and joyful in this way?
And in the process, be free from the bite of starvation?"

*In praise of the king, the refuge of right religion, the shadow of God in both
worlds over the heads of the weak and dispossessed, may God, be He exalted,
prolong his rule.*

- 70 Within the vaulted roof and foundations of this lofty dome,
What is the task of the one who has received His bounty?

It is to dwell in the station of gratitude to Him,
And in the bounties of the noble world-possessor.

The special bounty, which is effected through His command,
That bounty is the existence of the just king.

The just king is nothing except the shadow of God,
The shadow of God is a refuge for mankind.

However much the essence of a person receives glory from this,
In the eyes of the sages, there is something like it in the shadow.

- 75 This shadow is like the essence of the Master of the shadow,
Be careful so that you do not look disdainfully on the shadow.

The shadow is a reflection of the essence of the One who holds the shadow,
And is full of substance from the attributes of His essence.

Although in His essence He is concealed through His attributes,
He is manifested in every direction of this world through His shadow.

Through the majesty of kings,
Divine effulgence is manifested.

And if you require proof concerning this claim,
Go look upon the king, who is the refuge of the world.

- 80 He is a prince who has the vast ocean, left and right,
The entire purview of the kingship of Jamshīd is under his royal sealing-ring.

Shāh Ya'qūb is that world-possessor, who,
On account of his loftiness, humbles low the pinnacle of the heavens.

The dominion of existence is within the boundaries of his polo grounds,
The ball of the world is within the curvature of his mallet.

The crescent moon kisses the dust kicked up from the horseshoe of his
Rakhsh,

Its humped back is proof of this very fact.

At the top of this garden canopy, far from misery,
His strength became great from this act of supplication.

- 85 His hands revived the ancient Arabian custom of being noble,
Raising even the fame of the generosity of Ḥātim.

His name is the exordium of the volume of justice,
His decrees are the fulcrum of the scales of justice.

The light of his justice has imprisoned the darkness of tyranny and
oppression

In the night-chamber of non-existence.

On account of the beauty of his character, he became the hero of the age,
This, he inherited from the good character of [Ūzūn] Ḥasan.

The cavalcade of his father left for the gates of eternity,
On account of him, this beautiful nature remains as his inheritance.

- 90 The azure sky is but the foot of his throne,
The kings bow down in prostration before his pedestal,

No one refuses to bow down in front of his throne,
Whoever turns their head away from him would not find their head.

True cavalry-ship is to make one's head the dust of his path,
True excellence, is to turn one's face towards his path.

Whoever's head became dust on his path,
His dust was the crown of the head of the heavens.

Whoever honored the dust of his door,
In his eyes, every honor became a flowing watercourse.

- 95 My desire is to praise him, since, for many years
I have said that I find years of good fortune by praising him.

But I will cut short this chapter,
I will abbreviate this loquaciousness.

The body of the sun has arisen above the horizon,
An entire world prospers on account of its radiance.

It is not within the purview of the mere mote
To become a story-singer by praising him.

To sing his praises is not within the purview of just any person,
I spoke his name, and this very praise for him is sufficient.

The tale of the poet who intended to praise the king, but who presented an abbreviated composition in the name of the king.

- 100 A poet came before a famous king and said:
 “Oh you, whose exalted crown scrapes the heavens,
 I have composed a fresh poem in praise of you,
 I have threaded a pearl, bright as the Sirius star.
 Although a circle of many people have strung pearls of praise for you,
 Rarely have they composed a panegyric for you like this.”
 At that moment he passed his composition into the hands of the king,
 In it, he inscribed the name of the king, and nothing more.
 The king said to him: “Oh you, who are empty of intellect and reason,
 It is better that you be silent from this praise.
- 105 The imprint of your composition is the name, and nothing else,
 Mentioning the name of the person is not praising the person.
 You have not described me in terms of my kingship and justice,
 You have not related news of my throne and crown.
 Because you cited my name far away from these descriptions,
 That is not an acceptable method of bringing praise.”
 The poet said: “Oh king, by means of your fortunate name,
 You will find fame in noble attributes.
 Everyone who speaks your name, or who hears it,
 What comes to his mind, except noble attributes?
- 110 Because your name points to these great attributes,
 It becomes an entire ledger book of the noble attributes of perfection.
 Although a book, other than this one, is not mentioned,
 If I call that book “praise of you,” it is not far from those other attributes.
- Demonstration of the inability to effect due praise and to raise the hand of humility in the pronouncement of the prayer for the king.*
 For the king, his excellence and virtue are without limit,
 Which faculty of intelligence could calculate that?
 It is better that I now acknowledge my weakness,
 And that I raise an affirming cry for this inability.
 This, in the eyes of the possessors of penetrating insight, is right religion,
 This is the secret of *I cannot count the praises (for you).*¹

¹ *la aḥsī thanā* is part of a canonical *ḥadīth*, the entirety of which reads: “Oh Lord I take refuge in Your good pleasure from Your wrath and in Your pardons from Your

- 115 Since I am unable to count the praises for Him,
It is better to be quiet and still in the act of my prayer—

Not a prayer that comes from any feeble-minded person
Limited to the power of this [temporal] palace.

On the contrary, a prayer of the people of the heart,
Filled with the blessings of God,

Which brings happiness and joy in this world,
And which brings a life of salvation in the next world.

It places religion on the face of the heart of the king,
It makes a pious form of Islamic governance his law.

- 120 His task is to become he who makes royal decrees obligatory,
And to become the origin of everlasting good fortune.

So that this azure dome
Becomes the place of manifestation for the eastern sun.

May the royal throne be the place of manifestation of the King,
May he always be mindful of the secrets of the Faith.

May he, at every moment, be succored by eternal grace,
So that he becomes worthy of the everlasting kingdom.

May those who wish him well be free of misfortune,
And may they be firmly established on the straight path.

In praise of the jewel of the mine of manly virtue, the architect of the pillars of brotherhood, the governor of the kingdom of grandeur and beauty, the Joseph of the Egypt of excellence and superiority.² May God, who is exalted, make powerful his supporters and magnify his stature.

- 125 A good word, especially for he who is a helpful friend for Ya'qūb,
And who was manifested from the same womb.

He has made a place in the shadow of his prosperity,
And fallen, like a shadow, in obedience to him.

Wherever the sun is, that one is the ray,
Wherever the leader is, that one is the follower.

Though he was born in the cradle of the caliphate,
He has not planted one step in opposition to him.

punishments. I take refuge in You from You. I cannot count the praises for You. You are as You have praised Yourself."

² An allusion to Yamin al-Dīn Abū al-'Izz Yūsuf Bahādur, Āq Qoyūnlū prince and younger brother of Ya'qūb.

He is the prince of the Egypt of grandeur and magnificence,
It was for that reason that they named him "Yūsuf."

- 130 His beautiful countenance was the envy of Joseph,
Like Zulaikhā, an entire world is enamored of him.

Anyone who sets their sight on his cheeks,
They will call out: *This is no mortal!*³

Though he is one brother, among others, of the king,
For the king, he is equal to a hundred souls.

He became both the brother and friend of the king,
This must be very rare in life.

The simple man once asked a sage:

"Oh you, who, by virtue of your proximity to knowledge, are unique among
the noble,

- 135 Peel away the skin from this concealed subtle point:
Which is better, the brother or the friend?"

The one close to knowledge said: "Neither is better,
Since that particular brother will also be the friend."

Oh God, so many months and years have passed at the head of the celestial
wheel,

That separating the two bright stars of Ursa Major⁴ ought to be impossible.

Keep these two stars shining together,
And keep them firmly situated on the throne of honor.

*Description of infirmity, old age, and the inability to derive benefits from
the senses.*

It has been many ages that, in this ancient abode,
The strings of my verses were tied onto the lute of speech.

- 140 Every time I strike a new melody,
I speak about ancient happenings.

My life has passed, and this melody has not ended,
So too my soul is reduced, but this happening has not finished.

My back has become like the crooked harp, and yet,
Each night, I am engaged in the tuning of my lute, till daylight.

The lute is discordant, and time has made
The hands of the musician tremulous with old age.

³ Q 12: 31.

⁴ The constellation referred to in Persian as "Seven Thrones" or *haft auran*.

How can the melody of the lute be harmonious,
How can the intonation of the musician be as fine as the zither?

- 145 The time has come for me to gently break this lute,
And cast it into the fire, so that I might smell its sweet fragrance.

It would be crude to play the lute badly,
It is pleasing to set the unmelodious lute on fire.

May it be so that the fragrance of the unmelodious lute is dispersed,
And that from it comes the perfume of Reason and Faith.

It is good to fortify Reason and Faith,
For this body of mine is pointed in the direction of weakness.

If gaps appear in the row of one's teeth,
How can one's teeth chomp down on a morsel of food?

- 150 The incisors are too blunt to cut,
The molars are too worn away.

Now I must eat like a child,
Bread is first chewed with the teeth of other people.

My stature became bent, and my head remains slumped forward,
I have become inclined in the direction of my own roots.

My mother is the earth, and I am its suckling,
It is not strange that a mother's inclination should be for her children.

Soon it shall be that, at rest from tribulation,
I will fall into my mother's bosom in an intoxicating sleep.

- 155 No use comes from my two eyes,
Even with Frankish glasses, which make them four.

So long as a foot-ache is my close companion,
My habit has been to sit on my knees.

My legs are too helpless for me to stand up,
Unless, that is, my forearm becomes a pillar for my body.

These failings are the unavoidable defects of old age,
Woe to that person who is afflicted with old age!

Every affliction that befalls the constitution from old age,
The power of the physician is not enough to cure that.

The tale of the octogenarian who came to a physician and asked him for a cure for his infirmity, and the physician answered: "Your remedy is that you should become young and that you should go back in age from eighty to forty."

- 160 A certain aged man, his lifetime spanning eighty years,
Consulted a wise man, regarding the state of his infirmity.

He said: "My teeth have become too brittle to eat,
They cannot perform properly the task of chewing.

Because the morsel does not soften in my mouth,
Digesting it in the stomach becomes difficult.

Since digestion in the stomach is incomplete,
How will bits of food bestow strength to my limbs?

You would do me a great favor,
Were you to remove this weakness from my teeth."

165 The learned sage said to the old man:

"Oh you, whose heart has split in two, on account of the affliction of
old age,

After eighty years, there is no remedy for your infirmity,
Other than youth, and that is impossible.

The row of your teeth will be strengthened,
If, from these eighty, you go back forty.

But you are not empowered with the ability to retrace them,
If, however, you reconcile yourself to this weakness, you will not be far from
that which you seek.

When the appointed time grants you a separation from the body,
It will deliver you from all of your weaknesses.

The reason for composing the book and motive for presenting this address.

170 The weakness of old age has broken the strength of my constitution,
It has closed down the path of contemplation in my mind.

The comprehension of eloquence has vanished in my heart,
The eloquence of speech has disappeared from my lips.

It is better that I draw my head into the collar of silence,
And draw my foot into the skirt of oblivion.

These two couplets from the *Maṣnavī-yi Maulavī* [Rūmī]
Have a powerful relevance to my state of being:

"How should verse-making and rhyming come to me,
Especially after the foundations of my sanity are destroyed?

175 I contemplate rhyming, and my beloved says to me:
'Do not contemplate anything except the sight of me!'"

Who is the beloved? It is He whose abode is in hearts,
All of the souls are His treasury of secrets.

He is aware of His own abode,
It therefore is better that you keep a dwelling vacant for Him,

So that when He sees that the stranger is far from Him,
He will make that abode His place of manifestation.

For everyone with a share of this knowledge,
How could any other meaning be acceptable?

- 180 However, kings are also shadows of Him,
They are full of His attributes and His essence.

Mentioning them is, in reality, remembering Him,
Thinking of how to describe their qualities is to contemplate Him.

Perforce, in spite of my deficient petition,
By praising the king, I am seized by the buttonhole.

But to praise him, in the ancient palace of this world,
It is necessary that it be done in a wide-open space.

I will make that vast space with this *masnavī*,
I will employ a new method of praise for Him.

- 185 Otherwise, I have already created the other *masnavīs*,
My mind is finished with the likes of them.

In particular, the versification of this book is for His sake,
It is the manifestation of the signs of His grace and might.

So that when a particular occasion arises,
I will be engrossed in the remembrance of Him.

I will praise Him in the form of pure speech,
I will pray to Him through lamentation and weeping.

Because I do not have, at hand, the hem of nearness to Him,
I must sit in conversation with Him.

The tale of Majnūn, who, while in the desert, made his finger into a pen and wrote a notation on a tablet of sand like the geomancers. They asked, "What is this writing, and for whom has it been written?" Majnūn answered, "This is the name of Lailī. By writing her name, I am engaging in love making because she is not present."

- 190 A certain vagabond saw Majnūn
Seated alone in the middle of the wilderness.

He had made a pen out of his fingers, and in the sand,
Was tracing a letter with his hand.

The traveler said: "Oh you, who are a frenzied lover, what is this,
To whom are you writing this letter?"

All that suffering you will endure by inscribing it,
The blade of the cold autumn wind will, in a flash, erase it.

How long will it remain on the tablet of sand,
So that another person, after you, reads it?"

- 195 Majnūn said: "I am giving a description of Lailī's beauty,
And I am setting my mind at ease.

First, I write her name,
After that, I will write the book of love and fidelity,
There is nothing but her name in my hand,
And from that name, my lowly person finds loftiness,
Though not having tasted a single drop from her cup,
I am, nevertheless, making love-play with her name."

Discourse on the success of his Excellency, refuge of the caliphate, in abstaining from certain prohibited things. May God, glory be to Him, bring success to him in piety and redemption in this world and the next.

Oh excellent is a king who, in the time of his youth,
Finds benefits from repentance, just like the aged do.

- 200 Though, at first, his lips were polluted from wine,
In the end, he washed his lips of that wine with the water of repentance.

The wine cup, with all that water of joy,
Has remained dry-lipped and far from his audiences.

The wine jug, its belly void of that which is forbidden,
Betakes itself into a corner, just like ascetics of good repute.

Having been excluded from the inner sanctuary of his banquets,
The pitcher, with its head in its hands, heaves hundreds of dry "alas-es."

Even though the flagon once raised its head for him,
It has been forsaken, on account of his repentance, its hand on its neck.

- 205 How will the goblet again discover wine?
Henceforth, may its only task be to measure the wind.

For animals, it is all just eyes and ears,
Intellect and reason are the property of man.

Oh you, a person who is aware, wine is the enemy of awareness,
Do not permit the friend to be conquered by his enemy!

If fortune should sell half a barley grain's worth of reason
For two hundred ass-loads of pure gold.

It is better for the wise man, since he spent a lifetime suffering
To buy those two grains of reason and understanding,

- 210 Never taking one or two draughts of wine in his palm,
And thus, all at once, squandering the coin of wisdom,

Never setting his foot outside the boundary of wisdom,
And thus driving his prized possessions to the limits of madness.

For an entire lifetime you drank wine and were senseless,
You became a slave of its good and bad edicts.

From all that wine drinking and merriment,
What have you gained, other than losses?

If you spend another hundred years in such a way,
You will arrive at something even more vexing than this.

- 215 Acknowledge the concupiscence of last year,
And compare the coming year with that previous one.

The tale of the tailor who made a living patching Sufi cloaks and who bought a little bit of every type of fresh fruit, and bringing it to his wife and children to eat, said: "Be content with this and do not scratch the cheek of good intention with the thought of more, because the taste of this fruit is not like this all year, nor am I able to purchase more than this."

A certain patch-maker was within the confines of Rayy,
His mind contented with patch sewing.

His back was bent under the burden of family matters,
Since he had a fistful of tender-aged children.

He was occupied, day and night, in mending
The dervish cloak of his livelihood.

When the fruits of the New Year ripened,
He set his heart on every single fruit.

- 220 For the benefit of his family, and with hundreds of types of stratagems,
He acquired that fruit, bosom full, and underarms too.

He proudly poured all of the fruit out in front of them,
So that they were completely satisfied from eating all of it.

After that, he said: "Oh you, who are lowly ones,
Born upon the carpet of toil and despair,

Even if a hundred loads of this fruit fell into your grasp,
All of them have the same flavor, scent, and color.

So renounce your concupiscence and your greed,
And incline your nature toward contentment!

- 225 Since I am lowly, like dust under the foot of poverty,
Nothing more than this will ever come from my hand."

On the fact that carrying through with the determination to renounce sin is dependent upon the will of God, glory be to Him. If it is fulfilled, gratitude must be given, otherwise one must beg for pardon.

Repentance is like a glass bottle, Divine decree like rock,
How can a glass bottle do battle with a stone?

When Divine decree becomes the agent
Repentance will be solidly founded;

And if Divine decree does not become its (i.e., *tauba's*) agent
There is no happiness except in acquiescing to His judgments;

The repentance-granter and repentance-breaker are both Divine decree,
Attributing these things to oneself is to sin.

- 230 If divine decree grants repentance, express gratitude,
If not, run, like a person who sinned, and follow the path of contrition.

For repentance is to be penitent over the past,
And, for the present, to abandon acts of rebellion.

It is to also resolve that, in the future,
You will overcome acts of disobedience.

If, let us suppose, this determination of yours is not met—
After all the choice to do so is not in your hands—

Do not sleep for one moment, neglectful of rectifying it,
Though you fell into the mire, do not sleep in the muck.

- 235 Resolve to again stand up to sin,
Evermore to be in communion with repentance.

May it come to pass that the bounty of God brings you back to the right
path,
And the good fortune of this resolution leads you away from sin.

The tale of the wine-worshipper who attained the ranks of perfection, and who, when asked the reason for that perfection, replied, "It is because I am so blessed that whenever I bring the goblet of spiritual wine to my lips, my intention in doing so is that I not stain them with a different, phenomenal goblet.

A wine-worshipper turned his face toward the path of repentance,
And made a place, away from sin, in the refuge of repentance.

On account of repentance, he attained spiritual stations,
And ensnared the quarry of sainthood.

A very insightful person asked him:
"Oh you who have planted your foot on the highest frontier of perfection,

- 240 For many years you busied yourself with wine drinking,
From which quality, did you attain this saintly grace?"

He answered: "Whenever I rest the cup of spiritual wine on my lip,
For the sake of joy and rapture,

Rarely does it ever pass through my mind that
I would again raise my hand to a cup of phenomenal wine.

Apart from this, no other desire comes into my heart,
Except that I should wash my heart of the joy of phenomenal wine.

The auspiciousness of this intention led me to success,
It opened before me hundreds of doors of good fortune.

*Indication regarding a dream that this poet saw while composing this preface,
and the interpretation of that dream in such a way that set his mind at ease.*

- 245 When, at night, I reached this very part of the discourse,
And in the midst of thinking of You, sleep overtook me,

I saw myself on a very long path,
Pure and luminous, like the hearts of the People of the Secret.

The dust of it was not stirred by the wind,
The water on it did not mix with its earth.

In short, it was a path without dust or clay,
I walked upon that path peacefully.

Suddenly, the noise of an army, full of tumult,
Entered my ears from behind on that path.

- 250 The clamor of the heralds wrenched my heart from its place,
And took wits from my head and strength from my legs.

Seeking an escape, a way to avert calamity
Entered my eyes in the form a lofty portal.

When I took refuge in that direction,
I was secure from the calumny of the army.

From among them appeared the father of the King of the Age,
That one most fair⁵ in name, character, and countenance,

A mount as high as the heavens beneath his thighs,
His face luminous, like the sun and the moon,

- 255 Majestic vestments swaddling his breast,
And a camphor-white turban bound to his head.

⁵ *ḥasan*: an allusion to Ūzūn Ḥasan.

He turned the reigns toward me, joyful and smiling,
With his smile the door of ease opened to me.

When he arrived in front of me, he alighted,
Kissed my hand, and showed sincere concern for me.

I was gladdened by those gestures, which were charitable,
Relieved at his expressions of humility.

In speaking with me, he scattered an abundance of pearls,
But none of them remained in my ears.

260 At daybreak, when I rose from my pillow,
I asked my heart for the interpretation of this dream.

It said to me: "The favor and approbation of the king
Comes as proof of his acceptance of your poetry.

Do not sit quietly, because of this conversation, for even one moment,
Since you started it, endeavor to complete it."

When I heard my heart disclose this dream interpretation,
Like a pen, I girded my loins for the task of writing.

May it be that, the source from which this dream sprang,
Be that same place from which this interpretation proceeds.

The tale of the interpretation of the dream for that simple man by way of mockery and derision, and that dream coming true without the slightest alteration or change.

265 A certain simple, having fallen from the path of reason,
Went before that interpreter of dreams.

He said: "At the crack of dawn, I saw myself in a dream,
Perplexed, and in a desolate and ruined village.

Wherever I looked, there was a house in the distance,
It was without walls and in a ruinous state.

When I set foot in one of the ruins,
My foot hit upon a treasure."

Laughing, the dream interpreter said to the poor fellow:
"Oh you who have been made rich by way of the treasure, *kuntu kanz*,⁶

270 Throw clogs made of iron on your feet,
Split granite in two and cleave the mountains.

Whenever you travel to a place of ruin,
Stamp hard upon the ground.

⁶ An allusion to the *hadīth qudsī*: *kuntu kanzan makhfiyyan*.

Wherever your foot makes a depression in the soil,
Make a pit in that place with your fingernails.

When you break apart the earth in this fashion,
I have no doubt that a treasure will fall into your hands."

When, on account of the sincerity of his faith, the simple man
Departed and acted in accordance with the words of the interpreter,

- 275 He started his quest, and did not suffer in his search,
His foot found treasure in the very first step.

There must be sincerity in every one of your actions,
So that the hem of your desire remains in your hands!

If it so happens that your sincerity wavers, even the least bit,
All of your searching is for naught.

Beginning the story with the appearance⁷ of Salāmān and Absāl.

There was a King in the land of Greece,
Who, like Alexander, possessed the crown and royal sealing-ring.

During his reign, there was a certain Sage,
Who made firm the foundation of the palace of wisdom.

- 280 One by one, the people of wisdom became his students,
All of them sat in a circle around him.

When the King realized the eminence of his rank,
He consorted with him in private and in public.

He did not travel one step without consulting him,
He sought no other desire than his instruction.

Then he managed to completely conquer the world,
He subdued everything from *Qāf* to *Qāf*.

On account of his justice and munificence, the affairs of God's creatures
were well ordered,
His kingship stood firm on that foundation.

- 285 If the king is not himself a sage,
Or if a sage is not his friend and boon-companion,
The foundation of the palace of his kingship is weak,
And rarely will the laws of his commands be correct.

Ignorant of the attributes and hallmarks of justice and tyranny,
He cannot distinguish justice from tyranny.

⁷ *sūrat-i ḥal*: the "appearance of the spiritual state" of Salāmān and Absāl.

He applies tyranny in the place of justice,
He treats justice as if it were disgraceful, like injustice.

The world is thus ruined through his tyranny,
On account of him, the wellspring of kingship and religion is a mirage.

- 290 That far-sighted one has spoken well:
"It is justice not religion that keeps kingship stable.

An infidel king who proceeds with justice
Is better for kingship than a pious king who is a tyrant."

Pointing to what God, may He be praised and exalted, said to David, peace be upon him, about the ancient kings of Iran.

God said to the prophet David:

"Oh man of excellent discernment, tell your community

That when they mention the kings of Iran,
They should not utter their names, except with respect.

Although their religion was fire worship,
Their customary law was based on justice and rectitude.

- 295 For centuries the world flourished on account of them,
The darkness of tyranny was far from their subjects.

The servants, at ease from the torment of worry,
Knew only quiet repose, on account of their justice."

The manifestation of the wish for a son, on the part of the felicitous King, and the discourse of the Sage on that subject.

When, in accordance with the counsel of the well-known Sage,
The world became stable under the King of Greece,

The world, from end to end, was subservient to him,
Making him the second Alexander.

No part of the surface of the world
Escaped the imprint of his royal sealing-ring.

- 300 One night, the King contemplated his situation,
He performed the duty incumbent upon a person with knowledge of God's favor.

He found that the garment of good fortune suited him,
For whatever he sought from the stuff of dynastic fortune, he found it,

Except, that is, for a son, who, in glory and honor,
Would succeed him after his was gone.

When this thought appeared in the mind of the King,
The Sage spoke right to him.

He said: "Oh you, whose duty it is to be king,
May you be congratulated for your thought!

- 305 There is no better blessing than a son,
There is no deeper attachment for the soul, than for a son.

A man's wish is realized through a son,
A man's name lives on through a son.

As long as you shall live, your eyes will be bright because of him,
Because of him, when you die, your dust will become a rose garden.

When you fall down, he will take your hand,
When you remain stuck in place, he will be your foot.

Your back becomes powerful through his support,
Your life is renewed every time you see him.

- 310 In the ranks of battle, he is sharp, like a sword,
Raining arrows, like a storm cloud, onto the heads of the enemies.

When he and your allies all rout the enemy,
He strives, by way of the soul, they, by way of the body.

Your enemy trembles on account of his skills,
You could say, in fact, that his very purpose is to vanquish the enemy.

*The story of the Arab who named his sons after beasts of prey and who named
his servants after beasts of burden.*

A certain traveler, in order to find good fortune,
Passed the night in the home of an Arab.

He found that all of his sons, big and small,
Bore the names of pack animals, like Lion and Wolf.

- 315 Everyone, from among his servants,
Were named Sheep or Lamb.

The traveler said to him: "Oh warrior from among the Arabs,
Tonight I am astonished on account of these names."

The Arab said: "My sons, who are a part of my cavalcade,
Are well prepared for the task of defeating the enemy.

My servants, on the other hand, whose concern is domestic service,
Are responsible for waiting on my guests.

Wolf and Lion are necessary to vanquish the enemy,
That is, to be courageous in slaying the adversary.

- 320 For the sake of domestic tasks, Lamb or Sheep are better,
Since no one suffers injury or loss from their deeds.

In condemnation of unworthy sons.

This, that I just said, is the state of the good son,
He, who is well and truly linked to his origin.

On the other hand, the one possessed of bad thoughts and evil nature,
There are thousands of ugly dispositions in his constitution.

It would be better for you to withhold from that son the thread of his
lifetime,
So that you might prevent his wicked habits.

Noah, had an unworthy son,
His manner was vainglorious and ignorant of God's will.

325 He suffered from the stigma of: "He is not of your people!"⁸
He did not, in the end, see the way to escape the Flood.

Since the condition of every child is not perfect,
Do not seek just any son from God—but

Such a son that, in the end,
It is not necessary to pray and to seek from God his death.

*The tale of a person who appealed for help from a saint, that is, through the
saint's himmat for the birth of a son, and who later sought assistance from the
same saint in order to be free from his son's wickedness.*

A certain impertinent man went before a shaikh,
His heart vexed on account of his being without a son.

He said: "Oh shaikh, direct your *himmat* at me!
So that God, the Omnipotent, grants me good fortune,

330 A tender cypress, to grow from my water and clay,
From whose existence, my heart will be put at ease.

That is to say, a young boy to come to my side,
From whose beauty, my eyes will be brightened."

The shaikh said: "Do not trouble yourself,
Leave this matter to God.

For, in every matter that you set your sight and mind to,
God knows your best interests better than you."

The man said: "Oh shaikh, but I am a prisoner of this desire,
Do not withhold your favor from me!

335 Be, by way of prayer, the conduit of my wellbeing,
So that my desire is quickly realized!"

⁸ *laisa min ahlika*—Q 11: 46.

The shaikh, in a state of prayer, raised his hands,
His arrow sailed from the archer's thumbstall and struck the target.

A boy, redolent of musk, like the wild deer of China,
And from the hunting ground of the Unseen realm, became his quarry.

But when the sapling of lust and the branch of desire
Sprouted in his water and clay,

He took to drinking wine with cronies,
He began to expend his energy in pursuit of every desire.

- 340 Intoxicated, he situated himself on the edge of the roof,
He dishonored his neighbor's daughter.

The husband of the girl fled his presence,
If not, he would have wanted to spill his blood with a dagger.

They informed the local constable of the spectacle,
He demanded cinch-purses of gold from the father of the boy.

Night and day, these were his affairs,
His conduct became notorious throughout the city and its streets.

Good counsel made no impression on him,
Punishment bore no effect on him.

- 345 When his father became distressed, on account of these dealings,
He again grasped at the skirt of the shaikh.

Saying: "Because I do not have a source of help, other than you,
Be compassionate to me, and come to my aid.

Offer up another prayer regarding his deeds,
And remove his torment from off my head."

The shaikh said: "That day I said to you,
'Do not beg and then leave off of this prayer.'

Ask God for forgiveness and salvation,
Since this will suffice you in this world and the next."

- 350 When you pack your bags and leave this world,
Neither son nor daughter will be of any service to you.

You are a slave, be unfettered in your servitude,
Whatever may unfold, be content with that.

The Sage's condemnation of lust, without which, the bearing of children cannot occur.

When the perspicacious Sage heard
The tale of the son from the King of Greece,

He said: "Oh King, whoever does not purge their lust,
Remains in the despair occasioned by being deprived of a son.

The eye of reason and knowledge is blinded by lust,
On account of lust, a demon appears as a *hūrī* in front of the eyes.

- 355 Wherever the tumult of lust rages,
It severs wisdom from the heart and Light from the eyes.

Wherever the torrent of lust becomes a flood,
It demolishes the abode of good fortune.

The path of lust is full of the clay and mire of calamity,
Whoever falls into this quagmire will not rise again.

Whoever tastes a single dreg of the wine of lust,
Will never, for all eternity, see the face of redemption.

From that trifling bit of wine, the honorable man becomes contemptible,
Since, just a little bit of it, always demands more.

- 360 Whenever you taste even one drop of the wine of lust,
The pleasure derived from it sits on your palate.

That pleasure becomes a bridle ring in your nose,
It lures you to no end, night and day.

Until your soul is engaged with the [Sufi] path of non-existence,
It will not be possible for you to again stand up against it.

The tale of a noble person who did not respond to the invitation of a base person, so that he would not become accustomed to associating with base people.

A certain scoundrel prepared a party,
He invited the rabble of the town.

He also invited a noble person,
So that he might trouble himself to approach his table.

- 365 The noble person said: "The carnal soul is abject and weak,
My heart is broken in two, on account of these two qualities it has.

If it draws near these wretches,
And consumes a few morsels of their food,

The taste of that meal, even far from its table,
Will remain in the roots of its teeth.⁹

So that when another lowlife invites me to him,
That pleasure will be my leader.

My name will be erased from the ranks of nobility,
I will forever remain in the company of the scoundrels.

⁹ This couplet does not appear in all MSS. See Jāmī, *SA*, 410 n. 1.

In condemnation of women, who are the locus of lust, the result of which is children.

The people of lust cannot do without women,
Associating with women extirpates the roots of life.

- 370 What is a woman? A thing deficient in intellect and faith,
Nothing in the world is as deficient.

Know, then, that it is quite unlike the proper conduct of the People of
Perfection,

To be, month and a year, the plaything of such deficient creatures.

In the eyes of the Perfect Man, who, by virtue of his knowledge, is a
leader,

The plaything of the deficient is lowlier than the deficient itself.

There is nothing worse than the ingratitude of a woman,
Who sits at the head of the table of a man given much by God.

If you give gold and silver to a woman for a hundred years,
Smother her, from head to toe, in precious jewels,

- 375 Stitch robes for her with the brocade of Shushtar,
Furbish a house for her with golden flatware,

Hang rubies and pearls from her ears,
Fashion golden embroidered nightgowns for her,

Adorn her table with all different dishes of cuisine,
At lunch time and during the dinner hour,

Bring to her water drawn from the fountain of Khidr
When she becomes thirsty, in a jeweled goblet,

Bring pomegranates from Yazd and apples from Isfahan,
When, as kings do, she wants fruit from you,

- 380 And when she becomes inflamed and twisted, on account of a quarrel,
All of these aforementioned things amount to nothing in her eyes,
absolutely nothing.

She will then say to you: "Oh you soul-melter, you life-shortener,
Never have I seen a single thing from you."

Although her countenance is a tablet of purity,
That tablet is devoid of the word "fidelity."

Indeed, who in the world ever saw fidelity from a woman,
Who ever saw anything from a woman other than plots and stratagems?

For years she will hold you in her embrace,
Then, when you turn away for a moment, she will forget you.

- 385 When you get old, there will, no doubt, be another friend for her,
A companion who will, most assuredly, be more vigorous than you.

As soon as she spies a young man,
She will want him, rather than you, to come to her service.

The tale of Solomon, peace be upon him, and Bilqīs, and how they spoke to each other with sincerity.

Bilqīs and Solomon were deep in conversation one day,
Bearing their innermost secrets.

The heart of each of them was set on equanimity,
Their minds were purified of the rust of arrogance.

The king of right religion, Solomon, spoke first:
"Though the royal sealing-ring of kingship was fitted to me,

- 390 Neither day nor night does anyone come to my threshold,
Without me first looking at his hands,

In order to see what gift he brings for me,
A gift that would increase my magnificence and nobility."

Thereupon Bilqīs revealed her innermost secret,
And made this point regarding her own state:

"No young man on earth passes by me,
Without me gazing upon him longingly.

- 395 Such is the custom of women of good character,
Women of bad character should not even be discussed.

Master Firdausī, whose wisdom is known,
Heaped horrible curses on good women.

How is an evil woman to behave well?
In the eyes of good men, she is always worthy of curses.

The Sage's plan for a son to be born without the medium of woman, and his hiring a wet-nurse to nurture him.

When the well-meaning Sage
Condemned the lust of women in front of the King,

He made a plan, by way of his knowledge,
Which bewildered the thoughts of wise people.

- 400 Without lust, he drew sperm from the King's loins,
And deposited in a place other than the womb.

After nine months, there appeared, from that place,
An infant without defect, and a child without blemish,

A rosebud grew from the root of the rosebush of kingship,
A fragrance wafted from the dominion of awareness,

The royal crown was glorified through his essence,
The royal throne triumphed from his good auguries.

Without him, the plain of the earth and the eye of the heavens
Lacked, for the former, people, and for the latter, a pupil.

- 405 On account of him, that vast plain flourished with people,
And the eye was illuminated through the pupil.

Because they found him free of all blemishes,
They split his name from the word, "Salāmat."

His name, Salāmān, descended from the sky,
His body and frame were free of any fault.

Because he had no part of mother's milk,
They selected, for him, a wet-nurse,

A true heart-ravisher—in beauty, a full moon.
Her years were less than twenty, her name was Absāl.

- 410 Fine-bodied, from head to toe,
Every particle of her was fair and enchanting.

On the crown of her head was a line of silver
That parted, in two halves, like a harvest of musk.

Her tresses fell down on the nape of her neck,
From each hair a hundred calamities were hung.

Her stature was that of a cyprus from the garden of symmetry,
The crowns of kings were trampled in the path to her.

Her forehead was luminous, like a mirror,
Her eyebrows rested on it like verdigris.

- 415 When, mirror-like, its smoky-hue was polished,
The shape of an upturned letter *nūn* lingered.

Her eyes were like a drunkard, who, languid,
Reposed atop roses underneath a musk-scented canopy.

Her ears, attentive to subtle points,
Were silvery oyster-shells for the pearls of speech.

On her cheek was a beautiful line of indigo,
The splendor of the Egypt of her beauty, just like the River Nile.

Although that drawing of a talisman, was meant to ward-off the Evil Eye,
It brought endless calamities to the eyes of good people.

- 420 The rows of her teeth were watery pearls,
The casket containing those moist pearls were limpid rubies.

The path of thought became lost in her mouth,
Any talk about the art of thoughtful reason, was quieted.

From her lips, the palate drew nothing but sugar,
Which of those was her lips and which was sugar?

From the well of her chin, a sprinkling emanated,
And hung from a dimple.

Thousands of graces appeared through it,
Astute observers called it "her dewlap."

- 425 Her body was of silver, just like a silvery doll,
Her neck held aloft like a long-necked flask.

The breasts on her body were like perfect bubbles,
Stirred by a zephyr, on the surface of water.

Beneath her breasts was a belly, shimmering bright,
White as ivory and soft as sable.

When the hairdresser beheld the grace of that belly,
She said: "This is nothing less than the petal of a rose."

When she gestured by pointing toward it,
The tip of her finger made an impression,

- 430 A mark the describers called "navel"—
A navel, on which the heart of a musk-bag was emptied.

Whoever saw that waist, thinner than a hair,
Wanted nothing else but to embrace it.

Her thighs, a heap of eglantine roses,
Were concealed from the vulgar by a skirt.

Her two hands parted equally a treasury of grace,
From each sleeve, they hung like a silver purse.

The aggrieved found consolation in the palm of her hand,
It delivered a deluge of oblivion on the withered ones.

- 435 The desire of the People of the Heart was in her grasp,
Her finger was the key to their padlocked hearts.

Because of her hands, the insides of the lovers poured blood,
The color of her henna was drawn from the blood of lovers.

Each of her fingertips, dyed and un-dyed,
Was either a fresh filbert-nut or luscious jujube.

Her fingernails were moons of various phases,
Moons of hers that were only eclipsed by henna.

When the hairdresser decorated its shape,
A crescent moon fell from the tip of each.

- 440 When talk turns to her calves and thighs
One should, from such talk, draw the tongue back into the palate.

For I am afraid such speech will reach a place
Where those words will be unbearable to my delicate nature.

That is a secret concealed from the people forbidden to it,
No one, not any in the world, was privy to that secret.

Nevertheless, a thief penetrated that secret and seized it,
All that had been there was plundered.

He split open that silver-shelled one,
And, in doing so, found the pearl of his pleasure.

- 445 Whatever has been ravaged at the hands of another,
For it, the hand of rejection is better than the eye of its acceptance.

The tale of the whispering melancholic, who, on account of contamination by the creatures of the sea, washed his hands of sea water and sought water that was purer than the sea.

A whispering man once sat at the lip of the sea,
In order perform ritual ablutions for the sake of approaching God.

He saw a sea full of fish and serpents,
Frogs and crabs, thousands upon thousands, were within it.

The waterfowl swimming on every side,
Diving, seeking nourishment from the depths of the sea.

He said: "A sea that so many creatures,
Morning and night, circulate within it.

- 450 How am I to properly wash my hands and face in it?
Now I wash my hands of this cleansing.

I desire a wellspring in the style of a Zamzam well,
One in which the hands of the unconsecrated are cut-off from it.

With regard to that which has become defiled on account of the polluted,
Those who are of pure livers, care not for it.

Absāl's assumption of the task of being wet-nurse to Salāmān, and the tucking up of her hem for the nourishment of that pure being.

When the king took Absāl as a wet nurse,
So that the auspicious divination of Salāmān

Was delivered into the hem of her goodness,
And nourished from the sprinklings of her breasts.

- 455 When her eyes fell upon Salāmān,
She rent her collar on account of that sight.

Her soul grew infatuated with the subtlety of his essence,
She nestled him, just like a pearl, into a golden cradle.

In gazing at the cheeks of that heart-illuminator,
She could no longer sleep at night or repose during daylight.

From day until nightfall, all her labors and efforts,
Were engaged in loosening and tightening his cradle.

She would, at times, cleanse his body with musk and rosewater,
Then his sugar-lips took to her pure honey.

460 So firmly was her affection for that moon rooted in her soul,
That she closed the eye of affection to everyone other than him.

Without a doubt, were it possible for her,
She would have made a place for him in her eye, like a pupil.

When, after some while, he was weaned from her milk,
She commenced with another type of work.

At bedtime, she would prepare his bed cushion,
And burn like a candle over his head.

At daybreak, when he awoke from sleep,
She would adorn him, just like a golden doll.

465 She applied collyrium to his blue narcissus,
And bound firmly his garments upon him.

She cocked a golden cap atop his head,
And from it, hung a single black tress.

She encircled a girdle around his slender waist,
With bands of rubies and gold.

She would attend to him this way night and day,
Until he became a youth of fourteen years.

In terms of beauty, his moon-face was fourteen nights old,
His years, like his moon, were fourteen.

470 His beauty took on a rank so high
That desire for him took root in the heart of everyone.

His beauty became a hundred, and that hundred became a thousand,
Hundreds of thousands of hearts quivered with love for him.

That heart-pleaser had a stature like a spear,
He had turned into a sun, one spear tall.

When his spear-like stature was drawn upward,
A wound appeared on everyone's heart because of it.

From that height, wherever he cast his radiance,
The soul of an entire world burned on account of that sun.

475 His brow was a full moon, half of it hidden,
 And half of it made conjunctive to eclipsed crescent moons.
 His nose, beneath the eclipsed crescents,
 Was a letter *ālif* in the center of a camphor moon.
 His languid eye was a man-hunting deer,
 Its place of manifestation was a bed of tulips.
 Because of his cheeks, he was king of the dominion of excellence,
 Kingly majesty was his companion.
 The seal of his kingship was a fiery ruby,
 A treasury of pearls and gems arrayed underneath its bezel.

480 His fresh apple was the fruit of the garden of Paradise,
 Blessed be the hand that sowed this fruit!
 The apple of his dewlap was a fountain of grace,
 When the thirsty saw it, their soul came to their lips.
 His neck raised the heads of the moon-like beauties,
 He held in his lasso the necks of the world-conquering heroes.
 The beautiful ones, seeking to repel misfortune,
 Fastened amulets of prayer to his arm.
 The might of all the strongmen was humbled before him,
 The arms of the silver-breasted ones were under his hand.

485 On account of his arms, left and right,
 Zealous people would scatter the coin of their life into his sleeve.
 His grip shattered pure silver,
 And twisted the hand of every steely-man.
 In his fists, the coins of ease fell from his two palms,
 The beauty of this inlaid work concluded at his fingertips.
 Whatever may be said about the description of his beauty,
 Is a pearl pierced from a sea of form.
 Lend me the ear of your soul,
 And hear a little bit more about his condition!

Description of the sharpness of Salāmān's understanding and the excellence of his poetry and prose.

490 In speech, the subtlety of his nature was such that it split hairs,
 Even before hearing a pronouncement, it would hasten to the meaning.
 Before the utterance even entered his ear,
 Its meaning would come into the yoke of his understanding.
 Whatever poetry came from the sea of his nature, was a single pearl,
 Whatever prose, was a fruit from the orchard of his subtlety.

Like the Pleiades, the rank of his poetry was lofty,
Like the constellation of the Bear, his prose was noble.

In witticisms, his ruby lips were ready with an answer,
In grasping fine points, his understanding was pure like water.

- 495 His script was heart-alluring, like the facial down of the beautiful people,
Calligraphists were like helpless lovers after seeing it.

When he would grasp the musk-inscribing pen,
The Celestial Tablet and Celestial Pen would heap praises upon him.

His soul was blessed with every type of wisdom,
He remembered all of the fine points of wisdom.

In his execution of the philosophy of the Greeks,
The Greeks would refer to him as: "He who is does well in expounding."

Description of his enjoyable banquets and his delightful singing.

At night, when his heart was liberated from all concerns,
He would play the backgammon of delight with his cronies.

- 500 He would decorate a banquet-hall like Paradise,
And summon *hūrī*-faced singers.

When his brain was warmed by wine,
He would lift the veil of modesty off of the party.

Sometimes he would harmonize with the singer,
Accompanying the performer by becoming a singer himself.

Keeping the melody with his sugar-lips,
He would, like the Messiah, bring spirit into body.

Sometimes he became the mate of the flute-player,
Making a flute with his sugarcane lips.

- 505 He would infuse the sound of the nay with sweet words,
Pouring sugar into the skirt of the ear.

Other times, he would seize the harp from the harpist's hand,
And sharpen its plaintive tune.

He would pour moist filbert-nut onto its dry strings,
Throwing off sparks onto the wet and the dry.

Sometimes the lute was in his embrace, like a young child,
And by having its ears boxed in chastisement,

He would stir plaintive lamentations,
Causing blood to pour from the eyelashes of the adults.

- 510 At times he would become nightingale-voiced in reciting *ghazals*,
Other times he would clap along to every word and movement.

This was what he would do each night, until daybreak,
 Passing time with companions in this fashion.

*Description of his polo-playing with his associates and how he snared the ball
 from the other players.*

When his body was refreshed from the sleep of dawn,
 His intention, in the morning, was to go to the hippodrome.

At daybreak, when the king of this azure veil,
 Made his way to the parade-ground of the horizon.

Shāh Salāmān, still drunk and half-asleep,
 Would, foot in stirrup, track towards the hippodrome,

515 With a coterie, all of royal origin,
 And all tender-aged, fresh-faced, and in the prime of life,
 Each one a commander in the cavalcade of beautiful people,
 Eah one the ruin of a kingdom, and the calamity of a realm.

He would gallop to the hippodrome, polo mallet in-hand,
 And hurl the gilded ball into the middle.

One by one, the polo players sought the goalpost,
 Like hundreds of crescent moons encircling one full moon.

Though all of them were struggling with the mallet,
 Salāmān was nimbler than all the rest.

520 With hundreds of agile moves, he would snare the ball from all comers,
 The ball was the full moon, and Salāmān was the sun.

With the crescent mallets trailing the full moon,
 He would say "*ḥāl*" all the way to the goalpost.

Even though the ball was returned a hundred times thereafter,
 Every time it was the same situation, and nothing more.

Indeed, that person for whom propitious fortune is his friend,
 And who is sustained by the sapling of good luck,

No mallet under this azure cupola
 Can snare the ball from his hippodrome.

Description of his bowmanship and archery.

525 The *shāh*, after playing polo, would become
 Inclined, like a bow, to shoot arrows.

From the royal archers of the time,
 He would request an unstrung *Chāchī* bow.

Without assistance he would anoint that bow with bowstring,
 The twang of the bowstring would leap from the corners.

He would briskly and nimbly rub his hands across it,
At first, in order to draw it to his earlobe.

Sometimes he would set a three-feathered arrow in it,
And it would fly off toward the path of the bulls-eye.

- 530 If the bulls-eye were the azure scroll of heaven,
Then, without a doubt, its center would be the bonze point of the sun.

And if the far-flying arrow were set loose from the archer's thumbstall,
Its alighting place would be at the limit of the horizon.

Had not the obduracy of the celestial orb become an obstacle,
It would have surpassed the circle of the horizon.

There would be no escape from the danger of his arrowhead
In the hunting grounds—not for the deer on foot, nor for the quail on wing.

Straight toward the goal it would swiftly go,
In the same way an upright constitution preserves one from sin.

Description of his munificence and liberality, his generosity, and his gift-giving.

- 535 In munificence and liberality his palm was like the sea,
On the contrary, the sea was mere foam from the ocean of his generosity.

On account of that cloud of effulgent generosity,
The surface of the world was full of dinars and dirhams.

Never relate him to the sea, for his palms
Would scatter pearls, whereas the sea only scatters shells.

The hand of his munificence was more open than a cloud,
For a cloud is a drop-giver, he, on the other hand, is a cinch-purse thrower.

When I adorn the banquet of his liberality,
My desire is to relate him to Ma'n and Ḥātim.

- 540 But next to him, Ma'n is indisputably worthless,
And Ḥātim, a miser.

So much was his hand accustomed to openness,
His fingers would frown from the act of constriction.

If he wanted to clench his palm,
His fingers would not bend their backs into his fist.

If a beggar passed in front of his door,
His heart, pained from the cruelty of privation,

Would so thoroughly heap a load of favor upon him,
That he would flee from his court, running.

The tale of the escape of the poet Qaṭrān from the superabundance of gifts that Faḏlūn, the object of his praise, showered upon him.

- 545 Qaṭrān was an enchanter, knowledgeable of fine points,
One ink drop from his reed-pen produced a sea of mystery.

For the sake of Faḏlūn's honorific title: "Sea-Bestowing,"
He recited a panegyric graceful and polite from start to end.

Because Faḏlūn's temperament accepted that praise,
He made Qaṭrān's hem overflow with riches.

The next day Qaṭrān sung his praises,
Faḏlūn showered twice as much gold and silver upon the poet.

He did the very same thing the following day,
For days thereafter he repeated this conduct.

- 550 So completely did that gift multiply,
That his interest in it disappeared.

When night fell he sprang upward like a lightning bolt,
And bundled his goods, fleeing from the sanctuary of Faḏlūn's bounty.

At dawn Faḏlūn sought him, but did not find him,
Saying: "The poor fellow renounced this good fortune."

Since my hand would give *dirhams* liberally,
This, to him, was my generous custom.

But he was unable to support this gift,
Therefore, he labored in journeying from this threshold.

Indication that the object of these panegyrics is praise of the felicitous king, may God make his kingship and dominion eternal.

- 555 At night Intellect, that sweet-speaking counselor,
Began, like a blazing sunset, to reproach me.

It said: "Jāmī, for how long will you engage in idle thought,
For who long will you keep scraping a reed-pen that cannot wear out?"

Any thing that is not victorious over the kingdom of subsistence,
If it, by necessity, existed yesterday, today it is not.

Do not lose the purpose of your true goal,
Utter less the praises of non-existent kings."

I said: "Oh you who are the wellspring of wisdom,
And you, On whose head you are the seal of intelligent thought,

- 560 My object in making this eulogy is a different king,
Other than the one on whose head currently rests the crown of good fortune.

The seven climes are subservient to his royal command,
The seven seas are sprinklings from his bounty.

It is better to conceal the description of the elect from the common people,
May that gnostic (Rūmī), who said the following, be forever in his moment:

'It is better that the description of lovers
Be told in the garment of others.'

Truly, not everyone will be privy to this secret,
The door will not be opened to this secret, even to those privy to it."

The tale of a lover who dispelled the suspicions of his rivals by describing the qualities of his beloved in terms of the sun, the moon, and the like.

565 A lover was sitting in a corner,
Engaged in conversation with himself.

At each moment he would construct a new tale,
And would tell a tale never heard before.

At first he would speak about the full moon, at another moment about
the sun,

At another moment, about the petal of the rose, veiled by the hyacinth,

At another moment he would make subtle points about the stature of the
cyprus,

At yet another moment about the grass which rose from the dust of
his feet.

A heedless person heard him from afar,
His mind startled on account of the lover's inanities.

570 He said to the lover: "Oh you, for whom the name of your love has
departed,
A real lover utters words about his beloved.

Which people then, oh lover, are you talking about,
What pearl of a description about vile people is being pierced?

The lover said to him: "Oh you who are far from the signs of true lovers,
You are incapable of understanding the language of true lovers.

By way of the sun and the moon, the real intention was my beloved,
This secret is evident to those knowledgeable of fine points.

When I spoke of the rose, my intention was the delicateness of her face,
The hyacinth went mentioned, and my intention was her hair.

575 What is the cyprus? Her graceful stature,
Me, I am grass that springs from the dust of her feet.

If you become well-acquainted with my language,
You will hear nothing from me except talk of my love for her/him.

Salāmān's beauty reaches perfection and Absāl's love for him manifests itself, as she devises stratagems to seduce him.

When the stuff of Salāmān's beauty
Gathered, by way of maturity, the utmost level of perfection,

The cyprus of his elegance took on a certain freshness,
The garden of his graciousness took on another brilliance.

At first, he was an unripe fruit,
But when that fruit became completely ripened,

- 580 Absāl's mind wished to pluck it,
And, immediately after the plucking, desired to taste it.

But that fruit was atop a lofty branch,
The lasso of that desire was too short.

Absāl was also a beautiful person, full of coquetry,
Lacking nothing in the stuff of her beauty, not a single thing.

She made ready to unveil her loveliness for Salāmān,
She commenced with the craft of prancing horse-like.

At times, by means of coiled locks before her face,
She would weave a chain of moist musk,

- 585 So that with that chain, admired even by a sage,
She might bind tightly the bottom of the heart of the prince.

At times she would divide her musky hair,
To make a part she would curl it into two forelocks—

As if to say: "How is it that my heart's desire for him is not attained,
For how long will he make me twist them in this fashion?"

At times she applied, like heart-illuminating idols,
Dust of indigo leaves onto the bow of her eyebrows.

So that she would, by dint of those rust-colored bows,
Chase his soul away from surety and tranquility.

- 590 She would make her eye black with coal,
In order to make him, by means of her black deeds, veer from the Path.

She would beautify the rose petals of her cheeks with rouge,
By means of that make-up, she would rob his heart of patience.

She would plant a musky grain beauty mark onto her cheeks,
By means of it, she would trap the bird of his heart.

At times she would loosen the bonds of her narrow sugar-lips,
And other times, break the seal on the casket of her pearl teeth.

By means of that, she would become sweet, like sugar, to his heart,
And he would gather pearls from the lip of her elocution.

595 At times she would display a golden ball from beneath the collar of her garment,

Under it was a waist, ringed with encrusted jewels.

So that, despite all his kingly glory, she would draw

His neck beneath the collar of servitude.

At times she would engage her silver hand in a task,

And with that excuse, she would roll up her sleeve,

By means of that, he would behold her henna-embellished forearm,

And thus paint his cheeks with blood.

At times she would rise up for the sake of serving him,

And forcefully step up from her place.

600 By means of that, his crown-worthy forehead would be trampled
By the jangle of her ankle bracelet.

In short, by way of a hundred ruses and stratagems,

She would, at every opportunity, unveil herself to his eyes.

Morning and night she would keep his face fixated on her,

Not allowing him to neglect her, even for a moment.

For she knew that by way of gazing,

Love leaves an impression on the heart of the lover.

Only through the sight of heart-wrenching beauties,

Does love become firmly-rooted in hearts.

The tale of Zulaikhā who put pictures of her beauty everywhere in the house so that everyplace he looked Joseph would see her face and be inclined toward her.

605 Behold Zuleikhā who, with heart full of hope,
Built a palace, white, like the heart of a Sufi.¹⁰

No painting, nay, not a single color was in it,

Like the face of a mirror, nary a spot of rust was in it.

Then she summoned a skilled painter,¹¹

In order to hang her portrait in every place.

No place remained empty of her portrait,

She sat contended and summoned Joseph.

She removed the veil from her gorgeous face,

And engaged in telling a tale about her desire.

¹⁰ "Yūsuf" in some mss.

¹¹ *naqshbandī*.

- 610 When Joseph turned his head away in order to avoid the conversation,
He saw her visage in every direction he turned.

Because he saw her image, one after another,
A yearning to join her came to him.

He was on the brink of giving into his wish,
Of planting the sugar of his desire on her mouth.

But from the unseen world, a proof manifested itself to him,
And divine protection intervened quickly for him.

It kept his hand from attaining its desire,
And with that his need to accomplish his desires passed.

The effect of Absāl's stratagems on Salāmān and his inclination toward her.

- 615 Despite all Salāmān's forbearance and dignity,
Absāl's coquetry worked its way into him.

The thorn of her eyelashes pricked its way into his heart,
And like a snake, the lasso of her tress bit him.

His endurance buckled under the vaulted arch of her eyebrows,
On account of her lips, honey became bitter to his taste.

Her magic narcissus-eyes cut into his sleep,
The ringlets of her locks robbed him of strength.

On account of her cheeks, his tears became rose-colored,
On account of the memory of her mouth, his enjoyment of life narrowed.

- 620 He looked at the black mole on her cheek,
His condition, on account of that dark impression, turned ruinous.

He saw restless ringlets on her cheek,
He grew restless on account of the need to unite with her.

He brought his longing out from behind its veil,
But inwardly, his thoughts were still good:

"God forbid that I should taste the meal of [sexual] union!
Its flavor will become unwholesome to my soul.

That taste will not stay with me, and for an entire lifetime
I will remain far from my lofty rank and majesty."

- 625 The man for whom good fortune is not everlasting
Is not, according to the sages, an altar of hope.

*The tale of the crow on the shore of the salty sea, to whom the pelican offered
fresh water, but who did not find it acceptable.*

There was a crow, day-blind just like an owl,
That had taken a place on the shore of the salty sea.

His watering place was in that salty sea,
But to him that salty water tasted like sugar.

By divine decree a bird, its name: "pelican,"
And its crop, the wellspring of His bounty,

Cast the shadow of good fortune the crow's forehead,
The brackishness of the sea was not pleasing to him.

The pelican said: "Oh you, who lament that which is bitter, come here,
For I will give you sweet water from my crop!"

630 The crow answered: "I am afraid that when I drink fresh water,
The taste of salty water will be unpleasing to me.

Were I to subsist with sweet water,
My nature would be averse to the watering place of the salty sea.

Seated on the seashore, day and night,
I would remain in the middle of both, thirsty-lipped.

It is better that I make salty water my companion,
So that I am not confronted with the agony of being waterless."

In solitude, Absāl goes before Salāmān and they discover enjoyment from each other's company.

635 When Salāmān became Absāl's desire,
Absāl's "star" was in the ascendant.

That ancient affection found newness,
Her hope of joining him grew in strength,

To the extent that night and day she sought an opportunity
To find a way to be alone with that moon,

To satisfy her heart's desire for his rubies,
And join her soul with his sweet lips.

Then one night she discovered the way to be alone with him,
Coin of the soul in hand, she hurried toward him.

640 Like a shadow, she fell at his feet,
And out of humility, placed her face atop his feet and kissed them.

Shah Salāmān, with hundreds of endearments and niceties,
Extended the hand of mercy to her,

Holding her, like a *qabā* shirt, tightly to his bosom,
He drank his soul's desire from the fountain of life.

For both of them it started with a kiss,
Since kissing would be the guide to embracing.

So completely were they rubbing lip to lip together,
That the cup of rapture overflowed for the both of them.

- 645 Though their lips rubbed together again and again,
That which is at the heart of the business of lovemaking, remained undone.

Then, on account of the madness of the heart, which now boiled their
heads,

They removed the veil of modesty from their midst.

The only knot that divided them was loosened,
The desire that existed between them, to unite, became stronger.

One had sugar, the other one milk,
Milk and sugar mingled together.

The palate of their souls was brimming with milk and sugar,
Until, that is, the sweetness of the sleep of dawn was upon them.

*Salāmān awakes from the night's sleep and summons Absāl to the assembly
of joy.*

- 650 In the morning, those musky beauties,
Covered themselves, for the sake of impurities caused by sleep, with pure
gold,

Drawing back their collyrium-pins to the verdigris arches of their eyelids,
And applying the collyrium of wakefulness onto their eyes.

The prince rose from his bed, gratified,
Eyes still half-asleep from the wakefulness of the night before.

The previous night's hangover itched inside him,
Agitating within him the desire for a taste of his nocturnal friend.

His mind, in order to dispel that hangover,
Desired a sip of the dregs, but a sip from the ruby lips of the friend.

- 655 Without the interference of others, he called out for the friend,
She sat beside him atop the throne.

He unwrapped the veil of modesty from her beauty
And renewed with her the previous night's pleasure.

Another day passed in a similar manner,
The evil eye of fate was far from them.

A day became a week, a week became a month, and a month became a year,
A year and a month passed, free of any pain or boredom.

His *himmat* was that that pleasure and rapture
Should not be separated from each other, either day or night.

- 660 But the revolving wheel of fate, lying in ambush, declared:
 "It is not my habit to allow matters to pass in such a fashion.

For I have excited so many companionships each day,
 And when night came, I snapped those threads.

Alas, I have given so many good fortunes each night,
 And at daybreak its turn came to an end."

*The tale of the Bedouin Arab who praised the caliph's table and said:
 "Henceforth I shall always come here," and the caliph's response: "Perhaps you
 will not be allowed." To which the Arab said: "If you do that, the shortcoming
 will be yours, not mine."*

A certain Bedouin Arab headed to Baghdad,
 In the hope that he would find some benefit there.

After several days patiently looking for admittance,
 He gained entrance to the Caliph's table.

- 665 Set down before him, bereft of any deficiency,
 Was a platter of *pālūda*, made of rose-flavored syrup,

Smooth and sweet like the poetic speech of the People of the Heart,
 Delicate and elegant like the lips of every heart-ravisher,

Safe from the torments of the foul-mouthed—
 The moment it drops onto the lip, it makes a place in the stomach.

When, having cleansed his mouth by consuming it,
 He said to the Caliph, without a shred of fear or timidity:

"Oh you, for whom the cradle was on the summit of the celestial spheres,
 I have now made a covenant with my God,

- 670 So long as I am under the firmament of this place of hospitality,
 For the sake of breakfast, or in hope of dinner,

I will not set my foot except in the direction of your table,
 So that I may satisfy my need of this *pālūda*."

The Caliph laughed at such talk, and said:
 "Oh you, for whom the hidden secrets are veiled,

You might not even get another opportunity to be here,
 Do not trouble yourself with coming and going."

The Bedouin said: "When that time comes, the loss will be yours—
 Oh you *qibla* of safety and security—not mine.

- 675 For I shall, through my own strength, make a meal myself,
 What then is my sin, if you do not even allow me in?"

The Sage and the King learn of the state of Salāmān and Absāl. Salāmān is called to account and things become difficult for him.

When Salāmān became Absāl's intimate,
His union with her consumed a year and a month.

He stopped being in service to the King and Sage,
Both of their hearts were split in two on account of him having deserted them.

When they sought reports of his situation,
His confidants made them aware of the secret.

They summoned him in order to question him,
They recounted stories for him from every respect.

680 The spoke of subtle points, old and new,
Until, from all the questioning, the talk met its desired goal.

It was certain that the tale spoken about him was true,
Since the story was told without embellishments or understatements.

Each one rendered an opinion on his case,
Each one took great pains in order to save him.

In the end, it was agreed upon to give him good counsel,
Since no deed is better than dispensing good counsel.

Through good counsel, deficient people become perfect,
And through good counsel, those who retreat become hard-chargers.

685 Through good counsel, every heart is enlivened,
Through good counsel, every predicament is solved.

In the beginning, the givers of good counsel were Prophets,
Because of them, matters of reason and religion were made right.

He who drew the breath of prophecy, for him,
Nothing descends from heaven except good counsel.

The King's good counsel to Salāmān.

The King said to him: "Oh you, who are the soul of your father,
You, who are the feast-illuminating candle of your father's palace,

On account of you, the eye of my prosperity is illuminated,
On account of you, the courtyard of my hopes is a rose garden.

690 For years my heart bled, like a rosebud,
Until I held in my hand a rose like you.

Do not, as the rose does, draw your hem away from my hand,
Do not draw the dagger of the thorn of cruelty on me!

It is on account of my affection for you that the crown rubs my forehead,
And it is for your sake that my throne is beneath my feet.

Do not turn your face toward foolish beloveds,
Do not remove the diadem of good fortune from your head,

Do not set the hand of your heart upon a delicate beauty,
Do not kick the throne of kingly majesty with your foot.

695 What is your job? To play polo,

To gallop into the arena, Rakhsh under your thighs,

Not to take a tress into the hand, as if it were a mallet,
Not to repose astride the silver-breasted ones.

Were you to always shoot an arrow into the hunting-ground,
You would fell a fawn once, a wild beast another time.

It is better that I not see you, like wild game,
Become the target of these gazelle-like lion-tamers.

Go into the rows of heroes, sword-striking,
And be the one who severs necks from the bodies of great heroes.

700 It is better that you gird yourself among men worthy of the title 'real man'
Than to lay your neck before the sword of womanhood!

For God's sake abandon this behavior,
Otherwise, I shall collapse on account of my pain!

It has been years that, for your sake, I have not sat down and rested my feet,
Shame on you if you now knock me off my feet!"

A cautionary tale about the murder of Khusrau by Shīrūya and the misfortune that brought.

As Khusrau slept, drowning in blood on account of Shīrūya,
He uttered a subtle point with regard to Shīrūya.

Know, that a branch which was watered from its root,
Withdrew its head from the water and made a break for its root.

705 When it uprooted its trunk, and became a empty plain,
The branch fell to the ground, withered and fruitless.

Salāmān's response to the King.

When Salāmān listened to the good counsel,
The sea of his nature effervesced with pearls of good speech.

He said: "Oh Shāh, I am a slave to your judgment,
I am the dust beneath your throne-scraping foot.

Whatever you command, I accept, heart and soul,
But I am wearied by my own impatience.

Because of my long-suffering heart,
My fate will not wait for your commandments.

- 710 Many times I have deliberated with myself,
Twisted in thoughts of liberating myself from this calamity.

But when the thought of that moon comes to me,
My heart starts to lament and sigh,

And if my eyes fall upon her face,
I turn my face away from the two worlds and towards her.

After seeing the cheeks of that heart-pleaser,
No good counsel remains in my memory, no wise advice.”

The story of the fox and the fox-cub.

The mother of the fox-cub said to him,
As she guided him to the fruit orchard:

- 715 “Eat as much fruit as will allow you to run
And quickly escape from the dog’s malice.”

The cub said: “Oh mother, if I see fruit,
How can I carry out this plan?

My greed for fruit will be like a veil, blanketing my awareness,
And I will be neglectful of the danger of the dog’s bite.”

The Sage’s counsel to Salāmān.

When the King fell silent after giving advice to Salāmān,
The Sage then, with much determination, engaged him in good counsel.

He said: “Oh you, who are the sprout of the primordial garden,
The most recent image from the pen of ‘Be!’

- 720 Letter-reader of the ledger book of the seven [heavens] and the four
[elements],

Decipherer of the pages of night and day,

It is you who are the keeper of the treasure of Adam,
It is you who are the comprehensive book of the cosmos;

Realize your worth and do not count yourself foolishly,
For you are superior to whatever I speak of!

He whose almighty hand mixed your clay,
And who transcribed the word ‘wisdom’¹² onto your pure heart,

For His sake, purify your breast of the image of external forms,
And turn that mirror toward Reality,

¹² *hikmat*.

- 725 So that your breast may be the treasure of inner meanings,
Your mirror flooded with the light of gnosis!

Veil your eye from the face of the beautiful one,
After this, do not strive to keep company with the beautiful one.

What is a beauty? An outer form full of shame and imperfection,
Neither its hem nor its collar cleansed of lust.

Do not be seduced by such defilement,
And do not go beyond the sanctuary of salvation.

The sperm in your body is your substance-giving life,
It nourishes your limbs and strengthens your bodily foundations.

- 730 Oh you, who struggle with body and soul on account of lust,
Whether you wish to preserve it or spill it.

In the beginning, you were of lofty rank,
Your star was in the highest heaven.

But now the lust of your carnal soul has dropped you low,
It has fettered you tightly in the nadir of the Earth.

The tale of the rooster and the crier who calls the faithful to prayer.

At the time of prayer, the crier said
To the rooster, that high-headed crown-holder:

“No sage knows time like you do,
Or fears the passage of time like you do!

- 735 Oh you chanticleer, with this type of wisdom,
You must always make for yourself a place atop the divine Throne,
For how long have you grieved over a hen,
For how long have you circumambulated the bottom of every dung-heap?”

The rooster replied: “At first, there was a lofty rank for me,
But the lust of the carnal soul cast me down to this lowliness.

If I were able to pass by the carnal soul and its lust,
Why would I saunter into the pit of every dung-heap?

I would be admitted to the gardens of Paradise,
I would be a companion of the Celestial Cock.

Salāmān’s response to the Sage.

- 740 When Salāmān heard these things from the Sage,
The fragrance of wisdom wafted into his nose.

He said: “On account of you, Plato’s soul is contented,
May a hundred Aristotles submit to your every command!

From the beginning, the Intelligences were Ten,
You have made the Ten now Eleven.

I set my face upon your path,
I am the lowliest pupil in your court.

In whatever you said, I found the very essence of wisdom,
I hurried to accept that wisdom in my very soul.

745 But it is surely clear to your enlightened view
That free will is beyond me.

The power of the agent depends on the ability of the recipient,
Its agency is not the product of the producer.

Whatever it is that I have had a capacity for from the beginning,
How can I break from it in the end?

Nay, it is outside the power of the agent
To have an effect contrary to that."

The story of the old villager and his son.

A certain rustic was travelling with his son,
Both of their travel-packs loaded onto one little donkey.

750 Their feet were sore from all the hardships of the path,
On top of that, a mountain now appeared in front of them,

A mountain so majestic, on account of its lofty stature,
That a sea billowed beneath its peak.

Along the mountaintop, there was a path so narrow,
That the foot of imagination grew lame traversing it.

No one was able to pass through that place,
Except he who, like a snake, made feet out of his belly.

Whatever fell from that narrow path,
Its final place of repose was the bottom of the sea.

755 Suddenly, the little donkey slipped at that very place,
The boy, who was behind it, cried out: "Oh God!

My donkey strayed from the path—do not forsake him,
Wherever he may be, keep him safe!"

To which the old man said: "Oh son, quit your crying,
Since the power of choice slipped out of his hand as well!

If you want the right opinion, get up straight away—
Since it is a sin to believe that there is choice in this world."

How things became difficult for Salāmān on account of the numerous reproaches of the King and the Sage, and how Salāmān escaped with Absāl.

Whenever a soul, on account of love, is entangled,
It is a trial within a trial, and pain upon pain,

- 760 Especially a love that is accompanied by the reproaches
And talk of those who give plenty of good counsel.

On account of reproach, the business of love becomes hard,
And through the one who reproaches, the attention of love increases.

Love nourishes the soul, without reproach,
When reproach becomes its friend, it is painful.

When Salāmān heard those reproaches,
His sweet soul, out of sheer pain, reached his lips.

They did not uproot the affection of Absāl from within him,
Rather, they infused bitterness into his heart.

- 765 The pleasurable drink of union became bitter to him,
The new moon of his joy waned.

Not a single breath arose from within him,
Rather, a wail of reproach fell upon him.

His soul was wounded from the arrow of reproach,
The grief that was in his heart increased.

Through reproach the soul of a man wastes away—
For how long can a man possibly endure it?

It is possible to absorb a single blow from a sharp sword,
But when it becomes continuous, what choice is there but to escape?

- 770 For days he immersed himself in deep reflection,
Many times he contemplated his situation.

After a thousand thoughts about how to solve the problem,
He ultimately found solace in the decision to flee.

He severed his mind from its homeland,
And, in order depart, fashioned a camel litter.

When night came, he bound his soul to the litter,
And nestled close to Absāl inside the litter—

Salāmān, the beautiful, and Absāl, who was beautiful too,
The litter, with both of them, was like an almond with two kernels.

- 775 When the time to leave had come, their heads rested on the other's
shoulder,
When the time to sleep came, they slumbered in each other's embrace.

Both of them were closely joined, side-by-side,
As they went, the litter grew tight—but not their heart.

When the Friend is within your embrace, and strangers are gone,
However tighter the dwelling becomes, the better it is.

Indeed, wherever it might be that the Friend dwells,
How can it be tight for the heartsick lover?

The tale of how Zulaikhā's narrow prison became broad on account of seeing Joseph, peace be upon him.

When Joseph of Canaan sat in prison,
Zulaikhā, on account of their separation, was broken in spirit.

780 Her entire house became narrow to her, like [Joseph's] prison,
Each night she set her mind toward the prison.

A certain person, exempt of the brand of love,
Someone who never tasted fruit from the orchard of love, said to her:

"For how long will you, in this delightful palace-garden,
Sit like a sinner in jail?"

She answered: "Being far from the beauty of the Friend,
The distance of the horizon is like an ant's eye for me,

And were I to sit with him in the eye of an ant,
That would be more pleasing to me than a hundred palace-gardens."

How Salāmān and Absāl set out to sea and reached the island of delight, where they reposed and dwelled

785 Because Salāmān drove the litter for a week,
The admonishers now had no hold on him.

Secure from reproach and free of admonition,
He cast his burdens on the shore of a sea.

He saw a sea as unbounded as the firmament,
The eyes of its sea-creatures as abundant as the stars.

Its circumference stretched from Qāf to Qāf,
Its depth reached the back of the Bull and Fish.

Waves, mountain-like in appearance, out of agitation,
Turned the surface of the water into a chain of mountains.

790 It was as if Bactrian camels, on every side,
Foamed at the lip in a fit of anger.

In it there were innumerable fish,
Glittering, like a gem that has been faceted by a sword.

Indeed, to the eye which perceives minutia,
It looked like the Cathay embroidery on Chinese brocade.

Everywhere they went, they clove apart the surface of the water into
two halves,

In the same fashion that silver scissors slice indigo cloth.

If the Leviathan of the sea emerged from these depths,
Draco would be terrified of these heights.

795 When Salāmān gazed upon the sea,
He made preparations to cross it.

He found a skiff, shaped like a new moon,
Going swiftly along the shore of the green sea.

In a state of tranquility, both went inside it,
The crescent moon became a mansion for the moon and sun.

It flowed with sails made of wings,
Pressing its breast against the water, like a duck.

With its breast, it split apart a path for itself,
And with its breast, it hurried in the direction of its destination.

800 It was shaped like a bow, but it moved more swiftly than an arrow
Dropped in a catchment basin.

After they had sailed the skiff for a month,
And had lost their beauty, on account of the sea breeze,

There appeared a wooded island in the midst of the sea,
The description of which would surpass the imagination of anyone.

There was no bird (Sufi), in the entire world,
Who was not in that felicitous pleasure-place.

On one side they paraded, troop by troop,
Crowned like a partridge and ringed like a turtledove.

805 On another side they trilled, rank by rank,
Making their beaks melodious reed-flutes.

Inside it, stood saplings, branch upon branch,
Wherein the impudent birds engaged in song.

Fruit was strewn at the foot of the trees,
Dry and fresh, they all mingled together.

A spring of water beneath each tree
Turned sun and shade into slices and slivers.

On account of the wind, each branch was a tremulous hand,
Its fist was full of dinars for the sake of scattering.

- 810 Because its fist was not well-grasping,
They poured through the gaps of its fingers.

You could say, like the Garden of Iram, the concealed face
Had the rosebud of its manifestation bloom there.

Or that the Garden of Eden, without a Day of Reckoning,
Stripped the veil from its face there.

When Salāmān saw the graciousness of the woods,
He cut short any thought of going further.

With a heart free of every hope and fear,
He became a denizen of the forest with Absāl.

- 815 Both of them were as contented as body and soul together,
Both of them were as delighted as rose and lily together.

Their companionship was far from the clutches of others,
Their tranquility was far from the meddling of concerns.

There was no reproach-monger to war with them,
No two-faced hypocrite for them to fear.

A rose was in the bosom—not a pricking thorn,
A treasure was near—not the bite of a snake.

All the while, they slept in a place abounding with birds,
Drinking, at every moment, water from a flowing spring.

- 820 At times, they would speak with the nightingale,
At other times, they ate sugar with the parrot.

At times, they paraded about with the peacock,
At other times, they walked elegantly with the partridge.

In short, the heart was full of merriment and delight,
As both of them spent days and nights there.

Indeed, what is better than for you and the Beloved,
To be in each other's midst, and fault-finders off to the side?

There is nothing in your breast other than the goal [of creation],
There is no denying that your goal exists.

The tale of Vāmiq's explanation to the one who asked: "What is the goal of all your searching and seeking?"

- 825 A certain perspicacious observer said, in private, to Vāmiq:
"Oh you, who are melting on account of the branding-iron of love for
'Azrā!

You have spent a lifetime searching to and fro—
Tell me, what is your goal from all this seeking?"

He said: "My intention is that together with 'Azrā,
I will set my face upon the desert,

Make a home in the wilderness,
And pitch my tent at the head of a spring.

Friends, as well as enemies, would be far from that place,
My soul, as well as my body, would be at ease from God's people.

- 830 Were I to venture two hundred *farsangs* or more in any direction,
I would not encounter a single person, not anyone.

My limbs, hair by hair, would turn into eyes,
My 'Azrā, would be the *qibla* to which I turn,

In order to face her with a thousand eyes,
So that I might gaze forever upon her face—

No, on the contrary, I will stray from gazing as well,
And be liberated from duality, I will become her."

So long as duality lingers, there is distance,
For the soul is the prisoner of the brand of exile.

- 835 When the lover sets foot upon the laneway of union,
Nothing will be contained there, except oneness, peace!

*The King's becoming aware of Salāmān's departure, but not having any news
of Salāmān's whereabouts, and how the King employed his world-displaying
mirror to find out.*

When, after some time, the King became aware
Of that soul-melting, life-diminishing separation,

His cries of lamentation reached the skies,
And he began to drip bloody tears from both eyes.

He said they should go again and search everywhere for news,
Since no one was aware of that hidden secret.

The King possessed a world-displaying mirror,
Rending the veil of all the secrets of the world.

- 840 Like the heart of the Gnostic, nothing was concealed from it,
Not a single situation, good or bad, in the entire world.

He said: "Bring that mirror to me,"
So that he could see the face of the person for whom he was searching.

When his gaze fell upon the mirror,
He got news of his lost ones.

He saw both of them pleasing each other in the woods,
He saw both of them unconcerned with the passing of the days.

Together, they were far from any thoughts about this world,
And together, they were fleeing from the people of this world.

- 845 Each one of them contented with the face of the other,
Neither of them caring for anyone else.

When the King saw their intercourse,
He was overcome with sympathy for them.

Without making any heart-stabbing reproach,
He came to know everything about how they lived.

He did not ignore a single hair-tip,
He kept it all arranged from where he was.

Oh blessed is he whose heart is illuminated by pure thought,
Who brings to bear the conditions of true manliness.

- 850 Everywhere he looks, there are two companions together,
Quaffing together the cup of joy and pain,

Whose souls are purified of the rust of separation,
And whose cups are secure from the stone of separation.

He shows sympathy to them in their good fortune,
And assists them in their propitious fate,

Far from breaking-off their union,
He throws a lasso around their joined souls.

Whatever befalls the people afflicted by misfortune,
Comes all of a sudden and by way of recompense.

- 855 Do good, so that good begets good for you,
Do not do evil, lest it wear you down.

The tale of Parvīz getting his just dessert for what he did to Farhād at the hands of Shīrūya.

The mountain-piercer, who made a partnership with Parvīz,
Turned his face toward Shīrīn, that maker of tumult.

Shīrīn saw his heart inclining in her direction,
She also yearned after him for the reason you know.

The jealousy of love lit a blazing fire,
And engulfed the harvest of Khusrau's restraint.

Without delay, he devised a stratagem so that the Old Hag of Fate
Poured poison into Farhād's goblet.

- 860 That hapless person, his soul full of love, departed,
Only Parvīz remained with Shīrīn, and nothing else.

The revenge-bearing wheel of fate, though, applied the same rule,
And placed the sword of vengeance in the palm of Shīrūya,

So that, with one smite of the sword, Parvīz was separated from Shīrīn,
Casting him far away from the throne of his life.

*How the King become melancholy, on account of the continued infatuation of
Salāmān with the company of Absāl, and how, by means of his himmat, he
was able to prevent Salāmān from further enjoying her.*

The King of Greece saw how Salāmān
Was comfortable in his union with Absāl.

Lifetimes passed, and he did not refrain from this erring,
Nor did he turn the face of the heart away from his error.

- 865 His head remained empty of the crown of kingship,
He instead turned, high-headed, to her crown.

His fortune cast the royal throne beneath his feet,
So that it was the throne that kissed his foot.

Then, on account of his despair over this, a fire ignited within the King,
Time passed unhappily for him on account of this unhappiness.

So he applied the power of *himmat* on Salāmān,
Until he completely separated him from Absāl.

Every moment he hurried toward her,
But he was unable to enjoy her.

- 870 He could see her face and his heart would throb,
But he was unable to unite with her.

On account of this deception, he fell onto a rough path,
The donkey died, and its burden fell to the ground.

What despair is worse for the bankrupt man
Than having treasure at his side but his coin-purse empty of *dirhams*?

What punishment is more severe for the thirsty
Than having a fountain before his eyes but his lips deprived of the water?

What trial is worse for the inhabitants of hell
Than having their soul in the fire but Paradise in their sights?

- 875 When this torment lingered long inside Salāmān,
The door of ease slammed in front of his face.

It then became evident to him that it was all on account of his father,
And that only he could extricate him from that whirlpool.

Fearful, he turned his face to his father,
Repenting, begging pardon, and seeking forgiveness.

Indeed, that bird, which is of excellent fortune,
Will, in the end, bring its earthly prey back to its origin.

The tale of the dialogue of the Sage, who was asked: "Who is a legitimate son, and what is the mark of his legitimacy?"

An apprentice once asked a sage:

"Oh you skilled person, who is the legitimate son?"

- 880 He said: "That child who, in the end, is similar to his father,
Whether he be wise or foolish.

If, for several days, he does not resemble his father,
In the end, he will bring himself back to his father;

If not, his situation is in this respect, clear—
Wash your hands of such a person, for he is a bastard.

That dry hay, which has sprouted from green wheat,
Will adorn itself with wheat.

Though, in the beginning, it resembles wheat,
When harvest season comes to the field,

- 885 Its grain will reveal that it is not wheat,
The qualities and name 'wheat-ness' are far from it."

The arrival of Salāmān before the King and the demonstration of the King's compassion for him.

When the father saw the face of Salāmān,
And delivered him from his life-diminishing separation,

He laid kisses of mercy upon his head,
And gently placed the hand of affection upon his shoulder.

Saying: "Oh you, whose existence is salt for the table of beneficence,
Your beauty is the pupil of the eye of humanity,

A sapling in spring for the garden of the soul,
To the heavens, you are another sun,

- 890 A newly-sprung rose for the garden of good fortune,
An unwaning moon for the zodiac of kingship.

The broad plain of the horizon is your parade ground,
The would-be obstinate ones all have their faces toward your royal court.

Head to toe, you are well-suited to the royal crown and throne,
Without you, crown and throne lack currency.

Do not countenance the crown being atop the head of the lowly,
And the throne being beneath the feet of the unworthy.

Kingship is your private property, seize your kingship,
Do not pull kingship out of your lineage.

- 895 Remove your hand from the beautiful person you possess,
Kingship and worshipping the beautiful person do not go together.

Remove, from your hand, the henna of the beautiful person,
You must either be a king or a worshipper of beautiful people.

Explanation of the four characteristics that are prerequisites for the sultanate.

The conditions of kingship are of four things:
Wisdom, chastity, courage, and generosity.

Wisdom is not that which, following the abject carnal soul,
Turns the noble man into the plaything of a woman's orders.

It is not on account of chastity that the conscientious man
Defiles himself for an unworthy lover.

900 It does not belong to courage that he is rendered a captive,
Dragged by a whore outside the collar of manliness.

It is not a mark of generosity that he is not able to pass
Around his circle nothing except meanness.

Whoever is not a friend of these four conditions,
Is not entitled to the fruit of the bride of kingship,

For the one who happens to be deficient in all four,
How will the King give him a place in his heart?

I have finished with this talk of wisdom,
I spoke on that which is necessary, peace!

Salāmān, becoming heart-sick his father's reproaches, turns his fate in the direction of the desert, kindles a fire, and together with Absāl, enters the inferno. Absāl is burned and Salāmān remains intact.

905 Who, in the world, is more afflicted than the lover?
There is no undertaking more difficult than this job.

Never does the pain caused by the friend leave his heart,
Nor is the desire of his heart ever fulfilled.

The pay-off of his affliction, day and night,
Is the criticism of those who wish him ill and the good counsel of the well-wisher.

When Salāmān heard this good counsel,
He rent the garment of ease from his body.

The thought of living vexed him,
And he became bent on annihilation.

910 When a life is deserving of death,
Dying is better than living.

He headed with Absāl into the wilderness,
And set his foot onto the plain of self-sacrifice.

He cut heaps of kindling sticks from every place,
He gathered them together in one spot.

With that kindling, he assembled a lofty mountain,
He set fire to heap and mountain.

Both of them rejoiced at the sight of the fire,
Having taken each other's hand, they then went into the fire.

- 915 The King secretly knew about the situation,
His *himmat* was set on killing Absāl.

He committed his *himmat* to his own will,
He burned her and left him.

That one was alloyed gold—this one was pure gold,
Pure gold remained intact—alloy became dross.

When dross falls into a fire,
If a split is going to occur, it will happen to the dross.

The power of real, that is, spiritual men, comes from God,
It does not come from men of this world, that is, exiles from the spiritual world.

- 920 The person who is the possessor of *himmat* knows this,
Only he who is without *himmat* would deny this.

The tale of the hypocrite and the sincere believer and how the hypocrite rolled the cloak of the sincere believer inside his own and cast both into a blazing furnace, whereupon the cloak of the hypocrite burned up and the cloak of the believer remained intact.

There was a furnace of fire in front of a certain sincere believer,
He was hot as the fire on account of his labors.

With him was a hypocrite, skilled at being two-faced in matters of religion,
Who engaged him in a battle, one that would confirm the truth of the religion.

The hypocrite said to the sincere believer: "Come on,
If you have some proof, produce it!"

First he asked for the cloak of the hypocrite,
Wrapping it tightly inside his own cloak;

- 925 Then he placed them inside the blazing furnace,
Fire immediately engulfed the cloak of the enemy of religion,

The cloak of the religious man remained untouched,
Whereupon he said: "Behold the quality of the divine light of faith!

For, the one inside burned like woodchips,
But the one outside remained completely intact."

Salāmān's being left alone after the death of Absāl and his lamentation on account of being separated from her.

The struggle of day and night is,
For the hapless lover, a strange condition.

Whatever arrows of affliction strike him,
Come incessantly from the bow of the wheel of fate.

- 930 No sooner has an arrow-head slit his throat,
That another one follows behind it.

If the friend should raise his hand on account of oppression,
Destruction will come to him from the stone of the Guardian.

And if the stone of the Guardian misses his head,
He will get what is due to him by way of the reproaches of the accusers.

And should he escape from these,
The viceroy of exile will shed his blood on a sword, with a hundred pains
and sighs.

When Salāmān kindled the mountain of fire,
And burned Absāl in it, like dross,

- 935 His partner was gone and he remained alone,
Like a body without a soul, he was isolated from her.

He sent soul-burning lamentations unto the skies,
And drew the hem of his eyelashes with the blood of his heart.

The smoke of his sighs pitched its tent in the heavens,
Morning rent its collar on account of his anguish.

He was so completely involved in tearing at his breast, out of pain,
That his breast became all claws, like the talons of a falcon.

So thoroughly did he go at himself with his nails, out of grief,
That no single fingertip remained intact.

- 940 He would strike stones upon his heart, and without any doubt,
That was the touchstone for the coin of his faithfulness.

When, from those stones, dust settled on his heart,
Its coin came out completely assayed.

When he sat down from all this, empty handed,
He would dig into the back of his hands with his teeth in despair.

When he did not see the fist of the friend within his grasp,
He would wound his own five fingers with his teeth.

When he saw his fist empty of that jewel,
He would tear apart his fingertips with his teeth.

945 When he did not see those sugar lips beside him,
He gnawed at his fingers as though they were sugarcane.

Absent her, with whom he sat day-and-night,
He made his knee blue by beating it.

Each night he would face the corner of the house,
And tell fairytales to the image of his friend,

Saying: "Oh you who burned my soul by deserting me,
Who, through your beauty, stitched my eyes shut.

For ages you were my soulmate,
The one who bestowed light on the eye of sacrifice.

950 My house was in the laneway of union with you,
My eye was constantly focused on the candle of your beauty.

Both of us were contented with the sight of the other,
On account of our union with each other, we fulfilled a hundred wishes.

Both of us were with one another, and there was nothing more,
No one mattered to us, and we did not matter to anyone.

The hand of the injustice of heaven was short,
Affairs were in accordance with the desire of our heart.

At night we always slept in each other's embrace,
By day our heads were in each other's ears, whispering secrets.

955 No one passed in between us,
Nor was anyone aware of our state.

Oh if only it were so that when I kindled the fire,
You had been spared, and that it was I who was burned.

But it was you who were consumed, while I remained. What was this?
What was this injustice of fate that befell lowly me?

Oh if only I were still with you,
I would have traveled the path of non-existence with you.

I would have escaped from my miserable existence,
I would have attained eternal bliss."

*The tale of the Bedouin Arab who lost his camel and said: "If only I too had
been lost with my camel, so that whoever found him would also find me."*

960 A certain Bedouin, one eye drunk with sleep,
Fell from his camel as it quickened its stride.

When the camel, now unencumbered, saw a friend,
It began a pleasant pace.

At daybreak, when the Bedouin awoke,
He could not at all find his camel.

He said, with despair: "My camel is lost, now
My mind is full of her image.

Oh if only I too would have been lost with her,
This cruelty would not have fallen on my head.

965 Wherever she went missing, I would have gone with her,
Side-by-side, so that I might escape this distance,

And so that whoever would find that lost one,
Would find her in the same place as poor, lost me.

*The King's hearing about the state of Salāmān, his inability to order the affairs
of Salāmān, and his referring the resolution of the matter to the Sage.*

When Salāmān lingered, in this manner, without Absāl,
His state, day and night, was thus.

The King's confidants related the matter to him,
His soul melted, on account of pain.

With Absāl, he had more than a hundred concerns,
Without her, anguish confronted him like a mountain.

970 With and without her he was aggrieved,
The anguish did not leave his mind.

Verily, the cupola of the firmament is a house of pain,
To exist in it without pain is a lie, like a fairy tale.

In the primordial age, when the clay of Adam was kneaded,
The garment of outer form was stitched to his stature.

For forty mornings, the cloud of trial
Poured down onto him, head to toe.

One day, at nightfall, when the forty days had passed,
The rain of rapture showered onto his head.

975 As a consequence, no person has ever found freedom from anguish,
Nor have they discovered any contentment, except after forty days of
despair.

Since the shower of rapture is what seals the ordeal,
The matter is ultimately settled through happiness.

But the wise one knows that,
This place of ease is in the other abode.

When the King witnessed Salāmān mourning,
A hundred stabs of pain and grief struck his heart.

Nothing was able to remedy that affair;
The vein of his soul, twisting and coiling, withered.

- 980 He therefore consulted the opinion of the learned Sage,
Saying: "Oh you *qibla* of the world's hopes and fears,
Whenever a desperate person is in trouble,
A solution to that trouble is found through the thought of an illuminated heart.

In today's world, you are that illuminated heart,
You are the loosener of the lock of every problem.

Absāl burned, and Salāmān, through his pain,
Has dedicated his time to mourning for her.

I am unable to convey Absāl back again,
And incapable of being Salāmān's remedy-maker.

- 985 I have spoken, this dilemma of mine is now before you,
Seek a remedy through your far-sighted intellect.

Show compassion, since I am thoroughly weary,
I am constrained in the palm of a hundred strangulations."

The learned Sage gave him an answer:
"Oh you whose judgment has not wavered from the path of rectitude.

If Salāmān does not break his oath with me,
And comes inside the collar of my command,

I shall soon bring Absāl back to him;
I will effect the unveiling of this state for him.

- 990 In several days I will fashion a remedy for his condition;
I will make Absāl his eternal companion."

When Salāmān heard this from the Sage,
His soul submitted to his command.

He took to sweeping the thorns and underbrush of his door,
He accepted, with all his heart, everything the Sage said.

How wonderful it is to be dust at the door of the Perfect Man,
To be a slave to the commands of he who is a master of the heart.

Listen to this subtle point, which a learned man has spoken,
Threading a pearl, which is very beautiful:

- 995 "Be wise, do not quarrel or brawl,
That, or escape under the shadow of a learned man.

The harm that besets temperament, on account of ignorance,
Is cured through the learned man and wisdom."

Salāmān's obedience to the Sage and the Sage's ordering of his affairs.

When Salāmān submitted to the Sage,
He situated himself under the shadow of his care,

His resignation amazed the Sage,
Who applied magic in instructing him.

He poured the wine of good fortune into his cup,
He poured the honeycomb of wisdom onto his palate.

1000 On account of the taste of that wine, his cup became rapturous,
On account of this honeycomb, his palate poured sugar.

Whenever Absāl appeared in his memory,
He started to bewail his separation from her.

When the Sage recognized that condition,
He fashioned the form of Absāl.

He held it in front of his eyes for one or two hours,
He sowed the seed of setting his mind at ease.

When his grief and distress found solace,
The image left for the frontier of non-existence.

1005 When the *himmat* of the Gnostic becomes powerful enough,
The Gnostic creates whatever he wishes, undiminished.

If, however, *himmat* is aimless, even for one instant,
The existent form disappears from the Gnostic.

From time to time, as he perfected his speech,
He would interpose the description of Venus.

"Venus," he said, "is the candle of the assembly of stars,
In front of her, the fairness of all of the stars vanishes.

When she shows her beauty,
She throws the sun and the moon into a frenzy.

1010 There is no one sharper in song than her,
Or more able to arouse the cheers of the banquet of pleasure.

The ear of the firmament is brimming with the melody of her harp,
Rapt in perpetual movement,¹³ on account of her song."

When Salāmān heard these words,
He discovered a yearning for her within himself.

¹³ *samā'.*

When these words were repeated several times,
He found that the yearning within him was great.

When the Sage perceived the significance of this for him,
He increased the effect of Venus on him,

- 1015 Until she manifested her beauty completely,
And it made an impression on the heart and soul of Salāmān.

He effaced the image of Absāl from his mind,
And the imprint of the face of Venus was mended to it.

He saw everlasting beauty and flew from the transitory world,
He favored eternal rapture over the temporal.

The King and the pillars of state swear allegiance to Salāmān, and hand the throne over to him.

How excellent a thing is the crown of kingship,
How lofty a degree is the throne of the sultanate.

Not just any head is worthy of that fortunate thing,
Not every foot is suited to this rank.

- 1020 Only a firmament-scraping foot is worthy of this dignity,
Only a divine, throne-rubbing head merits this rank.

Once Salāmān was delivered from the pain caused by Absāl,
He bound his heart to the beloved that augers well for royalty.

His hem was purified of all defilements,
His *himmat* faced the heavens.

The top of his head became worthy of the crown,
His foot was now suitable for the ascension¹⁴ to the Throne of the celestial sphere.

The King of Greece called upon the princes,
Summoned the grandees and champions.

- 1025 He prepared a feast, the likes of which
No king of kings in the course of world history had ever seen.

Every commander and every soldier,
From every clime, was present at the feast.

With that, all the commanders and armies,
Whoever was there, swore their allegiance to Salāmān.

¹⁴ *mī'rāj*.

All of them removed the thought of leadership from their hearts,
And lifted their heads into the collar of servitude to him.

The King settled the jeweled crown atop his head,
And placed the golden throne of kingship beneath his feet.

- 1030 He placed the seven climes under his control,
The King taught him the custom of commanding an army.

He, at this very an assembly,
Composed for his sake, a final will and testament.

At the head of the audience, and thus not secretly,
He threaded a hundred pearls of diamond thoughts.

The King's final testament to Salāmān.

“Oh my son, kingship of this world is not everlasting,
It is not the hoped for end of men mature in spirit.

Take religion-acquiring Reason as your guide,
Realize that today is the seed-field of tomorrow.

- 1035 Before this seed-field comes to an end,
Sew the seed of everlasting good fortune.

Every task is possessed of the need for science,
Efforts always gain value through knowledge.

That which you know, keep proceeding according to it,
That which you do not know, ask learned men about it.

Whatever you get and give away,
Observe well how you get it, and how you give it.

Whatever you attain, take it in accordance with religion,
Not according to some irreligious regulator.

- 1040 Whenever you acquire a motive in accordance with religion,
Dispense with that motive according to religion.

Do not empty the purse of the oppressed,
Do not thereby elevate the rank of the tyrant.

The former falls into want and festering poverty,
And the latter squanders it on debauchery and tyranny.

In the end, this conduct turns into your misery,
Your neck buckles under the burden of both.

Go, Do not turn away from the straight paths,
For this is the rule of the ancient kings.

- 1045 The tyrant went to hell, you must not follow him,
Do not become, as he did, the kindling of hell.

Strive so that every error and every defect,
On account of your justice, is exchanged for its opposite.

Not so that justice, on account of you, acquires the color of oppression,
And the wineglass of real justice is shattered with the stone of tyranny.

You are a shepherd, and the subjects are like a flock of sheep,
In your shepherding, keep far from trouble.

In your shepherding, do not adopt other customs,
And regard your own ability as superior to actual shepherds.

- 1050 You yourself be equitable, like those who follow the right religion,
What is the principal concern of the shepherd for his flock?

It is necessary that you have commanders within the flock
So that the obedience of the flock to you is sincere,

Like a sheep dog, their heads on a leash for you,
But a dog to confront the wolves, not the sheep.

It is a great and utter calamity for the flock,
When the fierce dog is a friend of the wolf.

There is no escape for kings from the need for *vazīrs*,
But the *vazīr* must be one who is knowledgeable and trustworthy.

- 1055 He must know the affairs of the realm completely,
So that he may order them in the best form.

He must know that he is trusted with the wealth of the king,
And is not preparing an ambush for seizing more than his rightful share,

That he does not take more than what he needs from the subjects,
And that which is the rightful portion of the king and his retinue—

One benevolent towards all of God's creatures,
Pitying the state of the poor and the beggar,

His graciousness applying a salve to every wounded breast,
His severity delivering vengeance upon every oppressor,

- 1060 Not one of wicked disposition, who, with the appearance of a wild beast,
Betrays his foolishness in front of the wise,

All filthy, like a mongrel dog,
And at ease with having his paws defiled,

Craving for a hapless cow to sacrifice,
So that he may defile his mouth with its blood.

Nay, you must have an admonisher to guide you wherever you go,
Who is straight-sighted, disposed to sincerity, and possessed of excellent
discernment,

The one who can convey to you the hidden of everything,
And the date of the good and bad deeds of everyone.

- 1065 As for that person who is afraid of the *vazīr*,
Do not leave his interrogation up to the *vazīr*,

Investigate the matter yourself as well,
And you will make the rank of good fortune lofty.

As for he who acts competently on your behalf,
But who tyrannizes the cities and districts,

That is not being competent, that is causing calamity,
It is bundling together the kindling of hell.

Competence indeed! And it is not beyond him,
In the end, to convert his ten into two hundred.

- 1070 When the extent of this 'competence' increases,
His carnal soul will rebel, and he will become an infidel.

In the eyes of intelligent and distinguished men,
It is not recommended that an infidel exercise authority over Muslims.

In short, whoever makes tyranny their custom,
And who therefore abandons religion in pursuit of lowly things,

There is nothing in the entire world stupider than he;
No one will eat fruit from the property of the ignorant.

Entrust, therefore, all of your religious and worldly affairs
To learned men, and no one else, peace."

*An indication of the fact that the intention of this tale is not its outer form,
but that it has an altogether different meaning, which will be explained.*

- 1075 There is, in the outer form of every tale,
A certain share of its meaning meant for those who are able to see the fine
points.

Given that the outer form of this tale has been completed,
You must now attain to that meaning.

This has been explicated by a "Knower of the Path,"
Since it is he who has brought you to the secret business of "the way."

The goal of this story is not concerned with talk of "We" and "you,"
It is the unveiling of the spiritual secret state of "We" and "you."

Who is intended by the King and his Sage?
And Salāmān, who was he born of a King without a mate?

- 1080 Who is Absāl, through which Salāmān obtained his true desire?
What is the mountain of fire and the sea of water?

What is that kingship which came to Salāmān
When he withdrew his hem from Absāl?

Who is Venus, that, in the end, seized his heart,
Thereby scouring the verdigris of Absāl from his mirror?

Listen to me for an exposition of these things, one-by-one,
Be an ear from head to toe, and be understanding!

Explanation of what is meant by all of the aforementioned.

When the incomparable Creator made the world,
He created, before all else, First Intellect.

1085 Oh you knower of subtle points, the chain of intellects is comprised of
ten,
And the Tenth is the one that makes its effect known in this world.

Because it is the one that is the effecter,
They named it Active Intellect.

It is the one that emanates good and evil in the world,
It is the one responsible for abundance and deficiency on earth.

It is not fettered to the corporeal realm, nor to the body,
Its essence has no need of this talisman.

In its essence and activity, it is separate from these things,
It does whatever it wants, without the fetters of these things.

1090 The spirit of man is born of its effect,
The animal soul is the plaything of its plan.

All of these things are under its command,
All of these things drown in its favor.

It is the *shah* of the commanding king,
And the others, that is, the commanding or temporal *shahs*, are under its
command.

Since it is adorned with the epithet "kingship,"
The guide intended it when he spoke of the King.

The emanation, which flows through it onto this world,
Is constantly falling upon him, that is, the temporal *shah*, from above.

1095 In the opinion of the guide, who is experienced in the wonders of the
world,
The supernal emanation was to be given the title, "Sage."

His pure spirit was named, "Rational Soul,"
It is born of this Intellect, without the fetters of corporeality.

Its existence without bodily connection, is Jāmi's intention
When he says that it is "born of a mate-less father"—

A human soul that came into being completely clean-skirted,
The name of this offspring, which means “unblemished,” is “Salāmān.”

Who is Absal? The lust-worshipping body,
That became low under the laws of nature.

- 1100 The body lives by way of the soul, and through the body,
The soul derives pleasure through things perceptible to the senses.

For that reason, they are lovers of one another,
Only compulsion keeps them from mingling together.

What is that sea that both of them were in,
And from being in it, they were happily united?

It is the sea of sensual lusts,
It is the abyss of carnal pleasures.

An entire world drowns in its waves,
And in its being submerged, they are far from the Truth.

- 1105 What is that Absāl, who was so close in company,
And that Salāmān, who was to remain deprived of her?

That is the consequence of the age of decline,
The age at which the tools of lust are rolled up like a carpet.

Having made a place for the beloved of his true nature in his embrace,
The tool of lust remains low.

What is that inclination of Salāmān toward the King?
And that turning toward the throne of glory and dignity?

It is the inclination toward noetic pleasures,
The result of which is to be brought to the kingdom of Intellect.

- 1110 What is that fire? Ascetic discipline,
In order to set fire to the stuff of human disposition,
The result of which burned Salāmān's true nature, leaving pure spirit,
And which shed his skirt of animal lusts.
Even though he grew accustomed to a life in the fire,
From time to time, the pain of his separation resurfaced.
For that pain the Sage described to him the beauty of Venus,
The Sage made a yoke, joining [Salāmān's] life to his affection for Venus.
Until, gradually, he reposed with Venus,
And escaped from the anguish and affection for Absāl.

- 1115 Who is Venus? Those lofty perfections
With which, by way of union, the soul becomes truly noble.

From that beauty, Intellect becomes luminous,
Thus becoming the king of the kingdom of man.

I have given you a summary of these secrets,
I have given you a précis of this speech.

If you must have the details, then meditate,
So that the ancient secrets come to you in great detail.

This discourse, as well as this summary, is finished,
*And God knows what is best.*¹⁵

Conclusion of the book.

1120 Oh Jāmī you have rolled up the carpet of life,
For how long will you be in the image-laden realm of poetry?

How long will you be unskilled, and like the reed-pen,
Writhing, letter-like, in the blackness of poetry?

In doing black deeds, your hair became white,
But there is scant hope your face will turn white from this art.

The time has come for you to apologize for what you said here,
It is time to make your mantra, "*astaghfiru'llāh*,"¹⁶

To dedicate soul and breath to seeking forgiveness,
To bring life into this very moment, and nothing else,

1125 When you rinse your mouth with the water of seeking forgiveness,
Recite a prayer and praise the king of the world!

Praise the king of good fortune, Ya'qūb Beg,
He has come, like a pouring raincloud, and I am parched sand.

How can parched sand ever be satisfied with water,
How can it ever be brave enough to bid it farewell?

Since it is impossible for me to be satisfied with this water,
It is better to close this discourse with a prayer:

May the world be enlivened from the effusion of his beneficence,
May the turn of his justice become well-known to all,

1130 May, at every moment, he gain new glory and majesty,
And may the duration of his kingship be beyond all measure!

¹⁵ *Allāh a'lam bi al-ṣṣawāb.*

¹⁶ I.e., The supplication, *istighfār Allāh* ("I seek God's forgiveness"), invoked in the form of a litany (*virāḍ*) by Sufis, including Naqshbandis, during *zikr*.

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