

# HANDBUCH DER ORIENTALISTIK

Herausgegeben von B. SPULER

unter Mitarbeit von

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# HANDBUCH DER ORIENTALISTIK

ERSTE ABTEILUNG

DER NAHE UND DER MITTLERE OSTEN

HERAUSGEGEBEN VON B. SPULER

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VIERTER BAND

IRANISTIK

ZWEITER ABSCHNITT

LITERATUR

LIEFERUNG 2



# HISTORY OF PERSIAN LITERATURE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE ISLAMIC PERIOD TO THE PRESENT DAY

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY

GEORGE MORRISON, JULIAN BALDICK  
AND SHAFĪ'Ī KADKANĪ

EDITED BY G. MORRISON



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## TRANSCRIPTION

Vowels: (short) a i(e) u; (long) ā ī ū

Consonants: b p t ṣ j ch ḥ kh d ḡ r z zh s sh ṣ ḏ ṭ ḏ<sup>c</sup> gh f q k g l m n w h y ʾ

The *ezāfeh* has been transcribed both -e and -i.

**PERSIAN LITERATURE (BELLES-LETTRES)  
FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE TIME OF JĀMĪ**

**BY**

**GEORGE MORRISON**



## FOREWORD

For the most part, works have been included in this survey which have been published. It goes without saying that a great amount of manuscript material awaits publication.

Some prose works have been treated in the poetry section where appropriate; Šūfi prose works down to the time of Jāmī, and Šūfism in the same period of Persian poetry, are the subjects of separate studies by Dr. J. Baldick;<sup>1</sup> reference may be made to these for fuller treatment of certain poets. Persian literature from the time of (and including) Jāmī to the present day is surveyed elsewhere by Dr. Shafīʿī Kadkanī.<sup>2</sup> Historical and geographical literature is dealt with by Professor B. Spuler.<sup>3</sup> I am grateful to all three scholars for helpful advice; Professor Spuler has been most helpful as Editor.

I must thank the House of Brill for their patience, skill and co-operation; Miss Shīrīn Darvīsh for help with the manuscript; and the Keeper of Oriental Books, Bodleian Library, the Librarian of the Oriental Institute, Oxford and their staffs for their unfailingly willing help. Mr. A. A. Ḥaidarī kindly read this section and made useful suggestions.

## ABBREVIATIONS

|             |                                                                             |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EI          | Encyclopaedia of Islam.                                                     |
| GMS         | Gibb Memorial Series.                                                       |
| HIL         | Rypka, History of Iranian Literature.                                       |
| IDT         | Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh Tehran.                                              |
| Iranica     | Minorsky, Iranica, Tehran 1964.                                             |
| JRAS        | Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society                                        |
| LAN         | ʿAūfi, <i>Lubāb al-Albāb</i> , ed. Naḥsī, Tehran 1334/5 H.Š.                |
| LHP         | Browne, Literary History of Persia.                                         |
| MDAT        | <i>Majalleh-i Dānishkadeh-i Adabiyāt</i> , Tehran.                          |
| MDA Mashhad | id., Mashhad.                                                               |
| Mīnovī, F   | Mīnovī, <i>Firdaust va Shiʿr-i Ū</i> , Tehran 1346 H.Š.                     |
| NDAT        | <i>Nashrīyeh-i Dānishkadeh-i Adabiyāt</i> , Tabriz.                         |
| PPP         | Lazard, Les Premiers Poètes Persans, Tehran/Paris, 1964.                    |
| RK          | Rāhnumā-yi Kitāb, Tehran.                                                   |
| S I, II     | Šāfa, <i>Tārīkh-i Adabiyāt dar Irān</i> , Vol. I, II, Tehran 1332/41 H.Š.   |
| SK          | Shafīʿī Kadkanī, <i>Šavar-i Khīyāl dar Shiʿr-i Fārsī</i> , Tehran 1350 H.Š. |
| SS          | Bahār, <i>Sabkshināst</i> , Tehran 1337/8.                                  |
| S va S      | Furūzānfar, <i>Sukhan va Sukhanvarān</i> , Tehran 1308-1312 H.Š.            |

<sup>1</sup> Handbuch, p. 83ff.

<sup>2</sup> Handbuch, p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> Handbuch IV ii 1, p. 100. See this section for e.g. the *Siāsatnāmeḥ*.

## INTRODUCTION

The dominant scene of the early period of Persian literature is the Eastern region of the Iranian area; the North Eastern province of Iran today is called Khurāsān—the poetry of the early period is known as ‘Khurāsānī’. The confines of the Iranian area stretched beyond the present-day frontiers of Iran to areas now in Afghanistan: Herat, Ghazna and Ghur; and now in the Soviet Union: Marv and Balkh, as well as territories across the Oxus—Bukhārā, Samarqand and beyond.

At this time Iranian dynasties were in the process of establishing themselves for the first time since the Arab Conquest; earliest were the Ṭāhirids<sup>1</sup> in Khurāsān; amongst the earliest fragments of Persian poetry extant are eulogies to the Ṣaffārid Amīr Ya‘qūb ibn Laīṣ—the Ṣaffārids,<sup>2</sup> from Sīstān in the South East, gained sway over Khurāsān and over Fārs in the South. The Sāmānids,<sup>3</sup> with their capital at Bukhārā, gave in the words of Minorsky,<sup>4</sup> ‘a mighty impulse to Persian poetry and historiography which echoed all over Persia.’ Independent dynasties made their appearance in the North and West of Iran too; in the Caspian area the Ziyārids<sup>5</sup> and in Rayy, Shiraz and Baghdad the Būyids.<sup>6</sup>

Later a series of Turkish dynasties usurped the power of the Iranian kingdoms, but the newcomers in turn lent their patronage to literature. The Qārākhānids and Ghaznavids<sup>7</sup> were among these, and the court of Maḥmūd of Ghazna became a glittering assemblage of scholars and poets. They were in turn supplanted by the Seljūqs<sup>8</sup> who later struggled with the Khvārazmshāhs.<sup>9</sup>

The culture of the Eastern region developed in a colourful and cosmopolitan atmosphere; underlying all, the old Zoroastrian culture of Iran; Zoroastrians were in point of fact a not inconsiderable minority for some time after the Arab Conquest. The *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* records poetry recited to the Ṣaffārids by Zoroastrians at the fire-temple of Karkūy.<sup>10</sup> Daqīqī who began

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<sup>1</sup> 821-73.

<sup>2</sup> From 867.

<sup>3</sup> From 875.

<sup>4</sup> *Iranica*, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup> From 935.

<sup>6</sup> From 949.

<sup>7</sup> From 997.

<sup>8</sup> From 1063.

<sup>9</sup> From 1098.

<sup>10</sup> See p. 15.

the composition of the *Shāhnāmeḥ* is thought by some to have been a Zoroastrian; the source used by Firdausī for the *Shāhnāmeḥ* was the prose version produced by four Zoroastrians at the direction of Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd ar-Razzāq.<sup>11</sup> The Arabs brought with them their Islamic faith whose central focus was the Qur’ān and their language which was widely used in writing; in the days of the Sāmānids it was decided after reference to the religious authorities that it would be proper to translate the Commentary on the Qur’ān by Ṭabarī into Persian. On the Arabic poetical forms the new Persian poetry was largely modelled; the *qaṣīdeḥ* for example became the main poetic form; eulogies in this form are among the earliest examples of poetry. Greek influence was already present in Middle Persian literature and continued for example in the shape of the Alexander legend.

The culture of the Eastern Iranian world was also in contact with Central Asian and Indian influences. Indian influence, albeit through Pahlavī and Arabic translation, is to be seen in the book of fables *Kalīleh o Dimneh*.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> See p. 74.

## POETRY

### INTRODUCTION

The new Iranian rulers and their Turkish successors prided themselves on being patrons of literature. In the field of poetry this meant that the poet attached himself to a court in the hope of becoming a handsomely-endowed court poet. Thus the role of minstrel characterizes the Persian poet in this period; Dr. Mary Boyce has pointed out<sup>1</sup> that the Persian language had a term for 'minstrel' but took the word for poet, *shā'ir* from Arabic. The poet took his part in the life of the court, even travelling with the ruler on his campaigns.<sup>2</sup> The festivals of *Naurūz*, New Year, and *Mihregān*, the Autumn festival, were occasions for poetic offerings as well as the triumphs of the rulers. A more private face of the poet showed in the *ghazal*, or short lyric, and the *rubā'i*, the four-line poem familiar to the West in the *Rubā'iyyāt* of 'Umar Khayyām. The *maṣnavī* or long poem in rhyming couplets, dealt with romantic or mystic subjects or, as in the best-known *maṣnavī* poem of its time, the *Shāhnāmeḥ*, with the heroic legends and history of Iran.

Thus a vast poetic literature was produced, astonishing in its volume and vitality. Well might 'Irāqī' write that on being told 'Over and over again has everyone according to their whim composed *ghazal*,<sup>4</sup> *qīṭ'eh*<sup>5</sup> and *qaṣīdeḥ* in plenty: if you have ample stock, introduce a new, striking line into this market,' he replies, 'All have had their say: what remains unsaid? Who am I? How far will my words carry?'

The aspiring poet had his attention relentlessly directed towards the works of his predecessors and contemporaries, for like the minstrel's calling that of the poet was very much a craft. Niẓāmī-yi 'Arūzī in the *Chahār Maqāleh*<sup>3</sup> writes that the crowning advantage of poetry is that it ensures permanence of renown both for the poet and for his patron; however the poet will not attain to the stage of producing work of the required calibre unless 'in the prime of his youth and in his young days he commits to memory twenty thousand verses of the poetry of the classical poets, and runs his eyes over ten thousand words of the works of recent writers, constantly reading the *Dīvāns* of the

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<sup>1</sup> 'The Parthian gōsān and Iranian Minstrel Tradition', JRAS 1957.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Doubt has been cast on the attribution of these words to 'Irāqī; see Baldick, *Studia Iranica* II, 1973.

<sup>4</sup> On these terms see below, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> GMS Students' Edition, p. 34.

masters and learning them by heart, to see how their tackling and mastering the pitfalls and subtleties of versification was managed, so that the methods and varieties of poetry become second nature to him and the faults and virtues of poetry become engraved upon the page of his reason.' He is recommended to proceed further to the study of prosody, criticism and translation under a knowledgeable teacher.

Individual poets are mentioned as having been adept musicians also, among them Rūdakī, who is associated with the minstrel of Khusrou Parvīz the Sassanian, Bārbad.<sup>6</sup>

The forms developed and used by the poets of the early period were to last for a thousand years, for still today poets following the traditional style use the old forms of *ghazal*, *qaṣīdeh* and so forth side by side with writers who have eschewed the classical metre, rhyme and form (but see p. 139).

The collected works of a poet are called his *Dīvān*. For example the *Dīvān* of Vaḥshī-yi Bāfaqī<sup>7</sup> opens with *ghazal*, then follow *qaṣīdeh*, *qit'eh*, *tarkīb-band*, *tarjī'-band*, *rubā'ī* and *maṣnavī*<sup>8</sup>. The convention is for poems of the same type to be arranged in order of the last letter of the rhyme.

### *Qaṣīdeh*

The *qaṣīdeh* is written in lines of two hemistichs (*bait* is the term for the whole line, *miṣra'* for the hemistich). The rhyme is internal in the first line, i.e. the two hemistichs rhyme together; then the rhyme passes down the poem at the end of the second hemistich of each line. The poem opens with a lyrical passage, *nasīb*, *tashbīb* or *taghazzul*, in which Spring or the sweetheart may be celebrated; then after the 'transition' or *gurīzgāh* to mention of the poet's patron, the patron is eulogized in the section known as *madḥ* or panegyric, which may end with the *du'ā* or prayer for the patron.

The *qaṣīdeh* of Farrukhī dedicated to Abū 'l-Muẓaffar of Chaghāniyān and describing his branding-ground, as quoted by Niẓāmī-yi 'Arūzī in the *Chahār Maqāleh* may serve as an example:

The plain its head in silk of blue is covering,  
The mountains in shot silk are swaggering  
The earth is scented as the musk-deer's pod,  
The willow's parrot-leaves are trembling.  
At dawn the breeze had Spring upon its breath—

<sup>6</sup> Browne, LHP I, p. 17: see p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> See p. 148.

<sup>8</sup> See below.

How sweet the breeze, how exquisite the scent of Spring!  
 You'd swear the wind had musk upon its sleeve,  
 The garden with gay dolls were juggling.  
 The rose demure in necklace of white pearls,  
 The Judas-tree with ruby ear-rings tinkling.  
 Since from the rose-tree cups of ruby wine have bloomed  
 Down from the plane five-fingered hands are dangling.  
 Garden in rainbows clad, each branch of rainbow tint,  
 Water of pearly-hue, clouds pearl-strings showering.  
 You would have sworn the gardens full of beauties gay  
 In royal panoply were nobles sauntering.  
 The royal branding ground so fair and grand to see  
 That Time itself has found its grandeur dazzling.  
 Grass upon grass like sphere on heavenly sphere,  
 Tent upon tent like silver castles nestling.  
 Drunken in every tent sleeps lover with his love:  
 Friend with his friend upon the grass foregathering.  
 Sweetly across the grass harps nimbly fingered twang,  
 Through every tent the wine-boys' toast is echoing.  
 Sweethearts embrace and kiss, the beauties flirt and scold,  
 Minstrels with lutes the drowsy wakening.  
 By the pavilion of the prince, to heat the brands  
 Huge as the sun a fire is crackling.  
 Flames like a banner made of gold brocade  
 Hot as young blood, yellow as gold are flickering.  
 Brands, each a coral branch of ruby red  
 Like pomegranate seeds in fire are smouldering.  
 Boys rubbing sleepy eyes stand rank on rank,  
 Horses for branding queue string after string.  
 On his fleet charger sits the hero prince  
 Lasso like some Isfandiyār<sup>9</sup> manoeuvring,  
 Twisting like curls of beauties' perfumed hair,  
 Firm as an old friend's compact victims circling.  
 Abū 'l-Muẓaffar Shāh and all his retinue  
 Happy their every wish and whim are savouring.  
 Each time he ropes a colt within his long lasso  
 Face, flank and shoulder with his name are sizzling.  
 What one hand brands the other gives away,  
 Poets and guests with bridle honouring.

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<sup>9</sup> See p. 29.

Later on with the Şūfī Sanāʿī and the Ismāʿīlī Nāṣir-i Khusrou the *qaṣīdeh* is used as the vehicle for a message.

### *Ghazal*

Shams-i Qais in the *Muʿjam*<sup>10</sup> refers to a literal Arabic sense of the word *ghazal* as 'amorous talk with women'; mention of the beauty of the beloved and description of the states of love, he writes, is termed '*ghazal*' whilst poetry of this kind prefaced to eulogies is called '*naṣīb*'.<sup>11</sup> The *ghazal*, Shams-i Qais goes on, should be written in a pleasant metre; its purpose is to delight the mind, so distasteful words should be avoided in the poem. The *ghazal* is generally of four to fourteen lines, the rhyme being internal in the first *bait* or pair of half-lines, and thereafter running down the poem at the end of each second half-line. The last *bait* is called the *takhalluṣ*, which is also the term for the nom-de-plume of the poet; it became the convention for the poet to sign the *ghazal* in the concluding *bait* with his nom-de-plume.

The melody of the *ghazal* leads the reader—or rather, as Persian poetry is pre-eminently recited or sung, the hearer into a magical world. If there is a scene, it will be set in the garden or in the winehouse. Spring has come and the rose flaunts its ephemeral beauty to the distraction of the nightingale. To the sad music of the lute the poet sings of love—but love hopeless, fatal; over and over again he reproaches the sweetheart for her faithlessness and cruelty; crazed by the scent of the sweetheart brought to him by the morning breeze, he laments the fate of his broken heart and dwells on the bitterness and profusion of his tears. At times the vein is lighter—in the Spring garden friends take their pleasure by the cool bank of the stream while musicians play and beauties pour ruby-coloured wine. Ever present, however, like a sad knell, is the motif of the transitoriness of life, reminders of which crowd in upon the poet at the very moment of Nature's 'golden pomp'.

The *ghazal* is a personal poem where the poet speaks in the first person and addresses his sweetheart in the second. It is an esoteric genre in which the poet is cast tragically in the role of *Majnūn*; a pathetic figure, far from his sweetheart, he broods endlessly on all the facets of his hopeless love. This mis-en-scène lent itself ideally to the purpose of the Şūfīs<sup>12</sup> and indeed the introduction of mystic symbolism so profoundly affected the *ghazal* that it became impossible for even a conventional *ghazal* to be written without it.

<sup>10</sup> Ed. Qazvīnī and Browne, GMS X p. 387.

<sup>11</sup> The terms *tashbīb* and *taghazzul* are also used; on the connection of the Persian *ghazal* with the *naṣīb*. Arberry, *Fifty Poems of Ḥāfiẓ*, Cambridge 1953, p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> See p. 91.

There is no end to the *ghazal* form—even today its themes are sung in *ghazals* harking back in style to centuries long past. It is a language apart, instantly recognizable and temptingly repeatable.<sup>13</sup> The art declined, as Professor Yarshater writes, ‘from the moment in Persian literature when the masters caught the perfection of the haunting melody of the lovesong and set it down for ever with an effortlessness not again to be attained.’

### *Maṣnavī*

The *Maṣnavī* is a long poem in rhyming hemistichs.<sup>14</sup> It is an Iranian form; the Yashts or hymns of the Avesta are somewhat similar in form, consisting of metrical lines, not however rhyming. As early as Rūdakī we have traces of *maṣnavī* poems.<sup>15</sup> Firdausī used this form for the *Shāhnāmeḥ*. Fragments of two *maṣnavī* of ‘Unṣurī survive.<sup>16</sup> Asadī wrote the epic *Garshāspnāmeḥ* in *maṣnavī* form.<sup>17</sup> The romantic *maṣnavī Varqeh o Gulshāh* of ‘Ayyūqī<sup>18</sup> was followed by the *Vīs o Rāmīn* of Fakhr ad-Dīn Asad Gurgānī<sup>19</sup> in the middle of the eleventh century. This in turn served as the inspiration for the romantic *maṣnavīs* of Niẓāmī of Ganjeh.<sup>20</sup>

Writers of *maṣnavī*, such as Gurgānī and Firdausī, break into their narrative with great effect to ruminate on Fate or love. The Ṣūfī poets from Sanāʾī onwards made liberal use of the *maṣnavī* form; an early example is the *Ḥadiqat al-Ḥaqīqat* of Sanāʾī,<sup>21</sup> which was followed by ‘Aṭṭār with *maṣnavīs* like the *Ilāhīnāmeḥ*<sup>22</sup> and the *Asrār-nāmeḥ*.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps most famous of all are the *Maṣnavī* of Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī,<sup>24</sup> a poem on a huge scale traditionally called the Qurʾān in Persian<sup>25</sup> and the long *Shāhnāmeḥ*, the epic poem begun by Daqīqī<sup>26</sup> and finished as the work of a lifetime by Firdausī.<sup>27</sup>

The *maṣnavī* has been seen by some as fulfilling to some degree the role of the drama in Classical Persian literature. The *Shāhnāmeḥ* is recited publicly

<sup>13</sup> See e.g. p. 114.

<sup>14</sup> Or *miṣraʿ*. See p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> See p. 14.

<sup>16</sup> See p. 28.

<sup>17</sup> See p. 39 and Ṣafā, *Ḥamāseh-sarāʾī dar Īrān*, Tehran 1333 H.Š.

<sup>18</sup> See p. 38.

<sup>19</sup> See p. 35.

<sup>20</sup> See Maḥjūb, *Vīs o Rāmīn*, Introduction. On the *maṣnavī*, Maḥjūb, *Maṣnavī-sarāʾī*, NDAT 15, 1342 H.Š.

<sup>21</sup> See p. 18.

<sup>22</sup> See p. 123.

<sup>23</sup> See p. 56.

<sup>24</sup> See p. 125.

<sup>25</sup> See p. 102.

<sup>26</sup> See p. 21.

<sup>27</sup> See p. 22.

by professional *naqqāl* or 'reciters' who heighten the dramatic effect by providing 'noises off' to accompany battle scenes and by breaking into song—they are fond, too, of introducing the vocabulary of the twentieth century to enliven the occasion.

The subjects of the romantic *maṣnavī* are drawn from Arabic as well as from Persian sources; from pre-Islamic Iran for example come the stories of *Vīs o Rāmīn* and *Khusrou o Shīrīn*; from Arabic sources *Lailī o Majnūn* and *Yūsuf o Zulaikhā*.

A *maṣnavī* is divided into sections, which often receive decorative headings in the manuscripts; conventionally the poem opens with a section invoking the blessing of God and singing his praises; there follows a section in praise of the prophet Muḥammad; the poet's Patron is later eulogized, and there is frequently a section 'On the reason for the composition of the book.'

The *Maṣnavī* of Rūmī begins with a Preface in Arabic. The discursive nature of Rūmī's poem and the use by the Sūfīs of the anecdote are well illustrated by the names of the opening sections of the poem; (one may note the absence of any section eulogizing a patron). After the Arabic preface there follows abruptly the opening line:

Listen to the reed as it tells its tale...

Then there follow:<sup>28</sup>

Story of the King's falling in love with a handmaiden and buying her  
 Story of the greengrocer and the parrot  
 Story of the Jewish King who for bigotry's sake used to slay the Christians  
 Story of the Caliph's seeing Lailā  
 Story of the Jewish King resumed  
 Story of another Jewish King  
 How the mouth remained awry of a man who pronounced the name of  
     Muhammad derisively  
 Story of the Jewish King resumed  
 How the beasts of the chase told the lion to trust in God and cease from  
     exerting himself  
 How 'Azrāīl looked at a certain man and how that man fled to the palace of  
     Solomon  
 Story of the lion resumed  
 Commentary on a Tradition  
 How the ambassador of Rūm came to 'Umar  
 On the sense of 'Let him who desires to sit with God, sit with the Šūfīs,'  
 and so on.

<sup>28</sup> Titles from R. A. Nicholson's translation (GMS IV, 2).

*Rubāʿī*

The *rubāʿī* is familiar to the Western reader from Fitzgerald's version of the *Rubāʿīyyāt* of ʿUmar Khayyām.<sup>29</sup> In fact the *Divāns* of most Persian poets contain *rubāʿīyyāt*. The smallest of the stock poetic forms, it has the peculiarity of always being written in the same metre. The *rubāʿī* as its Arabic name implies is of four lines; all four may rhyme together, or the third line may not rhyme with the other three, thus either A-A-A-A or A-A-B-A. The form and metre are thought to be Iranian in origin. Minorsky has suggested that the metre as defined by the prosodists<sup>30</sup>:

may in reality be:

— — — — —  
— — — — —  
— — — — —  
— — — — —

Masʿūd-i Saʿd-i Salmān has a *rubāʿī*:

My tears have gone the colour of your cheeks  
My luck as jet-black as your lock has gone:  
My world is straitened narrow as your mouth.  
My soul is like your heart all turned to stone.

This well illustrates the way in which poets infused a personal theme into the the *rubāʿī*—Masʿūd spent long years in prison.<sup>31</sup>

Similarly Saʿdī lends a characteristic flash of wit to the *rubāʿī*:

That graceful cypress swayed into my view,  
First stole my heart, then trampled on her prize.  
Those laughing eyes trap the unwary heart:  
How not to lose your heart? Shut both your eyes!

*Qitʿeh*

This somewhat underrated Persian poetic form consists of a short poem in which the hemistichs of the opening line do not rhyme together, the rhyme coming at the end of the second hemistich. It is by way of being more informal than the other varieties of poem and is also used for didactic purposes.

The *qitʿeh* of Ibn Yamīn<sup>32</sup> are celebrated.

For years and years around this mortal world  
I hurried madly like the wind  
I wore my wretched body to a thread

<sup>29</sup> See p. 43.

<sup>30</sup> This scheme is susceptible of numerous variations.

<sup>31</sup> See p. 40.

<sup>32</sup> See p. 54.

Hoping a faithful friend to find  
But after all my search and questioning  
Not one in all of human kind!

Other forms include *tarjībānd* and *tarkībānd* (long poems formed by *ghazals* with a refrain), *marṣīeh* (elegy), *tārīkh* (chronogram) and more.

### *Tazkireh*

Poetry was collected along with biographies of poets in anthologies known as *tazkireh*. A good example is the *Lubāb al-Albāb*<sup>33</sup> of Muḥammad ‘Aufī (also author of the *Javāmi‘ al-Ḥikāyāt*<sup>34</sup>), which dates possibly from 1221-2<sup>35</sup> and is thought to be the earliest of its kind.<sup>36</sup> Nūr ad-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ṭāhir ibn Usmān al-‘Aufī was born in Bukhara.<sup>37</sup> He studied there and travelled, amongst other places, to Samarqand, Khvārazm, Marv, Nīshāpūr, Herāt, Sīstān, Ghazna, Lahore and Delhi. It is stated in the *Tārīkh-i Guzīdeh* that ‘Aufī died at the beginning of the Mongol Conquest.<sup>38</sup>

The work opens with a preface; Chapter I is on Poetry and the Art of the Poet and contains this elegant passage:<sup>39</sup>

‘Diction is a fountain of the water of life whose brilliance ever shines from the darkness of the ink-well; the Khizr<sup>40</sup> of Prose and Verse gains life from it: when the Alexander of the Pen, who has two horns,<sup>41</sup> seeks it, he brings from the murk of the ink-well pearls and jewels: one variety are fair-faced beauties with flowing hair (this they term Prose); another consists of sweethearts with veiled faces (this they term Poetry); the natures of those who court these sweethearts vary: some sport with the wide-eyed Persian maids of Prose: others dally with the slit-eyed Turkish maids of Poetry’.

Chapter II is on the literal meaning of *shī‘r*, ‘poetry’, which ‘Aufī equates with *‘ilm*, ‘learning.’

Chapter III discusses who was the first person to compose poetry; ‘Aufī quotes a disputed theory that this was Adam. Chapter IV discusses who was

<sup>33</sup> Ed. E.G. Browne and Muḥammad Qazvīnī, London/Leiden 1903-6; ed. Sa‘īd Nafīsī, Tehran 1334-5.

<sup>34</sup> See p. 78.

<sup>35</sup> HIL, p. 453.

<sup>36</sup> HIL, *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> LAN, p. xxii

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xx.

<sup>39</sup> LAN, p. 11.

<sup>40</sup> The guardian of the water of life.

<sup>41</sup> *Zū‘l-Qarnain*.

the first to compose Persian poetry—‘Aufī subscribes to the tradition that this was Bahrām Gūr the Sassanian King. Chapter V is on the poetry of Kings and Sultans, Chapter VI on that of Vazirs and statesmen. A charming *qiṣ‘eh* is attributed to Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan Maimandī, the vazir of Maḥmūd of Ghazna:

‘Command!’ said Youth to me:  
 ‘My friend, one moment stay!’  
 ‘I must be on my way—  
 But you come presently!’  
 Try as you will with might and main,  
 Lost youth will not come back again.<sup>42</sup>

Verses are attributed to the Niẓām al-Mulk, the great vazir of the Seljūq dynasty; the author of the *Chahār Maqāleh*, Niẓāmī-yi ‘Arūzī, observes that the Niẓām al-Mulk showed scant predilection for poets since he himself had little talent for poetry.

Chapter VII deals with religious dignitaries; Chapters VIII to XI with poets of the various Persian dynasties, and Chapter XII with dignitaries of ‘Aufī’s own court.<sup>43</sup>

Writers of *tazkireh* have been much criticized for their seemingly irrelevant style of diction—Ferté writes of the compiler of a *tazkireh*, ‘Tout est d’égale valeur à ses yeux, l’or pur et le plomb vil, ou plutôt il n’y a que métal précieux, d’aloi irréprochable.’

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<sup>42</sup> LAN, p. 63.

<sup>43</sup> The court of Naṣīr ad-Dīn Qabācheh in India, LAN, p. ix.

CHAPTER ONE  
BEGINNINGS TO FIRDAUSĪ

*Introductory*

In the early period, to which this chapter is devoted, there occur small poems in the form of delicate vignettes, charming in their simplicity. By and large, however, the *qaṣīdeh* is the main form of the period.<sup>1</sup>

In the poem of Rūdakī on p. 25 we can see some of the motifs which are to haunt Persian poetry for centuries to come—the transitoriness of life (line 1);<sup>2</sup> the philosophy of ‘carpe diem’ (line 3) and in the last line the motif of wine.

At the end of the period is found the *Shāhnāmeḥ* of Firdausī, not by any means the first Persian epic to be attempted<sup>3</sup> but enjoying a unique place in Persian literature. The *maṣnavī* form<sup>4</sup> in which the *Shāhnāmeḥ* is written was well established before the time of Firdausī,<sup>5</sup> although much of the poetry of the early period has either not survived or is in a fragmentary state.

*Early Poetry*

Only fragmentary information is available about the earliest poets in Persian. Tradition ascribes the first verse to Bahrām Gūr (Vahrām V the Sassanian king) but here we would have to do obviously with poetry originally in Pahlavī. The *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* quotes verses gleaned from Zoroastrians at Karkūy in Sīstān.<sup>6</sup> Abū Ḥafṣ Sughdī, a musician of note, is mentioned by Shams-i Qais in the *Mu‘jam*<sup>7</sup> as being reported to be the first poet but this is doubted by Lazard.<sup>8</sup> Also mentioned in the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* is Yazīd ibn Mufarrigh.<sup>9</sup> Ṭabarī quotes some verses from Balkh, c. 727 A.D.<sup>10</sup> Verses are quoted in the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* composed by Muḥammad ibn Vaṣīf in honour of

<sup>1</sup> Shaftīrī Kadkanī (SK p. 364) thinks that smaller poems quoted from writers of this period are in fact fragments of *qaṣīdeh*.

<sup>2</sup> A motif already found in Middle Persian writing.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> S I, p. 143; PPP, p. II (where Lazard suggests that these verses are Persian transcriptions of pre-Islamic poetry); Bahār, SS II, p. 21; *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* ed. Bahār, p. 37.

<sup>7</sup> Ed. Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazvīnī, GMS X p. 170.

<sup>8</sup> PPP, p. 10. Discussion of other early material *ibid.*, p. 11 n. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Ed. Bahār, pp. 95-6. Zarrīnkūb, Yaghma Yr. 11 No. 7, discusses a poem held by him and Shaftīrī Kadkanī to be earlier.

<sup>10</sup> S I, p. 145.

the Šaffārid Ya‘qūb ibn Laiṣ dating from about 865 A.D.<sup>11</sup> Ṭabarī mentions Muḥammad ibn al-Ba‘īṣ (d. 849-50 A.D.).<sup>12</sup> The *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā* mentions mourning songs for Siyāvush in the dialect of Bukhārā.<sup>13</sup> Lazard doubts<sup>14</sup> the theory, supported by Rypka,<sup>15</sup> that the verses quoted by ‘Aufī in the *Lubāb al-Albāb*<sup>16</sup> purporting to be by ‘Abbās of Marv and to have formed part of a *qaṣīdeh* written to greet the Caliph Ma’mūn in 809 are genuine.

Bassām-i Kurd is mentioned by the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*<sup>17</sup> as a Khārijite at the time of the Šaffārid Ya‘qūb ibn Laiṣ and some verses of his are quoted. In the same passage is mentioned Muḥammad ibn Mukhallad with some of his verses. Maḥmūd Varrāq is mentioned by Hidāyat in the *Majma‘ al-Fuṣahā* as contemporary with the last Ṭāhirid Amīr, Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir (862-873).<sup>18</sup>

Firūz Mashriqī was a contemporary of ‘Amr-i Laiṣ the Šaffārid (879-900).<sup>19</sup>

The arrow is a bird of prey  
That hunts down human souls for food;  
The vulture gave it feathers, so  
It has for guests the vulture’s brood<sup>20</sup>.

Abū Salīk of Gurgan<sup>21</sup> was also a contemporary of ‘Amr-i Laiṣ.

Farālāwī<sup>22</sup> was born at the beginning of the 9th century A.D.

Ḥanzaleh of Bādghīs<sup>23</sup> is mentioned by Nizāmī-yi ‘Arūzī in the *Chahār Maqāleh*;<sup>24</sup> the Amīr Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdullāh Khuḡistānī is supposed to have been inspired by some verses of his, which the author of the *Chahār Maqāleh* quotes, to aspire to higher things than the calling of an ass-herd; he rises to be ruler of Khurāsān (875-882)<sup>25</sup> after serving the Ṭāhirids and Šaffārids.

Mas‘ūdī of Marv wrote a verse *Shāhnāmeḥ* before 936.<sup>26</sup> He is mentioned by Maqdisī and Tha‘libī.

<sup>11</sup> S I, p. 162; PPP, p. 12; Tārīkh-i Sīstān ed. Bahār, p. 210.

<sup>12</sup> PPP, p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> S I, p. 146.

<sup>14</sup> PPP, p. 11.

<sup>15</sup> HIL, p. 135.

<sup>16</sup> Ed. Naḡfī, p. 21. Rypka quotes an identification by Barthold of ‘Abbās of Marv with Abū ḡl-Yanbaghī al-‘Abbās ibn Tarkhān, verses of whom are quoted by Ibn Khurdādhbih. HIL, p. 135.

<sup>17</sup> S I, p. 163; PPP, p. 18; Tārīkh-i Sīstān ed. Bahār, p. 211.

<sup>18</sup> S I, p. 178; PPP, p. 19.

<sup>19</sup> S I, p. 178; PPP, p. 19; LAN, p. 241.

<sup>20</sup> LAN, *ibid*.

<sup>21</sup> S I, p. 179; PPP, p. 19; LAN p. 242.

<sup>22</sup> S I, p. 397; LAN, p. 244; PPP, p. 21.

<sup>23</sup> PPP, p. 17; S I, pp. 173, 177.

<sup>24</sup> G. M. S. Students’ Edition, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> PPP, *ibid*.

<sup>26</sup> PPP, p. 22; S I, p. 372.

<sup>27</sup> Sa‘īd Naḡfī, Aḡvāl o Ash‘ār-i Rūdakī, p. 296.

Rūdakī, Abū ‘Abdullāh Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥakīm ibn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ādam,<sup>27</sup> the renowned poet of the Sāmānid period, died 940/1.<sup>28</sup> He may have been blind at the latter part of his life;<sup>29</sup> some sources say that he was born blind. His chief patron was Amīr Naṣr ibn Aḥmad the Sāmānid, about whom Niẓāmī-yi ‘Arūzī tells an anecdote in the *Chahār Maqāleh* in which the Amīr is captivated by the charms of Herāt whilst the court and the army are desperate to return to Bukhārā. Rūdakī is persuaded to recite a *qaṣideh* by which the Amīr is so affected that he mounts a horse and sets straight off for Bukhārā.

There has been some confusion between Rūdakī and Qaṭrān leading to the inclusion of verses of each poet in the *Dīvān* of the other, possibly due to a similarity of the names of two of their patrons. Not many of the vast amount of verses traditionally ascribed to Rūdakī have survived, giving a sadly ironic overtone to the verses of Sharīf Mukhalladī Gurgānī quoted by Niẓāmī-yi ‘Arūzī in the *Chahār Maqāleh*:

Sāsān and Sāmān—only names!  
Their royal houses left great store  
And treasures of worldly wealth  
All now no more.

What has remained? The eulogies  
of Rūdakī, their accolade  
And Bārbad’s melody and all  
The modes he made.

Rūdakī is said to have been an accomplished musician and to have had a melodious voice.<sup>30</sup>

Rūdakī wrote a *Dīvān*<sup>31</sup>, *maṣnavī* comprising at least *Katīleh o Dimneh*;<sup>32</sup> *Sindbādnāmeḥ*,<sup>33</sup> ‘*Arā’is an-Nafā’is*.<sup>34</sup> He appears to have written other *maṣnavī* as well; there is uncertainty about another title, *Dourān-i Āfiāb*.<sup>35</sup> Only fragments from these *maṣnavī* have survived.<sup>36</sup> Parts of couplets from a

<sup>27</sup> S I, p. 377: Nafīṣī, LAN, p. 564.

<sup>28</sup> S I, p. 376.

<sup>29</sup> Browne, LHP I, p. 13, LAN, p. 246.

<sup>31</sup> Poems, Persian text with Russian translation, Moscow 1964; Āṣār-i Rūdakī, ed. Mirzoyev, Stalinabad 1958; Sa‘īd Nafīṣī, Aḥvāl o Ash‘ār-i Rūdakī, Tehran 1341 H.Š.

<sup>32</sup> Nafīṣī, op. cit., p. 425.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 434.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 433.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 427.

<sup>36</sup> Collected in Nafīṣī, op. cit.

poem on Bilauhar and Būdāsaf survive in a very old Manichaean manuscript.<sup>37</sup>

The world is only empty air  
 A bedtime story full of lies.  
 Forget the world—live free of care  
 With a black pair of dancing eyes.  
 Welcome whatever fate may bring:  
 Have no regret for anything:  
 Here is my world—her scented curl;  
 Here is my fate—my fairy girl.  
 The lucky with their wealth are free—  
 The miser leaves it all behind.  
 The world is only cloud and wind—  
 Wine! Let whatever will be, be!<sup>38</sup>

Shahīd Balkhī<sup>39</sup> wrote in the period of the Sāmānids (873-999) and among the objects of his eulogy was Naṣr ibn Aḥmad (864-892). He is said to have died in 936/7. Rūdakī wrote an elegy on his death.<sup>40</sup> He was a philosopher and a calligraphist.

Learning and wealth are narcissus and rose—  
 Never together in bloom in one bed:  
 He who is learned will never be rich;  
 He who is rich has not much in the head.<sup>41</sup>

Abū Ṭayyib Mus‘abī<sup>42</sup> held the offices of Secretary and Vazīr under Naṣr ibn Aḥmad the Sāmānid. He wrote both in Persian and in Arabic.

Abū Shu‘aib Haravī<sup>43</sup> wrote under the Sāmānids.

Abū ‘l-‘Abbās Rabanjanī<sup>44</sup> wrote at the time of Naṣr ibn Aḥmad. Verses of his are quoted by Farrukhī and he is praised in the *Chahār Maqāleh*.

Abū Ishāq Jū‘bārī<sup>45</sup> wrote in the Sāmānid period.

Abū Zar‘eh Mu‘ammirī<sup>46</sup> lived near the time of Rūdakī. He is said to have replied, when asked by the Amīr of Khurāsān whether he wrote poetry like Rūdakī, that he wrote even better, but that royal patronage was a prerequisite.

<sup>37</sup> Boyce, *Handbuch* V ii 1, p. 76.

<sup>38</sup> Poems, Moscow 1964, p. 38.

<sup>39</sup> S I, p. 391; Lazard, PPP, pp. 20, 62-9; LAN, p. 242.

<sup>40</sup> S I, p. 394.

<sup>41</sup> LAN, p. 243.

<sup>42</sup> S I, p. 396; Lazard, PPP, p. 23.

<sup>43</sup> S I, p. 397; LAN, p. 244; Lazard, PPP, p. 30.

<sup>44</sup> S I, p. 398; LAN, p. 248; Lazard, PPP, p. 26.

<sup>45</sup> S I, p. 399; LAN, p. 249.

<sup>46</sup> S I, p. 399; LAN, p. 249.

Khusravān<sup>47</sup> lived before the second half of the 10th century in Khurāsān.

Shākir Bukhārī<sup>48</sup> lived in Transoxiana at the beginning of the 10th century.

Abū Mu'ayyad Balkhī<sup>49</sup> may have been the first poet to write a *Yūsuf o Zulaikhā*. He wrote the *ʿAjāʾib al-Buldān*, 'Wonders of the World' and a prose *Shāhnāmeḥ* of which only the portion on Garshāsp survives.<sup>50</sup>

Bū Shukūr Balkhī<sup>51</sup> lived towards the end of the lifetime of Rūdakī: he wrote a *maṣnavī* poem called *Āfarīnnāmeḥ* of which only fragments survive. He is thought to have written other *maṣnavī* also.

Pretty face, from far away  
Target of my tearful eye,  
Why shoot arrows through my heart?  
'Wound for Wound!' says Destiny.<sup>52</sup>

Ma'arūfī Balkhī<sup>53</sup> eulogized the Sāmānid ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Nūḥ (943-951).

Badīʿ Balkhī<sup>54</sup> was a contemporary of Daqīqī.<sup>55</sup> He may have been confused with another poet called Badāyīʿī who wrote a poem called *Pandnāmeḥ-i Anūshīrvān*.<sup>56</sup>

Munjik Tirmizī<sup>57</sup> wrote at the court of the rulers of Chaghāniyān. Nāṣir-i Khusrou in his *Safarnāmeḥ* mentions that he discussed Munjik with the poet Qaṭrān of Tabrīz.<sup>58</sup>

See the two-coloured rose  
Pearl on cornelian stone:  
Or lying cheek to cheek  
Two lovers all alone.<sup>59</sup>

Tāhir ibn Faḏl Chaghānī<sup>60</sup> was an Amīr of Chaghāniyān.

Āghājī<sup>61</sup> or 'Chamberlain' was a contemporary of Daqīqī<sup>62</sup> who held the office of Amīr.

<sup>47</sup> S I, p. 400; LAN, p. 258.

<sup>48</sup> S I, p. 402.

<sup>49</sup> S I, p. 404; LAN, p. 264.

<sup>50</sup> S I, p. 614.

<sup>51</sup> S I, p. 405; Lazard, PPP, p. 27; LAN, p. 258.

<sup>52</sup> LAN, p. 259.

<sup>53</sup> S I, p. 422; Lazard, PPP, p. 31; LAN, p. 254.

<sup>54</sup> S I, p. 425.

<sup>55</sup> See p. 21.

<sup>56</sup> S I, p. 426; cf. *Chahār Pand i Anūshīrvān* of Ibn Yamīn, see p. 66.

<sup>57</sup> S I, p. 427; LAN, p. 252.

<sup>58</sup> Ed. Nādir Vazīrpūr, p. 7.

<sup>59</sup> LAN, p. 257.

<sup>60</sup> S I, p. 431.

<sup>61</sup> S I, p. 432.

<sup>62</sup> See p. 21.

See the snow army in the air  
 How it flies and flies away  
 As if white pigeons from a hawk  
 In terror wheel in disarray.<sup>63</sup>

Manṭiqī Rāzī died between 976/7 and 990/1.<sup>64</sup> He may have been the first poet writing in Persian in the West of Iran. Badī' az-Zamān Hamadhānī is said to have translated verses of his into Arabic for the Ṣāhib Ismā'īl ibn 'Abbād (938-995),<sup>65</sup> the minister of the Būyids.

Is the moon ill perhaps tonight?  
 She looks so thin that she could cry.  
 A silver shield before, but now  
 A polo-stick across the sky,  
 As if the charger of some chamberlain  
 Had lost a shoe when galloping the plain.<sup>66</sup>

Khusravī Sarakhsī<sup>67</sup> wrote in the 10th century, in both Persian and Arabic. Qamarī Jurjānī<sup>68</sup> was a poet of the Ziyārid dynasty and eulogized Qābūs ibn Vashmgīr (978-1012).

Yūsuf 'Arūzī<sup>69</sup> may have written a book on prosody as well as poetry. He lived in the 10th century.

Abū 'l-'Alā Shushtarī<sup>70</sup> is mentioned by Manūchihrī.<sup>71</sup> He is thought to have written a book on prosody.

Muḥammad 'Abdah<sup>72</sup> the Secretary is mentioned in the *Chahār Maqāleh*.<sup>73</sup> He was Secretary to the Qārākhānid ruler Bughrā Khān, who occupied Bukhārā in 992. He was a poet as well as a Secretary.

Bundār of Rayy<sup>74</sup> wrote both in Persian and in the dialect of Tabaristān.

Kisā'ī Marvazī lived at the end of the Sāmānid and at the beginning of the Ghaznavid period. He was at first a eulogistic poet but repented of this in later life. He was a Shī'ite. Furūzānfar discusses him, S va S, s.v.

<sup>63</sup> LAN, p. 33.

<sup>64</sup> S I, p. 434; LAN, p. 254.

<sup>65</sup> HIL, p. 147.

<sup>66</sup> LAN, pp. 254-5.

<sup>67</sup> S I, p. 436.

<sup>68</sup> S I, p. 438; LAN, p. 257.

<sup>69</sup> S I, p. 440.

<sup>70</sup> S I, p. 441.

<sup>71</sup> See p. 33.

<sup>72</sup> S I, p. 442.

<sup>73</sup> Browne, LHP I, p. 86, HIL, p. 147.

<sup>74</sup> S I, p. 444.

Rābi‘eh bint Ka‘b,<sup>75</sup> a poetess, lived in the 10th century. The story of her love for a slave inspired the 19th century Riżā Qulī Khān Hidāyat, editor of the anthologies *Majma‘ al-Fuṣahā* and *Riāz al-‘Ārifīn*<sup>76</sup> to write a *maṣnavī* called *Gulistān-i Iram*.

Bashshār Marghazī<sup>77</sup> has been confused with the Persian poet in the Arabic language, *Bashshār ibn Burd* (d. 783). Information about him is lacking, though some poetry of his survives.

Abū Maṣṣūr ‘Umāreh<sup>78</sup> of Marv wrote at the end of the Sāmānid and at the beginning of the Ghaznavid period. The mystic Abū Sa‘īd is said to have been so affected by a line of his that he straight away went to pay his respects at his tomb.<sup>79</sup>

Abū ‘l-Faṭḥ Bustī<sup>80</sup> was a bilingual poet at the beginning of the Ghaznavid period.

Abū l-Haiṣam Jurjānī<sup>81</sup> is mentioned by Nāṣir-i Khusrou in the *Jāmi‘ al-Ḥikmatain*. A *qaṣīdeh* of his forms the basis of the *Jāmi‘ al-Ḥikmatain*, as Nāṣir-i Khusrou was asked to write a commentary on it. Abū ‘l-Haiṣam was an Ismā‘īlī, according to Corbin.<sup>82</sup>

Daqīqī (d. between 976 and 981) was a poet of the Sāmānid court. He began the composition of the *Shāhnāme* and wrote the section on Gushtāsp and Zoroaster. He is said to have been a Zoroastrian,<sup>83</sup> a point mentioned by ‘Abbās Iqbāl in his preface to the *Ḥadā‘iq as-Siḥr* of Rashīd Vaṭvāt;<sup>84</sup> Iqbāl there reconstructs from sporadic verses a *qaṣīdeh* of Daqīqī which contains the line:

If I had my wish, I would recite the Zand<sup>85</sup>  
By heart to you as Zoroaster did

and also the lines:

Give me a present, says my love  
Give me those poems of the Kings  
Those lovers’ verses sweetly sung

<sup>75</sup> S I, p. 452.

<sup>76</sup> See HIL, p. 340.

<sup>77</sup> S I, p. 454.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 457.

<sup>79</sup> *Asrār at-Tauḥīd* ed. Ṣafa, p. 280.

<sup>80</sup> S I, p. 459.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 525; Lazard, PPP, p. 24.

<sup>82</sup> *Jāmi‘ al-Ḥikmatain*, Paris/Tehran 1953, p. 49.

<sup>83</sup> This is contested, HIL, p. 153. Mīnovī (*Firdausī va Shi‘r-i Ū*, Tehran 1346 H.Š, p. 64) supports the theory, instancing Daqīqī’s choice of the subject of Zoroaster.

<sup>84</sup> See p. 46.

<sup>85</sup> Or the Avesta, the sacred book of the Zoroastrians.

That they may fill my memory  
 And from the tresses of my hair  
 A jewelled amulet be hung

He is said to have been killed by a slave and Firdausī continued the work of versifying the *Shāhnāmeḥ*, not without criticism of Daqīqī's work. Some have identified Daqīqī with a poet Abū 'Alī Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad of Balkh mentioned by Bīrūnī as having written a *Shāhnāmeḥ*; Ṣafā argues against this identification.<sup>86</sup>

### *Firdausī and the Shāhnāmeḥ*

Firdausī was born between 936 and 941<sup>87</sup> and died in 1020/1 or 1025/6.<sup>88</sup> He was a *dihqān* of the region of Ṭūs in Khurāsān; Mīnovī points out<sup>89</sup> that a member of this local landed aristocracy would have had much to do with administration and would have had important contacts and thus have been in a position to aspire to state office; this, Mīnovī emphasizes, Firdausī eschewed in favour of the task of versifying the Iranian epic.

In Sassanian times there had been composed the *Khvatāynāmak* (*Khudāynāmeḥ*) or Book of Kings, which was translated into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa'.<sup>90</sup> This translation is lost and survives only insofar as it has been used by later writers. In Persian were composed before the time of Firdausī, in prose, *Shāhnāmeḥ* of Abū 'l-Mu'ayyad Balkhī;<sup>91</sup> *Shāhnāmeḥ* of Abū 'Alī Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Balkhī<sup>92</sup> mentioned by Bīrūnī; a poem by Mas'ūdī of Marv;<sup>93</sup> a prose *Shāhnāmeḥ* written by order of Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad ibn 'Abd ar-Razzāq Ṭūsī.<sup>94</sup> This was composed by a group of Zoroastrians under the direction of Abū Maṣṣūr Ma'marī, an official subordinate to 'Abd ar-Razzāq. A Pahlavī text (or texts) was used.<sup>95</sup> It is this work which formed Firdausī's original.<sup>96</sup> The preface to this prose *Shāhnāmeḥ* has survived.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>86</sup> S I, p. 411, where reference is made to Sa'īd Nafīsī, *Sharḥ-i Aḥvāl o Āṣār-i Rūdakī*, p. 1260.

<sup>87</sup> Mīnovī, *Firdausī va Shī'r-i Ū*, p. 35.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51; Spuler, *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, IV ii 1, p. 101; the translation was made about 757 (Minorsky, *Iranica*, p. 260).

<sup>91</sup> See p. 19.

<sup>92</sup> See HIL, p. 157.

<sup>93</sup> See p. 16.

<sup>94</sup> Mīnovī, *Firdausī va Shī'r-i Ū*, p. 52; Minorsky, *Iranica*, p. 261; Ṣafā, *Ḥamāseh-Sarā'ī dar Irān*, pp. 71-269.

<sup>95</sup> Minorsky, *Iranica*, p. 265.

<sup>96</sup> Minorsky, *ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> trans. Minorsky, *Iranica*, p. 265.

Firdausī presented the *Shāhnāme* to Maḥmūd of Ghazna but (so runs the traditional account) owing to an intrigue was paid miserably for it. By the time Maḥmūd had repented of his meanness and sent a handsome payment, and the caravan carrying it was entering one gate of Ṭūs, the coffin of Firdausī was being carried out of another.<sup>98</sup>

The work of versifying the *Shāhnāme* was begun by Daqīqī<sup>99</sup> who wrote the section on Gushtāsp and Zoroaster. He was murdered and the task devolved upon Firdausī.

The poem opens with the story of the Pīshdādī kings, the first legendary dynasty, beginning with Gayomart, first man and first king, who fights the *dēvs* or demons; a prominent member of this dynasty is Jamshīd, already legendary at the time of Zoroaster, who alludes to him in the *Gāthās*;<sup>100</sup> Jamshīd lays claim to divinity and falls from grace to be sawn in two by two *dēvs*; his successor is Żahhāk the dragon king who is not originally evil but is tempted by Ahriman, the satan of Zoroastrianism. When Ahriman kisses Żahhāk's shoulders two snakes grow from them. Meantime the calf-boy Ferīdūn is being fostered by a cow; this motif recurs when the great mace of Ferīdūn bears a cow's head. Ferīdūn overthrows Żahhāk and imprisons him in Mount Damāvand (whence the smoke from the cone of the volcano). The world is divided by Ferīdūn between his sons Īraj, Salm and Tūr, the last being the ancestor of the Turanians, the sworn enemies of Iran. The two brothers of Īraj murder him, thus starting the long feud between Iran and Tūrān.

The accession speech of Manūchihr resembles the *Naqsh-i Rostam* inscription of Darius I, where the Achaemenian king details his martial talents and character and then modestly records that these talents (*hunarā*) have been caused to descend upon him by Ahura Mazdah. Manūchihr similarly says: 'Still with all these talents (*hunarhā*) I am but a slave.' With the reign of Manūchihr begins the period when the kings of Iran are served by a dynasty of Scythian heroes, beginning with Sām, who steal the scene for a large part of the *Shāhnāme*. The *Shāhnāme* in fact presents the reader with a cosmopolitan scene which reminds one of the Iran of today. The heroes of Sīstān, Sām, Zāl, Rostam and Suhrāb play their dramatic roles on the same stage as the kings of Iran and their enemies of Tūrān, notably the Turanian

<sup>98</sup> Chahār Maqāleh of Nizāmī-yi 'Arūzi, GMS Students' Edition, p. 57.

<sup>99</sup> See p. 21.

<sup>100</sup> Yasna 32.8. The kings of the legendary dynasties appear in the Yashts or Hymns of the Avesta. See Boyce, Handbuch VIII i 2 2a I, p. 92. On the question of Daqīqī's source HIL p. 154. Bahār (SS II p. 24) there quoted, in fact merely surmises that the *Shāhnāme* of Abū 'l-Mu'ayyad may have been Daqīqī's source. Massé (Firdousi et l'Épopée Nationale p. 59) considers that Daqīqī and Firdausī used the same source.

king Afrāsiyāb. The Turkish element is strong in Iran today; Persian history is full of the sweep of Turkish invasions across the land and for instance the royal house preceding the late Pahlavī dynasty was of Turkish origin. Iran numbers among its population tribes, both Iranian and Turkish in origin, for example the Kurdish people with their distinctive dress and language and the Qashqāi whose language is Turkī.

The weird arrival of the white-haired baby Zāl, son of Sām, strikes horror into the minds of all and he is exposed in the mountains. The *Štimurgh*, a mysterious bird living in a mountain eyrie, plays a tutelary role in the fortunes of the hero dynasty, whose exploits do not figure in the Avesta. A vivid picture is painted by Firdausī of the *Štimurgh* fostering the baby Zāl whom it finds helpless in the mountains. It brings him up with its own chicks and speaks affectionately to him when he has to return to his father. The *Štimurgh* gives Zāl one of its feathers and tells him to burn it should he ever be in danger—the talisman is later used and the *Štimurgh* appears as rescuer. Later as Sām sits in state he is found to have a feather of the *Štimurgh* depending from his crown.

A charming scene is the conversation between the commander of the royal guard and the group of girls carrying flowers during the courtship of Zāl and Rūdābeh, daughter of the King of Kābul; the gruff castellan addresses the girls in threatening tones clearly intended to tease and receives a gay reply.

During this period the constitutional pattern, so to speak, is one of the King of Iran relying on a hereditary dynasty of warriors, though at one point Rustam rules as king in Tūrān. Zāl details explicitly the respective status of hero and king; of the heroes he says

Not for them is proper royal crown and throne,  
There must be a Shāh victorious, fortunate.

A sharp delineation is given of the pacific character of Aghrēras, brother of the King of Tūrān, Afrāsiyāb, very much at odds with the proud, ruthless personality of the usual hero, somewhat reminiscent of the character of Zard in the later Vīs o Rāmīn of Fakhr ad-Dīn Gurgānī.<sup>101</sup> Aghrēras in fact pays for his pacific demeanour with his life when his brother kills him.

A fantastic episode is the expedition of Rustam to the castle of Sipand, a self-contained community up in the mountains provided with every amenity

<sup>101</sup> See p. 35.

A similar human touch occurs when Manūchīhr feels compunction at the thought of taking the head of Tūr, whom he has killed, to his father, Ferīdūn:

For however far from religion strays the son  
At his death his father's heart burns just the same.

except salt—Rustam employs the Trojan Horse tactic of entering the fastness with his force in the guise of salt traders with their caravan.

You will see a castle whose towers touch the clouds  
Even soaring eagles never venture there  
Rich in grass and water, in brocade and gold  
Teeming with its creatures, animals and men.

The period of the Kayānī dynasty<sup>102</sup> begins with Kai Kobād. Rustam rescues him from the White Demon in Māzanderān and kills the demon. Kai Kobād is succeeded by Kai Kā'ūs who at one point attempts a flight up to heaven on a throne carried by eagles spurred on by pieces of meat. Rustam performs seven feats of heroism called the Haft Khvān.

The episode of Suhrāb and Rustam is known to Western readers from the poem of Matthew Arnold. Rustam meets the Turanian princess Tahmīneh by whom he has a son, Suhrāb. Suhrāb fights with the army of Turan and engages Rustam in combat. Rustam defeats him only to find he has killed his own son.

Siyāvush, son of Kai Kā'ūs, is a tragic figure who has about him the aura of a martyr.<sup>103</sup> He is a kind of bridge character between Iran and Tūrān, being the son of Kai Kā'ūs and of a mother who, though descended from Ferīdūn, is grand-daughter of the Turanian Garšīvaz. Siyāvush finds himself involved in an episode resembling the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife (Yūsuf and Zulaikhā in Islamic sources) when he is tempted by Sūdābeh, wife of Kai Kā'ūs. He goes to Tūrān and is hospitably received by Afrāsiyāb, the king, who gives him a territory to rule. He builds the fortress Kangdīz and the city Siyāvushkert and lays out a hunting ground. Eventually through the intrigues of Garšīvaz fighting breaks out between Afrāsiyāb and Siyāvush. Siyāvush is captured and after some deliberation Afrāsiyāb decides to put him to death. This act provokes a fearful reaction from Iran, whose heroes and troops set out to avenge Siyāvush.

The motif of the feud is a very strong one in the wars of Iran and Tūrān, reminding one of the ferocity of the blood-feud among the Iranian Pashtūns of Pakistan and Afghanistan. As the peace between Iran and Tūrān is about to be shattered again by blood-feud, Firdausī reacts passionately and bursts out against the world—

From your foster-children  
What do you desire?  
Foster-children? Rather  
Waifs with hearts on fire!

<sup>102</sup> See A. Christensen, *Les Kayanides*, Copenhagen 1931.

<sup>103</sup> The place of his murder is described as a sanctuary for mourners. On mourning songs for Siyāvush see p. 16. See also Yūsufī, *MDA Mashad VI* i, 1349 H.Š.

recalling the words of Nāṣir-i Khusrou:

World, if you do not need us, why then give us birth?  
And if you give us birth, why gulp us down?

The son of Siyāvush, Kaikhusrou, is brought up by shepherds in the wilds. Pīrān later brings Kaikhusrou to Afrāsiyāb but tells him to feign madness so that he may appear harmless and not be thought by Afrāsiyāb to represent a threat to him. The scene which follows is one of the most vivid in the *Shāhnāme*:

Afrāsiyāb: Well, young shepherd, what do you know of night and day? What have you been doing with your sheep? How have you counted your goats and ewes?

Kaikhusrou: There is no game about—and I have no bow and arrow.

Afrāsiyāb: How about your teacher? Tell about the good and ill turns of Fate.

Kaikhusrou: Where there is a leopard, the hearts even of men of nimble grip are torn.

Afrāsiyāb: Tell us about Iran, about your town and your parents.

Kaikhusrou: Even a ravening lion will not lay a caravan dog low.

Afrāsiyāb: Will you go from here to Iran, to the King of the Brave?

Kaikhusrou: Out in the mountain and plain a horseman passed me last night.

Afrāsiyāb: (laughing) *You* will never learn secretaryship nor visit vengeance on an enemy!

Professor Mīnovī<sup>104</sup> suggests that Firdausī may have tried his talent on the story of Bīzhan and Manīzheh<sup>105</sup> which is of exceptional charm. Firdausī prefaces it with a vivid account of the way in which he heard it at home. Professor Mīnovī also points out that the syllable *-ā* occurs here at the end of some of the half-lines, a mannerism frequent in poetry before the time of Firdausī (and to a lesser extent later) but not found in the maturer style of Firdausī.

“One dark night, dark as pitch when the stars were nowhere to be seen, I seemed to see Ahriman on every side, like a black snake with open jaws: you would have sworn that the earth had gone to sleep under its pitch black veil; neither note of bird nor call of beast were to be heard. I felt dreary at the long suspense and, jumping up, I called to my maidservant for a lamp.

<sup>104</sup> Firdausī va Shi‘r-i Ū, p. 69.

<sup>105</sup> evidently of Parthian origin.

Out she came to the garden: 'What do you want a light for? Can't you sleep this dark night?' 'No sleep for me!' I replied, 'Bring a lamp like the sun: put it down by me and bring the harp and wine to cheer me.'

Off she went and returned with lamps, wine and fruit. Now she poured wine, now played the harp. The night became like day.

Now hear what she said to me, 'Drink away, and I shall sing you a tale of the olden days. You will be amazed at the doings of the Sphere.' 'Tell it to me,' I said, 'Listen to the tale,' she said, 'and make it into poetry.'<sup>106</sup>

### *The story of Bīzhan and Manīzheh*

Kaikhusrō sat at wine with his nobles: the wine in the cup was for all the world like cornelian of Yaman: fairylike beauties stood in attendance before the King. All of a sudden a chamberlain approached the King and told him that there were waiting outside some men from Armān.<sup>107</sup> They had come to beg for help; they had planted fruit trees in a wood but now the wood was being ravaged by wild boars. 'Which of you nobles will go forth on this quest?' asked Kaikhusrō. There was silence. Then Bīzhan stepped forward and proclaimed himself the faithful servant of the King: he would risk his life on this quest. Giv, his father, tried to dissuade him, but Bīzhan grew angry. Kaikhusrō accepted Bīzhan's offer and sent Gurgīn with him, for he was only a youth and needed someone to guide him. So they departed.

When they reached Armān there was a wild battle and Bīzhan slaughtered the boars. But now Gurgīn proved an ill companion. Ahriman entered his soul and he evilly said to Bīzhan, 'There is a pleasure-ground not far from where we are now. In a fair garden the air is scent-laden, the ground like silk. The rose blooms there, the nightingale sings to it like a Shaman; the garden is full of beautiful maidens, fairest of all is Manīzheh daughter of Afrāsiyāb.<sup>108</sup> If we go there we can take some fairylike beauties back to Kaikhusrō.'

Bīzhan was greatly taken with the plan. He was young—like a youth off he strode. But first he dressed in noble regalia, put on a crown and a magnificent robe. Then he approached the spot and peeped out from a hiding-place at the banquet. Manīzheh espied him and said to her Nurse, 'Go and see who that is—has Siyāvush<sup>109</sup> come to life again, or is it some sprite? Ask him whence he comes.' The Nurse hurried off to Bīzhan. He told her, 'I am Bīzhan. I came from Iran to fight the Boars—I have cut off their heads, I shall take back their

<sup>106</sup> she goes on, 'from this Pahlavī volume'.

<sup>107</sup> A province on the frontier of Iran and Turan.

<sup>108</sup> The King of Tūrān.

<sup>109</sup> See p. 25.

tusks for the King Kaikhusrou'. Then he whispered to the Nurse. 'If you take me to Manīzheh, I shall give you a jewelled cup and this royal robe.'<sup>110</sup>

Back ran the Nurse to Manīzheh and they were soon chattering: 'His face is thus, his stature thus: thus and thus did the Creator fashion him.'

Bīzhan came to the banquet. Manīzheh greeted him with an embrace and enquired about his journey. His feet were washed with musk and rose-water—then they began the feast. Servants stood by with lute and harp. For three days and nights they made merry.

At last it was time to depart. But Manīzheh had not seen her fill of Bīzhan and she saw that he was sad to go. She secretly told her servants to put a drug in his wine to put him to sleep. Then she bade them carry him to the palace of Afrāsiyāb.

Bīzhan woke up and found himself in the palace, with the beautiful Manīzheh in his arms. Manīzheh calmed him when he was distressed: 'Be of good cheer: fate brings men all kinds of fortune: now battle, now the feast'.

They began to feast. But the janitor found out what was going on, and ran to tell King Afrāsiyāb. The King ordered Garsīvaz, one of his nobles, to bring the intruder to him in chains.

Off went Garsīvaz, and heard the sound of music and feasting, but found the door barred. He burst in. There was Bīzhan seated among the women. Bīzhan drew his dagger, but the wise Garsīvaz forbore to engage him in combat. He had him bound and brought him before King Afrāsiyāb.

'Crazy wretch! Why have you come to these parts?' burst out the King. Bīzhan addressed him courteously. 'Your Majesty, I went to sleep under a cypress tree to shelter from the sun. A sprite came, spread her wings and took me into her embrace. Then the cavalcade of the Princess passed, and I saw her in her litter. The sprite laid me in the litter beside her. It was no fault of mine—Manīzheh is innocent.' Afrāsiyāb ordered Bīzhan to be put to death.

But the old Pīrān counselled Afrāsiyāb not to kill Bīzhan. He told the King that the old feud over Siyāvush would be renewed, and warned him not to ignore his advice yet again for fear of dreadful results once more. Afrāsiyāb decided to imprison Bīzhan in a pit instead, and to make Manīzheh serve as his gaoler and take him food daily.

Meanwhile Gurgīn had returned to Iran bearing a lying tale of how Bīzhan had disappeared. Kaikhusrou suspected him and put him in chains. He sent nobles to search for Bīzhan and when they failed to find him, he put on crown and royal robe, prayed to God and looked in his World-seeing Cup. There

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<sup>110</sup> A similar offer is made in *Vis o Rāmīn* (see p. 35) to the Nurse of *Vis* by Rāmīn. There the Nurse contents herself with a single ring as a keepsake.

Kaikhusrō saw all that was to be, the Moon, Saturn, Mars, Venus—and then saw Bīzhan in his pit.

Kaikhusrō sent a letter to the hero Rustam. Rustam set off for Turan, masquerading as a merchant. When he reached there, Manīzheh appealed to him for help. She did not know who he was, and Rustam did not tell her; but he gave her a chicken to take to Bīzhan and in it cunningly concealed his signet ring.

Manīzheh went to the pit taking the chicken for Bīzhan's meal. Then she heard laughter coming up from the pit—she thought Bīzhan had gone mad; but he had found the ring and knew that Rustam was on his way to set him free.

When Rustam and his companions reached the pit, they found a huge stone on its mouth. The nobles tried in vain to move the stone, then Rustam prayed to God for strength and with a mighty heave rolled the stone from the mouth of the pit. Bīzhan was free. Afrāsiyāb gave battle but the Iranians defeated him. They returned to Iran. Kaikhusrō gave a banquet and presented Bīzhan with sumptuous gifts for Manīzheh, 'Live happily with her' said the King, 'Fate is no respecter of persons. The very one she has nurtured she throws into the pit of wretchedness: another she lifts up from the pit onto a throne, and places a jewelled crown upon his head.'"

Kaikhusrō vanishes leaving his suite engulfed in a snowstorm; he is succeeded by Luhrāsp who in turn is followed by Gushtāsp the patron of Zoroaster. This is the section written by Daqīqī.

Isfandiyār son of Gushtāsp becomes the champion of Iran. He is later killed by Rustam in a battle during which Zāl makes use of the talisman of the *Simurgh's* feather.

Rustam is killed by his brother Shighād. The son of Isfandiyār, Bahman, is identified with Artaxerxes Longimanus. Bahman marries his sister Humā who bears him a posthumous son, Dārāb. The brother of Dārāb, Sāsān, is supposed to have been the ancestor of the Sassanians. Dārāb marries the daughter of Philip of Macedon and is the father of Alexander the Great, who defeats the son of Dārāb, Dārā (Darius III).

The exploits of Alexander include his search for the Water of Life and the building of a great wall to oppose the peoples Gog and Magog.

The Parthians, Ashkāniān, are confined to a tiny portion of the poem. Sāsān, a descendant of Bahman, is the shepherd of Bābak governor of Istakhr, near Persepolis, later the Iranian capital of the Sassanians. The son of Sāsān, Ardashīr, becomes the first king of the Sassanian Empire, after eloping from the palace of Ardavān the Parthian king with the courtesan Gulnār and defeating Ardavān in battle.

In a fantastic episode Ardešhīr overcomes the fearful Worm of Kirman. The exploits of the later Bahrām Gūr are described; he is a hunter par excellence and his reign becomes a golden age. Anūshīrvān rules in wisdom and justice. The story of the revolt of Bahrām Chūbīn is recounted; the poem ends with the defeat of the last Sassanian, Yazdigird, by the Arabs.

Firdausī was formerly credited with the authorship of the *maṣnavī Yūsuf o Zulaikha*;<sup>111</sup> Mīnovī has written a strong refutation of this attribution, in the course of which he quotes some verses from the poem and remarks that if Firdausī had produced verse so abysmally bad he would never have been raised to his high place in the Persian hall of poets.<sup>112</sup>

The *Shāhnāme*<sup>113</sup> inspired numerous imitations. The *Bahmannāme* of Īrānshāh ibn Abī ʿl-Khair was published in India;<sup>114</sup> the same author wrote the *Kūshnāme*.<sup>115</sup> These and the *Farāmurz-nāme*<sup>116</sup> date from about the end of the eleventh century.<sup>117</sup>

ʿAyyūqī may have written the *maṣnavī Varqeh o Gulshāh* about 1000<sup>118</sup>; it is described as the earliest Persian romantic epic extant.<sup>119</sup> Rypka believes that ʿAyyūqī wrote another epic as well as panegyric *qaṣīde*.<sup>120</sup> The poem *Varqeh o Gulshāh* tells of the romance of two lovers, *Varqeh*, the son of the shaikh of an Arab tribe, and his cousin Gulshāh. The romance has been compared with the European 'Floire et Blancheflor'.<sup>121</sup> A feature of the poem is the use of *ghazals* interspersed in the *maṣnavī*; Shāfiʿī Kadkanī considers that these may be among the earliest examples of independent *ghazals* in Persian.<sup>122</sup>

Bahrāmī Sarakhsī wrote works on prosody as well as being a poet. Šafā<sup>123</sup> places him in the early Ghaznavid period (c.1000). His works on prosody, *Kanz al-Qaṣīyeh* and *Ghāyat al-ʿArūzain* are highly recommended to the aspiring poet in the *Chahār Maqāleh*.<sup>124</sup> A third such work, *Khujaسته-nāme*, is mentioned by ʿAufī.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Ed. Éthé, London 1908.

<sup>112</sup> *Firdausī va Shiʿr-i Ū*.

<sup>113</sup> Editions of the *Shāhnāme*—ed. Mohl, Paris 1838; ed. Vullers, Lugd. Bat. 1877; ed. Ramazānī, Tehran 1311/1354 H.Š.; revision of Vullers ed., Tehran 1313 H.Š.; ed. Dabīrsiāqī, Tehran 1335 H.Š.; Amīr Kabīr edn., Tehran 1341 H.Š.; ed. Bertels, Moscow 1960; *Dāstān-i Rustam o Suhrāb*, (Suhrāb and Rustam episode) ed. Mīnovī, Tehran 1352 H.Š.

<sup>114</sup> Maḥjūb, NDAT XV; Šafā, *Hamāseh-sarāʾī*, p. 239.

<sup>115</sup> Maḥjūb, *ibid.*; Šafā, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

<sup>116</sup> Šafā, *ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> HIL, p. 163; on the Bānū Gushaspnāme see S II, p. 364, Šafā, *Hamāseh-sarāʾī*, p. 301.

<sup>118</sup> Shāfiʿī Kadkanī, SK, p. 375; ed. Šafā, Tehran 1343 H.Š.; Melikian-Shirvani, *Le Roman de Varqeh et Gulshah* (part tr. and facsimiles of Ms.) Paris 1970.

<sup>119</sup> HIL, p. 177.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> SK, p. 377. <sup>123</sup> I, p. 570.

<sup>124</sup> Students' Edition, p. 34. <sup>125</sup> S I, p. 571.

CHAPTER TWO  
FARRUKHĪ TO MU'IZZĪ

*Introductory*

The period discussed in this chapter is one of the most brilliant in Persian poetry. The *qaṣīdeh* is still the main poetic form; Farrukhī and Manūchihrī, two of its greatest exponents, fall in this period; some of the most remarkable *qaṣīdeh* were written by the highly individual Nāṣir-i Khusrou. Other forms were in use also, not least the *maṣnavī*, a brilliant example of which is the *Vīs o Rāmīn* of Fakhr ad-Dīn Asad Gurgānī.<sup>1</sup> Interest in pre-Islamic subjects by patrons of poetry is reflected both in the *Vīs o Rāmīn* and in the *Garshāspnāme* of Asadī, another *maṣnavī*.<sup>2</sup>

Shafīʿī Kadkanī remarks on the difference between this period and the preceding in the interest shown in the field of abstract poetic thought.<sup>3</sup> He notes the Islamic character of some imagery, appearing side by side with Old Iranian motifs. In fact this dichotomy, reflected incidentally in the Persian language itself with its Persian base and Arabic overlay, is one of the most attractive features of Persian literature; it resembles somewhat the interplay of Classical and Christian motifs in English poetry.



Farrukhī<sup>4</sup> (Abū ʿl-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Julūgh) (d. 1037-8) came from Sīstān. The story of his privations and eventual rise to fame is told by Nizāmī-yi ʿArūzī in the *Chahār Maqāleh*.<sup>5</sup> He found himself with many mouths to feed and petitioned the local ruler for an increase in his stipend. This was not forthcoming, so he kept his ears open for news of some more satisfactory patron. At length he heard of the Amīr Abū ʿl-Muẓaffar Chaghānī in Chaghāniyān<sup>6</sup> in Transoxiana. Arming himself with a *qaṣīdeh*, he joined a caravan and made his way there. When he arrived, the Amīr was at the branding-ground, but his steward

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> SK, p. 322 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Divān*, ed. ʿAbd ar-Rasūlī, Tehran 1311; ed. Muḥammad Dabīrsiaqī, Tehran, 1335.

<sup>5</sup> GMS Students' Edition, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> *Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam*, tr. Minorsky, p. 114. The author notes that the district produces 'a small number of horses.'

Khvājah ‘Amīd Asad was at the court. Farrukhī proffered his *qaṣīdeh* but such was the contrast between the gangling appearance of Farrukhī with his huge turban and inelegant footwear that ‘Amīd Asad could hardly believe that the poem could be the work of this weird rustic. To test him, he told him that the Amīr was at the branding-ground; he would take Farrukhī there, but he was to compose a *qaṣīdeh* apposite to the scene, full of bustle and colour. Then in a somewhat patronizing manner he gives Farrukhī a few pointers to show him how various features of the scene lend themselves to poetic treatment. Farrukhī goes off and composes the *qaṣīdeh*;<sup>7</sup> it makes such an impression on the Amīr that he directs that Farrukhī is to have as many colts as he can catch; but Farrukhī is so affected by the wine he has drunk that after a wild chase he crawls into a wayside building and falls asleep.

Farrukhī eventually entered the service of Maḥmūd of Ghazna. Furūzānfar describes his style as being so simple that the poet seems to be talking to the reader; on further examination, however, he goes on, poetic expertise is discernible.

‘Abd ar-Rasūlī<sup>8</sup> considers that Farrukhī’s successors in the art of the *qaṣīdeh* followed very much in his footsteps, and quotes Rashīd Vaṭvāṭ to the effect that Farrukhī is unexcelled among Persian poets in ease of expression. Shafī‘ī Kadkanī<sup>9</sup> believes that only Manūchihrī of his predecessors and contemporaries is to be compared to him, and writes that he would be selected as one representative of the ‘Nature’ period of Persian poetry because of his fresh, vital imagery.

‘Unṣurī is said to have been born in Balkh;<sup>10</sup> he wrote under the Ghaznavid rulers Maḥmūd and Mas‘ūd (998-1031); he died in 1039/40.<sup>11</sup> Furūzānfar<sup>12</sup> considers him to have been the greatest *qaṣīdeh* writer and eulogist of the 11th century, if not of Iran. Shafī‘ī Kadkanī<sup>13</sup> estimates him as a masterly versifier: he writes that he specialized in taking the imagery of others and presenting it in a new manner.<sup>14</sup>

He wrote a *Dīvān*<sup>15</sup> and two *maṣnavīs*, *Vāmiq o ‘Aḡrā* and *Khing But o Surkh But*; nothing remains of the first except fragments; the discovery of a

<sup>7</sup> The *qaṣīdeh* is translated on p. 7 ff.

<sup>8</sup> *Dīvān*, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> SK, p. 387.

<sup>10</sup> S I, p. 571.

<sup>11</sup> S va S I, p. 104.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>13</sup> SK, p. 430.

<sup>14</sup> SK, p. 381.

<sup>15</sup> Ed. Yaḥyā Qarīb, Tehran 1323, 1341; ed. Muḥammad Dabīrsiāqī, Tehran 1342.

portion of the latter by Muḥammad Shafīʿ is noted by Maḥjūb.<sup>16</sup> Another lost work is *Khizāneh-i Yamīn ad-Douleh*, said to be a collection of epics.<sup>17</sup>

Nizāmī-yi ʿArūzī in the *Chahār Maqāleh*<sup>18</sup> relates how ʿUnṣurī with this *rubāʿī* soothed the vexation of Maḥmūd after the Amīr had ordered Ayyāz, his favourite, to cut short his curls:

How is it wrong to snip the idol's hair?  
Why rise and sit and rise thus in distress?  
Rather it calls for wine and happiness:  
Is not the cypress pruned to grow more fair?

Ghazāyirī Rāzī<sup>19</sup> was a poet of Iraq and eulogized Bahā ad-Dauleh the Buwayhid;<sup>20</sup> however, wearying of the preponderance of Arabic in the culture of the area he addressed a *qaṣīdeh* to Maḥmūd of Ghazna; eventually he himself went to Ghazna; he died in 1034/5. He is said to have quarrelled with ʿUnṣurī<sup>21</sup> and to have written a verse criticizing one of ʿUnṣurī's verses:

Only for the sky to see your banquet and it sheds its teeth:  
Only for your sword to flash in Fate's eye and her talons fall!

Ghazāyirī wrote:

Maybe there are such things in your town; there are not found in  
ours  
Either sky complete with set of teeth or Fate with talons armed!<sup>22</sup>

Shafīʿī Kadkanī considers that Ghazāyirī follows ʿUnṣurī in taking others' images and refurbishing them.<sup>23</sup>

Manūchihrī Dāmghānī<sup>24</sup> was a poet of the Ghaznavid court. He died in 1040/1. He took his *takhalluṣ* from Manūchihr ibn Qābūs.

Furūzānfar<sup>25</sup> describes him as a happy poet who lacks deep thought. Shafīʿī Kadkanī<sup>26</sup> considers him the greatest poet of Iran in the field of imagery, sensual and material, from Nature; he writes that it is as if Manūchihrī holds a

<sup>16</sup> NDAT, IV, p. 182; Maḡnavī-yi Vāmiq o ʿAzrā, ed. Muḥammad Shafīʿ, Punjab University, Lahore 1967.

<sup>17</sup> HIL, p. 175.

<sup>18</sup> Students' Edition, pp. 39-40.

<sup>19</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>20</sup> Minorsky, *La Domination des Dailamites*, p. 20.

<sup>21</sup> See p. 32.

<sup>22</sup> S va S, *ibid*.

<sup>23</sup> SK, p. 382.

<sup>24</sup> *Divān*, ed. Muḥammad Dabīrsiāqī, Tehran 1329/1341.

<sup>25</sup> S va S I, p. 125.

<sup>26</sup> SK, p. 400.

mirror to Nature, possessed as he is by endless curiosity; he considers him the most prolific poet of his period in imagery.<sup>27</sup>

One of his *musammāt* runs:

Now Spring has come bringing joy:  
Earth wears a bright dress again,  
People rejoice everywhere,  
Cups full of wine in the hand,  
Notes high and low sweetly sound.  
Since Winter's cold is no more,  
Jasmine and roses abound,  
Spring clouds are scattering rain,  
Thousands of tulips appear  
From the hard rock of the plain.<sup>28</sup>

‘Asjadī<sup>29</sup> wrote at the Ghaznavid court. He may have died in 1040/1.<sup>30</sup> Shihāb<sup>31</sup> describes him as one of the first poets to employ rhetorical figures. Shaḥrī Kadkanī<sup>32</sup> thinks that, together with Ghazāyirī, he follows ‘Unṣurī in borrowing and refurbishing imagery.

Zīnatī ‘Alavī wrote at the courts of Maḥmūd and Mas‘ūd at Ghazna. He is mentioned under poets of the Ghaznavid court in the *Chahār Maqāleh*.<sup>33</sup>

It is disputed whether Abū Sa‘īd ibn Abī ‘l-Khair should be reckoned an early Ṣūfī poet.<sup>34</sup> Biographies of him are: *Asrār at-Tauḥīd fī Maqāmāt ash-Shaikh Abī Sa‘īd* by Muḥammad ibn al-Munavvar and *Hālāt va Sukhanān-i Shaikh Abū Sa‘īd ibn Abī ‘l-Khair*.<sup>35</sup> It has been questioned whether the quatrains ascribed to Abū Sa‘īd are in fact by him; Nafīsī<sup>36</sup> believes them to be genuine but mentions the fact that Muḥammad ibn al-Munavvar denies that Abū Sa‘īd wrote poetry; Ṣafā believes that the work of other writers besides Abū Sa‘īd is contained in the poems.<sup>37</sup> Shaḥrī Kadkanī does not believe that the quatrains in question are by Abū Sa‘īd.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Also on Manūchīhrī: Clinton, *The Divan of Manūchīhrī Dāmghānī, A Critical Study*, Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1972.

<sup>28</sup> On Manūchīhrī see Hillmann, *Manūchīhrī, Poet or Versifier?*, Edebiyât, University of Pennsylvania I i 1976, p. 93.

<sup>29</sup> *Dirvan*, ed. Ṭāhirī Shihāb, Tehran 1955.

<sup>30</sup> later, according to Ṣafā, S I, p. 581.

<sup>31</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>32</sup> SK, p. 382.

<sup>33</sup> Students' Edition, p. 32 where his name occurs as Zīnatī; some sources record Zīnabī.

<sup>34</sup> v. Baldick, *Handbuch*, p. 113.

<sup>35</sup> Baldick, *Handbuch*, p. 93.

<sup>36</sup> *Sukhanān-i Manzūm-i Abū Sa‘īd*, Tehran 1334.

<sup>37</sup> S I, p. 608; cf. HIL, p. 234.

<sup>38</sup> SK, p. 466.

Fakhr ad-Dīn Asad Gurgānī wrote the *maṣnavī Vīs o Rāmīn*,<sup>39</sup> the next romantic epic extant after *Varqeh o Gulshāh* of ‘Ayyūqī,<sup>40</sup> between 1040 and 1054.<sup>41</sup> Biographical details about Gurgānī are negligible. Minorsky<sup>42</sup> suggests that he may first have been in the service of one of the minor Bāvandid rulers; *Vīs o Rāmīn* was composed at the suggestion of ‘Amīd Abū ‘l-Faḥ Muẓaffar, appointed governor of Isfahan by the Seljūq Sultan Ṭughril. An anecdote about Gurgānī and his desperate love for a slave-boy occurs in the *Ilāhīnāmeḥ* of ‘Aṭṭar;<sup>43</sup> besides *Vīs o Rāmīn*, a small number of verses attributed to Gurgānī are recorded.<sup>44</sup>

The author tells us that a Pahlavī version of the romance existed in his day; Minorsky believes<sup>45</sup> that Gurgānī worked from a Persian translation of this; evidently the poet had some acquaintance with Pahlavī, to judge from one or two passages in the work.<sup>46</sup> There is a reference to ballads about Vīs and Rāmīn in an Arabic poem of Abū Nawās (747-801);<sup>47</sup> Daulatshāh in the *Tazkirat ash-Shu‘arā* mentions attributions of *Vīs o Rāmīn* to Nizāmī-yi ‘Arūzī Samarqandī and to Nizāmī of Ganjeh, finally preferring the latter.<sup>48</sup>

The poem tells of the loves and adventures of Vīs, daughter of the Queen of Māh (Media) and Rāmīn, brother of Moubad, King of Marv. The plot has a distinct resemblance to that of the legend of Tristan and Isolde;<sup>49</sup> for example, the Nurse of Vīs deputizes for her in the King’s bed exactly as Brangane does in ‘Tristan’; Rāmīn consoles himself with a new lover, Gul, as Tristan does with Isolde of the White Hand. Nevertheless views have differed about the connection between the two stories.<sup>50</sup>

Gurgānī describes how he undertook to refurbish the romance: ‘It is a very beautiful story, collected by six scholars. I have never seen a better; it resembles nothing so much as a blossoming garden. However, its language is Pahlavī, and by no means everyone who reads it is aware of its purport...at

<sup>39</sup> Ed. Nassau Lees, *Bibliotheca Indica*, 1864-5; ed. Mīnovī, Tehran 1935; ed. Maḥjūb, Tehran 1959; ed. Todua, Gwakharia and ‘Ainī, Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Georgian SSR, Tajik SSR and Cultural Foundation of Iran, Tehran 1970; ed. Devonaqulov, Dushambēh, 1966; trans. George Morrison, *Persian Heritage Series*, Columbia 1972.

<sup>40</sup> See p. 30.

<sup>41</sup> Minorsky, *Iranica*, p. 151.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>43</sup> See p. 123.

<sup>44</sup> Maḥjūb, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>45</sup> *Iranica*, p. 174; Boyce, *JRAS* 1957, p. 38.

<sup>46</sup> Furdūzāfar surmises that Gurgānī was also learned in Arabic, *S va S II i*, p. 6.

<sup>47</sup> Minorsky, *Iranica*, p. 197; Mīnovī, *MDAT* 1954.

<sup>48</sup> *Tazkirat ash-Shu‘arā*, ed. Browne, pp. 60, 130.

<sup>49</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. xvi, Yarshater, foreword, p. vii.

<sup>50</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. xvii; Minorsky, *Iranica*, p. 194.

that time poetry was not an art; there was no scholar of quick wit; if only those scholars could see how diction is produced nowadays, meanings unravelled, metre and rhyme superimposed!... when a work has metre and rhyme it is better than when it is arranged haphazardly, particularly when one may find therein sentiments which, when one reads them, will one day stand one in good stead. However dainty and sweet a tale may be, it becomes refurbished by metre and rhyme. There should be numerous sentiments and expressions scattered here and there in the story, like a royal pearl set in gold, shining from its midst like stars. Then the nobles and intelligentsia may read it to learn many sentiments from it, whilst the populace and ordinary folk merely read it for the sake of the story...if a scholar were to apply himself to it, it would become as pretty as a treasure full of gems...'¹

Furūzānfar<sup>22</sup> comments that Gurgānī describes the vicissitudes of the lovers like a skilled artist painting a picture; Shaḡīrī Kadkanī<sup>23</sup> remarks on the wealth and originality of Gurgānī's imagery, with the reservation that the poet's touch is less sure here when battle scenes are involved.

Certainly every nuance of romantic love is brought before the reader by Gurgānī; in the long dispute of the lovers and in the series of Letters sent by Vīs to Rāmīn the joys and sufferings of the pair's hearts are relentlessly catalogued:

'If the heavenly sphere were my scroll, all the stars my secretaries, the sky my ink-well, the night my ink, the letters of my epistle leaves, sand and fish, and these secretaries wrote till the Resurrection my hope and desire for my love, I swear they would still not write one half of it, nor paint the dread I suffer in separation...

'You are to me good and evil, cure and pain, sweet and bitter, warm and cool. You are desire and affliction, pleasure and pain, grief and happiness, poverty and treasure. You are my eyes and heart, my soul and world, my sun and moon and sky. My love, do with me as you will, for you are sovereign and queen over me. I cry to you, for you are the Fire in my heart; to you I cry, for you are the judge over it. You are my enemy, my friend; all you do is right, forbear to be cruel!'

Traces of the influence of Vīs o Rāmīn upon Nizāmī-yi Ganjavī can be found;<sup>24</sup> one example is the exchange of letters between Lailī and Majnūn,<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 17; ed. Todua, Gwakharia and 'Ainī, p. 28.

<sup>22</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>23</sup> SK, p. 451 ff.

<sup>24</sup> See p. 47 ff.; D. Kobidze, 'On the Antecedents of Vis-u-Ramin', *Yādnameh-yi Rypka*, Prague 1967, p. 89 ff.

<sup>25</sup> See p. 49.

resembling the similar exchange in *Vīs o Rāmīn*; the banqueting scene in *Khusrou va Shīrīn* is like that in *Vīs o Rāmīn*.

Nāṣir-i Khusrou was born near Balkh in 1003/4<sup>56</sup> and died possibly in 1088/9<sup>57</sup> near Badakhshān. Daulatshāh describes him as being from Isfahan,<sup>58</sup> also remarking that there is a division of opinion about him, some regarding him as a mystic and others as a heretic.

He came from a distinguished and wealthy family, and himself describes having seen at first hand the Ghaznavid court at Balkh. He held office as a Secretary; after the fall of Balkh to the Seljuqs he went to Marv. He became restless and disillusioned and finally had a climactic dream:<sup>59</sup>

‘A figure said to me ‘How long will you drink this wine which erodes the reason of man? Better for you to come to your senses!’ I replied, ‘The sages have been unable to contrive anything other than these means of alleviating the misery of the world.’ He replied, ‘There is no peace in craziness and senselessness. One cannot term him a sage who leads people into senselessness. Rather one ought to search for something which will increase reason and sense.’ Then he made a sign towards the *Qibla*<sup>60</sup> and said no more. When I awoke, I remembered the whole circumstance, which made an impression upon me. I said to myself, ‘I have awoken from last night’s sleep—I must also awake from the sleep of the past forty years!’

Nāṣir-i Khusrou set off to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. He visited Egypt, then under the rule of the Ismā‘īlī Fāṭimid Caliph.

His travels are chronicled in his *Safarnāmeḥ*.<sup>61</sup> The theory of Ivanov that Nāṣir-i Khusrou was an Ismā‘īlī before his journey to Fāṭimid Egypt is quoted by Rypka.<sup>62</sup>

His poetic works comprise the *Dīvān*<sup>63</sup> and the *maṣnavī Raushanā‘īnāmeḥ*. Bahār<sup>64</sup> does not regard the *Sa‘ādatnāmeḥ* as being by him.

<sup>56</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> *Tazkirat ash-Shu‘arā*, ed. Browne, p. 61.

<sup>59</sup> Corbin, *Jāmī‘ al-Hikmatain*, Paris/Tehran 1953.

<sup>60</sup> The direction of Mecca.

<sup>61</sup> See p. 73 and Spuler, *Handbuch IV ii I*, p. 108.

<sup>62</sup> HIL, p. 186; Ivanov, *Problems in Nāṣir-i Khusrou’s Biography*, Ismā‘īlī Society Series B 10, Bombay 1956.

<sup>63</sup> Incl. *Raushanā‘īnāmeḥ* ed. Taqavī, Tehran 1337 H.Š.; ed. Darvīsh, Tehran 1339 H.Š.; ed. Mīnovī, Tehran 1926-9; ed. Mahdī Suhailī,; Muḥaqqiq, *Tahllī-i Ash‘ār-i Nāṣir-i Khusrou*, Tehran 1344 H.Š.

<sup>64</sup> SS III, p. 188 n.

The *qaṣīdeh* of Nāṣir-i Khusrou, written in metres often unusual and complicated, are stark and pessimistic in tone. He inveighs constantly against the world, which he pillories as a faithless, deceitful crone plying her mischievous arts relentlessly upon man.

O how much more will you say  
 When the Spring is in the air  
 'Rose and almond will be gay:  
 In the gardens will be seen  
 Cheeks of blossom and of green.'  
 Do not tell me nonsense rhymes!  
 Sixty times the New Year came  
 As my guest—six hundred times  
 Let her come—all is the same!  
 What are blooms to my poor sight?  
 Fate has turned my bloom to blight.<sup>65</sup>

Shafī'ī Kadkanī notes the absence of the atmosphere of Court poetry in the work of Nāṣir-i Khusrou<sup>66</sup> and remarks on the poet's predilection for alphabetical conceits; this he attributes to the influence of Ismā'īlī beliefs.<sup>67</sup>

Qaṭrān Tabrīzī (d. after 1072-3)<sup>68</sup> eulogized the Amīr Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī Lashkarī, governor of Ganjeh. Nāṣir-i Khusrou met Qaṭrān in Tabriz on his journey;<sup>69</sup> Qaṭrān asked him to explain messages in the *Dīvāns* of Munjīk<sup>70</sup> and Daqīqī.<sup>71</sup> Šafā'<sup>72</sup> mentions Qaṭrān's predilection for early poetry;<sup>73</sup> Shafī'ī Kadkanī<sup>74</sup> remarks that Qaṭrān's images are so simple as to recall Kisā'i.<sup>75</sup> Furūzānfar describes his style as tending towards that of Farrukhī<sup>76</sup> and of 'Unṣurī.<sup>77</sup> Apart from a *Dīvān*, a work called *Qausnāmeḥ* is attributed to him but is the work of a later author otherwise unknown.<sup>78</sup> He wrote a lexicon which has not survived.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>65</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Suhailī, p. 108.

<sup>66</sup> SK, p. 449.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 445.

<sup>68</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>69</sup> See p. 73.

<sup>70</sup> See p. 19.

<sup>71</sup> See p. 21.

<sup>72</sup> II, p. 424.

<sup>73</sup> On the confusion between work of Qaṭrān and Rūdakī, see p. 17.

<sup>74</sup> SK, p. 437.

<sup>75</sup> See p. 20.

<sup>76</sup> See p. 31.

<sup>77</sup> See p. 32.

<sup>78</sup> HIL, p. 194.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

Her face is less fair than the moon—  
 What matter, if she be but kind?  
 But O, how would a lover be  
 With both combined?

Lāmiʿī Gurgānī is thought to have been born in 1021/2.<sup>80</sup> Shafīʿī Kadkanī notes his predilection for imagery from astronomical configurations.<sup>81</sup> He wrote at the Seljūq court and eulogized the Niẓām al-Mulk.<sup>82</sup>

Asadī (died c. 1072)<sup>83</sup> wrote the lexicon *Lughat-i Furs*, the epic *Garshāspnāmeḥ*<sup>84</sup> and 'disputation *qaṣīdeḥ*' (*munāẓireḥ*).

The *Lughat-i Furs*, apart from its value as a very early example of a lexicon, preserves numerous verses which would otherwise have been lost.

Asadī's account of how a dignitary encouraged him to write the *Garshāspnāmeḥ* is reminiscent of a similar passage in the *Vīs o Rāmīn* of Gurgānī;<sup>85</sup> the dignitary tells him, 'The world does not remain eternally for any man:<sup>86</sup> the best legacy is good name alone; now work the ruby-mine of knowledge, scatter in pearls from the ocean of thought.'

Asadī replies, 'Now I shall rain pearls from the sea of meaning, bring to bloom the flower of knowledge.'

Asadī writes that Firdausī had neglected the story of Garshāsp in the *Shāhnāmeḥ*. He is thought to have drawn upon oral tradition and upon the *Kitāb-i Garshāsp* of Abū ʿl-Muʿayyad Balkhī.<sup>87</sup>

The hero Garshāsp of Sīstān, according to Christensen<sup>88</sup> is to be identified with Sām, grandfather of Rustam; in the *Garshāspnāmeḥ* they are distinct persons, descended from Jamshīd of the Pīshdādī dynasty. In the Avesta<sup>89</sup> Keresāspa is found cooking his midday meal upon what he fondly imagines is a mountain—but the 'mountain' begins to sweat from the heat of the cauldron and moves—it is a dragon. The description of the dragon in the *Garshāspnāmeḥ* resembles to some extent that in the Avesta.

Naturally a work like the *Garshāspnāmeḥ* has to undergo comparison with the *Shāhnāmeḥ*. Shafīʿī Kadkanī considers that because of Asadī's style of proliferating imagery at the expense of continuity of narrative, in contrast

<sup>80</sup> S II, p. 387. *Dirvān*, ed. Saʿīd Naftīsī, Tehran 1319 H.Š.

<sup>81</sup> SK, p. 521.

<sup>82</sup> S II, p. 388.

<sup>83</sup> HIL, p. 164, where the theory that there were two Asadīs, father and son, is discussed.

<sup>84</sup> Ed. Ḥabīb Yaghmāʿī, Tehran 1317 H.Š.; ed. C. Huart, Paris 1926; tr. H. Massé, Paris 1951.

<sup>85</sup> See p. 35 ff.

<sup>86</sup> The line is recalled almost word for word by Saʿdī in the *Gulistan*.

<sup>87</sup> See p. 19.

<sup>88</sup> Les Kayanides, p. 131.

<sup>89</sup> Yasna 9.11.

to Firdausī's more deliberate use of imagery, the *Garshāspnāmeḥ* does not succeed as an epic.

Asadī vividly sets the scene for the combat with the dragon:

'Garshāsp entered the valley. He looked in every direction. Suddenly, round a bend, he caught sight of the dragon.'

In fact the work opens with encomia of God, the prophet, the religion, the qualities of man; there follow Description of the World, Discourse on Body and Soul; only then the account of the circumstances of the writing of the *Garshāspnāmeḥ* is reached.

The 'disputation *qaṣīdeḥ*' of Asadī contain disputations between Sky and Earth, Zoroastrian and Muslim, Spear and Bow, Night and Day.

On the dialect quatrains of Bābā Ṭāhir (fl. ? 1035) see Baldick, Handbuch, p. 116.

Azraqī (d. before 1072-3) is said to have been the son of Ismā'īl Varrāq in whose house Firdausī is described in one account as taking refuge.<sup>90</sup> Shaftī Kadkanī remarks on the novelty of his imagery and disagrees with the criticism of Azraqī's similes by Rashīd Vaṭvāt.<sup>91</sup>

Abū 'l-Faraj Rūnī (d. beginning of the twelfth century)<sup>92</sup> eulogized the later Ghaznavid rulers. According to 'Aufī his birthplace was near Lahore, in Pakistan. Ṣafā<sup>93</sup> sees a new departure in the style of his poetry and remarks that his *qaṣīdeḥ* mostly open without the conventional *taghazzul*. He sees Abū 'l-Faraj Rūnī as the main influence on Anvarī.<sup>94</sup> Shaftī Kadkanī notes his reaction against imagery from Nature and his predilection instead for imagery from the sciences of the time. He describes him as exceptional in his own time, deserving in fact of being classed in a later period.<sup>95</sup>

Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salmān<sup>96</sup> was born in Lahore in about 1046-8<sup>97</sup> and died about 1121. He accompanied Saif al-Dauleh Maḥmūd ibn Ibrāhīm the Ghaznavid to India when he became governor there. Saif al-Dauleh was later imprisoned with all his courtiers, so Mas'ūd suffered the same fate. Further imprisonment brought the total of years he spent in gaol to eighteen.<sup>98</sup> Ṣafā considers him one of the great masters of Persian poetry. Furūzānfar emphasizes his debt to Firdausī and to 'Unṣurī. Shaftī Kadkanī remarks on his pro-

<sup>90</sup> Chahār Maqāleh, GMS Students' Edition, p. 55. *Divān*, ed. Naftī, Tehran 1336 H.Š.

<sup>91</sup> SK, p. 523.

<sup>92</sup> HIL, p. 714; *Divān*, ed. Chāykhīn, Tehran 1334.

<sup>93</sup> II, p. 471.

<sup>94</sup> II, p. 667. On Anvarī and Abū 'l-Faraj Rūnī v. SK, p. 467-8.

<sup>95</sup> SK, p. 462 ff.

<sup>96</sup> *Divān*, ed. Rashīd Yāsami, Tehran 1339 H.Š.

<sup>97</sup> S II, p. 483.

<sup>98</sup> S II, p. 488.

clivity—not found in previous writing—for setting some intellectual conception behind and beyond his images.<sup>99</sup> Sanāʾī collected his *Divān*.<sup>100</sup> Whilst in prison he wrote his *Habsiyyāt* or ‘prison poems’, to which an eloquent tribute is paid by Niẓāmī-yi ʿArūzī in the *Chahār Maqāleh*: ‘Sometimes when I read his poems the hair stands on end on my limbs and I am moved to tears.’<sup>101</sup>

Masʿūd wrote in happier days charming *vers d’occasion*:

On the curls of the sweetheart’s hair  
Dark as hope and long as longing, tell me where  
Is the heart not tied to longing, chained by hope?  
My heart too lies prisoner among your hair.<sup>102</sup>

To the sweetheart, a pigeon-fancier  
Pigeons are the apple of your eye:  
Never once a look of love for me!  
Every pigeon that you send away  
Straight away returns obediently.  
Sweetheart, from your pigeons learn, and then  
Leave me only to fly back again.<sup>103</sup>

Muʿizzī (d. 1125-7)<sup>104</sup> wrote at the Seljūq court. Niẓāmī-yi ʿArūzī in the *Chahār Maqāleh* tells how he came by his title of Amīr.<sup>105</sup> Furūzānfar<sup>106</sup> describes him as immature in thought; he thinks he attempts to copy ʿUnṣurī and Farrukhī but fails to equal them. Shafīʿī Kadkanī<sup>107</sup> considers that the weakness in the field of imagery seen in the poetry of ʿUnṣurī is carried to its extreme in that of Muʿizzī.

ʿAṭāʾī, a contemporary of Masʿūd-i Saʿd-i Salmān, wrote the epics *Barzūnāmeḥ* and *Bīzhannāmeḥ*.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>99</sup> SK, p. 486.

<sup>100</sup> *Divān*, ed. Yāsami, p. 732 note 2.

<sup>101</sup> GMS, Students’ Edition, p. 51.

<sup>102</sup> *Divān*, ed. Yāsami, p. 637.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 643.

<sup>104</sup> *Divān*, ed. ʿAbbās Iqbāl, Tehran 1318 H.Š.

<sup>105</sup> Students’ Edition, p. 49.

<sup>106</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>107</sup> SK, p. 305 ff.

<sup>108</sup> S II, p. 477 ff. Ḥamāseh-sarāʾī dar Irān, 2nd ed., p. 303. HIL, p. 163.

CHAPTER THREE  
‘UMAR KHAYYĀM TO NIZĀMĪ OF GANJEH

*Introductory*

One of the most important developments in the period which follows is a new direction in poetry signalled by the work of the Šūfī poet Sanāʾī.<sup>1</sup> One of his *qaṣīdeh* opens:

Body is low and soul is high:  
In neither is it meet to stay;  
No, stop not either here or there—  
Pass far beyond the two away.

No matter, when the road is wrong  
Be unbelief or faith its name:  
Whatever holds you back from Him,  
Ugly or fair, it is the same.

He is a traveller who comes  
From Hell as cold as cold can be:  
He is a lover who returns  
Bone-dry from swimming in the sea.

The contrast with the *qaṣīdeh* of Farrukhī on page 7 is obvious.

The *qaṣīdeh* remains the predominant form in this period, though Sanāʾī used the *maṣnavī* also, and some of the most remarkable *maṣnavī* of Persian literature were written by Nizāmī of Ganjeh.

‘Umar Khayyām occupies a peculiar position, partly since he is uniquely familiar to Western readers because of Fitzgerald’s translation, partly because he depends for his fame on his *rubāʿīyyāt*, a form more or less incidental in the *œuvre* of other poets.

Khāqānī was also a writer of considerable originality who experimented with new imagery.<sup>2</sup> Anvarī is esteemed by some as the greatest *qaṣīdeh*-writer in Persian literature.

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<sup>1</sup> v. Baldick, *Handbuch*, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Shafīʿī Kadkanī, *Handbuch*, p. 151.

‘Umar Khayyām is best known to western readers through the Rubā‘iyyāt in the version of Edward Fitzgerald. He was famous as a mathematician; in 1074/5<sup>3</sup> he was invited by the Saljuq ruler Malikshāh to participate in a reform of the calendar. The author of the *Chahār Maqāleh*, Niẓāmī-yi ‘Arūẓī Samarqandī, met Khayyām in 1112/3. The date of Khayyām’s death is probably 1132. The attribution of the *Nourūznāme* to him is doubtful.<sup>4</sup>

Authorities have been sharply divided over the question of the place of Šūfism in the Rubā‘iyyāt of Khayyām. Zhukovski, as pointed out by Minor-sky, makes a strong point of the Šūfī element—whereas Christensen<sup>5</sup> writes ‘First and foremost we state the almost complete absence of the mystical element.’ Fitzgerald writes, ‘his Worldly Pleasures are what they profess to be without any Pretence at divine Allegory’, and Christensen remarks,<sup>6</sup> ‘Fitzgerald...has grasped with a sure psychological and cathetical instinct the true kernel of the ‘Umarian poetry.’ A diametrically opposite view is put forward by Robert Graves and Omar Ali Shah in their ‘Rubaiyyat of Omar Khayyam’,<sup>7</sup> where Khayyam is presented as a Šūfī. Shafī‘ī Kadkanī, *Mukhtār-nāme*, Tehran 1358 H.Š., attributes most of his celebrated *rubā‘ī* to ‘Attār.<sup>8</sup>

Among other Persian writers on the subject ‘Alī Dashtī<sup>9</sup> does not envisage a very close adherence on Khayyām’s part to Šūfism and Šādiq Hidāyat<sup>10</sup> sees him as scientist and agnostic.

‘Am‘aq of Bukhārā died 1148/9; he was a poet of Transoxiana, writing at the court of Khīẓr Khān Ibrāhīm the Qārakhānid. He is the subject of an anecdote in the *Chahār Maqāleh*.<sup>11</sup>

Abū Ṭāhir Khātūnī took his *takhalluṣ* from Gauhar Khātūn, wife of Muḥammad ibn Malikshāh the Seljūq.<sup>12</sup> He died before 1137/8.

Amīr Fakhr ad-Dīn Khālīd ibn Rabī‘ died after 1149/50. He exchanged poetry with Anvarī.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Minorsky, EI 1st edn.; Minorsky, ‘The Earliest Collections of O. Khayyam’, *Yādnāme-yi Rypka*, Prague 1967, p. 107.

<sup>4</sup> Gandjei, *Nourūznāme*, *Der Islam* 42, 1966 where the work is attributed to a pupil of Khayyām, ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Hijāzī al-Qāyīnī.

<sup>5</sup> Critical Studies in the Rubā‘iyyāt of Umar-i-Khayyām, Copenhagen 1927, p. 44.

<sup>6</sup> Op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>7</sup> London 1967.

<sup>8</sup> Rubā‘iyyāt-i Ḥakīm-i Khayyām-i Nīshāpūrī, Tehran 1321/40 H.Š.

<sup>9</sup> Damī bā Khayyām, Tehran 1966 (tr. Elwell-Sutton, London 1971).

<sup>10</sup> Tarāneh-hā-yi Khayyām, Tehran 1313 H.Š. On Khayyām also Arberry, *The Romance of the Rubaiyyat*, London 1959; Rubā‘iyyāt ed. Nafīsī, Tehran 1305-6 H.Š.

<sup>11</sup> Students’ Edition, p. 52.

<sup>12</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>13</sup> S va S, s.v.

Futūhī of Marv died after 1164/5.<sup>14</sup> He was a friend of Adīb Ṣābir.<sup>15</sup>

Adīb Ṣābir of Tirmizī<sup>16</sup> (d. 1151/2) was in the service of the Seljūq Sultan Sanjar. Adīb Ṣābir was sent by Sanjar on a mission to the Khvārazmshāh Atsiz. Atsiz had meantime sent two would-be assassins to kill Sanjar. Adīb Ṣābir learnt of this and sent a message to Sanjar concealed in an old woman's boot. Sanjar found the assassins and put them to death. When Atsiz learnt of what Adīb Ṣābir had done, he had him thrown into the Oxus.<sup>17</sup> Furūzānfar<sup>18</sup> thinks that Adīb Ṣābir tried without success to mix the styles of Farrukhī<sup>19</sup> and of 'Unṣurī.<sup>20</sup> (The ghazals in his *Dīvān* are not numerous.) Furūzānfar considers that in the *qaṣīdeh* Adīb Ṣābir followed Mas'ūd-i Sa'dī<sup>21</sup> and Mu'izzī;<sup>22</sup> he was no innovator.<sup>23</sup>

A ghazal of Adīb Ṣābir runs:

Whenever the garden is gay with red roses  
How fitly we match them with ruby-red wine:  
For whom does the rose tear its garment, I wonder—  
From love of the sweetheart insane I tear mine!  
Do not wretched victims cry out at injustice?  
Why rumbles the thunder—the victim am I!  
Like raindrops that fall on the jasmine at sunrise  
The cheek of the sweetheart, the tears that I cry.  
With tulips aflame all the plain is a ruby—  
What robber has been to the gem-mine to plunder?  
The trees scatter musk in such fragrant profusion  
That musk of Khotan is left breathless in wonder.<sup>24</sup>

Mukhtārī<sup>25</sup> of Ghazna died about 1159. A *Shahriyār-nāmeḥ* is attributed to him by some.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>14</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>15</sup> See below.

<sup>16</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. 'Alī Qavīm, Tehran 1331.

<sup>17</sup> Juvainī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*, GMS XVI ii, p. 8; Boyle, *The History of the World-Conqueror*, Cambridge, Mass. 1958, II, p. 282.

<sup>18</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>19</sup> See p. 31.

<sup>20</sup> See p. 32.

<sup>21</sup> See p. 40.

<sup>22</sup> See p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>24</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. 'Alī Qavīm, p. 265.

<sup>25</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Humāyūnfarrukh, Tehran 1336 H.Š.

<sup>26</sup> Maḥjūb NDAT XV quotes an edition by Humā'ī.

Sanāʾī (Hakīm Abū ʿl-Majd Majdūd ibn Ādam) (d. 1150/1) was born in Ghazna. He eulogized the Ghaznavid rulers, including Masʿūd ibn Ibrāhīm (1099/1115) and Bahrāmshāh ibn Masʿūd (1118-1152). His pilgrimage to Mecca is described in the *Kārnāmeḥ-i Balkh*.<sup>27</sup> Tradition ascribes his adoption of the mystic life to overhearing a chance remark about his own poetry.<sup>28</sup>

His works comprise: *Dīvān*,<sup>29</sup> *Ḥadīqat al-Ḥaḡīqat*,<sup>30</sup> a *maṣnavī* poem, and another *maṣnavī*, *Sair al-ʿIbād ilā ʿl-Mīʿād*.<sup>31</sup> His first *maṣnavī* is thought to have been the *Kārnāmeḥ-i Balkh*.<sup>32</sup>

ʿAbd al-Vāsiʿ Jabālī<sup>33</sup> (d. 1160-1) was born in Gharchistān;<sup>34</sup> he wrote under the Ghurids and Seljūqs. Ṣafā regards him as a pioneer in style; he cites the way his poetry approaches popular language.<sup>35</sup> Furūzānfar<sup>36</sup> sees diction taking pride of place over substance in his work; he mentions that he was bilingual in Persian and Arabic, though his Arabic verses have not survived.

Ḥasan Ghaznavī<sup>37</sup> (d. 1160-1), known as *Ashraf*,<sup>38</sup> wrote at the court of Bahrāmshāh of Ghazna. He was a friend of Masʿūd-i Saʿd-i Salmān.<sup>39</sup>

Sūzānī<sup>40</sup> (d.c. 1166-74) of Samarqand studied in Bukhārā; he specialized in satire. He claimed descent from Salmān Pārsī the companion of the Prophet.<sup>41</sup> Furūzānfar<sup>42</sup> remarks on his simple style, which he says is that of Farrukhī, except that Arabic expressions are common. He points out that Sūzānī was an admirer of ʿUnṣurī and mentions that dialect words are to be found in his poetry.

Anvarī Abīvardī<sup>43</sup> (d. 1187/8) is thought by Furūzānfar<sup>44</sup> to have been the most important *qaṣīdeh* writer of the twelfth century; he adds that Anvarī was an admirer of Abū ʿl-Faraj Rūnī;<sup>45</sup> Ṣafā<sup>46</sup> too notes that Anvarī's debt to Abū

<sup>27</sup> See below p. 116 ff on Sanāʾī.

<sup>28</sup> Daulatshāh, *Tazkirat ash-Shuʿarā* ed. Browne, pp. 95-7.

<sup>29</sup> Ed. Mudarris Razavī, Tehran 1320/1341 and 2535; ed. Muṣaffā, Tehran 1336.

<sup>30</sup> Ed. Mudarris Razavī, Tehran 1329, tr. Stephenson, Calcutta 1910.

<sup>31</sup> *Ḥadīqat al-Ḥaḡīqat*, ed. Razavī, p. 457. See p. 117.

<sup>32</sup> Ed. Mudarris Razavī, Tehran 1334.

<sup>33</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Ṣafā, IDT 604, 757, Tehran 1966.

<sup>34</sup> *Hudūd al-ʿĀlam* tr. Minorsky, G.M.S. New Series X, p. 105; Minorsky, *Iranica*, pp. 170-1.

<sup>35</sup> II, p. 651.

<sup>36</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>37</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Mudarris Razavī, Tehran 1328 H.Š.

<sup>38</sup> misprinted 'Ashraf', HIL, p. 892.

<sup>39</sup> Shafaq, *Tārikh*, p. 199.

<sup>40</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Ḥusainī, Tehran 1338/44 H.Š.

<sup>41</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>42</sup> S va S, *ibid*.

<sup>43</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Nafīsī, Tehran 1337 H.Š.; ed. Mudarris Razavī, Tehran 1337/40.

<sup>44</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>45</sup> See p. 40.

<sup>46</sup> S II, p. 667.

ʿl-Faraj Rūnī has been thought to be great; he considers Anvarī to be one of the great masters of the *ghazal* before the time of Saʿdī.<sup>47</sup> Furūzānfar<sup>48</sup> regards the use of popular diction as an innovation by Anvarī, and estimates his *qitʿeh* writing highly.

Falakī Shīrvānī<sup>49</sup> (d. 1181/2) was born in Shīrvān in Āzarbāijān. His *takhalluṣ* seems to be due to his expertise in astronomy. He made a study of Masʿūd-i Saʿd-i Salmān;<sup>50</sup> Furūzānfar<sup>51</sup> considers that he tried to emulate Masʿūd but was inhibited by the fashion of his time.

Rashīd Vaṭvāt<sup>52</sup> (d. 1182-3) wrote at the court of the Khvārazmshāh, where he was a secretary. He was the author of the *Ḥadāʾiq as-Sihr*, a manual of prosody. He corresponded with Adīb Ṣābir<sup>53</sup> who was employed at the contemporary Seljūq court. Furūzānfar<sup>54</sup> remarks on his skill in artifice and describes his style as that of ʿUnṣurī. He mentions his Arabic poetry and prose. Rashīd Vaṭvāt writes of Spring:

Hard at any time to be  
Separated from your love,  
But in Springtime how much more,  
Now that Nature's chamberlains  
Through the garden busy move  
Rainbow carpets scattering:  
Every border jewel-decked,  
Richer than a rich man's store:  
All the garden glorious  
Like the treasure of a king.

Khāqān<sup>55</sup> (d. 1198-9) was born about 1106 in Shīrvān in Āzarbāijān. His mother was a Christian. He enjoyed the patronage of the Shīrvānshāh Akhsatān by whom, however, he was at one time imprisoned. He twice performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and on his return from the second pilgrimage he visited Ctesiphon, near Baghdad, site of the *Aivān-i Kisrā*, the great Sassanian palace, where he wrote a remarkable *qaṣīdeh*. He appears to have forsworn the writing of eulogies after his first pilgrimage.<sup>56</sup> He died in Tabriz.

<sup>47</sup> S II, *ibid*.

<sup>48</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>49</sup> *Divān*, ed. Ṭāhiri Shihāb, Tehran 1345 H.Š.

<sup>50</sup> See p. 40.

<sup>51</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>52</sup> *Divān*, ed. Saʿīd Nafīsī, Tehran 1339; *Ḥadāʾiq as-Sihr*, ed. ʿAbbās Iqbal, Tehran 1308 H.Š.

<sup>53</sup> See p. 44.

<sup>54</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>55</sup> *Divān*, ed. Zīā ad-Dīn Sajjādī, Tehran 1338 H.Š. v. Baldick, *Handbuch*, p. 119.

<sup>56</sup> Sajjādī, *op. cit.*, p. xxxii.

His works comprise his *Dīvān*, including *qaṣīdeh*, *qīṭ'eh*, *ghazal*, *rubā'ī* and Arabic verses. His first pilgrimage is described in the *maṣnavī Tuḥfat al-‘Irāqain*,<sup>57</sup> written in Shīrvān.<sup>58</sup> Also attributed to him is the poem *Khatm al-Gharā'ib*.<sup>59</sup>

Furūzānfar<sup>60</sup> considers that Khāqānī at first followed Sanā'ī, then developed an individual style; he gives high praise to Khāqānī's descriptive powers and mentions the originality of his themes and his talent for new combinations of words. Minorsky<sup>61</sup> writes enthusiastically of Khāqānī as a poet, describing him as 'a personality and not a sanctimonious abstraction like so many of the worthies quoted in Persian anthologies.'<sup>62</sup>

Jamāl ad-Dīn Isfahānī<sup>63</sup> (d. 1192-3) was a goldsmith—Isfahan being still a great centre of the craft.<sup>64</sup> Furūzānfar<sup>65</sup> considers that his *qaṣīdeh* writing does not match that of Sanā'ī; he compares Jamāl ad-Dīn to the early dawn, Sanā'ī to the sun illumining the world. Ṣafā<sup>66</sup> esteems his *ghazals* highly.

Mujīr ad-Dīn Balaqānī died in 1100-1. Furūzānfar<sup>67</sup> remarks on the excellence of his *qaṣīdeh* writing. He sees in his poetry the influence of Farrukhī and of Manūchihri.

Ẓahīr Fāryābī<sup>68</sup> (d. 1201-2) from Fāryāb, near Balkh, travelled to Isfahan. Ṣafā<sup>69</sup> sees his real talent as lying in *ghazal* writing, though, as he points out, Ẓahīr wrote:

There may be a sweet-lipped beauty in Kashmir—what's that to me?  
There may be a silver bosom in Noushād<sup>70</sup>—I hardly care!

A *taẓmīn* on a *qīṭ'eh* of Ẓahīr Fāryābī occurs in the Kulliyāt of ‘Ubaid-i Zākānī.

Nizāmī of Ganjeh (died 1209) is chiefly famous for his *Khamseh* or series of five *maṣnavī* poems: *Makhzan al-Asrār*, *Khusrou va Shīrīn*, *Lailī va Majnūn*, *Haft Paikar* or *Bahrām-nāmeḥ*, and *Iskandarnāmeḥ*.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Ed. Yaḥyā Qarīb, Tehran 1333 H.Š.

<sup>58</sup> Qarīb, op. cit., p. 'mb'.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 'm'.

<sup>60</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>61</sup> Iranica, pp. 120 ff.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 124. See also. On Khāqānī also Khanikof, JA 1864; Rypka, MDA Tehran 4 Year 10; Zarrīnkūb, RK Year 6 No. 9.

<sup>63</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Dastgirdī, Tehran 1320 H.Š.

<sup>64</sup> On later craftsmen poets v, p. 163.

<sup>65</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>66</sup> II, p. 733.

<sup>67</sup> S va S, s.v.

<sup>68</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Taqī Bīnīsh, Mashhad 1958.

<sup>69</sup> II, p. 758.

<sup>70</sup> A palace and estate built near Balkh and regarded as an earthly paradise.

<sup>71</sup> *Khamseh* ed. Vaḥīd Dastgirdī, Tehran 1313-18; by the same editor, *Ganjīneh-i Ganjavī* (lyric poetry, biography, vocabulary.) *Dīvān*, ed. Naftī, Tehran 1338.

Nizāmī is thought to have been influenced by the *Ḥadīqat al-Ḥaqīqat* of Sanāʾī in the *Makhzan al-Asrār*.<sup>72</sup>

In the *Haft Paikar*<sup>73</sup> Nizāmī tells the story of Bahrām Gūr the Sassanian king and of how he was sent to the Arab kingdom of Ḥīra to be trained in the pursuits proper for a King. In Khvarnaq he stumbles upon a building containing seven pictures (*haft paikar*) of the daughters of the Seven Climes. Incidentally, Nizāmī, who throughout displays a learned knowledge of astrology, maintains in the work a pattern of correspondence between colours, jewels, and astrological configurations.<sup>74</sup> Bahrām, who succeeds his father Yazdigird as king, demands from the rulers of the seven climes their daughters in marriage; he installs each princess in a pavilion of appropriate colour and each one tells him a story when he visits her pavilion.

Ritter<sup>75</sup> has stressed the visual aspect of the work of Nizāmī, in contrast to what he believes to be the aural aspect of Arabic poetry. Nizāmī takes pleasure in depicting scenes of colour and artistic beauty.

It is significant that in the edition of the *Haft Paikar* by Dastgirdī many lines on any particular page receive a full commentary in the apparatus to make clear to the reader the precise allusion intended, or simply to give a translation of a word assumed to be unfamiliar. The performance of such a work must have been a lengthy, unhurried affair, with ample opportunity given for the appreciation of lines made elegant by recondite allusion. Already Gurgānī has been noticed stating his avowed object of refurbishing the story of *Vīs o Rāmīn* with conceits and sentiments.<sup>76</sup>

Bahrām is the great hunter par excellence of Persian legend, and Nizāmī does not omit to describe the hunting of the King. He also drives home the message of the inconsequence of this world; when Bahrām is considering the building of the seven domes he reflects:

Imagine that the work is done:  
The gold and iron of the domes  
Has risen upwards from the ground:  
Since in the end all men must die,  
Why all this labour and this pain?<sup>77</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Ed. Alizadeh, Baku 1900; ed. Pazhmān Bakhtiyārī, Tehran 1343; tr. with Introduction by G. H. Dārāb, London 1945. Zarrīnkūb, *Bā Kāravān-i Ḥulleh*, p. 176. See p. 20.

<sup>73</sup> Ed. Ritter and Rypka, Prague 1934; ed. Pazhmān Bakhtiyārī, Tehran 1344 H.Š.; tr. Wilson, London 1924.

<sup>74</sup> Wilson (op. cit.) sees a pattern of mystic symbolism as well.

<sup>75</sup> *Über die Bildersprache Nizamis*, Berlin/Leipzig, 1927.

<sup>76</sup> See p. 35.

<sup>77</sup> ed. Ritter and Rypka, p. 117.

and Nizāmī later ponders:

King Bahrām built these castle walls,  
But in the last resort he failed:  
From Death he did not save his soul.

Nizāmī, flee a garden where  
The flowers are thorns, the thorns are knives—  
With all his royal pomp and sway  
Bahrām too left our two-day home!<sup>78</sup>

*Lailī va Majnūn*<sup>79</sup> is based on an Arab romance. The poem was written by Nizāmī in a surprisingly short time. It tells of the sufferings of the distracted lover Majnūn when tribal hostility parts him from his sweetheart Lailī; he takes to the desert and lives with the wild animals. Majnūn is widely employed in Persian poetry as the type of the distracted lover; he may be seen too in Persian miniatures surrounded by his mild-looking entourage of animals.

Among the signs of influence on the work of Nizāmī of the *Vīs o Rāmīn* of Fakhr ad-Dīn Asad Gurgānī is the exchange of letters between Lailī and Majnūn, echoing the long passage in *Vīs o Rāmīn* where Vīs sends 'Ten Letters' to Rāmīn. Majnūn in several beautifully drawn passages shows empathy with the beasts of the chase caught in their traps:

Poor thing, trapped far from your mate,  
Sweetheart, like mine, far away,  
In your scent she talks to me,  
And your great eyes are her eyes.

Here Nizāmī echoes Sanā'ī, who writes of Majnūn<sup>80</sup> that he freed a deer from the snare, then

He said, 'Its eyes are like my lover's eyes.'

In *Khusrou va Shīrīn*<sup>81</sup> Nizāmī tells the story of Khusrou Parvīz, the Sassanian king of the seventh century A.D. Legends surround Khusrou, who had as his minstrel the famous Bārbad and whose favourite, Shīrīn, is said to have been a Christian; his horse, Shabdīz, is also renowned in story. At Ṭāq-i Būstān, near Kirmānshāh, can be seen rock-reliefs of Khusrou Parvīz, one supposed to be the king mounted on Shabdīz.

<sup>78</sup> On the motif cf. Nadūshan, *Khayyām va Firdausī*, Yaghmā, Year 19, No. 4, p. 169.

<sup>79</sup> Ed. Aleskerzadeh and F. Babayev, Moscow 1965; Khulāṣeh-i *Lailī Majnūn-i Nizāmī*, Matīnī, Mashhad 1341 H.Š.; tr. and ed. Gelpke, 1966.

<sup>80</sup> *Ḥadīqat al-Ḥaqīqat*, ed. Raḡavī, p. 457.

<sup>81</sup> Ed. Khetagurov, Baku 1960; ed. Bakhtiyārī, Tehran 1343 H.Š.

The stonemason Farhād falls in love with Shīrīn, whom he meets when she and her serving-maids decide to have a channel made to convey milk from the flocks to their palace. When Khusrou discovers Farhād's attachment to Shīrīn, he sets him to cut a passage through Mount Bīsūtūn, a crag beside the road not far from Ṭāq-i Būstān, on which is carved the great inscription of Darius I. Legend associates Farhād with these carvings—possibly the reliefs of Ṭāq-i Būstān have also played a part in the legend of Farhād.

There is also a ruined castle in the area called Qaṣr-i Shīrīn, 'Shīrīn's Castle', which legend says was built by Khusrou for his favourite.

Farhād is given a lying report of the death of Shīrīn, whereupon he falls to his death. Niẓāmī describes how a critic takes him to task for dwelling upon pre-Islamic themes<sup>42</sup>—

You have a voice God's Unity to sing  
The Magian lore needs no refurbishing!

Niẓāmī reads him some extracts from *Khusrou va Shīrīn*; the critic is won over and even encourages him to complete his work: quaintly enough, with the use of a pre-Islamic simile—

Like the Humā<sup>43</sup> your words in shadow veil...

Niẓāmī's enthusiasm for painting is well illustrated by the passage where a picture of Khusrou is painted by Shāpūr, who leaves it for Shīrīn and her companions to see (and fall in love with). Shāpūr says of his own artistic talents:

I paint a man's head and the man's head moves,  
I paint a bird's wing and it takes the air.

The influence of the *Vīs o Rāmīn* of Gurgānī can be seen in the banquet scene, where Khusrou, Shīrīn, Shāpūr and Shīrīn's handmaidens take their pleasure; each of the characters recites a couplet, termed *afsāneh*, referring in poetic terms to the love-affair of Khusrou and Shīrīn. This is reminiscent of the well-nigh fatal song sung by the minstrel at the court of King Moubad in *Vīs o Rāmīn*, alluding in parable to the love-affair of Rāmīn with Vīs.

In the passage of *Khusrou va Shīrīn* one of the handmaidens recites:

A shining pearl departed from its shell:  
The heavens ordered that it should be set  
Next to a ruby in a coronet.

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<sup>42</sup> See Bacher, Nizami, 1873, p. 29.

<sup>43</sup> A magic bird of the Iranian legend.

There is an anticipation of the story of Majnūn<sup>84</sup> in Nizāmī's description of the lover's agony of Farhād:

He made the desert beasts his only friends.

Nizāmī also celebrates in a series of couplets the Thirty Modes of the minstrel Bārbad. This passage and the court scene above highlight Nizāmī's predilection for the formal set piece. Similarly his descriptions of dawn, sunset and night take the form of elaborate vignettes.<sup>85</sup>

The *Iskandarnāmeḥ* is divided into two parts, *Sharafnāmeḥ*<sup>86</sup> and *Iqbāl-nāmeḥ*.<sup>87</sup> In the *Sharafnāmeḥ* the conquests and exploits of Alexander the Great are described. Nizāmī writes that he was instructed in the writing of the poem by Khizr, the prophet guardian of the Water of Life. The sections of the poem are each introduced by a 'Sāqīnāmeḥ', verses calling on the cup-bearer to give wine with marvellous properties.

Though Nizāmī writes that Firdausī, whilst embellishing diction like a bride, only wrote what was inescapable, omitting material not to his taste, episodes occur which are common to the *Sharafnāmeḥ* and the *Shāhnāmeḥ*, for instance Alexander's marriage with Roushanak (Roxana), widow of Dārā, and his quest for the Water of Life. Nizāmī refers to the variety of the sources which he consulted, Jewish, Christian and Pahlavī. He displays a considerable knowledge of Greek materials.

A fantastic episode is Alexander's destruction of a fire-temple guarded by the sorceress Āzar-Humā, who changes herself into a dragon; it is only when Aristotle counsels Alexander to make use of the talismanic powers of Apollonius that the dragon is overcome.

In the *Iqbāl-nāmeḥ* Alexander communes with Greek philosophers—Aristotle, Apollonius, Socrates, Plato, Thales, Porphyrius and Hermes. He reaches the stage of prophethood, and sets out to travel the whole world with an army.

Sharaf ad-Dīn Shafurvehī<sup>88</sup> was a poet of the later twelfth century; he eulogized Tughril Arslān, the Seljūq ruler in Iraq and Western Iran.

The poetess Mahsatī<sup>89</sup> is believed to have been contemporary with Nizāmī of Ganjeh.

Aṣṣīr Akhsīkatī<sup>90</sup> (died c. 1211) was born in Akhsīkat in the region of Farghāna. He fled from the Ghuzz and may have lost his possessions, as his

<sup>84</sup> See p. 49.

<sup>85</sup> See Ritter, *Bildersprache* on this feature.

<sup>86</sup> Ed. Ali-Zade, Baku 1947, tr. Wilberforce Clarke, London 1881.

<sup>87</sup> Ed. Babayev, Baku 1947.

<sup>88</sup> S II, p. 740.

<sup>89</sup> *Divān*, ed. Ṭāhīrī Shihāb, Tehran 1335 H.Š.; F. Meier, *Die Schöne Mahsati*, Wiesbaden 1963.

<sup>90</sup> *Divān*, ed. Rukn ad-Dīn Humāyūnfarrukh, Tehran 1337 H.Š.

*Divān* contains only poetry dating from after his journey to Iraq.<sup>91</sup> Šafa remarks that critics have accorded him a high place in the ranks of writers of *qaṣīdeh*; he is said to have engaged in recrimination with Khāqānī.<sup>92</sup> Furūzānfar finds his work derivative.<sup>93</sup>

The sweetheart is the candle of the company:  
That's as may be—no need to be a moth!

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<sup>91</sup> Humāyūnfarrukh, op. cit.

<sup>92</sup> S II, pp. 708-9.

<sup>93</sup> S va S, s.v.

CHAPTER FOUR  
‘AṬṬĀR TO KAMĀL-I KHUJANDĪ

*Introductory*

The Mongol invasion of Iran began about 1221<sup>1</sup> and the dynasty of Khvārazm, who bore the brunt of the attack, fell. Echoes of the horror of the invasion can be heard in the works of Shams-i Qais<sup>2</sup> and of Najm ad-Dīn Rāzī,<sup>3</sup> both of whom fled westwards from the Mongols. The poet Kamāl ad-Dīn of Isfahan<sup>4</sup> was killed by the Mongols; a similar tradition exists about ‘Aṭṭār.<sup>5</sup>

Shiraz escaped almost unscathed; it was there that Shams-i Qais settled to complete his work. The Salghūrid dynasty of Fārs ruled until 1270 when direct Mongol rule began.<sup>6</sup> Sa‘dī<sup>7</sup> wrote under the patronage of this dynasty.

The Mongol Īlkhāns ruled Iran until 1335. They made Tabriz their capital. They were succeeded in Baghdad and Tabriz by the Jalayirids, among whose poets was Salmān Sāveji,<sup>8</sup> and in the East by the Sarbadārs, under whom Ibn Yamīn<sup>9</sup> wrote, and the Karts. In the South the dynasties which succeeded the Īlkhāns were the Īnjūyids and Muḥaffarids. Ḥāfiz<sup>10</sup> wrote under these rulers in Shiraz; ‘Ubaid-i Zakānī also enjoyed their patronage. Tīmūr (Tamerlane) invaded Iran and held power from 1370; tradition says that he met Ḥāfiz.

Within this period fall some notable Sufi poets: ‘Aṭṭār,<sup>11</sup> Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī<sup>12</sup> and ‘Irāqī.<sup>13</sup>

The *ghazal* begins from now on to come to the centre of the stage, though *qaṣīdeh* and *maṣnavī* continue to be commonly written.

In the *ghazal* the poet is working within a close framework in which duality plays an important part.<sup>14</sup> In the manuscripts of Persian poetry the spaces for

<sup>1</sup> Minorsky, *Iranica*, p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 96.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 47 for his father, Jamāl ad-Dīn Isfahānī.

<sup>5</sup> See HIL, p. 237.

<sup>6</sup> Bosworth, *The Islamic Dynasties*, p. 125.

<sup>7</sup> See p. 59.

<sup>8</sup> See p. 67.

<sup>9</sup> See p. 66.

<sup>10</sup> See p. 67.

<sup>11</sup> See p. 55.

<sup>12</sup> See p. 57.

<sup>13</sup> See p. 58.

<sup>14</sup> See, on the *ghazal*, Hillmann, ‘Manūchihrī, Poet or Versifier’, *Edibiyât*, University of Pennsylvania, I i 1976, p. 93.

the writing are meticulously ruled out and the *baits* relentlessly divided into their twin *miṣraʿ*. Sometimes a *ghazal* is in the form of a meditation, sometimes it is addressed to the poet's sweetheart—or, for the Ṣūfī poet, the divine Beloved. The theme of the *ghazal* is, endlessly, love—the poets are fond of saying that the story of love is an endless one; in the words of Shakespeare—

O know, sweet love, I always write of you,  
And you and love are still my argument;  
So all my best is dressing old words new,  
Spending again what is already spent:  
For as the Sun is daily new and old,  
So is my love still telling what is told.

Ḥāfīz writes—

'Love is only one story—but how amazing that from whatever  
tongue I hear it, it is not repeated!'

Images are taken from a wide stock mostly familiar to the audience: Ḥāfīz for example writes—

Since the King of Tūrān sees fit to throw me in a pit,  
If the grace of the mighty hero does not rescue me, what am I to do?

His audience will have recognized the legend of Bīzhan, the Iranian hero thrown into a pit by order of Afrāsiyāb, King of Turan; Bīzhan is rescued by the 'mighty hero' Rustam, as Firdausī tells in the *Shāhnāmeḥ*.<sup>15</sup>

Much of the imagery of the *ghazal* is physical—eyes, hair, cheeks, stature, gait; as Donne says—

To our bodies turn we then, that so  
Weak men on love revealed may look:  
Love's mysteries in souls do grow  
But yet the body is his book.

The eyes frequently suggest an image from archery—the sweetheart pierces the poet's heart with an unerring eyelash, as Cupid with his bow; much as Herbert writes—

Love is swift of foot  
Love's a man of warre  
And can shoot  
And can kill from farre.

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<sup>15</sup> See p. 28.

Saʿdī says—

‘So that the quarry may not leap from the lasso of your locks, you  
have fashioned bow and arrow from your eyebrow and eyelash.’

and again with a further turn to the image—

‘If you go hunting, the wild beast will not flee from you—for cap-  
ture in your lasso is ease itself.’

This panoply of images requires tactful use by the poet; Helen Gardner writes of the metaphysical poets: ‘It is the use which they make of the conceit which is more important than the frequently learned content.’

In the *ghazals* of Saʿdī the atmosphere is conventional—images make their appearance on a familiar, ordered stage, like the formalized figures in the Persian miniature, which reached its zenith at the Timurid court.<sup>16</sup> The same attractive neatness, tastefully not overdone, can be seen in Saʿdī’s *ghazals*, where the poet seems to have developed a language of the *ghazal* as natural and effortless as ordinary speech. He frequently gives a flash of humour—

‘Year in and year out Saʿdī gives people advice—and doesn’t listen  
himself!’

and he can give a turn to a *bait* in the second *miṣraʿ* so unexpected as almost to surprise himself—

You said ‘Be patient!’ but, oh  
My heart was the place of patience and  
You’ve stolen it away!

\*  
\*   \*  
\*

‘Aṭṭār (d. 1220),<sup>17</sup> the Sufi poet, belonged to Nīshāpūr. His *takhalluṣ*, ‘Aṭṭār, means ‘perfumier’ or ‘druggist’; Daulatshāh in the *Tazkirat ash-Shuʿarā* writes:

‘His father was a master druggist of great standing and renown in the city of Shādyākh. After his father’s death, he in his turn engaged in the business of a perfumier, and kept a finely set up shop, such that when people beheld it, their eyes were illumined and their sense filled with scent. One day the Shaikh

<sup>16</sup> But contrast the rushing *ghazals* of Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī in the *Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrizī*.

<sup>17</sup> Ritter, *Das Meer der Seele*, p. I. This is a monumental work on the poet and his works. Cf. also Furūzānfar, *Sharḥ-i Aḥvāl va Naqd o Taḥlīl-i Āḡār-i Shaikh Farīd ad-Dīn Muḥammad ‘Aṭṭār-i Nīshāpūrī*, Tehran 1353 H.Š. v. Baldick, *Handbuch*, p. 120.

was sitting merchant-wise on the platform of his shop; by him were his servant-boys, smart and ready for work; all of a sudden a madman—or rather, one wise in the Way, arrived at the entrance of the shop and directed a piercing look into it—in fact, his eyes filled with tears and he sighed. The Shaikh said to the dervish, ‘What are you staring at? Come along, move on—and quick about it!’ The ‘madman’ replied, ‘Merchant, I carry a light load and have nothing but my cloak about me—

Merchant with drugs of every scent and hue  
The caravan departs—but what of you?

I can pass through this bazaar quickly; you had better be about the business of your paraphernalia and luggage! Take a cold look at your situation!’ ‘How will you pass through the bazaar?’ asked ‘Aṭṭār. ‘Like this’ said the ‘madman’ and taking off his cloak, he placed it under his head and gave up the ghost. At his words the Shaikh went cold as the humour of camphor; he left his shop to rack and ruin and delivered himself from the world. He had been a trader (*bāzārī*)—he became one familiar with lamentation (*bā zārī*); he had been busy with soda—passion (*soudā*) tied him in its fetters; he renounced the world and all its works.<sup>18</sup>

Ṣafā<sup>19</sup> is sceptical about this tale of ‘Aṭṭār’s conversion: such legends about Sufi saints are, he remarks, commonplace. At any rate the story gives some good examples of the plays on words in which writers of *taḏkireh* delighted to indulge.

After his conversion, ‘Aṭṭār is said to have travelled extensively and to have made the pilgrimage to Mecca. One account says that he met in his old age Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī and his father; he is said to have given Rūmī a copy of his *Asrār-nāmeḥ*;<sup>20</sup> ‘Aṭṭār is said to have prophesied to Rūmī’s father that the boy would ‘strike fire in the burnt ones of this world.’ Furūzānfar believes<sup>21</sup> that this meeting may in fact have taken place; he considers that the use of the *Asrār-nāmeḥ* by Rūmī in his works may have given rise to the story that ‘Aṭṭār gave him a copy of the poem.

The group of *maṣnavī* poems ascribed to ‘Aṭṭār<sup>22</sup> by Ritter includes: *Asrār-nāmeḥ*, *Ilāh-nāmeḥ*, *Manṭiq aṭ-Ṭair* and *Muṣibat-nāmeḥ* (see Baldick, *Handbuch*, p. 120 ff.)

<sup>18</sup> *Tazkirat ash-Shu‘arā*, ed. Browne, p. 187.

<sup>19</sup> II, p. 160.

<sup>20</sup> S II, p. 161.

<sup>21</sup> *Kulliyāt-i Shams-Tabrīzī*, ed. Darvīsh, Tehran n.d., p. ‘j’.

<sup>22</sup> Ritter, *op. cit.*, p. I.

The attribution to ‘Aṭṭār of the *Khusrounāmeḥ* has been doubted. ‘Aṭṭār also wrote the *Mukhtār-nāmeḥ*<sup>24</sup> and a *Dīvān*.<sup>25</sup>

The *maṣnavī* stories *Qiṣṣeh-i Sangtarāsh* ‘Story of the Stonemason’ and *Qiṣṣeh-i Sultān-i Jumjumeḥ* ‘Story of King Skull’ are attributed to ‘Aṭṭār by Asmussen. (See p. 64, note 95).

Bābā Afzāl of Kāshān<sup>26</sup> (d. 1256 or 1265) wrote *rubā’ī* as well as treatises in both Persian and Arabic and a translation of a work of Aristotle.<sup>27</sup>

Imāmī of Herāt (d. 1268/9)<sup>28</sup> was once preferred in a *rubā’ī* by Majd ad-Dīn Hamgar<sup>29</sup> to himself and to Sa‘dī.<sup>30</sup>

The Ṣūfī poet Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273) was born in Balkh in 1207. His father, Bahā ad-Dīn Valad,<sup>31</sup> was an eminent scholar and Ṣūfī who fled his native land before the advancing Mongols and made his way to Konya, in Turkey. It is said that in Nishapur father and son met ‘Aṭṭār<sup>32</sup> who gave Rūmī a copy of his *Asrār-nāmeḥ*<sup>33</sup> and prophesied that he would ‘soon strike fire into the burnt ones of this world.’ Furūzānfar believes that the use of the *Asrār-nāmeḥ* by Rūmī in the *Maṣnavī* may have given rise to the tradition that ‘Aṭṭār gave Rūmī a copy of the poem.<sup>34</sup>

Rūmī became, after his father’s death, a disciple of Burhān ad-Dīn Tirmīzī.<sup>35</sup> The ruler of the province of Rūm, Mu‘īn ad-Dīn Parvāna, was a follower of Rūmī; another member of their circle was ‘Irāqī.<sup>36</sup>

Arberry writes<sup>37</sup> that at one time ‘nothing seemed less likely than that (Rūmī) would turn poet’; he quotes from Rūmī’s own words: ‘What have I to do with poetry? By Allah, I care nothing for poetry, and there is nothing worse in my eyes than that. It has become incumbent upon me, as when a man plunges his hands into tripe and washes it out for the sake of a guest’s appetite, because the guest’s appetite is for tripe.’

<sup>24</sup> Ed. Suhailī Khvānsārī, Tehran 1340 H.Š.

<sup>25</sup> Ed. Shafī‘ī Kadkanī, Tehran 1358 H.Š. See p. 121.

<sup>26</sup> *Dīvān* ed. Taqī Tafazzulī, Tehran 1341/1345 H.Š.; ed. Nafīsī, Tehran 1319/1339 H.Š. Also Nafīsī, *Justujū dar Ahvāl o Aṣār-i Farīd ad-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār-i Nishāpūrī*, Tehran 1320 H.Š.

<sup>27</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Faizī and others, Kashan 1351 H.Š.; Nafīsī, *Sharḥ-i Ahvāl-i Afzal-i Kāshānī*, Tehran 1933.

<sup>28</sup> *Kitāb an-Nafs*, HIL p. 235.

<sup>29</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Humāyūn Shahīdī, Tehran 1344 H.Š.

<sup>30</sup> See p. 59.

<sup>31</sup> Hikmat, tr. of Browne, LHP III, p. 191 (HIL, p. 767, does not add the second edition of Hikmat, tr. of Browne, LHP III in 1339 H.Š.)

<sup>32</sup> Shafī‘ī Kadkanī, *Guzīdeh* (see n. 40), p. ix.

<sup>33</sup> See p. 55.

<sup>34</sup> See p. 56.

<sup>35</sup> Furūzānfar in *Kulliyāt-i Shams-i Tabrīzī*, ed. Darvīsh, Tehran, n.d., Preface p. ‘j’.

<sup>36</sup> Shafī‘ī Kadkanī, op. cit., p. xi.

<sup>37</sup> Baldick, *Studia Iranica* II, 1973 fasc. I, p. 71. See below.

<sup>38</sup> Discourses of Rūmī, London 1961, p. 5.

Rūmī fell under the spell or Shams ad-Dīn Tabrīzī, evidently a less unlettered figure than has been supposed.<sup>38</sup> Their intimacy angered Rūmī's disciples and Shams left Konya.

In his distress at separation from Shams, Rūmī was inspired to compose the *Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīzī*; Shams eventually disappeared altogether; Rūmī is said to have instituted the whirling dance of the Mevlevi dervishes to symbolize the search for the lost Beloved.<sup>39</sup> Later Rūmī formed an attachment to his disciple Ḥusām ad-Dīn to whom the *Maṣnavī* is addressed.

Both the *Maṣnavī*<sup>40</sup> and the *Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīzī*<sup>40</sup> are of considerable length. Nicholson writes of the *Maṣnavī*, 'It contains almost as many verses as the Iliad and Odyssey together and about twice as many as the Divina Commedia.'<sup>41</sup>

The Sufi poet 'Irāqī<sup>42</sup> (d. 1289) was born in the district of Hamadān; according to his biography<sup>43</sup> he followed a band of *qalandars* when he fell in love with a beautiful youth among their number; they wandered to India, where 'Irāqī spent twenty-five years in Multan; he then went to Rūm, where he found as patron Mu'īn ad-Dīn Parvāna, a follower of Rūmī. Mu'īn ad-Dīn, on falling out of favour with the Mongols, asked 'Irāqī to go to Egypt and obtain the release of his son, which he did. The last journey of 'Irāqī was to Damascus, where he died.

The *Lama'āt* of 'Irāqī is discussed by J. Baldick elsewhere in this volume.<sup>44</sup> The '*Ushshāqnāmeḥ*'<sup>45</sup> has been attributed to 'Irāqī; Baldick has argued against the attribution.<sup>46</sup> The work is also called *Dahnāmeḥ* or *Dah Faṣl*.<sup>47</sup> It is a *maṣnavī* interspersed with *ghazals*.<sup>48</sup> The poet is writing a *ghazal* when he is visited by the Beloved who reads out the *ghazal*, whose *takhalluṣ* is "'Irāqī", and enquires, 'Who is this poor 'Irāqī?' The poet answers that it is he. The

<sup>38</sup> Baldick, Handbuch, p. 98.

<sup>39</sup> Arberry, Discourses of Rūmī, p. 6.

<sup>40</sup> ed. Nicholson with tr. and commentary, G.M.S. IV, London/Leiden, 1925-40; Kullīyyāt-i Maṣnavī-yi Ma'navī, ed. Darvīsh, Tehran 1340; Khulāṣeh-i Maṣnavī, Furūzānfar, Tehran 1321; Kullīyyāt-i Maṣnavī-yi Ma'navī Moulavī, Ma'rifat, Shiraz 1354 H.Š.; Maṣnavī ed. Ramazānī, Tehran 1353 H.Š. Kullīyyāt-i Shams yā Dīvān-i Kabīr, ed. Furūzānfar, Tehran 1336-65 H.Š.; Selected Poems, ed. Nicholson, Cambridge 1898 and reprints; Guzīdeh-i Ghazaliyyāt-i Shams, ed. Shaff'ī Kadkanī, Tehran 1352 H.Š.

<sup>41</sup> Maṣnavī, Books I-II, Translation, p. xiii.

<sup>42</sup> Kullīyyāt, ed. Naftī, Tehran 1339; v. Baldick, Handbuch, p. 128.

<sup>43</sup> Naftī, p. 3.

<sup>44</sup> P. 99.

<sup>45</sup> Naftī, op. cit., p. 327; tr. Arberry, The Song of Lovers, Calcutta 1939.

<sup>46</sup> 'The Authenticity of 'Irāqī's 'Ushshāq-nāma', Studia Iranica II, 1973 i.

<sup>47</sup> Baldick, op. cit., p. 67, quoting Gandjei, Der Islam XLVII, 1971, pp. 59-66.

<sup>48</sup> Baldick, op. cit., p. 76, sees many differences between these and the *ghazals* in the *Dīvān* of 'Irāqī.

Beloved says that this will only be believed when another *ghazal*, this time on the theme of Union, is composed extempore. The poet thereupon dictates a *ghazal*. The Beloved praises it but warns the poet against self-praise and enjoins him to write something novel on the subject of love, brushing aside the doubts of the poet.<sup>49</sup> Stories, some set in Shiraz,<sup>50</sup> follow along with *maṣnavī* passages and further *ghazals*.

Majd ad-Dīn Hamgar (d. 1287/8)<sup>51</sup> was in the service of Bahā ad-Dīn Juvainī, Governor of Fārs. Hikmat<sup>52</sup> discovered in a manuscript of the *Dīvān* of Majd ad-Dīn Hamgar two poems dating manuscripts copied by him. A pupil of Majd ad-Dīn Hamgar is said to have been the poet Badr ad-Dīn Jājarmī, father of Muḥammad Jājarmī, author of the *tazkireh Mu'nis al-Aḥrār*<sup>53</sup>.

Sa'adī,<sup>54</sup> Abū Abdallāh Musharrif b. Muṣliḥ,<sup>55</sup> was born in Shiraz about 1213-19.<sup>56</sup> He went to Baghdad to study in the Niẓāmiyyah College and became a preacher.<sup>57</sup> He travelled widely carrying on his calling; he may not have been well known till about 1250 or thereafter;<sup>58</sup> he returned to Shiraz in 1256/7<sup>59</sup> and died in 1292.<sup>60</sup>

Famous as his *Gulistān* and *Būstān* are, he is no less celebrated as a *ghazal*-writer.

The *Gulistān*<sup>61</sup> has a unique place in Persian culture. It is constantly quoted and has had an immense influence upon subsequent writing. It is written in prose interspersed with verses. Bahār<sup>62</sup> has termed the *Gulistān* '*Maqāmāt*'; he notes Sa'adī's debt to Qāzī Ḥamid ad-Dīn<sup>63</sup> but emphasizes that the *Gulistān* represents an original departure.

<sup>49</sup> Quoted on p. 6.

<sup>50</sup> Baldick, 'The Authenticity...' p. 77.

<sup>51</sup> Nafīsī, Majd ad-Dīn Hamgar-i Shīrāzī, *Mihr* II 10-12, 1313-14 H.Š.

<sup>52</sup> Tr. of Browne, LHP III, p. 169, n. 1.

<sup>53</sup> ed. Ṭabībī, Tehran 1332, 1350 H.Š.

<sup>54</sup> Kulliyāt, ed. Furūghī, Tehran 1337-42 H.Š.; ed. Furūghī, Ḥalat, Tehran 1345 H.Š.; with preface and biography by Zarrīnqalam, Tehran 1345 H.Š.; Ma'rifat, Shiraz, (with glossary) 1340 H.Š., ed. Muṣaffā, Tehran 1342.

<sup>55</sup> Bahār, *Sabkshināsī* III, p. 111.

<sup>56</sup> 'Abbās Iqbāl Āshtiyānī, *Sa'adīnāmeḥ*, Tehran 1316 H.Š., p. 28.

<sup>57</sup> Bahār, op. cit., ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Āshtiyānī, op. cit., ibid.

<sup>59</sup> HIL, p. 250.

<sup>60</sup> HIL, p. 251. See also Massé, *Essai sur le Poète Saadi*, Paris 1919; Arberry, 'Kings and Beggars' (tr. of Books I and II of the *Gulistān*) London 1945, Introduction.

<sup>61</sup> Ed. Garakānī, Tehran 1310 H.Š.; ed. Nafīsī, Tehran 1345 H.Š., ed. Furūghī, and Mashkūr, Tehran 1344 H.Š.; ed. Irānparast, Tehran; 1348/H.Š.; ed. Aliyev, Moscow 1959 (with Russian tr.); Khazāyilī, *Sharḥ-i Gulistān* (with commentary), Tehran 1344; ed. Platts, 1874; tr. Platts, 1889; tr. Rehatsek, 1964; Südi, *Commentary on the Gulistān*, Persian tr., Tehran 1349 H.Š.

<sup>62</sup> *Sabkshināsī* III, p. 111 ff.

<sup>63</sup> See p. 76.

An elegantly written Introduction leads on to eight chapters, each on a particular subject: On the nature of kings, on the character of dervishes, on the merit of contentment, on the benefits of silence (lasting, appropriately enough, only a few pages), on love and youth, on weakness and old age, on the effect of education, on the etiquette of society. The divisions are not, however, strictly observed: anecdotes may find a place which seems irrelevant. Many of the anecdotes describe incidents in Saʿdī's life and travels. Extensive use is made of rhyming prose—Bahār even terms Saʿdī's diction 'prose poetry'.<sup>64</sup> Some anecdotes are entirely in verse. Šūfī thought plays a large part in the *Gulistān*,<sup>65</sup> though Furūzānfar implies that Saʿdī's connection with Šūfism may have been after the manner of a current fashion.<sup>66</sup>

'Never had I lamented the changing face of Fate, nor frowned at the revolution of the heavens, till the time when my feet were unshod and I had no wherewithal to shoe them. I came into the Friday mosque of Kūfa sore at heart and saw a man with no feet. I rendered thanks for the bounty of God and bore my shoelessness patiently.

Roast chicken to the man replete  
Is worthless as a lettuce-leaf:  
But turnips to the indigent  
Are chicken rare beyond belief.'

'I remember how once I had travelled all night long with a caravan and at dawn lain down by the side of a wood. A distracted soul, who was our companion on that journey, gave a shriek and made off into the desert, resting not a single instant. When day broke I said to him, 'What was the matter?' He replied, 'I heard how the nightingales had begun their calls from the trees, the partridges from the hill, the frogs from the water and the beasts from the wood. I reflected that it would hardly be proper for all to be at their devotions and for me to be sleeping the sleep of carelessness!

The bird sang out at dawn and then and there  
Made short work of my patience and my sense:  
A drowsy friend my cry of anguish heard  
And said 'Who would have thought a chirping bird  
Would turn a man so suddenly insane?  
I said, 'Would one be human to remain  
Silent when all about me are at prayer?'

<sup>64</sup> SS III, pp. 154-5.

<sup>65</sup> Maḥallātī, *Maktab-i ʿIrfān-i Saʿdī*, I, Shiraz 1345 H.Š.

<sup>66</sup> *Saʿdīnāmeḥ*, p. 77.

'They found 'Abd al-Qādir Gīlān<sup>67</sup> in the shrine of the Ka'beh with his face on the pebbles, saying, 'O Lord, forgive me: but if I am nevertheless worthy of retribution, raise me up blind on the Day of Resurrection, so that I may not be humiliated before the Good

Every morning I implore  
With my head bowed helplessly,  
'You whom I do not forget,  
'Do you ever think of me?'

To the replete man barley bread is dull:  
My sweetheart fair is ugly in your eyes:  
Houris of Paradise call Limbo Hell—  
Ask those in Hell—they'll call it Paradise.  
One with a lover in his arms—  
How different is he  
From one whose eyes upon the door  
Are fixed impatiently!

The ear is able all its life  
To do without the drum and fife:  
The eye can miss the garden gay,  
The nose get by with rose away:  
If pillowless you go to bed,  
A potsherd serves beneath your head:  
If by your side no sweetheart lies,  
Sleep in your own arms loverwise:  
Only the stomach, twisted thing,  
Cannot put up with rationing!

The *Būstān*<sup>68</sup> though moving to a large extent in the field of everyday life, and also at times spiced with humour, is more didactic in vein. The work is entirely in poetry, a *Sūfī maṣnavī*. Sa'dī quotes from the *Būstān*—as well as from his *ghazals*—in the *Gulistān*. He displays admiration for Firdausī, of whom he says, 'May mercy light on that pure tomb!'; the style of the *Shāhnāme* is echoed as Sa'dī describes a battle. He also tells the story of how, when in India, he discovers the way to operate manually the 'miraculous' hand of an idol. Some have been sceptical about Sa'dī's reminiscences.

<sup>67</sup> Founder of the Qādiriyyah order.

<sup>68</sup> Ed. Furūghī, Tehran see note 34, 'Kullīyyāt'; ed. with commentary, Graf, Vienna 1858; ed. with commentary, Khazāyīlī, Tehran 1348/H.Š.; The *Būstān* was written before the *Gulistān*; on their chronology, HIL, p. 250.

The *Būstān*<sup>69</sup> opens with doxologies, dedications and a section on the reason for the book's composition. The succeeding chapters are entitled: on justice, deliberation and prudence; on doing good; on love, intoxication and distraction; on modesty; on resignation; on contentment; on education; on thankfulness for security; on repentance and the right way; on prayers.

The *ghazals* of Saʿdī<sup>70</sup> have been conventionally divided into groups called respectively *Ṭayyibāt*, *Badāyiʿ*, *Khavāṭīm*; Furūghī<sup>71</sup> does not believe that this division goes back to Saʿdī himself, and arranges the *ghazals* in the usual way without divisions. Saʿdī also wrote *qaṣīdeh*,<sup>72</sup> some in Arabic.

In his *Kullīyyāt* are seven prose *risāleh* or treatises which also contain verses. The first is entitled 'Introduction to a volume' but to what specific volume is unknown. The second consists of five sermons; the third tells how a letter was sent to Saʿdī by the Ṣāhib-dīvān Shams ad-Dīn<sup>73</sup> containing questions and enclosing five hundred *dīnārs*. The messenger decided to pocket a hundred and fifty of these; when the Ṣāhib-dīvān read Saʿdī's reply he found a verse as follows:

May your life as these *dīnārs* as many years contain;  
May you live three centuries and then for half again!

—so the theft was discovered. Eventually the Ṣāhib-dīvān sent Saʿdī a sum of money to build a rest-house in Shiraz, described as the one 'below the fort of *Quhandar*',<sup>74</sup> now called *Qalʿeh-i Bandar*, on a yellow eminence above the (now rebuilt) shrine of Saʿdī. The fourth is in reply to a question about Reason and Love and contains the verse (also found in the *Gulistān*):

Bird of the morning, learn love from the moth,  
Yielding his life in flames without a word;  
Frauds stumble on the quest without a clue—  
Crazy remains he who the Clue has found!

The fifth consists of 'Counsel to Kings.' The sixth, in three parts, describes an encounter—suspected to be apocryphal—between Saʿdī and Abaqā Khān the Mongol Ilkhān; there follows a section containing advice on statecraft, addressed to the Mongol governor of Fārs, Ankiānū,<sup>75</sup> then the story of how

<sup>69</sup> Originally called '*Saʿdīnāmeḥ*', Furūghī, *Būstān*, Introduction.

<sup>70</sup> Discussed on p. 55.

<sup>71</sup> *Ghazaliyyāt-i Saʿdī*, Tehran 1318/1343 H.Š. (v. p. 6); ed. and tr. Lucas King, *Ṭayyibāt* 1919-26, *Badāyiʿ* 1925.

<sup>72</sup> *Qaṣayid* ed. Furūghī, Tehran 1343 H.Š.

<sup>73</sup> Boyle, *The History of the World-Conqueror*, p. xvi.

<sup>74</sup> The word may stand for *kuhan diz* 'old castle'; remains of the old castle can still be seen.

<sup>75</sup> Qazvīnī, *Saʿdīnāmeḥ*, p. 134.

Sa'adī interceded for his brother, a greengrocer, with the governor Shams ad-Dīn Tāzīgū<sup>76</sup> over the price of dates. A further *risāleh*, in Three Sermons, parodying the second *risāleh*, has been thought spurious, though Bahār thinks it may be genuine.<sup>77</sup>

On Sulṭān Valad, son of Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī, see Baldick, Handbuch, p. 128.

Nizārī (d. 1320-1) Quhistānī is treated rather cautiously by Daulatshāh<sup>78</sup> because of his suspected Ismā'īlī leanings. He is thought to have had some Ismā'īlī tendencies.<sup>79</sup> Daulatshāh solemnly debates whether his *takhalluṣ* derives from *nizār*, 'thin' or from the name of the Ismā'īlī caliph Nizār, finally deciding on the latter.<sup>80</sup> He wrote a *Dīvān* and the *maṣnavīs Aẓhar o Maẓhar*, *Dastūr-nāmeḥ* and *Safarnāmeḥ*, the last describing his own travels. The diction of his *qaṣīdeḥ* is at times extremely involved.

Amīr Khusrou of Delhi (d. 1325)<sup>81</sup> came of a Turkī family. He became a disciple of the mystic Najm ad-Dīn Auliya. His writings are very extensive and varied. Shafī'ī Kadkanī does not think that he can be said to be the originator of the Indian style of Persian poetry, though he may be said to belong to a group from whom collectively it originated.<sup>82</sup>

He wrote a *Dīvān* divided into five books corresponding to the stages of his life. Rypka<sup>83</sup> doubts the view that Amīr Khusrou was the greatest lyric poet before Ḥāfiz.

He also wrote a *Khamseh* on the lines of that of Nizāmī of Ganjeh;<sup>84</sup> *Maṭla' al-Anvār*<sup>85</sup> (after the *Makhzan al-Asrār*); *Shīrīn va Khusrou*<sup>86</sup> (after *Khusrou va Shīrīn*); *Majnūn va Lailī*<sup>87</sup> (after *Lailī va Majnūn*); *Āṭneh-i Sikandarī* (after the *Iskandarnāmeḥ*); *Hasht Bihišt*<sup>88</sup> (after the *Haft Paikar*); other

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>77</sup> *Sabkshināsī* III, p. 123; Bahār considers it the source of the Laṭāyif of 'Ubaid-i Zakānī (see p. 66).

<sup>78</sup> *Tazkirat ash-Shu'arā*, ed. Browne, p. 231 ff.

<sup>79</sup> HIL, p. 255 ff.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>81</sup> *Dīvān-i Kāmil* ed. Darvish, Tehran 1348; *Kulliyāt-i 'Anāsir-i Davāvīn-i Khusrou*, Cawnpore 1916; *Kulliyāt-i Ghazaliyāt-i Khusrou*, ed. 'Ābidī, Lahore 1974. *Guzīdeh-i Āṣār*, Kabul 1975.

<sup>82</sup> Handbuch, p. 150.

<sup>83</sup> HIL, p. 258.

<sup>84</sup> See pp. 47 ff.

<sup>85</sup> With commentary, Multānī, Delhi 1876.

<sup>86</sup> Ed. Aliyev, Moscow 1961.

<sup>87</sup> Ed. Mahramof, Moscow 1964, 1975; Ḥabīb ar-Rahmān Khān, Aligarh 1917.

<sup>88</sup> Ed. Ashraf, Aligarh 1918.

*maṣnavī*, *Qirān as-Saʿdain*,<sup>89</sup> *Nuh Sipīhr*<sup>90</sup> (in mine metres), *Miftāḥ al-Futūḥ*,<sup>91</sup> *ʿIshqiyyeh*,<sup>92</sup> *Tughluqnāmeḥ*.<sup>93</sup>

At a recent meeting in Kabul to commemorate the 650th anniversary of the death of Amīr Khusrou, plans were drawn up for publication of his works.<sup>94</sup>

The Jewish poet Shāhīn of Shiraz lived under the Īlkhān Abū Saʿīd (1316-1335). He wrote a 'miniature epic' called King Kishvar.<sup>95</sup>

Humām of Tabriz<sup>96</sup> (d. 1314) eulogized the *Ṣāhibdīvān*<sup>97</sup> and is said to have engaged, to his disadvantage, in badinage with Saʿdī.<sup>98</sup>

Shaikh Maḥmūd Shabistārī (d. 1320) from Shabistar near Tabriz, wrote the *maṣnavī Gulshan-i Rāz*,<sup>99</sup> on the symbolism of Ṣūfism, and the *Saʿādatnāmeḥ*.<sup>100</sup> Ḥikmat<sup>101</sup> notes that Shabistārī himself had no pretensions to being a poet, and quotes a verse of his to this effect which contains a false rhyme, as if, Ḥikmat remarks, to lend point on the disclaimer.

Auḥādī<sup>102</sup> (d. 1338) is often styled *Marāghehī*, 'of Marāgheh'; Nafīsī<sup>103</sup> states that he was in fact born in Isfahan where he lived till the age of 19; later residence in Marāgheh, he goes on, gave him the soubriquet Marāghehī. Nafīsī also disbelieves the tradition that Auḥādī took his *takhalluṣ* from the Sufi Shaikh Auḥad ad-Dīn Kirmānī; he writes that even had the two been alive at the same time, Auḥādī would have been a small child. Auḥādī wrote the *maṣnavī Jām-i Jam*,<sup>104</sup> containing sections on creation, moral and social obligation, education, *samāʿ* and *futuvvat*.

A preacher was saying one day  
 'The Houris of fair Paradise  
 Provide a delightful surprise:  
 Each man will have twenty, they say.'

<sup>89</sup> Ed. Barni, Aligarh 1918.

<sup>90</sup> Ed. Waḥīd Mīrzā, Islamic Research Association Series 12, Oxford/Calcutta 1949.

<sup>91</sup> Ed. Niyāzī, Oriental College Magazine, 12-13, 1936-7.

<sup>92</sup> Ed. Rashid Aḥmad, Aligarh 1917.

<sup>93</sup> Ed. Farīdābādī, Aurangabad 1933.

<sup>94</sup> RK, Vol. 18 1-3, April-June 1975, p. 187.

<sup>95</sup> Asmussen, Studies in Judeo-Persian Literature, Leiden 1973.

<sup>96</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Muʿayyad Ṣābitī, Tehran 1333; ed. Rashid ʿAyūzī, Tehran 1351 H.Š.

<sup>97</sup> *Tazkirat ash-Shuʿarā*, ed. Browne, p. 218.

<sup>98</sup> *Tazkirat ash-Shuʿarā*, ed. Browne, p. 203.

<sup>99</sup> Ed. and tr. Whinfield, London 1880; commentary by Sabzavārī, Tehran 1885; commentary by Lāhijī, introduction by Samīʿī, Tehran 1337; ed. Muḥammadzādeh, Baku 1972; v. Baldick, Handbuch, p. 129.

<sup>100</sup> Only known in defective copies according to Ḥikmat, tr. of Browne, LHP III, p. 192, note 1.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, note 2.

<sup>102</sup> Kulliyāt, ed. Nafīsī, Tehran 1340; *Dīvān*, ed. Ḥamīd Saʿadat, Tehran 1340; ed. Yūshaʿ, Madras 1951.

<sup>103</sup> Nafīsī, op. cit., p. lxviii.

<sup>104</sup> Ed. Dastgirdī, Tehran 1307.

An old woman rose from her place,  
 'And are there men houris as well?'  
 'If you show your face there,' he said,  
 'You'll not escape when they give chase!'

Auḥādī also composed the *Manṭiq al-ʿUshshāq* or *Dahnāmeḥ*,<sup>105</sup> a *māšnavī* interspersed with *ghazals*, which tells of the sufferings of a lover whose love is unrequited; the *ghazals* are messages sent by lover to beloved and vice versa. This *genre* was a popular one.<sup>106</sup>

The *ghazals* of Auḥādī are written in a style as felicitous as, and a little more erotic than, that of Saʿdī. On Auḥādī see also Baldick, Handbuch, p. 130.

Maghribī<sup>107</sup> (d. 1406/7) followed the doctrine of Ibn ʿArabī.<sup>108</sup> Ḥikmat<sup>109</sup> writes that he grave of Maghribī, which he visited, is at Istahbānāt in Fārs.

Knowledge seek no further from us, culture no more seek!  
 You are rational and sober, we are drunk on love!  
 Through God's grace we have escaped from worship of the Self,  
 Now we wander fancy-free as worshippers of wine!  
 Wine, wine is our quest, for we are drunkards through and through,  
 He who is a drunkard through and through our trusty friend!

Khvājū of Kirmān<sup>110</sup> (d. 1351-2)<sup>111</sup> wrote at first in Yazd, then became a follower of Shaikh Amīn ad-Dīn Muḥammad Kāzerūnī during the time he spent in Shiraz.<sup>112</sup> He travelled to Tabriz, Isfahan, Baghdad and Egypt.<sup>113</sup> His grave lies in a pretty setting on the side of the Allahu Akbar pass at the entrance to Shiraz. His *Dīvān* is divided into two parts, *Ṣanāyiʿ al-Kamāl*, 'Contrivances of Perfection' and *Badāyiʿ al-Jamāl*, 'Wonders of Beauty'. Browne's unenthusiastic verdict on the *ghazals* of Khvājū calls forth a sharp rejoinder from Ḥikmat.<sup>114</sup>

Besides his *Dīvān*, Khvājū wrote a *khamseh* or set of five *mašnavī* poems: *Gul o Nourūz*<sup>115</sup> and *Humāy o Humāyūn*, both romances; the mystical

<sup>105</sup> Ed. Farrukh, Mashhad 1335; see *Dīvān*, ed. Nafīsī.

<sup>106</sup> Gandjei, 'Il 'Muḥabbat-nāme' di Hōrazmī', *Annali dell' Istituto Orientale di Napoli*, Nuova Serie, VI e VII, Rome 1958, p. 131 ff. edits and translates a Turkish poem (with some Persian verses) written in 1353 in a similar form.

<sup>107</sup> *Kulliyāt-i Dīvān*, ed. Suhailī (reprint) Tehran 1337.

<sup>108</sup> Baldick, Handbuch, p. 131.

<sup>109</sup> Tr. of Browne, LHP III, p. 445 note 1.

<sup>110</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Khvānsārī, Tehran 1336.

<sup>111</sup> Khvānsārī, *ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12. The Shaikh is mentioned in a *ghazal* of Ḥāfiẓ (ed. Qazvīnī/Ghanī, p. 363).

<sup>113</sup> Khvānsārī, p. 12.

<sup>114</sup> Tr. of Browne, LHP III, p. 310 note 3.

<sup>115</sup> Ed. Kamāl Aynī, Tehran 1350.

*Rouzat al-Anvār*,<sup>116</sup> *Kamāl-nāmeḥ* and *Gauharnāmeḥ*; the *Sāmnāmeḥ*<sup>117</sup> has been attributed to Khvājū by some.

The tazkireh *Muʿnis al-Aḥrār fī Daqāʾiq al-Ashʿār*<sup>118</sup> was compiled by Muḥammad Jājarmī son of Badr ad-Dīn Jājarmī.

ʿImād-i Faqīh<sup>119</sup> (d. 1371) wrote a *Dīvān* and is credited with five Ṣūfī *maṣnavī* including the *Muḥabbatnāmeḥ-i Šāhibdilān*.

Ibn Yamīn<sup>120</sup> (d. 1368) wrote under the patronage of the Sarbadārs of Khurasan, who ruled in the disturbed period at the end of the line of Ilkhāns. He suffered the experience of losing his *Dīvān* in the troubled times so that it had to be reconstituted from memory. Besides the usual forms of verse he wrote *Qitʿeh* for which he is renowned:

From the street of Life to Death  
Is no distance—half a breath,  
But this is beyond belief:  
Every step is dogged by grief!<sup>121</sup>

ʿUbaid-i Zākānī<sup>122</sup> has earned fame as a satirist; his *Laṭāyif*, 'Facetiae', are thought<sup>123</sup> to have been inspired by a *risāleh* of Saʿdī. In the prose *Akhlāq al-Ashrāf*, 'Character of the Nobility' (in which verses are interspersed), he sets out the prescribed view of the religion on topics such as philosophy, courage, and chastity, then follows it in each case with the view preferred by the cynic.

In the section on Justice, ʿUbaid recounts a story about Hūlāgū Khān after his conquest of Baghdad; whereas the merchants were set about their business again, a group containing Ṣūfīs, preachers, *qalandars*, poets and others were ordered to be drowned in the Tigris.

The *ʿUshshāqnāmeḥ*, a *maṣnavī*, may according to Rypka<sup>124</sup> have been inspired by the work of the same name attributed to ʿIrāqī.<sup>125</sup>

In the *Rīshnāmeḥ*, 'Book of the Beard', written in prose, partly rhyming, interspersed with verses, the poet receives a visitation from Rīsh ad-Dīn or 'Beard of the Faith' who declares himself to have been born in Paradise and

<sup>116</sup> Ed. Kūhī Kirmānī, Tehran 1306.

<sup>117</sup> Ed. Kūhī Kirmānī, Tehran 1306.; ed. Khāzī, Bombay 1319/20.

<sup>118</sup> Ed. Mīr Šālih Ṭabībī, Tehran 1337 (vol. I) and 1350 (vol. II).

<sup>119</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Humāyūnfarrukh, Tehran 1348.

<sup>120</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Yāsami, Tehran 1317 H.Š.; ed. Naftī, Tehran 1318 H.Š.; ed. Bāstānīrād, Tehran 1344.

<sup>121</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Bāstānīrād, p. 220.

<sup>122</sup> Kullīyyāt, ed. ʿAbbās Iqbāl Āshtīyānī, Tehran 1334 H.Š.; ed. Atābakī, Tehran 1343 H.Š.

<sup>123</sup> By Bahār, see note p. 63.

<sup>124</sup> HIL, p. 272.

<sup>125</sup> See p. 58.

quotes references to himself from the Qurʾān and from poetry. Several anecdotes follow, the burden of one being that Adam's departure from Eden was due to his growing a beard and incurring the ridicule of the angels.

The *Risāleh-i Sad Pand*, 'Treatise of a Hundred Pieces of Advice', contains multifarious advice, sometimes of an earthy nature; amongst other things the reader is cautioned against 'a woman who reads the story of *Vīs o Rāmīn*'.<sup>126</sup>

The prose *Risāleh-i Dilgushā* 'Delightful Treatise', contains anecdotes in Persian and in Arabic. The tone is again by no means refined and often humorous—one story tells of the man of Qazvin whose son falls into a pit. He calls down to him, 'I'm off to fetch a rope—now just you stay where you are till I get back!'

The prose *Risāleh-i Taʿrīfāt* and the prose *Taʿrīfāt-i Mullā Do Piāzeh* contain satirical definitions (*taʿrīfāt*).

The well-known and entertaining *Mūsh o Gurbēh*, 'The Mice and the Cat',<sup>127</sup> is not now regarded by Mīnovī<sup>128</sup> as the work of ʿUbaid-i Zākānī. It is a *maṣnavī* poem describing the struggle between the Cat and the Mice who attempt to capture him. ʿUbaid-i Zākānī was also skilled in the *ghazal*.

Salmān Sāveji<sup>129</sup> ('of Sāveh') (d. 1376) emigrated from Sāveh to Baghdad where he wrote at the court of the Jalāyirids. The chief object of his eulogies was the princess Dilshād Khātūn.<sup>130</sup> Tafazzulī<sup>131</sup> traces in his *ghazals* the influence of Saʿdī and particularly that of Ḥāfiz. He wrote two *maṣnavīs*, *Firāq-nāmeḥ* and *Jamshīd va Khurshīd*.<sup>132</sup>

Ḥāfiz<sup>133</sup> (Khvājah Shams ad-Dīn Muḥammad) (d. 1389 or 1390)<sup>134</sup> was born in Shiraz in 1325-6 (according to Ghanī, 1317). He is said to have gained the title of Ḥāfiz, or one who has the Qurʾān by heart, early in life and to have

<sup>126</sup> See p. 35.

<sup>127</sup> In *Kulliyāt*, ed. Āshtiyānī. Tr. Farzād, 'Rats against Cats', London 1946.

<sup>128</sup> Yaghma, Year ix, 'Mūsh o Gurbēh-i Shaikh-i Bahāʾī.' See also Berthels, *Yādnāmeḥ-i Rypka*, Prague 1967, p. 58.

<sup>129</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Mushfiq, Tehran 1336; *Kulliyāt-i Ashʿar*, ed. Yāsami, Tehran 1337 H.Š.

<sup>130</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Mushfiq, preface by Tafazzulī, p. 'v'.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 'xxvii'.

<sup>132</sup> *Jamshīd va Khurshīd*, ed. Asmussen, Tehran 1348 H.Š.

<sup>133</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Qazvinī and Ghanī, reprint Tehran 1353 H.Š.; ed. with Introduction, Khalkhālī, Tehran 1306; ed. Injavi, Tehran 1345 H.Š.; ed. Pazhmān Bakhtiārī, Tehran 1345 H.Š.; ed. Qudsi, reprint, Tehran 1353 H.Š.; ed. Khānlarī, Tehran 1958; ed. Jalālī Nayinī and Nāzīr Aḥmad, Mashhad 1350 ed. Qarīb, Tehran 1977; ed. Brockhaus, Leipzig 1854-61; ed. Rosenzweig-Schvannau, Vienna, 1856-64; with commentary (orig. Turkish) by Sūdī, tr. into Persian by ʿIsmat Sattārzādeh, Tehran 1341-2; Ḥāfiz, Fifty Poems, with translations by A. J. Arberry and other, Cambridge 1953; Farzād, Jāmiʿ-i Nusakh-i Ḥāfiz, Shiraz 1347 H.Š.; *Iṣlāt va tavālī-yi abyāt dar ghazaliyāt-i Ḥāfiz*, 2 vols., Shiraz 1353 H.Š. (on the text), tr. Wilberforce Clarke, Calcutta 1891. See also Boms, Two Studies in the relations of Ḥāfiz and the West, Helsinki 1968. On Ḥāfiz see also Baldick, *Handbuch*, p. 131.

<sup>134</sup> HIL, p. 264, '1320' inadvertent misprint.

been a professor of Qurʾānic exegesis. He lived under the Injūyid and Muzāfarid dynasties; it was a time of violence and confusion.

The preponderance of the *ghazal* in the *Dīvān* of Ḥāfiẓ leads Lescot<sup>135</sup> to conclude that Ḥāfiẓ uses the *ghazal* in preference to the *qaṣīdeh* (only three *qaṣīdeh* occur, for example, in the edition of Qazvīnī/Ghanī). Lescot asserts that in view of the large number of *ghazals* which refer to personages of the time, Ḥāfiẓ is a court poet; the 'Beloved' in his *ghazals*, he believes, is the patron. Khānlari<sup>136</sup> sees his title of *Khvājah* as that of a court functionary. Khalkhālī<sup>137</sup> thinks too much should not be made of the eulogy of Ḥāfiẓ, which is restricted.

Zarrīnkūb<sup>138</sup> considers that Ḥāfiẓ was not a Ṣūfī in the formal sense of the word; the ideas of the Ṣūfīs, however, appealed strongly to him, hence their occurrence in his poems.

It is something of a paradox that Ḥāfiẓ, a more withdrawn figure than the gregarious Saʿdī, should have touched sympathetic strings more generally in people's hearts with his *ghazals* than Saʿdī has done with his. Zarrīnkūb<sup>139</sup> maintains that Ḥāfiẓ opened a new era in the *ghazal* by contriving to 'pour his whole self into every *bait*.'

Ḥāfiẓ enjoys a unique position in popular esteem. His *dīvān* is to be found, with the Qurʾān, in the typical Iranian household: it is in daily use as a source of auguries. It fell to Ḥāfiẓ to achieve the final perfection of the *ghazal*, which in his hands presents a delicate balance between mystic and profane; at frequent intervals Fate is pilloried no less effectively than by his forbears. Not a little derives from the cultured *insouciance* of the atmosphere of Shiraz, an attractive *mise-en-scène* still full of charm today. Legends about Ḥāfiẓ are still associated with sites in and around Shiraz.

Patience and peace!

He who touched your cheek with rose

The elixir for my poor spirit knows.

Long curling hair!

He who taught you tyranny

His grace can soothe my sorrow, hear my plea.

Farhād<sup>140</sup>, goodbye!

Shīrīn's sweet lip your heart has won

And your last moment henceforth is begun.

<sup>135</sup> Bulletin des Études Orientales, Damascus 1944, p. 59.; HIL, p. 266.

<sup>136</sup> L'Âme de l'Iran, Paris 1951, p. 157.

<sup>137</sup> *Dīvān*, p. 'yh'.

<sup>138</sup> *Ba Karvān-i Hulleh*, Tehran 1343 H.Š. p. 271 ff.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p. 278.

<sup>140</sup> The storemason who falls in love with Shīrīn, favourite of Khusrou, see p. 50.

Treasure of gold  
 is not worth half Contentment's store;  
 God gave kings much but gave to beggars more.  
 Beautiful bride  
 To outward view the world for wife —  
 Until the dowry is the suitor's life!  
 Cypress and stream!  
 Here comes a suppliant hurrying  
 Now that the fragrant breeze proclaims the Spring.  
 Qavvām ad-Dīn!<sup>141</sup>  
 Caught sick at heart in Time's embrace  
 Spare, spare us separation from your face!

It is a commonly-held view that Persian poetry reached a climax with Ḥāfiẓ never to be repeated; Shafī'ī Kadkanī for instance remarks that poets from Ḥāfiẓ to Jāmī and after him merely glossed previous writing.<sup>142</sup> Ḥāfiẓ inspired Goethe to write the *West-östlicher Divan*.<sup>143</sup>

Kamāl Khujandī<sup>144</sup> (d.c. 1400-1), from Khojand in Transoxiana, lived in Tabriz. Daulatshāh<sup>145</sup> relates that Kamāl sent one of his *ghazals* to Ḥāfiẓ who commented favourably on it. He enjoyed the patronage of the Jalāyirids and of Mirzā Mirānshāh, son of Timūr and governor of Āzarbāijān. Hikmat<sup>146</sup> and Doulatābādī<sup>147</sup> mention the influence of Sa'dī upon Kamāl.<sup>148</sup> Browne<sup>149</sup> points out that Kamāl keeps most of his *ghazals* to seven lines' length; Hikmat<sup>150</sup> adds that the same is done by Jāmī.

<sup>141</sup> A Vazīr of the time of Ḥāfiẓ.

<sup>142</sup> Handbuch, p. 140.

<sup>143</sup> See Lentz, *Goethes Noten und Abhandlungen zum West-östlichen Divan*, Hamburg 1958. Wertheim, *Von Tasso zu Hafis, Probleme von Lyrik und Prosa des 'West-Östlichen Divans'*, Berlin 1965.

<sup>144</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. Doulatābādī, Tabriz 1337 H.Š.; *Izbrannaya lirika*, tr. Adalis, ed. Braginskiy, Stalinabad 1949.

<sup>145</sup> *Tazkirat ash-Shu'arā* ed. Browne, p. 325.

<sup>146</sup> Tr. of Browne, LHP III, p. 434 (HIL, p. 276 has 'p. 348').

<sup>147</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>148</sup> See HIL, p. 262.

<sup>149</sup> LHP III, p. 325.

<sup>150</sup> Tr. of Browne, LHP III, p. 440 note 1.

## PROSE—BELLES-LETTRES<sup>1</sup>

### *Introductory*

Rhymers who measure speech gain the treasure of this world and the next:

Poetry will seat you on the Sidra tree<sup>2</sup> and make you Sultan of the world of meaning.

Nizāmī of Ganjeh in the *Sikandarnāmeḥ*

His tribute to poetry highlights the relative position of poetry and prose in the earlier centuries of Persian literature. Much of the early prose extant—and a large amount remains unpublished, as Rypka stresses<sup>3</sup>—falls within the category of *adab* literature, devoted to moralizing,<sup>4</sup> or is anecdotal in character; much too is in fact translation from older works.

In the Introduction to the Persian translation of the commentary on the Qurʾān by Ṭabarī<sup>5</sup> it is stated that the ʿulamā ruled that it was permissible to translate the work into Persian.<sup>6</sup> (It is curiously further stated that kings and prophets down to Ismāʿīl spoke Persian, Ismāʿīl being the first to speak Arabic.)

The *Marzbānnāmeḥ*<sup>7</sup> was originally written in the dialect of Tabaristan; *Kātleḥ o Dimneh*, originally a collection of Indian tales translated into Pahlavī,<sup>8</sup> was translated into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>9</sup> and thereafter into Persian.

The literati would be learned in Arabic; Qāẓī Ḥamīd ad-Dīn goes out of his way to say in the preface to his *Maqāmāt*<sup>10</sup> that he has liberally interlarded his work with Arabic; later Najm ad-Dīn Rāzī apologizes for writing the *Mirṣād al-ʿIbād*<sup>11</sup> in Persian, quoting the same verse as Qāẓī Ḥamīd ad-Dīn<sup>11</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> For Šūfi prose texts, see Baldick, *Handbuch*, p. 83; for historical and geographical texts, see Spuler, *Handbuch* IV ii I; some prose works by poets have been discussed in the section on 'Poetry'; e.g. the *Gulistan* of Saʿdī. It is again stressed that some prose works of belles-lettres have been discussed in the section on poetry; historical and philosophical works are discussed elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> A tree in Paradise.

<sup>3</sup> HIL, p. 109.

<sup>4</sup> A genre already well represented in Pahlavī literature, see Boyce, *Handbuch*, IV ii I, p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature*, pp. 40ff.

<sup>6</sup> On this see Spuler, *Handbuch* IV ii I, p. 104.

<sup>7</sup> See p. 77.

<sup>8</sup> Boyce, *op. cit.*, p. 65. See p. 74.

<sup>9</sup> See p. 76.

<sup>10</sup> See Baldick, p. 96.

<sup>11</sup> ed. Abarqūʿī, Isfahan 1334 H.Š., p. 5.

If you must speak to a new friend of pain that is old,  
In his own language at least let the sad tale be told!

Avicenna and al-Bīrūnī wrote only exceptionally in Persian, otherwise in Arabic.

The anecdote (*hikāyat*) was a quite ubiquitous component of prose works; the *Javāmi*<sup>12</sup> *al-Hikāyat* is in fact a great collection of anecdotes. Some prose works are long narratives, for example *Samak-i 'Ayyār*<sup>12</sup> and *Dārābnāme*.<sup>13</sup>

### *Prose (Belles-lettres)*

One of the very earliest examples of Persian prose is the Preface to the prose *Shāhnāme* written for Abū Manṣūr.<sup>14</sup> Bahār<sup>15</sup> comments on the simplicity of the style and on the high proportion of Persian words as opposed to Arabic. He points out the similarity between this work and the portions added in Persian by Bal'amī to his translation of the History of Ṭabarī, as well as the parts of the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* derived from the *Garshāspnāme* of Abū 'l-Mu'ayyad Balkhī; the latter work is thought to have inspired the *Garshāspnāme* of Asadī.<sup>16</sup> Bahār<sup>17</sup> believes that Abū 'l-Mu'ayyad wrote a complete prose *Shāhnāme* which may have been used by Daqīqī.<sup>18</sup>

Of uncertain date is the *Iskandarnāme*,<sup>19</sup> which tells the legend of Alexander; according to Bahār<sup>20</sup> it was used by Niẓāmī of Ganjeh for his *Iskandarnāme*.<sup>21</sup>

Of uncertain date also is the story *Samak-i 'Ayyār*<sup>22</sup> by Farāmurz ibn Khudādād. It is considered by Khānlari<sup>23</sup> one of the oldest examples of the story in Persian literature.<sup>24</sup> It is of great value as a source of information about social and cultural matters in mediaeval Iran.<sup>25</sup> Its popularity in Iran is

<sup>12</sup> See below.

<sup>13</sup> See p. 77.

<sup>14</sup> See p. 22. Minorsky, *Iranica*, p. 261 ff; Mīnovī, *Firdausī va Shī'r-i Ū*, Tehran, 1346 H.Š., p. 52; ed. Qazvīnī, Tehran 1323 H.Š.

<sup>15</sup> SS II, p. 2ff.

<sup>16</sup> See p. 39.

<sup>17</sup> SS II, p. 20ff.

<sup>18</sup> See p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> SS II, p. 128ff; Lazard, *La langue des plus anciens monuments de la prose persane*, p. 126 No. 71.

<sup>20</sup> op. cit., *ibid*.

<sup>21</sup> See p. 51.

<sup>22</sup> Ed. Khānlari, Tehran 1338-51. tr. (French) Razavi, Paris 1972.

<sup>23</sup> Op. cit., Vol. I, 1347, p. iii.

<sup>24</sup> A Turkish translation of part of the story also exists.

<sup>25</sup> Massé, *Introduction to Razavi*, op. cit., p. 10. Maḥjūb, *Ā'n-i 'Ayyār*, Sukhan Series XX i, p. 38 ff. (and previous issues)

now being increased by a television presentation. It is certainly a work which lends itself to dramatization—the style is vivid and natural; dialogue is lively and the plot, though complicated, is fast-moving and engaging.

Khurshīdshāh, son of King Marzbānshāh, goes hunting and with his falcons and cheetahs pursues a beautiful wild ass. He comes upon a mysterious tent pitched in the desert:

‘He was amazed and said to himself, ‘A solitary tent in such a desert? I do not know how this can be!’ ... He spurred his horse down from the hill into the desert till he drew near the tent. He looked and saw a tent of red satin pitched with twenty-four silken ropes and golden pegs; a jewel-encrusted border was worked on it and a golden moon set with jewels was mounted on its crest; its flap was let down and there was no trace of any human there... He raised the flap of the tent. He looked in and saw a sumptuous carpet... someone was lying asleep on a bed of cushions... The prince examined the figure: he saw a girl as pretty as a hundred thousand pictures... with hair like a lasso and eyebrows like a bow of Chāch; eyes like a pair of narcissi; eyelashes like the arrow of Ārish;<sup>26</sup> mouth like a half-*dīnār*, cheek like silver... breasts like pomegranates, belly like the finest flour that is sieved with silk and mixed with almond oil, wearing a dress white as snow, with shoes of pure Byzantine weave on her feet and silken veil on head... Thus fair and beautiful the girl stood before him, drowsy with sleep.’

The *Naurūznāme*<sup>27</sup> has been attributed to ‘Umar Khayyām;<sup>28</sup> a contrary view has been expressed.<sup>29</sup> The treatise discusses the institution of Naurūz, the Persian New Year festival, which it says was originated by Jamshīd, the legendary king of the Pīshdādī dynasty. The names of the Persian months are discussed, and popular etymologies are given, for instance *Khurdād* is explained as meaning ‘the month that gives food (*khurish*) to men’ (*dād* meaning ‘giving’); in actual fact the word is derived from Avestan Harvatāt, ‘soundness,’ the name of one of the ‘archangels’ of Zoroastrianism.

In a chapter called ‘The Chief Moubad<sup>30</sup> comes bringing a New Year gift’ it is described how at Naurūz the King of Iran’s first caller was the Chief Moubad bringing a golden cup full of wine, a ring, a *dirham*, a *dīnār*, a handful of green corn-ears, a sword, a bow and arrow, an ink-well and pen, a horse, a falcon and a handsome slave-boy. The priest delivers a speech to the

<sup>26</sup> A great archer in the *Shāhnāme*.

<sup>27</sup> Ed. Mīnovī, Tehran 1933;

<sup>28</sup> See p. 43.

<sup>29</sup> Gandjei, *Der Islam* XLII, 1966 attributes the *Naurūznāme* to a pupil of Khayyām, ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Hijāzī al-Qāyīnī.

<sup>30</sup> Zoroastrian priest.

King based upon these gifts; the writer of the treatise then develops the theme further by devoting chapters to each of the articles—'Gold' (anecdotes begin to make their appearance in this chapter), 'The Ring', 'Green corn-ears', 'Bow and Arrow', 'The Pen', 'The Horse and its virtue', 'The Falcon and its virtue', 'The Benefit of Wine' (with an anecdote relating how wine was discovered), 'The particular quality of a pretty face.'

Bahār remarks on the simplicity of the style of the *Naurūznāmeḥ* which he describes as being, in the main, that of the eleventh century.<sup>31</sup>

The *Safarnāmeḥ*<sup>32</sup> of Nāṣir-i Khusrou<sup>33</sup> describes the journey he made between the years 1045 and 1052. The book is a prepossessing travelogue; Nāṣir-i Khusrou is painstaking in his description of buildings and sites, revealing incidentally that he was a painter—his services are called upon in one of the mosques he visits. Particularly vivid is his description of some weird country through which he passed and of the lizard-eating habits of the inhabitants. 'I was unable to consume either lizard or camel's milk,' he remarks ruefully. There is a touching moment in the scholar's travels when his books are loaded on a camel whilst he himself goes on foot. In his description of Jerusalem he writes, 'It is popularly reported that whoever goes to the head of (this) valley hears the voices of the damned in hell coming up—I went there but heard nothing.' His artist's eye is caught by flowers, '...the whole plain was white with narcissus' ... 'I saw a boy with fresh roses in his hand, one red and one white.'

He gives a list of fruit and flowers seasonable at all times of the year which he saw on one and the same day in Egypt. He was obviously greatly impressed by the opulence and luxury of Egypt, then under the Ismāʿīlī Fāṭimids and he paints a lively picture of a cosmopolitan society. To remind us that he is a poet, a line of poetry greets us at the beginning of the book; Nāṣir-i Khusrou meets the poet Qaṭrān<sup>34</sup> in Tabrīz.

The *Qābūs-nāmeḥ*<sup>35</sup> was written in 1082-3 by Kaikāʾūs ibn Iskandar ibn Qābūs ibn Vashmgīr, an *Amīr* of the Ziyārid dynasty of Ṭabaristān in the North of Iran, for his son Gīlānshāh, and is intended to provide him with advice on a far-ranging selection of subjects which include eating, drinking, playing polo, buying slaves, medicine, poetry, generalship, love, marriage, musicianship and many more. There is a notable section on the Ṣūfis.

<sup>31</sup> SS II, p. 168.

<sup>32</sup> Ed. Nādir Vazīrpūr, Tehran 1350 H.Š.; ed. Maḥmūd Ghanīzādeh, Berlin, 1923; ed. Dabīrsiyāqī, Tehran 1335 H.Š.; ed. and tr. Schefer, Paris 1881.

<sup>33</sup> See p. 37.

<sup>34</sup> See p. 38.

<sup>35</sup> Ed. Levy, GMS New Series XVIII, 1951; ed. Nafīsī, Tehran 1312 H.Š.; ed. Ghulām Ḥusain Yūsufī, Tehran 1345 H.Š.; tr. Levy, 'A Mirror for Princes', London 1951.

The book is remarkable if only for the pronounced manner in which the author's personality pervades it; touches of humour are frequent and a refreshing cynicism informs the work. The author quotes liberally from poetry, including his own; anecdotes are numerous.

The *Naṣīhat al-Mulūk*<sup>36</sup> of Muḥammad Ghazālī was written in 1108/9-1109/10;<sup>37</sup> it is divided into two parts, the first of which, as Humāṭī points out, derives from his *Kīmiyā-yi Saʿādat*;<sup>38</sup> he considers the second part, on statecraft, to be by another hand.

*Kaṭīleh o Dimneh*,<sup>39</sup> a book of moralizing fables, was translated from the Pahlavī *Kaṭīlag ud Dimnag*, deriving from the Indian Pancatantra,<sup>40</sup> by Ibn Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>, whose work was translated into Persian by Abū ʿI-Maʿālī Naṣrullāh between 1121 and 1152.<sup>41</sup> Bahār<sup>42</sup> stresses the difficulty of estimating the style of the book because of its great popularity in the past, leading many hands to tamper with the text. Nevertheless he considers *Kaṭīleh o Dimneh* to rank with the *Gulistān* of Saʿdī<sup>43</sup> as one of the two masterpieces of Persian prose. The style of *Kaṭīleh o Dimneh*, according to Bahār,<sup>44</sup> is based on balanced sentences (*muṣāzaneh*).

The book opens with two jackals, Kaṭīleh and Dimneh, debating about the idea of entering the service of the lion: anecdotes are introduced, interspersed with Persian and Arabic poetry.

Rūdakī<sup>45</sup> wrote a *maṣnavī Kaṭīleh o Dimneh* of which only a few verses have survived. A later rifacimento of *Kaṭīleh o Dimneh* is the *Anvār-i Suhailī* of Ḥusain Vāʿiẓ Kāshifī (d. 1505).

The *Chahār Maqāleh*<sup>46</sup> was probably written about 1155/6.<sup>47</sup> Verses by the author, Niẓāmī-yi ʿArūẓī-yi Samarqandī, are quoted in the *Lubāb al-Albab*.<sup>48</sup> Daulatshāh in the *Tazkirat ash-Shuʿarā*<sup>49</sup> wrongly ascribes to Niẓāmī-yi ʿArūẓī authorship of *Vīs o Rāmīn*, the poem by Gurgānī.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Ed. Humāṭī, Tehran 1351.

<sup>37</sup> Op. cit., Introduction.

<sup>38</sup> See Baldick, Handbuch, p. 89.

<sup>39</sup> ed. Mīnovī, Tehran 1351 H.Š.

<sup>40</sup> Boyce, Handbuch IV ii I, p. 65.

<sup>41</sup> S II, p. 950.

<sup>42</sup> SS II, p. 254.

<sup>43</sup> See p. 59.

<sup>44</sup> SS II, p. 274.

<sup>45</sup> See p. 17.

<sup>46</sup> Ed. Qazvīnī, GMS XI i, also Students' Edition; ed. Muʿīn, Tehran 1334/57 H.Š.; ed. Ḥaṣṣūrī, Tehran 1343; tr. E. G. Browne, GMS XI ii, London 1921; tr. (French) de Gastines, Paris 1968; see Spuler, Handbuch IV ii I, p. 118.

<sup>47</sup> Qazvīnī, op. cit., Preface (Students' Edition, p. i)

<sup>48</sup> Ed. Naḥṣī, p. 395.

<sup>49</sup> Ed. Browne, p. 60.

<sup>50</sup> See p. 35.

The title of the book was evidently *Majma' an-Navādir*<sup>51</sup> but it became known as *Chahār Maqāleh* because of its 'Four Discourses.' Bahār<sup>52</sup> considers the *Chahār Maqāleh* to be one of the masterpieces of Persian literature and cites its felicitous style; he thinks that an expert not knowing the date of the book would place it in an earlier period, and concludes that the author was expressly writing in the style of his predecessors in Persian prose. Both Bahār<sup>53</sup> and Šafā<sup>54</sup> remark upon the contrast in style between the Introductions to the Discourses and the Anecdotes which follow. In the former the style is mannered and, since the author is discussing amongst other topics astrology and medicine, Arabic words are numerous; the style in the Anecdotes is simpler and there are conversations in the spoken language of the time.

The Discourses deal respectively with the Secretary, Poet, Astrologer and Physician, the author's avowed intention being to demonstrate to the ruler how essential these persons are at his court. Valuable material upon Firdausī and 'Umar Khayyām is contained in the Discourse on the Poet, the Introduction to which is by way of being an *Ars Poetica* of the period.<sup>55</sup>

#### *The Nasnās*

'This is a creature whose habitat is the desert of Turkistan, of erect stature, straight posture and broad nails. It adores Man—wherever it sees men, it comes to the roadside and just gazes at them. Should it catch sight of a solitary man, it will take him away; they say it will mate with him. After man, then, it is the most sophisticated animal, bearing a resemblance to him in several features: first, its erect stature, second, the breadth of its nails, third, the hair on its head.

#### *Anecdote*

I heard the following from Abū Rijā ibn 'Abd as-Salām of Nīshāpūr in the Friday Mosque: 'We were travelling towards Tamghāch in a caravan comprising many camels. One day we were going along in the noonday heat when on top of a dune we saw a woman standing, bareheaded and naked, of extreme beauty; her figure was like a cypress, her face like the moon; she had long hair. She stared and stared at us. No matter how much we spoke to her, she would give no reply and when we made for her, she ran away. So swiftly

<sup>51</sup> Qazvīnī, op. cit., p. iii.

<sup>52</sup> SS II, p. 298.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>54</sup> S II, p. 963.

<sup>55</sup> See p. 6.

did she run in her flight that surely no horse could have caught her up. Our camelteers were Turks; they told us, 'This is one of the Wild People—this is what they call the Nasnās.' At any rate, what one should know is that it is the most sophisticated animal by virtue of the three characteristics mentioned above.'

The *Maqāmāt-i Ḥamīdī*<sup>56</sup> was begun by Qāzī Ḥamīd ad-Dīn, the chief Qāzī of Balkh, in 1115/6. Ḥamīd ad-Dīn is said to have protected the poet Anvarī when he was the object of popular disapproval in Balkh.<sup>57</sup> The form, rhymed prose interspersed with verses, is imitated from the *Maqāmāt* of Ḥarīrī and Hamadānī in Arabic, as is the contrived diction—Ḥamīd ad-Dīn himself remarks that he has infused the work liberally with Arabic. We can recognize the genre later in the *Gulistān* of Saʿdī.<sup>58</sup> In the opinion of Bahār<sup>59</sup> the book despite its virtues fails to reach the standard of either *Katīleh o Dimneh* or the *Gulistān*.<sup>60</sup> It is quoted as a paragon of style by Niẓāmī-yi ʿArūzī in the *Chahār Maqāleh*.<sup>61</sup>

A contemporary of Ḥamīdī who wrote *Maqāmāt* was Sadīd ad-Dīn Aʿvar,<sup>62</sup> fragments of whose work have recently been discovered.

The *Tarjumān al-Balāgheh* of Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar ar-Rāduyānī<sup>63</sup> is a manual of prosody. Rashīd Vaṭvāt<sup>64</sup> later wrote his *Ḥadāyiq as-Sihr* avowedly to correct the *Tarjumān al-Balāgheh*.

The *Sindbādnāmeḥ*<sup>65</sup> was written in 1160/1 by Muḥammad az-Zahīrī al-Kātib Samarqandī who describes how he found the earlier version of Abū ʿl-Favāris Fanārūzī<sup>66</sup> lacking in rhetorical embellishment and determined to produce a version suitably attired with conceits—'no dresser had adorned this bride.' This account is reminiscent of that of Gurgānī a century earlier when refurbishing the earlier version of *Vīs o Rāmīn*. The style of the *Sindbādnāmeḥ* is indeed studied and recondite.

Az-Zahīrī writes that Abū ʿl-Favāris was commanded by the Sāmānid ruler Nūḥ ibn Manṣūr to translate the *Sindbādnāmeḥ* from Pahlavī; the Pahlavī *Sindbād Nāmag* came from India.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Ed. Abarqūʿī, Isfahan 1339 H.Š.

<sup>57</sup> Bahār, SS II, p. 329.

<sup>58</sup> See p. 59.

<sup>59</sup> SS II, p. 343.

<sup>60</sup> Which contains a somewhat similar discussion on the merits of travel.

<sup>61</sup> GMS Students' Edition, p. 15.

<sup>62</sup> Afshār, Sadīd ad-Dīn Aʿvar, MDA Tehran, Year XVI Nos. 5 and 6.

<sup>63</sup> Ed. Ateş, Istanbul 1949.

<sup>64</sup> See p. 46.

<sup>65</sup> Ed. Ateş, Istanbul 1948; ed. Qavīm, Tehran 1333 H.Š.

<sup>66</sup> or Qanārizī, HIL, p. 225.

<sup>67</sup> Boyce, Handbuch, IV ii I, p. 65.

A king is without a son and summons the sages to look into his horoscope; in accordance with their prognostications a son is born. (This corresponds exactly with the beginning of the story of Samak-i 'Ayyār.) The prince does not prove susceptible of education, and seven sages deliberate on the problem; one of their number, Sindbād, accepts the task of educating him. A girl whose affections are scorned by the Prince persuades the King that he should be put to death. This greatly shocks the seven Vazīrs of the King, who meet in conclave and decide that they should each in turn visit the King and tell him tales of the wiles of womankind. Thus the scene is set for the development of the plot to the accompaniment of anecdotes.

Rūdakī wrote a *maṣnavī Sindbādnāmeḥ* of which only fragments survive<sup>68</sup> and Azraqī<sup>69</sup> wrote a verse *Sindbādnāmeḥ* which is lost. Similar to the *Sindbādnāmeḥ* is the *Bakhtiyār-nāmeḥ*.<sup>70</sup> A later version is the *Ṭāṭīnāmeḥ* of ziā ad-Dīn Nakhshabī (1330).

The *Darābnāmeḥ*<sup>71</sup> of Ṭarsūsī is ascribed by Ṣafā to a date not later than the end of the eleventh century. It tells the story of Dārāb, son of Bahman, son of Isfandiyār. Bahman is generally identified with Ardešhīr (Artaxerxes Longimanus). In the *Darābnāmeḥ* of Ṭarsūsī the father of Dārāb is called indifferently Bahman and Ardešhīr. The story is told in simple, prepossessing language; Ṣafā<sup>72</sup> remarks upon the popular language of story writers; he notes the lack of Arabic in their language and senses that their background is not that of the *madraseḥ* or religious college—here he compares the popular works of the Ṣūfis.

Another *Darābnāmeḥ* is that of Bīghamī.<sup>73</sup> A *Qahramānnāmeḥ*<sup>74</sup> exists in Ms. It was translated into Georgian.<sup>75</sup>

Other works were the *Hamzeh-nāmeḥ*, *Qīṣṣeh-i Shāh-i Mardān* 'Alī, and *Abū Muslim-nāmeḥ*.

The *Marzbānnāmeḥ*<sup>76</sup> was originally written in the dialect of Tabaristan by Ispahbad Marzbān who traced descent from the Sassanian king Kavād. Two versions of it were made later, one the *Rauzat al-'Uqūl'*<sup>77</sup> about the year 1200, by Muḥammad ibn Ghāzī of Malatya, also author of *Barīd al-'Ādat*,<sup>78</sup> a work

<sup>68</sup> See p. 17.

<sup>69</sup> See p. 40. See HIL, p. 195.

<sup>70</sup> HIL, p. 223.

<sup>71</sup> Ed. Ṣafā, Tehran 1344 H.Š.

<sup>72</sup> Op. cit., preface.

<sup>73</sup> Ed. Ṣafā, Tehran 1342 H.Š.

<sup>74</sup> Pertsch, Berlin Persian Catalogue, p. 993.

<sup>75</sup> Information in a letter from R. Stevenson.

<sup>76</sup> Ed. Qazvīnī, GMS VIII, 1909; tr. Levy, London 1959.

<sup>77</sup> Part ed. and tr. Massé, Paris 1938.

<sup>78</sup> Ed. Shīrvānī, Tehran 1351 H.Š.

on ethics and government couched in the form of stories, and the *Marzbānnāmeḥ* of Saʿd ad-Dīn Varāvīnī (1225).

Bahār<sup>79</sup> describes the *Marzbānnāmeḥ* and *Kaṭīleh o Dimneh* as two crowning jewels of Persian diction. The *Marzbānnāmeḥ* contains moralizing fables where the characters are frequently animals; a significant passage on the role of the fable runs:

‘As for what it is that is serious on one side and nonsensical on the reverse, that is none other than these fables and chats devised by sages devoted to wisdom, who have collected them and set them down in books and volumes: from one point of view, namely that the narration is through the mouths of brute beasts, the whole has an absurd appearance; yet from another, namely that from beginning to end the whole consists of precept and hidden wisdom embedded in the contents, it can be said to be seriousness itself; the object being to cause the reader to be drawn by natural inclination to peruse the surface material and then to become acquainted with the inner secrets.’

We catch a glimpse of the disruption caused by the Mongol invasion in the *Muʿjam fi Maʿāyir Ashʿari-l-ʿAjam*,<sup>80</sup> a treatise on poetics by Shams-i Qais. He began the book in Marv in 1217/18 but had to flee before the Mongol invaders; he completed the work in Shiraz in 1232/3.

A propos the *ghazal* he writes that the word *ghazal* originally denoted ‘mention of women and love-affairs with them’. The object of the *ghazal* is to soothe the thought and delight the spirit, so it should be based upon a metre which is attractive and pleasant, words which are sweet and gentle, and sense pure as can be. In its composition one should avoid offensive words and abrasive expressions.

He recommends that the *rubāʿī* should be free of padding and overdone word-plays: it will gain in effectiveness by the judicious use of simile, metaphor and other elegant figures. Like Niẓāmī-yi ʿArūẓī in the *Chahār Maqāleh*, Shams-i Qais advises the aspiring poet to make a study of prosody, then to apply himself diligently to reading the works of the masters until their artistry is thoroughly imprinted on his mind. Again like Niẓāmī-yi ʿArūẓī, he advises the poet to have at least a nodding acquaintance with a variety of sciences in case they should impinge upon his work.

Muḥammad ʿAuḡī, author of the anthology *Lubāb al-Albāb*<sup>81</sup> also wrote in 1232/3<sup>82</sup> the *Javāmiʿ al-Ḥikāyat*,<sup>83</sup> a huge collection of anecdotes.

<sup>79</sup> SS III, p. 19.

<sup>80</sup> Ed. Qazvīnī, GMS Series X, 1909; ed. Razavī, Tehran 1342.

<sup>81</sup> Discussed on p. 13.

<sup>82</sup> S II, p. 1027.

<sup>83</sup> Ed. Muʿīn, Tehran 1335/40.

‘The great Imām Shāfi‘ī (God’s mercy upon him!) was sitting before a king; the king was dropping off to sleep. Every time he nodded off a fly would come and sit on his face; he would give his face a sharp slap. Then all at once he said to the Imām Shāfi‘ī, ‘What wisdom underlies God’s creation of the fly?’ He said, ‘So that he may demonstrate to those who lay claim to might how weak they are.’’<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> On the defective nature of prose in the Timurid period, see p. 143.

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## NAMES OF POETS

- |                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ‘Abbās of Marv                     | Amīr Khusrou of Delhi |
| ‘Abd al-Vāsī‘ Jabālī               | Anvarī                |
| Abū ‘l-‘Abbās Rabānjānī            | Asadī                 |
| Abū ‘l-‘Alā Shushtarī              | Ašīr Akhsikātī        |
| Abū ‘l-Faraj Rūnī                  | ‘Asjadī               |
| Abū ‘l-Faṭḥ Bustī                  | ‘Atā‘ī                |
| Abū Ḥafṣ Sugḥdī                    | ‘Aṭṭār                |
| Abū ‘l-Haiṣam Jurjānī              | ‘Aufī                 |
| Abū ‘l-Ishāq Jū‘bārī               | Auḥādī of Marāgheh    |
| Abū Ṭāhir Khātūnī                  | ‘Ayyūqī               |
| Abū Ṭayyib Mu‘abī                  | Azraqī                |
| Abū Zar‘eh Mu‘ammirī               | Bābā Afzal Kāshānī    |
| Abū Maṣnūr ‘Umāreh                 | Bābā Ṭāhir            |
| Abū Mu‘ayyad Balkhī                | Badāyī‘ī              |
| Abū Sa‘īd ibn Abī ‘l-Khair         | Badr ad-Dīn Jājarmī   |
| Abū Salīk of Gurgān                | Badrī Balkhī          |
| Abū Shu‘aib Haravī                 | Bahrāmī Sarakhsī      |
| Adīb Šābir of Tirmiz               | Bashshār Marghazī     |
| Āghājī                             | Bassām-i Kurd         |
| Aḥmad-i Ḥasan Maimandī             | Bundār of Rayy        |
| ‘Am‘aq Bukhārī                     | Bū Shukūr Balkhī      |
| Amīr Fakhr ad-Dīn Khālīd ibn Rabī‘ | Daqīqī                |

Fakhr ad-Dīn Asad Gurgānī  
 Fakhr ad-Dīn Khālid ibn Rabīʿ  
 Falakī Shīrvānī  
 Farālavī  
 Farrukhī  
 Firdausī  
 Firūz Mashriqī  
 Futūḥī of Marv  
 Ghazāyirī of Rayy  
 Ḥafīz  
 Ḥanzaleh Bādghīstī  
 Ḥasan Ghaznavī  
 Humām Tabrizī  
 Ibn Yamīn  
 ʿImād-i Faqīh  
 Imāmī of Herāt  
 ʿIrāqī  
 Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī  
 Jamāl ad-Dīn Isfahānī  
 Kamāl Khujandī  
 Kamāl ad-Dīn Isfahānī  
 Khāqānī  
 Khusravānī  
 Khusravī Sarakhsī  
 Khvājū Kirmānī  
 Kisāʾī of Marv  
 Lāmiʿī Gurgānī  
 Maghribī  
 Maḥmūd Varrāq  
 Maḥsatī  
 Majd ad-Dīn Hamgar  
 Manṭiqī of Rayy  
 Manūchihrī  
 Maʿrūfī Balkhī  
 Masʿūd-i Saʿd-i Salmān  
 Masʿūdī of Marv  
 Muḥammad ʿAbdah

Muḥammad ibn al-Baʿṣ  
 Muḥammad ibn Mukhallad  
 Muḥammad ibn Vaṣīf  
 Muḥammad Jājarmī  
 Muʿizzī  
 Mukhtārī Ghaznavī  
 Mujīr ad-Dīn Bailaqānī  
 Munjīk of Tirmiz  
 Naṣir-i Khusrou  
 Nizāmī of Ganjeh  
 Nizārī  
 Qamarī Jurjānī  
 Qaṭrān Tabrizī  
 Rābiʿeh bint Kaʿb  
 Rashīd Vaṭvāt  
 Rūdakī  
 Saʿdī  
 Salmān Sāvejrī  
 Sanāʾī  
 Shabistārī  
 Shahīd Balkhī  
 Shāhīn of Shīrāz  
 Shākīr Bukhārī  
 Sharaf ad-Dīn Shafurvehī  
 Sulṭān Valad  
 Sūzanī  
 Ṭāhir ibn Faḏl Chaghānī  
 ʿUbaid-i Zakānī  
 ʿUmar Khayyām  
 ʿUnṣurī  
 Yazīd Abū Mufarrigh  
 Yūsuf ʿArūẓī  
 Ḥāḥīr Fāryābī  
 Zīnatī ʿAlavī



**MEDIEVAL ŞŪFĪ LITERATURE IN PERSIAN PROSE**

**BY**

**JULIAN BALDICK**



## MEDIEVAL ŠŪFĪ LITERATURE IN PERSIAN PROSE

The Persian treatises written in the Middle Ages on the subject of Šūfism, the main mystical movement in Islam, occupy an important position in the culture of the Middle East: standing between the most imaginative formulations of medieval thought, the theoretical works on mysticism composed in Arabic, on the one hand, and the masterpieces of classical Persian poetry on the other, they not only provide us with valuable information on the ways in which ideas came to pass from the former to the latter; they also enable us to see many highly provocative elements which are much less evident in the Arabic sources, giving us a picture of Šūfism which would otherwise be much poorer and much less colourful. This is because the erotic aspects of Islamic mysticism, which emphasize the significance of human love as an initiation to the love of God, are far more evident in Persian Šūfī literature. Various hypotheses may be adduced to explain why this is so: the influence of central Asian traditions, the political motivations of censorship in Arab countries, the opposition between Arabic as the language of theology and Persian as the language of daily life. Moreover, along with works on the theory and practice of Šūfism, many biographies of Šūfī saints,<sup>1</sup> sometimes the main evidence for the study of their mystical doctrines, also provide what are often the most interesting materials for the social historian: anecdotes and accounts of miracles, letters and records of conversations, descriptions of wild and unusual practices. Here again it is in Persian that most of the evidence survives.

Thus whereas the Arabic texts are chiefly valuable for their difficult philosophical arguments and elaborate metaphysical theories, the Persian sources are more useful for the study of the application of Šūfism than for that of its theory, enlightening us for example upon the problems faced by novices in daily life, when asking their masters for advice—naturally given in the vernacular. Unorthodox doctrines may find expression in letters or books circulated in very small circles, written in Persian as a more natural form of communication, and so as to avoid the interference of the lawyers of Baghdad. On the other hand, Persian would also be more natural for works of a popular character, destined for the public at large rather than for the Šūfī élite, and thus attempting to show that the movement was really respectable

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<sup>1</sup> In this article only individual biographies are discussed, the medieval collections of Šūfī biographies having been considered elsewhere in the present volume, as historical literature.

and compatible with orthodox Islam. Such works are often to be valued more for their accounts of the practices of the extremist Šūfīs whom they attack than for their theoretical content, since they are usually manifestations of marked conservatism, showing little originality.

We see here the main opposition which characterizes Persian works on Šūfism in the eleventh and twelfth centuries: that between the "sober" and "drunken" traditions. During the eleventh century it is the former that dominates the field of literary production, and it does not seem unreasonable to link this fact with the establishment and consolidation of a firm government, that of the Seljūq State. Excessive emphasis by earlier orientalists on the culmination of the process of "reconciling Šūfism with orthodoxy" about 1100 has recently provoked a reaction from G. Maqrizi, who, while rightly pointing out that earlier assertions of the orthodox character of Šūfism had been made long before, has gone so far as to say: "There was never a question of Šūfism not being orthodox; it grew up as part and parcel of orthodox Islam in the security of the *ḥadīth*, a most orthodox Islamic science."<sup>2</sup> Now the science of the *ḥadīth* (a saying or "Tradition" attributed to Muḥammad) was only as orthodox as people chose to make it, while if there had never been a question of Šūfism not being orthodox there would never have been so many extremely defensive attempts to prove that it was compatible with religious law.

Just such an attempt is very much in evidence in the *Kitāb al-Ta'arruf* of Abū Bakr al-Kalābāzī (d. 995),<sup>3</sup> a massive commentary on which is the earliest known work on Šūfism in Persian.<sup>4</sup> But the commentator, Abū Ibrāhīm Ismā'īl ibn Muḥammad Mustamlī of Bukhārā (d. 1043), shows a much more adventurous spirit than his predecessor: whereas the latter, who begins with a "lengthy and perhaps tedious enumeration of the central doctrines of Islam",<sup>5</sup> and is obsessed with proving that Šūfism, "so far from being heretical, is actually conformable with the strictest standard of orthodoxy",<sup>6</sup> his commentator is not content with merely translating and explaining the meaning of the Arabic text, but adduces a vast amount of extraneous material to give it a very different orientation. Thus although he states in his preface<sup>7</sup> that he has chosen to support his interpretation of the text with quotations

<sup>2</sup> *Islamic Civilisation 950-1150*, ed. by D. S. Richards, London 1973, p. 163.

<sup>3</sup> Tr. by A. J. Arberry, *The Doctrine of the Sufis*, Cambridge 1935.

<sup>4</sup> *Sharḥ-i Ta'arruf*, lith. in 4 vols., Lucknow 1910-2. The preface has been ed. by Ḥasan Minūchihr, Tehran 1967.

<sup>5</sup> Arberry, op. cit., introduction, p. xiii.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

<sup>7</sup> Op. cit., Lucknow edition, vol. 1, p. 2; ed. Minūchihr, p. 6.

from the *Qurʾān*, the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet, and aspects of religious law, and although he begins by giving a somewhat philological, word-by-word analysis of the work's introductory doxology, and is pre-occupied with the definition of technical terms, he soon shows considerable initiative by quoting plenty of earlier sources, notably anecdotes and aphorisms from the classical period of Šūfism (the end of the ninth century). He also places great emphasis on the importance of the love of God in Šūfī mystical doctrine, and it is owing to this that his commentary appears more inspired than the text on which it is based. It is noteworthy that whereas Kalābāzī refrains from mentioning by name the great mystic Ḥallāj (d. 922), who was put to death for the outrageously provocative character of his teachings, condemned as heretical, Mustamlī is not afraid to explain the esoteric significance of his name with approval.<sup>8</sup>

The earliest original work on Šūfism to be written in Persian, the *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* ("Revelation of the Concealed") of ʿAlī ibn ʿUṣmān Hujvīrī of Ghazna (d. c. 1075),<sup>9</sup> is a long survey of all aspects of Šūfī theory and practice. The author seems to have composed this treatise in his old age, since he mentions that in the exuberance of his youth he felt greater enthusiasm for the dialectic of *fanā* (annihilation) and *baqā* (survival), writing a book on the subject, which has been lost along with all his other works mentioned in the *Kashf*.<sup>10</sup> It would indeed seem that senility is probably the reason for the lack of consistency which he displays, and which has earned him a very harsh judgment ("d'esprit futile, sans fermeté d'analyse, flottant et inconsistant") from Louis Massignon.<sup>11</sup> For in spite of his conservative attitude towards some Šūfī practices, notably the contemplation of beardless youths as an aid to meditation, which he condemns outright, and listening to music, which, he advises, should be forbidden to novices, and although he is extremely cautious when dealing with the theme of love, he shows some disrespect for the formal aspects of religious ritual in the Pilgrimage to Mecca, which contrasts with his insistence on the compatibility of Šūfism with the religious law. The work begins with a brief statement of the position in Šūfism of two important concepts, purity and poverty, and then gives a long enumeration of the Šūfis of the past, with a brief mention of the author's contemporaries. Then follows a classification of the different schools of thought within the movement, with an examination of their respective doctrines. Finally, the various branches of Šūfī practice are considered, with an explanation of many technical terms.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., vol. 4, p. 25.

<sup>9</sup> Ed. by V. Zhukovsky, Leningrad 1926; tr. by R. A. Nicholson, London 1911.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., text p. 62; translation, p. 60.

<sup>11</sup> *La Passion d'al-Hallāj*, Paris 1922, vol. 1, p. 408.

The book has enjoyed great popularity, especially in north India, probably because it is written in a language which is very easy to understand.

One outstanding figure of eleventh-century Šūfism is ‘Abdullāh Anšārī of Herāt (d. 1089). It seems however that the *Munājāt* (“Intimate Psalms”) for which he is best known were not actually written down by him. They survive in collections made by his disciples, which incorporate both genuine and spurious elements.<sup>12</sup> They consist mainly of invocations of God and moralising advice, in a rhyming prose which has attracted much interest among students of style.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, the short Persian works attributed to Anšārī, such as the *Kanz al-Sālikīn*,<sup>14</sup> which have been taken by historians of Persian literature to be the earliest examples of Persian works in mixed verse and prose, and thus to be models imitated by and exerting influence upon later writers, appear to be spurious and extremely late. In the absence of manuscripts earlier than the fifteenth century, it is difficult to see how they could be accepted as genuine, even allowing for the possibility that the extremely late language which they present could be the result of modernisation of early originals. It is hardly likely that so severe and conservative a preacher as Anšārī would have composed works such as the brief *Qalandar-nāmeḥ*,<sup>15</sup> where we are given a glimpse of the inspiration which the author seems to take from, and represent by, the figure of the *qalandar*, the wandering, antinomian dervish. Nor is it likely that he would have been capable of such daring in the field of mystical theory as is shown in the *Mahabbat-nāmeḥ* (“Book of Love”),<sup>16</sup> the author of which has no qualms about using the concept of *it-tiḥād*, unitive fusion of God and the mystic in which the latter becomes the former, a doctrine condemned as heretical by many Šūfis. This comes as a culmination to a description of the various stages of love. A less adventurous attitude is to be found in the *Šad Maidān*,<sup>17</sup> which seems to consist of notes taken by a disciple during lectures given in 1056, and represents a preliminary sketch of Anšārī’s famous Arabic work, the *Manāzil al-Sā’irīn*. But the differences between the two treatises, both of which describe a hundred stages on the mystic’s path, are considerable: the Persian text lists these stages in a different order, and includes twenty-four that are replaced by others in the *Manāzil*, while it shows a lesser degree of systematization, with a variety of sub-divisions under each heading, and less precise definitions. Moreover, the

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Serge de Beaurecueil, *L’Ilāhī-Nāmè de Ḥwājè ‘Abdallāh Anšārī*, *Bulletin de l’Institut français d’Archéologie Orientale du Caire*, XLVII (1948), pp. 151-70.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Jan Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature*, Dordrecht 1968, pp. 234-5.

<sup>14</sup> Ed. in his *Rasā’il* by Sulṭān Ḥusain Tābandeh Gunābādī, Tehran 1970, pp. 39-91.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 92-9.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 108-41.

<sup>17</sup> Ed. by Serge de Beaurecueil in *Mélanges Islamologiques* II (1954), pp. 1-90.

*Šad Maidān* ends by mentioning *maḥabbat* (love) as encompassing the hundred elements enumerated; this is not found in the Arabic version.

Anṣārī composed a commentary on the *Qurʾān*, which is now lost. This was used as the basis for a longer commentary, the *Kashf al-Asrār wa ʿUddat al-Abrār*, by Rashīd ad-Dīn Abū ʿl-Faẓl Aḥmad ibn Abī Saʿīd Maibudī (fl. 1126),<sup>18</sup> an enormous work that gives not only an explanation of the literal meaning of the text of the *Qurʾān*, translating it into Persian, and an orthodox interpretation of each verse on traditional lines, but also a mystical exegesis, with a vast number of digressions, many anecdotes, and plenty of quotations taken from Persian and Arabic poetry. The author often mentions that he is quoting Anṣārī, whose style is often easily recognized, notably in short rhyming prayers. Maibudī often refers to ʿAlī, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, and other members of his family, always with the greatest respect, and says at the end of his book that ʿAlī was the best commentator of the *Qurʾān* among the Prophet's Companions. This is evidence for the influence of Shīʿism (the doctrine of veneration for Muḥammad's family) on Šūfī thought.

The most influential writer of this period, Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ghazālī (1058-1111), is often credited with "reconciling" Šūfism with orthodox Islam. A close examination of his Persian works, however, would show that they present many highly suspect arguments and incompatible positions, thus refuting both this view and the contrary opinion that Šūfism was already orthodox. His main work in Persian, the *Kīmiyā-yi Saʿādat*,<sup>19</sup> is not, as has been thought, merely a simple abridgement of his encyclopaedic treatise in Arabic, the *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, since a number of differences are to be found. The *Kīmiyā* begins with four introductory chapters, which are mainly concerned with one of the most important of Šūfī themes, that of self-knowledge as the key to the knowledge of one's Lord, and the need to prepare for the next world while realising the deceptive character of earthly life. Then follows the main part of the book, dealing with the duties of the Muslim. Here, when Ghazālī ventures into the field of Šūfī theory, he gives evidence of his notorious inconsistency. He seems unable to decide whether the soul is created or not,<sup>20</sup> and makes such startling declarations as "All is He and apart from Him there is nothing at all," and "Everyone has a secret desire to say with Pharaoh, 'I am your Lord, the Most High,'"<sup>21</sup> which contrast sharply with the generally conservative attitudes that dominate the

<sup>18</sup> Ed. in 10 vols. by ʿAlī Aṣghar Ḥikmat, Tehran 1952-60.

<sup>19</sup> Ed. by Aḥmad Ārām, Tehran 1940 and 1954.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. R. C. Zaehner, *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism*, London 1960, p. 159.

<sup>21</sup> Op. cit., pp. 206 and 660.

work. For both here and in his short *Ḥamāqat Ahl al-Ibāḥīya*<sup>22</sup> (literally, "The Stupidity of the People of Permissiveness"), he makes vicious attacks on libertine, extremist Ṣūfīs, whom he accuses of wine-drinking and adultery.<sup>23</sup>

Ghazālī's letters, collected under the title *Faṣā'il al-Anām*,<sup>24</sup> contain not only some extremely provocative statements of Ṣūfī doctrine, but also evidence which refutes arguments against the authenticity of his later mystical writings in Arabic. He defends these against his critics, maintaining that "perfect *tauḥīd* (the affirmation of the Divine Unity) means that nothing exists except the One", that "there is no He but He", that light in its reality is God, and that the soul is a stranger from another world.<sup>25</sup> We also find much evidence of Ghazālī's political connections with the Seljūq regime, along with the declaration that antinomian Ṣūfīs should all be killed.<sup>26</sup> It seems reasonable to conclude, along with later Ṣūfīs, that his mysticism was not particularly profound. He is important chiefly as a populariser of Ṣūfī ideas, some of which he could assimilate only by contradicting the main lines of his teachings; his talent lies in the vigorous presentation of sententious advice.

His brother, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ghazālī (d. 1126), affords a striking contrast. He is the first great figure among the mystics who, because of their affinity with the companions of Dante, may conveniently be designated as the Iranian *Fedeli d'amore*, and who distinguish themselves by their emphasis upon the theme of the love of God. His best-known work, the *Sawāniḥ al-'Ushshaq* ("The Intuitions of Lovers"),<sup>27</sup> a short treatise divided into about a hundred brief chapters, with occasional fragments of verse, is characterized by considerable wildness and freedom of expression. The ideas follow one another without any obvious link, the incoherence of their arrangement corresponding to the absence of any rigid structure in the author's theories. This rhapsodic form of composition was to attract many imitators in the later Middle Ages. On the doctrinal level one may note a tendency to indicate a certain interdependence and reciprocity of relations between the Divine Beloved and the mortal lover, it being suggested that the former does in fact need the latter's infatuation. Aḥmad Ghazālī is probably also the author of a short

<sup>22</sup> Ed. by Otto Pretzl, *Die Streitschrift des Ḡazālī gegen die Ibāḥīja*, *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Abteilungen*, 1933 (7).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2 and 6.

<sup>24</sup> Ed. by Mu'ayyad Ṣabīṭī, Tehran 1954, and by 'Abbās Iqbāl, Tehran 1954; tr. by Dorothea Krawulsky, *Briefe und Reden des Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad al-Ḡazzālī*, Freiburg im Breisgau 1971.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Zaehner, *op. cit.*, pp. 162 and 166.

<sup>26</sup> *Faṣā'il*, ed. Ṣabīṭī, p. 74.

<sup>27</sup> Ed. by Hellmut Ritter, Leipzig 1942.

symbolic story, the *Risālat al-Ṭair*<sup>28</sup> (sometimes attributed to his brother), which may well have inspired the famous *Manṭiq al-Ṭair* ("Language of the Birds") of the poet ʿAṭṭār, since the subject of the narrative is the same in both works: a number of birds travel in search of their king, the mythical Sīmurgh. Some of his letters have been preserved among those of his pupil ʿAin al-Quḏāt Hamadānī (d. 1131).<sup>29</sup> The latter seems to have carried his master's doctrines very far indeed, showing a marked taste for daring metaphysical speculation. His letters often deal with the concept of passionate love (*ishq*), but are also extremely philosophical in content. Some represent the notes made by their author from day to day, often while in the grip of ecstasy, and were probably meant to be circulated among a small group of friends before being recast in their final form. For the dangers of persecution were not to be under-estimated: ʿAin al-Quḏāt was eventually executed after being convicted of heresy. Arberry observes that "his condemnation would have been even more peremptory, had his accusers been able to read Persian, and had they had access to his *Tamhīdāt*, for that book contains passages revolting in the extreme to strict orthodoxy".<sup>30</sup> The *Tamhīdāt*<sup>31</sup> does indeed contain several remarkable passages, which affirm the metaphysical character of the resurrection of the body (a doctrine condemned as heretical), glorify the Devil as a mad lover of God, and proclaim the identity of God and the mystic. Another work attributed to the same writer, but written in a language that differs from his usual style by its extensive use of rhymed prose, is the *Lawāʾih* ("Gleams"),<sup>32</sup> a book of two hundred short chapters, clearly modelled on Aḥmad Ghazālī's *Sawānīh* in both form and content. It deals principally with the soul's love for God, and also asserts the perfection of the Devil.<sup>33</sup>

Returning to the more sober climate of religious orthodoxy, we may note a work on Şūfism composed from a less passionately involved standpoint, the *Şūfī-nāmeḥ* or *al-Taṣṭiya fī Aḥwāl al-Mutaṣawwifa*, by Quṭb ad-Dīn Abū ʿl-Muḏaffar Maṣṣūr ibn Ardashīr ʿAbbādī (d. 1141), a famous preacher.<sup>34</sup> The book shows the author's desire to give a popular account of his subject that would not be too difficult for the reader who knew no Arabic. He provides a fairly comprehensive survey of the origins of Şūfism, Şūfī practice and

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Hellmut Ritter, *Das Meer der Seele*, Leiden 1955, pp. 8ff.

<sup>29</sup> *Nāmeḥ*, ed. by ʿAṭf ʿUsairān and ʿAlī Naqī Munzavī, 2 vols. so far published, Tehran 1969 and 1972.

<sup>30</sup> *A Sufi Martyr: The Apologia of ʿAin al-Quḏāt al-Hamadānī*, Translated with Introduction and Notes by A. J. Arberry, London 1969, p. 15.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 99-101; ed. by ʿAṭf ʿUsairān in *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 1, Tehran 1962.

<sup>32</sup> Ed. by Raḥīm Farmanīsh, Tehran 1958.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>34</sup> Ed. by Ghulām Ḥusain Yūsufī, Tehran 1968.

mystical theory, and the technical terms used by the movement. The conservative nature of his own position is shown by his violent disapproval of the practice of contemplating God's beauty in the faces of adolescents, and his extremely cautious attitude towards that of listening to poetry in order to provoke ecstasy. In general, the work shows few signs of inspiration, although it has the merit of being written in a clear and straightforward style.

Another sternly orthodox figure of the Šūfī literature of this period is the celebrated mystic Aḥmad-i Jām, also known as Zhindeh Pīl (d. 1141). The only work of his to have been published in its entirety, the *Miftāḥ al-Najāt*,<sup>35</sup> is packed with *ḥadīth* in an effort to demonstrate the strictest possible orthodoxy. The first half of this book consists mainly of exhortations to repentance, while in the second the author devotes much space to attacking the antinomian tendencies of his contemporaries (about which he gives valuable and detailed information), and their predilection for music, dancing and erotic poetry, which he rejects with horror. It is significant that Aḥmad, unlike most Šūfīs, does not disapprove of wealth in the least. Another work, the *Uns al-Tā'ibīn*,<sup>36</sup> shows him in a less severe mood: it consists of a series of replies to questions from disciples about various aspects of Šūfism, arranged in forty-five chapters, of which, remarks Ivanow,<sup>37</sup> "the most interesting is perhaps the 40th, as shedding some light on the psychological grounds of Sufic erotic symbolism." Other passages also reflect the growing importance of the Persian *Fedeli d'amore*. Unfortunately the second half of this book, as well as the author's *magnum opus*, his *Sirāj al-Sā'irīn*,<sup>38</sup> and other long treatises have yet to be published. We do however have an edition of a fragment of his *Risālat al-Samarqandīya*,<sup>39</sup> another collection of replies to questions, which contains such contrasting elements as a discussion of the concept of *walāyat* (friendship with God), a letter to the Sultan Sanjar (d. 1157), declaring that one has to be forty years old to be a beginner in the science of mysticism, and sixty-three to reach perfection, a Šūfī account of the production of the Philosophers' Stone, an explanation of the mystical significance of bees, and a treatise on poverty.

A biography of Aḥmad-i Jām was begun during his lifetime, and with his assistance, by his pupil Sadīd ad-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Mūsā Ghaznavī,<sup>40</sup> who seems to have completed it sometime in the second half of the twelfth century.

<sup>35</sup> Ed. by 'Alī Fāzil, Tehran 1968.

<sup>36</sup> Vol. 1, ed. by 'Alī Fāzil, Tehran 1971.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted *ibid.*, p. 35 of the introduction.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Hishmat Mu'ayyad, introduction to Sadīd ad-Dīn Muḥammad Ghaznavī, *Maqāmāt-i Zhindeh Pīl*, Tehran 1961, p. 22.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 209-27.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-178.

In spite of its antiquity, however, it is of an extremely hagiographical character, and of little value for reconstructing the life of its subject, while so far as Šūfī doctrine is concerned it is equally disappointing. Fortunately it can be supplemented by shorter biographical works by members of Aḥmad's family.<sup>41</sup>

About this time (probably between 1170 and 1200), another, much more important Šūfī biography was written, that of Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī ʿl-Khair (967-1049), composed by his great-great-grandson Muḥammad ibn al-Munavvar,<sup>42</sup> who incorporated therein a shorter biography by a cousin of his.<sup>43</sup> Long selections from both works have been translated in an essay by R.A. Nicholson,<sup>44</sup> who, while noting the biographers' "credulity and entire lack of critical judgment",<sup>45</sup> observes that when it come to accounts of miracles "the ancient Lives of Abū Saʿīd are modest and subdued if we compare them with some famous legends of the same kind."<sup>46</sup> They are rich in detail, and contain long passages in which the story is told by Abū Saʿīd himself. Many anecdotes, whether true or not, indicate attitudes which were doubtless his own, notably an enthusiasm for scandalously outrageous behaviour and an extravagant style of life, along with music and dancing. His mysticism seems to have been of a practical nature, avoiding philosophical subtleties, while the sayings and sermons recorded by his biographers cannot be considered as enough to form a clearly defined system.

Along with these two biographies, which clearly demonstrate the existence from a very early date of an extremely wild and unorthodox type of Šūfism in north-east Iran, we should mention the *Nūr al-ʿUlūm*, an anonymous biography of Abū Saʿīd's contemporary Abū ʿl-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad Khurqānī or Kharāqānī (d. 1034), who took his inspiration from the most famous figure of the "drunken" school of Sufis, Abū Yazīd Baṣṭāmī (d. 873). The work survives only in an abridgement,<sup>47</sup> the sole manuscript of which is dated 1299, but must have been composed much earlier. In addition to biographical material, the book contains many sayings attributed to Khurqānī himself.

Now it would seem that the composition of biographies of individual Šūfīs in the twelfth century, which represents something of an innovation, cor-

<sup>41</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 50-1 and 179-207.

<sup>42</sup> *Asrār al-Tauḥīd fī Maqāmāt al-Shaikh Abī Saʿīd*, ed. by V. Zhukovsky, Petrograd 1899, and by Zabīḥullāh Šafā, Tehran 1953. Tr. by Mohammad Agha, Paris 1974.

<sup>43</sup> *Ḥalāt u Sukhanān-i Shaikh Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī ʿl-Khair*, ed. by V. Zhukovsky, Petrograd 1899, and by ʿIraj Afshār, Tehran 1963.

<sup>44</sup> *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, Cambridge 1921, pp. 1-76. Cf. Fritz Meier, *Abū Saʿīd-i Abū l-Ḥayr, Wirklichkeit und Legende*, Leiden 1976.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>47</sup> Ed. by E. Berthels in *Iran III*, Leningrad 1929, pp. 155-224.

responds to a profound change in the nature of Ṣūfism itself, consisting in a transition from an older and more conventional kind of mysticism, stressing the need for repentance and the love of God, whose Unity is regarded as the basis and the goal of all theory and practice, towards a kind of mysticism that asserts the importance of the mystic himself, emphasizing the need to perfect the individual, and is accompanied by increased devotion to great Ṣūfī masters. Obviously it would be wrong to leap to such a conclusion on the basis of the biographical evidence alone; it is rather the works left by the great mystical theorists of the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century that oblige us to recognise a revolution with far-reaching consequences in the Ṣūfism of the eastern Islamic world.

One of these theorists, Shihāb ad-Dīn Yaḥyā Suhrawardī, who was put to death at Aleppo in 1191, lies outside the scope of the present article, since he was a philosopher, albeit a mystical one, rather than a Ṣūfī. But his short treatises in Persian,<sup>48</sup> which rank as masterpieces of prose style, have often been classed together with Ṣūfī works and are sometimes attributed to Ṣūfī authors. Moreover, it is necessary to mention the influence exerted by his philosophy of "Oriental Illumination" (*ishrāq*) upon the mysticism of the later Middle Ages, an influence which is shown by an emphasis on the theme of Light, notably in the titles of Ṣūfī books. That he was thoroughly familiar with Ṣūfism is quite clear; one of his treatises<sup>49</sup> is presented as part of a conversation with a group of Ṣūfīs in a *khānaqāh* (Ṣūfī centre), although both this and the master (*shaikh*) of whom the author says he had been the disciple are probably symbolic figures. His short essay *Yazdān-shinākht* ("Knowing God"), which belongs to the category of philosophy rather than that of mysticism, has been attributed to 'Ain al-Quṣṣāt. Another connection with Ṣūfism is to be found in his *Mu'nis al-Ushshāq* ("The Lovers' Companion"),<sup>50</sup> a symbolic story in which the concept of Beauty, typified by Joseph, is treated in a manner that is characteristic of the Persian *Fedeli d'amore*. But in his other works, notably the *Aql-i Surkh*,<sup>51</sup> a conversation between the author and a mysterious angel, the *Lughat-i Mūrān*,<sup>52</sup> a collection of short texts including a story that evokes the Legend of the Grail, set in an

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<sup>48</sup> *Majmū'ce-yi Āṣār-i Fārsī*, ed. by Sayyid Ḥusain Naṣr, with a French introduction by Henry Corbin, Tehran 1970.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 242-50 of the Persian text; cf. pp. 82-5 of the French section. Tr. by Henry Corbin in a collection of fifteen treatises by Suhrawardī, *L'Archange empourpré*, Paris 1976, pp. 368-77.

<sup>50</sup> Tr. by Henry Corbin in *L'Archange empourpré*, pp. 302-18.

<sup>51</sup> Tr. by Henry Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, Paris 1971-2, vol. 2, pp. 246-57, and in *L'Archange empourpré*, pp. 201-13.

<sup>52</sup> Tr. by Henry Corbin in *L'Archange empourpré*, pp. 420-32.

old Iranian context, and the *Āvāz-i Parr-i Jibrāʾīl*,<sup>53</sup> which speaks of the liberation of the mystic from the world of Darkness, and has a markedly initiatory character, Suhrawardī shows himself as above all an individualist, a philosopher searching for knowledge in his solitude, as opposed to the shared, social movement of the Šūfī fraternities: he is concerned with the perfection of the intellectual who looks for illumination in the dawn of his own being, rather than with the path towards annihilation or mystical experience with a personal God.

Although the works of Rūzbihān Baqlī of Shīrāz (1128-1209), the most prolific writer of the Šūfī *Fedeli d'amore*, leave a very different impression, it is still possible to discern a certain individualism beneath the flowery complications of his elaborate style and the intricate structures of his mystical doctrine. But at this period the theme of the love of God still overshadows that of the perfection of the mystic; it dominates the author's *ʿAbhar al-ʿAshiqīn* ("The Lovers' Jasmine"),<sup>54</sup> which emphasizes the importance of human love as an initiation to the Šūfī Path, giving the lover an advantage over the pious ascetic, and describes the various stages by which the transmutation of human passion into divine love is achieved. The classification of the various stages of infatuation is rigorous in the extreme. Another important work, the *Sharḥ al-Shaḥīyāt*,<sup>55</sup> is a long commentary in very elegant but difficult Persian on the ecstatic utterances of earlier mystics. The most valuable part of this is that which gives us texts by Ḥallāj, constituting one of our best sources for the understanding of the formative period of Šūfism. But Rūzbihān's teachings are best expressed in his short *Risāle-yi Qudstyeh*,<sup>56</sup> which sums up the essential aspects of Šūfī theory and practice in twelve brief chapters. It is to be observed that his doctrine displays a considerable degree of systematization when compared to that of Aḥmad Ghazālī, showing that much progress had been made in the arrangement of concepts, but the resulting sophistication, although maintaining a balance between the inspiration of passion and the precision of a system, is accompanied by a lack of clarity that indicates the highly personal character of the mysticism now making its appearance.

With the rise in importance of the personality of the mystic, discussed above, coincides the rise of the great Šūfī Orders, and the appearance of two

<sup>53</sup> Ed. and tr. by Henry Corbin and Paul Kraus in *Journal asiatique*, juillet-septembre 1935, pp. 1-82, and tr. by Henry Corbin in *L'Archange empourpré*, pp. 227-39.

<sup>54</sup> Ed. by Henry Corbin and Muḥammad Muʿīn, Tehran 1958, with a French introduction and translation of the first chapter; and by Javād Nūrbakhsh, Tehran 1970. Cf. Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 3, pp. 65-146.

<sup>55</sup> Ed. by Henry Corbin, Tehran 1966.

<sup>56</sup> Lith. in margin of Najīb ad-Dīn Rīzā Tabrīzī's *Sabʿ al-Mathānī*, Shīrāz 1929. Cf. Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 3, pp. 130-3.

of their greatest figures, both of whom composed their main works in Arabic, but also wrote a little in Persian: Shihāb ad-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar ibn ʿAbdillāh Suhrawardī (d. 1234), who has left us two *Futuvvat-nāmeḥs*,<sup>57</sup> documents of the greatest value for the study of the social and political history of his time, since they deal with mysterious organizations bound together by rituals of initiation, on which their author had a considerable influence; and Aḥmad ibn ʿUmar Khīvaqī, known as Najm ad-Dīn Kubrā (1145-1221), who translated one of his own Arabic treatises into Persian,<sup>58</sup> describing the elements of Šūfī practice necessary as a preparation to the mystic path. The most important section gives elaborately detailed instructions on how to produce visions of fire and light.<sup>59</sup>

Both of these mystics had an influence on a Šūfī who distinguished himself considerably in the field of literary production, Najm ad-Dīn Dāyeh Rāzī (d. 1256), who was a “deputy” (*khalīfeh*) of Najm ad-Dīn Kubrā, and was advised by ʿUmar Suhrawardī to dedicate his best-known work, the *Miršād al-ʿIbad*,<sup>60</sup> to the Seljūq ruler of Asia Minor, ʿAlāʾ ad-Dīn Kai Qubād I (d. 1237). This dedication of a treatise on Šūfism to a temporal ruler is of considerable interest when one examines the emphasis given by Dāyeh to the theme of kingship.<sup>61</sup> Dāyeh, as he relates in his preface, had been obliged to postpone the completion of the book, begun at the request of some pupils, by the Mongol invasion, which in 1220 had resulted in the massacre of hundreds of thousands of his fellow-citizens in Rayy (near Tehran). Thus he had been forced to take to flight and emigrate to Anatolia, where he finished the *Miršād* in the following year. The preface continues with a savage attack on ʿUmar Khayyām as a blind and confused philosopher devoid of Šūfī intuition.<sup>62</sup> The work itself deals first of all with the creation of the Universe, laying considerable stress upon God’s love for Man, and according a greater importance to the latter than is normal in earlier Šūfism; then with the various aspects of life, and afterwards with the return of all things to their origin. A final section, of the greatest sociological interest, treats of the duties incumbent upon each class of society. Of the forty chapters into which the book is divided one

<sup>57</sup> Ed. by Murtizā Šarrāf, in *Rasāʾil-i Javānmardān*, Tehran 1973, pp. 89-166. Cf. pp. 37-58 of the French introduction by Henry Corbin.

<sup>58</sup> *Risālat al-sāʾir al-ḥāʾir al-wājid ilā ʾl-sāʾir al-wāhid al-mājid*, quoted by Manūchihr Muhsini in *Tahqīq dar Ahvāl u Āšār-i Najm ad-Dīn Kubrā*, Tehran 1967, pp. 176-9.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Henry Corbin, *L’homme de lumière dans le soufisme iranien*, 2nd edition, Paris 1971, pp. 113-7.

<sup>60</sup> Ed. by Shams al-ʿUrafā, Tehran 1933, and by Muḥammad Amīn Riyāhī, Tehran 1973.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Hermann Landolt, Introduction to Dāyeh’s *Marmūzāt-i Asadī dar Mazmūrāt-i Dāvūdī*, ed. by Muḥammad Rīzā Shaftī Kadkanī, Tehran 1973.

<sup>62</sup> Ed. Riyāhī, pp. 8-19.

should note in particular the eighteenth and nineteenth, which discuss the different kinds of contemplation and revelation reached by the Šūfī; they contain a complicated theory of coloured lights, to be seen in a journey across a series of valleys, and each corresponding to a different stage of progress towards mystical experience, and an impressive description of visions of suns, moons and stars, which culminate in the transformation of the mystic into a "Man of Light."<sup>63</sup> The *Miršād*, owing to the richness of the ideas which it expounds, expressed in a poetic rather than a systematic manner, and the eloquent, magisterial Persian in which it is written, has always enjoyed great popularity in Iran. Dāyeh also composed a *Risāle-yi 'Ishq u 'Aql*,<sup>64</sup> a short treatise about the opposition between discursive reason and passionate love, and a *Risālat al-Ṭuyūr*,<sup>65</sup> which, like the works of Aḥmad Ghazālī and 'Aṭṭār mentioned above, tells the story of a group of birds who are in need of their king, and the resulting search for the latter, but is followed by an explanation that relates the allegory to the local politics of Rayy. Here again we see a connection between the author and temporal authority, and again the work's ornate style provides a marked contrast with the language of earlier Šūfī literature.

Another important Šūfī writer who took refuge in Anatolia from the advancing Mongol hordes was Bahā' ad-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Valad of Balkh (d. 1230), the father of the poet Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī (d. 1273). His *Ma'ārif*,<sup>66</sup> a large collection of sermons and discourses dating from various periods of his life, contains valuable information about his clashes with the orthodox theologians of north-east Iran, as well as intimate details of his daily life. The book is important chiefly because of the influence which it had upon his son, who read it constantly and whose *Maṣnavī* is rich in passages that it obviously inspired. It lays considerable emphasis on the cult of beauty in human form, and shows that the author was favourably disposed towards music and poetry. The description of his own spiritual experiences is extremely frank, indicating an intimate relationship with a very personal God. His pupil Burhān ad-Dīn Muḥaqiqī Tirmizī (d. 1241) also has a book called *Ma'ārif* to his name;<sup>67</sup> it was not, however, actually composed by him, but represents a small collection of notes of his conversations, consisting of short, concise sentences without any connection or division into chapters. Here again very close parallels are to be found with the *Maṣnavī*, showing a direct influence upon the latter.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 165-73; cf. Corbin, *L'homme de lumière...*, pp. 154-64.

<sup>64</sup> Ed. by Ḥamīd Ḥamīd, Resht 1965; and by Taqī Tafazzulī, Tehran 1966.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Hellmut Ritter, *Anhang to Fritz Meier, Stambuler MSS. dreier persischer Mystiker, Der Islam XXIV*, pp. 39-42.

<sup>66</sup> Ed. by Badī' az-Zamān Furūzānfar, Tehran 1954.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Badī' az-Zamān Furūzānfar, *Zindigānī-yi Maulānā*, 2nd edition, Tehran 1954, pp. 44-5.

Another such influence, but much more important, was exerted by Shams ad-Dīn Tabrizī (d. 1247?), the publication of whose discourses (*Maqālāt*)<sup>68</sup> has shed much light upon the circumstances leading to the foundation by Rūmī of the Order of the Whirling Dervishes. Unfortunately the text is extremely corrupt, and in any case represents only a confused series of notes of conversations in which Shams's flamboyant and passionate character often seems to defy the pursuit of any logical train of thought. The result is a long and muddled record of violent outbursts of anger, indicating his tyrannical attitude towards his contemporaries, and references to the continual backbiting within Rūmī's circle and the jealousy of his disciples, but also a number of stories, parables and allusions to earlier mystics, and inspired but naturally unsystematic expositions of Ṣūfī doctrine, along with passages concerning the contemplation of beauty and profane love. This text is an extremely rich one (important in particular for the views expressed in it about Yaḥyā Suhrawardī), and a critical edition would be of the greatest value. Of particular interest is its praise of the Persian language, as possessing a beauty and subtlety such that ideas have been expressed in it which are not to be found in Arabic.<sup>69</sup>

Rūmī's own discourses, collected under the title *Fīhi Mā Fīhī*,<sup>70</sup> constitute the most valuable of our sources for the understanding of thirteenth-century Persian Ṣūfism. We see the master replying to the questions put to him by his disciples, discussing political problems with the ruler of Anatolia, Mu'īn ad-Dīn Parvāneh (d. 1277), expressing his hostility towards the menace of the Mongol Empire, giving an account of his mysticism of passionate love, engaging in a little metaphysical speculation, and, in general, providing us with a picture of Ṣūfism that has both simplicity and clarity, in a synthesis of the teachings of his predecessors that is to be valued chiefly for the variety of metaphors and illustrations that he uses, rather than for any theoretical subtlety. These discourses probably give a more faithful impression of Rūmī's thought than his famous poems, for which he himself evinces a certain distaste.<sup>71</sup> His letters,<sup>72</sup> on the other hand, are extremely disappointing for the student of Ṣūfī doctrine, since they consist mainly of messages to influential personages, asking them to help his disciples, letters of introduction and so

<sup>68</sup> Ed. by Aḥmad Khushnīvīs, Tehran 1970.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 286. (Several passages are repeated in Aḥmad Aflākī, *Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn*, ed. by Tahsīn Yazıcı, vol. 2, Ankara 1961, pp. 653 ff.)

<sup>70</sup> Ed. by Badīʿ az-Zamān Furūzānfar, Tehran 1951-2; tr. by A. J. Arberry, *The Discourses of Rumi*, London 1961.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>72</sup> *Maktabāt*, ed. by Feridun Nafiz, Istanbul 1937; and by Yūsuf Jamshīdīpūr and Ghulām Ḥusain Amīn, Tehran 1956.

on, and usually do not deal with questions of mysticism except in passing. His sermons (*Majālis-i Sab'eh*),<sup>73</sup> however, are important in that they show us the earlier period of his thought, before the wildness inspired in him by Shams, and represent an example of a highly stylized literary genre: an Arabic introduction gives way to invocations in Persian, followed by a long eulogy of the Prophet and commentaries of *ḥadīth* in ornate, rhyming prose, with plenty of parables and protracted digressions.

Rūmī's son and successor, Bahā' ad-Dīn Aḥmad, known as Sulṭān Valad (1226-1312), in his continuation of his father's *Fīhi Mā Fīhi*,<sup>74</sup> does not reach the same level of inspiration. He devotes much space to repeating well-known stories, and seems to be chiefly occupied with demonstrating the importance of the mystic. In this respect he follows his father's teachings to some extent, emphasizing the fact that nothing but good can come from the *mard-i Khudā*, the man who is qualified with God as his attribute, God becoming his hearing and his sight. When, however, he stresses the all-embracing power of the Šūfī who has reached perfection, it might seem legitimate to look for a link with the theory of Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240) concerning the Perfect Man (*al-Insān al-Kāmil*). But there is in fact no real trace of the influence of this theory in either section of *Fīhi Mā Fīhi*, and although we can see a marked tendency towards the exaltation of the personality of the Šūfī in the works of his son, Rūmī himself appears to have abstained from adopting the idea of the Perfect Man and the new system evolved by Ibn 'Arabī in general.

One of the members of his circle, however, Fakhr ad-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn Buzurgmihr 'Irāqī (d. 1289), was responsible for an extremely influential presentation of this system in Persian. While following lectures on Ibn 'Arabī's *Fuṣṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* given by his pupil Ṣadr ad-Dīn Qunavī (d. 1274), 'Irāqī composed his *Lama'āt* ("Flashes"),<sup>75</sup> a short treatise in verse and prose. In his preface he declares his intention to imitate the style of Aḥmad Ghazālī's *Sawānīh*, but in fact his language is much more polished, as is normal in the literature of the thirteenth century, and he uses much more verse. He does nevertheless follow his model in using the words "Love", "Lover" and "Beloved" throughout the treatise, in order to designate respectively the *Deus Absconditus* or Absolute Reality, the mystic, and the *Deus Revelatus* or "God created in the religions" of Ibn 'Arabī's doctrine. The corruption of the text and the absence of a critical edition have long obscured the fact that the divisions of the work correspond to those of the *Fuṣṣūṣ*, so that each of the twenty-seven "Flashes" may be seen to contain a reference to a chapter of Ibn

<sup>73</sup> Ed. by Feridun Nafiz, Istanbul 1937.

<sup>74</sup> Lith. Tehran 1916; ed. Tehran n.d.

<sup>75</sup> Ed. in his *Kulliyāt* by Sa'īd Naftī, 4th edition, Tehran n.d., pp. 375-409.

‘Arabī’s main summary of his system. This, characterized by a truly structuralist pre-occupation with rigorous formalisations and the subordination of individual elements to unified totalities, might be said to have transformed Ṣūfism into a science. The resulting severity makes itself felt all through the *Lama‘āt*, determining the exact course of the dialectic of love between the mystic and the God who eventually must himself fall victim to the onslaughts of passion. For this is the outcome of the new, implacable logic imposed on the older, free and unstructured thought of the Persian *Fedeli d’amore*: the affirmation, which few earlier Ṣūfīs had dared to express, that God could feel passionate love (‘*ishq*) for Man. Thus the work completes Ibn ‘Arabī’s system by bringing out the importance of its motive force, the theory of ardent desire (*shauq*), and giving pride of place in it to the theme of love, as demanded by the kind of Ṣūfism prevailing in the eastern Islamic world. Its influence in the later Middle Ages was considerable, and it was the subject of several commentaries.

A short biography of ‘Irāqī,<sup>76</sup> composed not long after his death, is one of our most important sources concerning the antinomian practices of the Qalandars. The anonymous author describes ‘Irāqī’s childhood in Hamadān (W. Iran), his emigration to India and stay in the Panjab, his travels in Arabia and involvement in Anatolian politics, his departure to Egypt in order to escape from the tyranny of the Mongols, and his last days in Damascus. He shows that throughout his life ‘Irāqī was devoted to the love of adolescents, music and dancing. There also exists a key to the symbols in his poems (*Muṣṭalahāt-i ‘Irāqī*),<sup>77</sup> of uncertain authorship, but probably not, as has been thought, by the poet himself. This explains the various elements of Persian erotic poetry as references to the main concepts of Ṣūfī theory, and has survived in many different versions, often as a glossary to the works of Ḥāfiz.

Another populariser of Ibn ‘Arabī’s teachings, ‘Azīz ad-Dīn ibn Muḥammad Nasaḥī (fl. 1281), also seems to have had to take refuge from the attacks of the Mongols, leaving Transoxania to travel all over Iran. He composed a large number of short treatises, grouped into collections that sometimes overlap, the most important bearing the title *Kitāb al-Insān al-Kāmil* (“The Book of the Perfect Man”).<sup>78</sup> The first half of this book is intended for the ordinary reader, the second for those who are fairly experienced in Ṣūfism. But in both parts the author shows a marked naïveté, indicating that he is not really an original thinker or an authority on his subject, but is only transmit-

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., pp. 46-65 (similar material is found in the thirteenth-century *Manāqib-i Aḥad ad-Dīn Ḥamid ibn Abī ‘l-Fakhr Kirmānī*, ed. by Badī‘ az-Zamān Furūzānfar, Tehran 1968).

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 410-26.

<sup>78</sup> Ed. by Marijan Molé, Tehran 1962.

ting the ideas of others. He writes because he has been asked to give an exposition of a variety of themes, not because he himself has anything new to say. Nevertheless, the extreme simplicity of his outlook results in a very uncomplicated presentation of difficult theories, notably that of the Perfect Man, to which he perhaps attaches more importance than it in fact occupies in Ibn 'Arabī's system. In a similar collection of treatises, the *Manāzil al-Sā'irīn*,<sup>79</sup> we find a connection with politics in the doctrine of the *Mahdī* or Messiah, taught to Nasafī by his master, the Shī'ite mystic Sa'd ad-Dīn Ḥamūyeh (d. 1250), the revolutionary character of which seems to have frightened him somewhat. He did however believe that a radical change in society would come at the end of the century, bringing about the unification of Islam, and said that the Prophet had told him in a dream not to publish his *Kashf al-Ḥaqā'iq* before this happened.<sup>80</sup> This book<sup>81</sup> does in fact lack the chapters which it was meant to contain concerning the *Mahdī*. It gives a useful comparison of the views of Šūfis and philosophers, displaying considerable erudition in the fields of cosmology and natural science. Nasafī's *Maqṣad al-Aqṣā*,<sup>82</sup> unlike his other works, exposes his own personal views, and is an excellent summary of Šūfī doctrine. It establishes a certain dichotomy between traditional Šūfism and the new theories of Ibn 'Arabī's school, which emphasize the absolute unity of all being.

The interest in philosophical speculation that characterizes this school is also evident in two short prose treatises by Maḥmūd Shabistarī (d. 1320), the *Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn* and the *Mir'āt al-Muḥaqqiqīn*.<sup>83</sup> The former work consists of a series of disconnected propositions, strung together without any attempt at systematization, apart from a division into eight chapters, which deal mainly with complex problems of metaphysics, the only specifically Šūfī elements appearing at the end, in a discussion of "annihilation and survival"; the second, however, develops a number of arguments, beginning with a psychological study and then showing how God can be understood by examining the world, with an elaborate comparison between Man and the Universe.

This tendency towards an emphasis on the theoretical formulation of Šūfī teachings, favouring the sophistication of philosophy rather than the organization of life upon the lines of a specific practice, was naturally accom-

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., pp. 313-452.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Fritz Meier, *Die Schriften des 'Atz-i Nasafī*, in *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* LII (1953), pp. 144-5.

<sup>81</sup> Ed. by Aḥmad Mahdavi Dāmghānī, Tehran 1965.

<sup>82</sup> Lith. with 'Abd ar-Rahmān Jāmī's *Ashī'at al-Lama'at*, Tehran 1886; tr. by E. H. Palmer, *Oriental Mysticism*, 2nd edition, London 1938.

<sup>83</sup> Ed. by Ḥusain Jahān-Namā in *'Awārif al-Ma'arif*, Shīrāz 1938, Parts 1 and 2.

panied by a rise in the importance of the individual, as shown in the doctrine of the Perfect Man. As in the second half of the twelfth century, we see a wave of biographical activity accompanying the exaltation of the personality of the mystic. Two biographies of Baqlī, written at the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth by his great-grandsons,<sup>64</sup> show how the custom of glorifying great Ṣūfīs had progressed in the meantime. They contain plenty of verses praising their subject, and many quotations from his works, but are rather disappointing from the point of view of the historian, containing relatively few anecdotes and pieces of biographical information. The same may be said of the biography of Rūmī written by one of his pupils, the *Risāleh* of Farīdun ibn Aḥmad Sipahsālār,<sup>65</sup> which is however an extremely important source in view of its antiquity and the author's intimate acquaintance with the first members of the Maulavī Order. But the most valuable biographical work composed in this period is the *Firdaus al-Murshidiya* of Maḥmūd ibn ʿUṣmān,<sup>66</sup> written in 1327, dealing with the life of Abū Ishāq Kāzarūnī (d. 1035). This is an expanded version of a lost Arabic biography by Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm (d. 1109), incorporating many later sources. It gives a vast amount of detail about Kāzarūnī's asceticism, preaching and mystical doctrine (which declares the identity (*ittiḥād*) of God and his servants), as well as giving a picture of his social rôle as a Muslim missionary in a predominantly Zoroastrian community.

The individualism which we have discerned in this period of Ṣūfism reaches its highest point in the theories of ʿAlāʾ ad-Dawleh Simnānī (1261-1336). The works of this author have yet to be edited, but Henry Corbin has made an excellent exposition of the ideas to be found in his *Kitāb al-ʿUrwat al-Wuthqā*.<sup>67</sup> They include an extremely difficult system of correspondences between the spiritual "organs" of the mystic, the "Prophets" which inhabit his being, and the colours which indicate the various stages of progress that he reaches. Although the doctrine of coloured lights appearing in the course of visions had already been adumbrated in Persian Ṣūfism (as noted above), Simnānī's intricate arrangements of detail and painstakingly elaborated structures make him the leading theorist in this field. He also shows his talent for constructing complicated systems in the domain of theology, with a minute analysis of the Islamic version of the Creation. But it is chiefly on the personal level that he

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<sup>64</sup> Sharaf ad-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn Ṣadr ad-Dīn, *Tuḥfat Ahl al-ʿIrfān*, ed. by Javād Nūrbakhsh, Tehran 1970; ʿAbd al-Laṭīf ibn Ṣadr ad-Dīn, *Rūḥ al-Jinān*, ed. by Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh, in *Rāzbiḥān-nāmeḥ*, Tehran 1968, pp. 153-371.

<sup>65</sup> Ed. by Saʿīd Naḥfī, Tehran 1946.

<sup>66</sup> Ed. by Fritz Meier, Istanbul 1943.

<sup>67</sup> *En Islam iranien*, vol. 3, pp. 275-355.

shines, giving us plenty of autobiographical information. One must observe that the concept of the Ego has a preponderant place in his teachings, isolating him from the main current of Šūfī doctrine, which usually stresses the need to suppress one's own identity. For Simnānī, however, it is a question of rising to a higher form of "I-ness" (*anā'iyat*), and interiorizing everything, as opposed to embarking upon a voyage beyond one's consciousness or losing oneself in an external totality.

In contrast to this highly abstract literature written in Iran, the Persian works composed by members of the Chishtī Order in India tell us more about Šūfī practice and daily life. They consist mainly of *malfūzāt*, records of the conversations of a master with his pupils, which are however often apocryphal. Those attributed to the thirteenth century are certainly forgeries, since the founders of the Order were not interested in writing books.<sup>88</sup> Among genuine *malfūzāt*, the earliest and most important example is the *Fawā'id al-Fu'ād*, consisting of the conversations of Nizām ad-Dīn Auliya (d. 1325), recorded by Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī.<sup>89</sup> These give valuable information about the organization of Šūfī life in North India in the thirteenth century, with plenty of biographical details about earlier mystics, and constitute the best source available for the social historian. The other main example of this kind of literature is the *Khair al-Majālis* of Ḥamīd Qalandar, describing a hundred conversations of Naṣīr ad-Dīn Chirāgh-i Dihlī (d. 1356).<sup>90</sup> Here too we find plenty of materials for the study of Šūfism as practised in Indian *khānaqāhs*, along with references to the political history of the day that imply a certain hostility to the established authorities.

In addition to these genuine works, however, we are faced with a number of *malfūzāt* that are clearly forgeries, but are nevertheless of considerable interest, since they were often composed at a very early date, the fourteenth century having been very rich in such productions. These forgeries often betray themselves by absurd anachronisms and quotations from works that can be dated to a time later than their supposed authors, but also by the wild and uncontrolled mysticism that they express, which is incompatible with the severe orthodoxy observed by the Šūfis to whom they are attributed. They contain many amusing stories and provide plenty of light entertainment, but avoid the difficulties of metaphysics. It seems that they were written purely because the booksellers of Delhi found that they sold well.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Muḥammad Ḥabīb, *Chishti Mystics' Records of the Sultanate Period*, in *Medieval India Quarterly*, vol. 1, No. 2, 1950, pp. 1-43.

<sup>89</sup> Ed. by Muḥammad Laṭf Malik, Lahore 1967.

<sup>90</sup> Ed. by K. A. Nizāmī, Aligarh.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Ḥabīb, op. cit., pp. 39 ff.

One Indian author to whom a large number of treatises may safely be attributed is Muḥammad Gīṣū Darāz (d. 1422), a mystic of great erudition, notably in the field of Hinduism, who is said to have written over a hundred books. These include many commentaries of earlier Ṣūfī works, the authors of which he often criticizes, disagreeing in particular with Ibn ʿArabī and ʿAin al-Quzāt Hamadānī, and outlining his own ideas with an originality rare among commentators. Some of his teachings concerning Ṣūfī practice appear to have been quite unconventional.<sup>92</sup>

Meanwhile, in Iran, it is chiefly the popularisation of the doctrines of Ibn ʿArabī that dominates literary production during the fourteenth century, his theories taking a long time to be assimilated, because of their extreme complexity, and giving rise to numerous commentaries on his *Fuṣṣūṣ*. The development of Ṣūfī thought had reached its highest point, and it was now a question of explaining and elucidating the difficulties to be found in the masterpieces of the thirteenth century. A certain severity was imposed, at the expense of the Iranian *Fedeli d'amore*, whose finest period was now over. In general, it must be admitted that little of any novelty appears in Persian prose at this time, though we must note one major figure, ʿAlī Hamadānī (1314-85), the author of a large number of short treatises.<sup>93</sup> These are sometimes restricted to the repetition of moralising advice, occasionally offered to royalty, in a flowery and allusive style. The author's mysticism is usually of a straightforward, traditional kind, but his works are important as representing the growing importance of Shīʿite Ṣūfism. His essay on dreams (*Risāle-yi Manāmīyeh*)<sup>94</sup> contains an interesting division of the Universe into realms of light and darkness, separated by a third, intermediary world, which he calls the *ʿālam al-mithāl* ("the world of the symbol"), following the terminology of Ibn ʿArabī. It is the existence of this world, between those of spirits and bodies, that enables dreams to take place and to be interpreted. Hamadānī speaks in the same treatise of an East which is the very essence of the source of being; this indicates the continuing influence of Yaḥyā Suhrawardī's "Philosophy of Oriental Illumination" (*Hikmat al-Ishrāq*).<sup>95</sup>

<sup>92</sup> For a long bibliography, listing several texts edited by S. ʿAṭā Husayn, cf. K. A. Nizāmī, article "Gīṣū Darāz" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, vol. 2, Leiden/London 1965, pp. 1114-6.

<sup>93</sup> Three of his *Rasāʾil* (*Zikrīyeh*, *Chihil Maqām*, *Aqabāt*) have been ed. with Ḥasan ibn Ḥamza Palāstī's *Tazkire-yi Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Šiddīq al-Kujujī*, Tehran/Shirāz 1947, pp. 53-78. A list of eighty has been made by J. K. Teufel, *Eine Lebensbeschreibung des Scheichs ʿAlī-i Hamadānī*, Leiden 1962, pp. 43-60.

<sup>94</sup> Studied by Fritz Meier, *Die Welt der Urbilder bei ʿAlī Hamadānī*, *Erano Jahrbuch* XVIII, Zurich 1950, pp. 115-72.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Corbin, *L'homme de lumière...*, p. 91.

An important biography of Hamadānī, the *Khulāṣat al-Manāqib*, was written by his pupil Nūr ad-Dīn Jaʿfar Badakhshī in 1385.<sup>96</sup> This contains a number of digressions on Šūfī themes, showing that the author was himself a man of some learning. Apart from recording his own conversations with Hamadānī, he provides valuable information about the latter's extensive travels and emigration to Transoxania. He shows his master as disapproving violently of some Šūfis' wild behaviour.<sup>97</sup> Another biography composed in the fourteenth century is that of Šafī ad-Dīn Ishāq Ardabīlī (1252-1335), the ancestor of the Šafavid dynasty, by Ibn Bazzāz (d. 1398),<sup>98</sup> a long text which includes amusing accounts of miracles, but from the point of view of the historian needs to be supplemented by the documentary evidence now available, in spite of the wealth of sociological detail which it contains.

A most important figure in Persian Šūfism at the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth, Shāh Niʿmatullāh Walī Kirmānī, who died at a great age in 1431, has left a huge corpus of prose treatises. One of his biographers, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Shīr Malik Vāʿiẓī, who wrote between 1435 and 1457, after describing Niʿmatullāh's long travels, notes the existence of hundreds of his works.<sup>99</sup> As a rule, however, these are extremely short, usually consisting of a few pages of mixed verse and prose.<sup>100</sup> It may be noted that here the proportion of verse is much higher than in the compositions of earlier writers, producing texts that are rather fragmentary in character. Their author appears to follow the doctrine of Ibn ʿArabī very closely, and an examination of what he has written often reveals a straightforward paraphrase of parts of books by the latter. But it must be remembered that in Iran plagiarism was never considered a grave sin, and that Niʿmatullāh did not hesitate to acknowledge his debt to his predecessor. As the founder of what was to become Iran's leading Šūfī Order it was incumbent upon him to give replies to his disciples on the various aspects of his teachings, and in order to extend his influence he had to devote a large amount of his time to the translation of Arabic works that were unintelligible to his contemporaries. By the sheer scale of his literary activity, and thanks to the weight of his personal authority, he succeeded in radically changing the nature of Persian mysticism to conform to theories that have changed little since their initial formulation by Ibn ʿArabī.

<sup>96</sup> Tr. by J. K. Teufel, op. cit., pp. 61-140.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>98</sup> *Šafwat al-Šafa*, lith. Bombay 1911.

<sup>99</sup> *Matériaux pour la biographie de Shāh Niʿmatullāh Walī Kirmānī*, ed. by Jean Aubin, Tehran 1956, pp. 310 ff.

<sup>100</sup> Eight vols. of these *Rasāʾil* have so far been ed. by Javād Nūrbakhsh, Tehran 1962-72. Unfortunately, the literature of this period which records the rise of the Naqshbandī Order has still to be published.

In doing so he reduced the significance of the theme of the mystic's love for God, while increasing that of veneration for the "Pole" (*Quṭb*) or Head of the Order. The latter development was doubtless due to the influence of Shī'ism, and Ni'matullāh's own claim to descent from the Prophet, but it also came as a culmination to the gradually mounting insistence on the need for a *pīr* or spiritual director.

One of his contemporaries, Ṣā'ib ad-Dīn 'Alī Turkeh of Isfahān (d. 1427), has also been cited as a mystic whose thought combines both Ṣūfī and Shī'ite ideas.<sup>101</sup> Another source of his doctrine, the teachings of the Ḥurūfī sect, so called because of the esoteric significance which it attached to the letters (*hurūf*) of the alphabet, lies outside the scope of the present survey, although the influence of this movement upon the Ṣūfism of the early fifteenth century must be noted, especially in view of its political activity. The best known of his essays,<sup>102</sup> the *Risāle-yi Shaqq-i Qamar*, takes as its starting-point a verse of the *Qur'ān* (LIV 1), "The Hour became imminent and the Moon split asunder"; the various ways of interpreting this are used to classify the different types of theologians, philosophers and mystics of the day, showing the extreme complexity of hermeneutics in Persian Islam and the author's belief that mystical enlightenment is reserved for a very small élite. 'Alī Turkeh's other works show him as a very capable commentator of *ḥadīth* as well as of the compositions of Ibn 'Arabī and 'Irāqī; as an expert on linguistics, aspects of which occupy an important place in his doctrine; as a master of the polemic, and as an impoverished debtor obliged to beg for money by his failure to cope with the vicissitudes of the political history of his time, in which he seems to have been deeply involved.<sup>103</sup>

Another Ṣūfī writer who had difficulties with the reigning Tīmūrid dynasty, Qāsim-i Anvār (d. 1433-4), has left us two short works in prose.<sup>104</sup> One of these (*Risāle-yi Su'āl u Jawāb*), taking the form of a series of questions and answers, lays considerable stress upon the importance of mankind, and Man's nearness to God, as well as the pre-eminence of the Prophet as the manifestation of God's Essence (a now familiar theme, with many antecedents in Ṣūfī literature). The other, which has various titles and seems to be a confused amalgam of different treatises, contains an explanation of the famous *ḥadīth* "I was a hidden Treasure; I desired to be known; so I created the world," as well as a short piece of autobiographical information, between commentaries

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 3, pp. 233-74.

<sup>102</sup> *Chahārdah Risāle-yi Fārsī*, ed. by S. 'Alī Mūsavī Bihbihānī and S. Ibrāhīm Dīrbājī, Tehran 1972.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 295-6.

<sup>104</sup> Ed. in his *Kulliyāt* by Sa'īd Naḥṣī, Tehran 1958, pp. 387-406.

of part of a poem by ʿIrāqī and a quatrain attributed to Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī ʿl-Khair, which has given rise to many interpretations by writers of this period.

The most famous Šūfī of the fifteenth century, ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Jāmī (1414-92), was also much occupied with elucidating difficulties in the works of his predecessors. His study of ʿIrāqī's *Lamaʿāt*<sup>105</sup> is the best available, surpassing the commentaries produced by Shāh Niʿmatullāh, ʿAlī Turkeh and other Šūfis.<sup>106</sup> Unfortunately, Jāmī tends to over-estimate the influence of Ibn ʿArabī on ʿIrāqī, erring notably when he explains the latter's idea of the personality of the mystic as being equivalent to that of the Perfect Man. Although he presents us with many extremely valuable passages on Šūfī doctrine, most of his commentary is concerned with the word-by-word exegesis of the text, in which, regrettably, the delicate ambiguities of ʿIrāqī's work are ignored as the symbols are de-coded. For by concentrating on the hidden, latent meaning of the *Lamaʿāt*, Jāmī fails to grasp the value of the symbols themselves, and the provocative character of the author's overt statements concerning the theme of love. Unlike ʿIrāqī, he remains a prisoner of Ibn ʿArabī's theories, unable to recapture the moment of their initial penetration into Persian Šūfism. His commentary on the *Khamrīyeh* ("Wine-poem") of Ibn al-Fāriz (d. 1235),<sup>107</sup> on the other hand, contains some interesting hypotheses concerning the causes of love, as well as a classification of the various ways of contemplating human beauty. Jāmī's own attempt to produce an original work on the lines of the *Lamaʿāt* and Aḥmad Ghazālī's *Sawāniḥ*, his *Lawāʾih*,<sup>108</sup> which, like these two commentaries, includes a number of his own quatrains (not, however, dispersed among prose passages with the spontaneity to be found in the compositions of earlier writers), fails lamentably. It is full of discussions of complicated metaphysical systems and references to the works of Ibn ʿArabī, which do not form any unified whole and are totally unsuitable for an effort to display literary virtuosity. We see here the tragedy of Jāmī: as a mystic, he fails to escape from the limitations of the scholar, and as a writer, from those of the littérateur. His talents lie rather in his ability to explain the theoretical aspects of Šūfī treatises, as is shown by his valuable commentary on Ibn ʿArabī's summary of his *Fuṣūṣ*.<sup>109</sup>

Another specialist in the same field, ʿAbdullāh Sīmābī, known as Ilāhī (d. 1491), who was born in Turkey but travelled widely in Iran and Transoxania,

<sup>105</sup> *Ashīʿat al-Lamaʿāt*, lith. Tehran 1886.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Hellmut Ritter, *Philologika VII*, in *Der Islam* XXI (1933), pp. 98-9.

<sup>107</sup> *Lawāmiʿ*, ed. by Hikmat Āl Āqā, Tehran 1962.

<sup>108</sup> Ed. in facsimile and tr. by E. H. Whinfield and Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazvīnī, London 1906.

<sup>109</sup> *Naqd al-Nuṣṣ*, lith. Tehran n.d. and Bombay 1889, 1908 and n.d.

and was, like Jāmī, a member of the Naqshbandī Order, also shows a tendency to see the structures of Ibn ‘Arabī’s theories in the older ideas of the Persian *Fedeli d’amore*. In his *Manāzil al-Qulūb*,<sup>110</sup> a commentary on part of Baqlī’s *Risāle-yi Qudsiyeh* (from which he selects a section that speaks of mystical experience as being vouchsafed only to an élite), he begins by using Ibn ‘Arabī’s division of all existence into five “presences” (*ḥazarāt*), including that of the Perfect Man, thus producing an effect which is of considerable interest in itself, but probably does not reflect the intentions that gave rise to the text which he is explaining. Ilāhī goes on to attack the extremist, antinomian Ṣūfīs, from whom however he seems to take a good deal of his inspiration.

Much more interesting materials are to be found in the masterpiece of another commentator, Shams ad-Dīn Muḥammad Lāhijī (d. 1506), whose massive *Mafātīḥ al-I‘jāz*<sup>111</sup> is the most famous study of Shabistarī’s *Gulshan-i Rāz*, on which many other commentaries were written at this time. In this work Lāhijī develops the theories of coloured lights which we have noted above, laying particular emphasis on a mysterious “Black Light” which signifies God’s Essence and comes as a culmination to the Ṣūfī’s progress. He also gives us plenty of autobiographical information, showing that these lights were in fact part of his own spiritual experience. On the theoretical plane he demonstrates an impressive ability to link the concept of poverty, central to Ṣūfism, with metaphysical speculation inspired by Avicenna.<sup>112</sup>

Alongside this extensive production of commentaries, now often written for kings and princes, we may observe the survival of a more traditional kind of literature in the letters of Quṭb ‘Abdullāh Jahrumī (fl. 1494).<sup>113</sup> These show their author as a very conservative figure, following a stern and rigorous path in Ṣūfī practice without troubling himself with complicated theories. He is mainly concerned with giving advice to his disciples, whom he tells to read not the works discussed in this article, but rather books on theology, commentaries on the *Qur’ān*, and collections of Ṣūfī biographies.<sup>114</sup>

On the whole, however, Persian Ṣūfī literature of this period lacks the connection with real life present in earlier works. By the end of the fifteenth century the gradually encroaching influence of temporal rulers had radically altered the field of literary production, destroying the spontaneity to be found in the writers of the past. With the establishment of a strong central govern-

<sup>110</sup> Ed. by Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh in *Rūzbihān-nāmeḥ*, Tehran 1968, pp. 387-421.

<sup>111</sup> Ed. by Kaivān Samī‘ī, Tehran 1957.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Corbin, *L’homme de lumière...*, pp. 164-78.

<sup>113</sup> *Makātīb*, ed. Tehran/Shīrāz 1960.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 36 and 112-3.

ment at the beginning of the sixteenth century conditions in Iran were no longer favourable for Šūfism, and it was in the domain of Shīʿite philosophy that the best examples of mystical literature were now produced, evoking the feelings of the solitary individual rather than those of a group or a movement. If we look back over the period studied above, however, we can see plenty of literary evidence that corresponds to a social reality, expressing the impetus of passionate desire with a freedom and a vigour too long obscured by the ensuing pre-occupation with theory and exegesis: the literature on Šūfism written in Persian prose during the Middle Ages shows that an extremely wild kind of mysticism had flourished in Iran from a very early date, and that this mysticism has been misunderstood owing to endeavours to suppress it beneath a theological framework.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

|       |              |
|-------|--------------|
| ed.   | edited       |
| lith. | lithographed |
| n.d.  | no date      |
| p.    | page         |
| tr.   | translated   |
| vol.  | volume       |

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**PERSIAN ŞŪFĪ POETRY UP TO THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY**

**BY**

**JULIAN BALDICK**



## PERSIAN ŠŪFĪ POETRY UP TO THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Medieval Persian mystical poetry is regarded by the peoples of the eastern Islamic world as containing the very highest expressions of their psychology and culture. The men who wrote it or in whose honour it was written are accorded the greatest possible veneration. This poetry is the richest source for the study of changes and tendencies in the human mind that underlie and accompany historical developments.

This article contains a new reading of the long didactic poems of ‘Aṭṭār and Rūmī. These poems have clearly not been read with any understanding of their plan, development or structure. With regard to Persian Šūfī lyric poetry, it is not possible here to begin the task of a psychological analysis. All that will be attempted here is a sketch of the broadest outlines of historical development, indicating various extremely unstructured elements.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the rise of Persian Šūfī poetry, it is necessary to bear in mind the existence of libertine tendencies, represented notably by the figure of the *qalandar*, the wandering antinomian dervish. It is no accident that this poetry should have first flourished mainly in the north-east of Iran, the homeland of Abū Yazīd of Baṣṭām (d. 874?), the leading figure of the “drunken” school of Šūfism, and the region of central Asian tribal influences, to be found notably in the practice of the contemplation of human beauty.

When embarking upon the study of the early Šūfī poetry in the form of the popular quatrain (*rubāʿī* or *du-baitī*), it is absolutely essential to concentrate upon the examples preserved in early manuscripts of twelfth-century prose works<sup>2</sup> or of the poems of Sanāʾī, who wrote in the first third of the twelfth century, instead of relying upon the collections made by modern writers from extremely late manuscripts. It must be remembered that Šūfis use profane poetry as well as poetry of clearly mystical content. Let us look, first of all, at the quatrains said to have been recited in the lifetime of Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī ʿl-Khair of Maihana (967-1049) in north-east Iran, according to thirteenth-century manuscripts of the biographies composed in the twelfth century.

We find here poems of love and devotion, and quatrains evoking libertine and antinomian tendencies. The tone is bold and vigorous, that of a proud group standing intransigent against the world. The love inherent in Man’s

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<sup>1</sup> Biographical and bibliographical information about the various authors will be found elsewhere in the present volume.

<sup>2</sup> These works are described in the article “Medieval Šūfī Literature in Persian Prose” in the present volume.

primordial reply to God of "Yes" (*Qurʾān* VII 172) brings dervishes to sacrifice their lives; the world and its money are not for true men.<sup>3</sup>

Besides this world we have another world  
 Besides hell and heaven we have another place  
 Tavern-haunting and love are our stock-in-trade  
*Qurʾān*-reciting and asceticism are another world<sup>4</sup>

The worship of beauty goes together with the rejection of prescribed religious worship:

Since I saw your face O candle of *Ṭirāz*  
 No work I do no fast I keep no prayer  
 When I'm with you my profanity is all prayer  
 When I'm without you all my prayer is profane<sup>5</sup>

Let us turn now to earlier twelfth-century sources. In the commentary on the *Qurʾān* written by Maibudī, the pupil of the conservative Anṣārī, we naturally find a different content:

Besides this tongue we have another tongue  
 Besides hell and heaven we have another place  
 The man of free lineage is alive with another soul  
 And that pure jewel of theirs is from another mine<sup>6</sup>

Love and devotion predominate even more, but here the accent is usually on submission rather than boldness. Elements such as wine occur in a specifically sacred context:

With love our steed set off from non-existence  
 Our night is bright from the wine of perpetual union  
 Of that wine which in our school is not forbidden  
 Till non-existence returns you won't find our lips dry<sup>7</sup>

This last poem, and one which mentions the black light that appears to the mystic near the end of his path,<sup>8</sup> also occur in the *Sawāniḥ al-ʿUshshāq* of Aḥmad Ghazālī (d. 1126).<sup>9</sup> Here we find the themes of union and separation,

<sup>3</sup> Muḥammad ibn al-Munavvar, *Asrār al-Tauḥīd fī Maqāmāt al-Shaikh Abī Saʿīd*, ed. by V. Zhukovsky, Petrograd 1899, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 428.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 431.

<sup>6</sup> Maibudī, *Kashf al-Asrār*, ed. by ʿAlī Aṣghar Hikmat, vol. 1, Tehran 1952, p. 331.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 508.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 324.

<sup>9</sup> Ed. by Hellmut Ritter, Leipzig 1942, pp. 4 and 37.

beauty and the vision of the Beloved. The following quatrain anticipates later exaltation of Man to the degree of being needed by God:

Love from non-existence for my sake came into existence  
I was and was love's object in the world  
I shall not leave you till scent leaves aloes-wood  
Year month day night in spite of the envious<sup>10</sup>

Allusion is made to the practice, characteristic of libertine and antinomian dervishes, of exposing oneself to blame (*malāmat*):

This is the street of *malāmat* the battlefield of destruction  
And this the path of gamblers that lose their all  
A *qalandarī* man is needed with torn skirt  
To pass over like an 'ayyār<sup>11</sup> and without fear<sup>12</sup>

In the letters of Aḥmad Ghazālī's martyred pupil 'Ain al-Quḏāt Hamadānī (d. 1131) we find an extremely complicated context. Here many of the quatrains are concerned with the beloved's tresses, generally the clearest of Šūfī symbols for the phenomenal world:

His hair I pull and purposely let go back again  
That it may jump and go towards Orion back again  
There's nothing wrong in its going homewards back again  
Because parts go towards the whole back again<sup>13</sup>

There is boldness again in the use of the concept of unbelief (*kufr*, *kāfirī*):

Without eyes on the path of *qalandarī* one cannot go  
Stealthily to the street of adversity one cannot go  
Unbelief in itself is the foundation of faith  
Easily easily to unbelief one cannot go<sup>14</sup>

Turning to the quatrains found in early manuscripts of Sanā'ī's poems, we find that *qalandarī* themes, joined with calls for self-annihilation, are the most striking:

This horse of *qalandarī* is not to be ridden by everyone  
This counter of nothingness is not to be played by everyone  
A man is needed who throws his life outside  
When life disappears he makes a life from love<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> A member of one of the unruly urban bands of this period.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>13</sup> *Nāmeḥā*, ed. by 'Aḥf 'Usairān and 'Alī Naqī Munzavī, vol. 1, Tehran 1969, p. 128.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 316.

<sup>15</sup> Sanā'ī, *Dirvān*, ed. by Mudarris Rīzavī (2nd edition), Tehran [1976], p. 1132, No. 178.

The attack on Man's self-identity goes together with a glorification of his inner potential:

Wash your hands of self as you are your own world  
Do not speak of stars as you are your own heaven  
The obvious is for others You are your own secret  
Rejoice for in short you are your own<sup>16</sup>

The popular character of the quatrain continues in the dialect quatrains attributed to Bābā Ṭāhir of Hamadān (fl. 1055?). In those found in a fifteenth-century manuscript a nomadic *qalandarī* standpoint is explicitly enunciated.<sup>17</sup> The spontaneity of the quatrain is most apparent in those of Auḥad ad-Dīn Kirmānī (d. 1238), who is represented by his thirteenth-century biographer as saying that he would find his quatrains on a green tablet seen in ecstasy during the Ṣūfī practice of listening to music (*samāʿ*).<sup>18</sup> In one of his quatrains Auḥad ad-Dīn says that he is called an antinomian (*ibāḥatī*).<sup>19</sup>

Let us now leave the quatrain and turn to the history of Ṣūfī poetry in other forms, beginning with Sanāʿī, with whom we encounter extremely difficult problems. The historian is unlikely to be satisfied by a picture which presents Sanāʿī as standing alone as the founder of Persian Ṣūfī poetry in the forms of the long didactic poem and the shorter and the extended ode. Yet this is the picture which the evidence still presents, and his achievement is certainly an enormous one.

A fact to be borne in mind is that a very great number of Sanāʿī's poems, including some with Ṣūfī content, are panegyrics addressed to Sulṭān Bahrām-shāh (c. 1117-1157) or other dignitaries. One of the greatest difficulties is that of most Ṣūfī poetry: the mixture of the sacred and the profane. We find poems enjoining piety and devotion, often in violent harangues, and praising God and the Prophet; we also find what are classed in some old manuscripts as *qalandarīyāt*, poems enjoining wine-drinking, gambling, profane love and the rejection of religion. Hellmut Ritter<sup>20</sup> has observed that those in the latter category, compared to those composed later in the twelfth century by ʿAṭṭār (d. 1221), approach the frivolous. They can, however, have a clearly serious character, as in the case of a personal vision of an "elder (*pīr*, old man,

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 1170, No. 477.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Muḥtabā Minuvī, *Az Khazāʾin-i Turkiyeh*, in *Majalle-yi Dānishkade-yi Adabīyāt*, vol. 4, No. 2, Tehran 1957, p. 57.

<sup>18</sup> *Manāqib-i Auḥad ad-Dīn Ḥamid ibn Abī ʿl-Fakhr Kirmānī*, ed. by Badīʿ az-Zamān Furūzānfar, Tehran 1968, pp. 102-3.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Introduction, p. 39.

<sup>20</sup> *Philologica XV: Farīduddīn ʿAṭṭār. III. 7. Der Dīwān*, in *Oriens* 12 (1959), p. 21.

spiritual director) of light", who shows the poet wine-drinkers who utter apparent blasphemies,<sup>21</sup> or in the case of a dialogue between the poet and a *qalandarī* "elder".<sup>22</sup> In the following poem we find the Šūfī technical terms *maqām* (station), *manzil* (stage) and *ḥāl* (state):

He who has not brightness in his heart  
Does not have familiarity in the tavern

In no way indeed in the tavern  
Is there a place for people of hypocrisy

Boy rise and bring a cup of wine  
For I have not the means for piety

I'll buy a draught of wine with heart and soul  
No-one will accept the currency of wine like this

Drunkenness and unconsciousness how fine you are  
No kingship is better than these two

Drink wine and speak not of science of verbiage  
Curse you this subject is not words for the assembly

How much will you say how much and how and why?  
Have you no escape from these ideas?

In the *maqām* of existence and the *manzil* of revelation  
There is no howness howmuchness or whyness

You are one come up round the heart and see  
In your heart there is no grief for twoness

How will you arrive from yourself to God  
Since you are not separated from self?

When you arrive at a place where you become other than you  
After that the *ḥāl* is not other than Godly

Do not call me negligent Sanāʾī  
For these words are not self-asserting<sup>23</sup>

Sanāʾī's *Sair al-ʿIbād* ("The Journey of the Faithful"), a short work in the *maṣnavī* (rhyming couplet) form, again shows an "elder of light" as the narrator's guide. There is a definite plan: they journey through the elements of

<sup>21</sup> Sanāʾī, op. cit., pp. 666-8.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 89-90.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 98-9.

this world, with these elements' corresponding vices and dangers coming from the heavenly spheres, before passing through these spheres. In the first sphere they encounter a number of beautiful youths (this is not without importance with regard to the study of Şūfī love-poetry), but in the rest they find various classes of bad people, with corresponding perversions of eyesight and objects of adoration. Eventually they reach Universal Soul, but not Universal Reason; the latter is hidden by veils, which cover different classes of dervishes. After years of individual effort the narrator finds a superior class of these, and in it a dominating light, the *qāzī* (judge) of the town of Sarakhs, to whom a very long panegyric is then devoted.

We see here two features to be found later in 'Aṭṭār and Rūmī: the existence of a plan and the stress on the importance of a master. But these should not obscure richer aspects, such as the profusion of the detail and the savagery of the satire.

Sanā'ī's massive *Ḥadīqat al-Ḥaqīqa* ("The Enclosed Garden of Reality") also has a plan, if a loose one. It is perhaps going too far to see the first chapters, which praise God, the *Qur'ān*, the Prophet and the outstanding figures of early Islam, as being in a symmetrical relationship with the final ones, in which the poet eulogizes the Sulṭān and those around him, gives advice and satirizes various classes of people, and finally speaks of himself. But in the intervening chapters we see a symmetry between on the one hand the discussion of Reason, followed by sections on knowledge and love, and on the other the ensuing dialogue with Universal Soul, and the attacks on lust, the world and the animal soul, followed by sections on pride and other vices of the carnal soul. Thus the work is divided into two parts, the first on a higher, the second on a lower level.

The *Ḥadīqat*, so far as the study of the ideas and practice of Şūfism is concerned, is restrained in comparison with the evocations of ecstasy and annihilation to be found in later *magnavī* works. What is perhaps most striking is the indebtedness to the philosophers—a phenomenon often observed in Şūfism when writers are closely under the shadow of a king—shown in the emphasis on the importance of Reason and the accompanying details. This naturally poses a problem with regard to the violent hostility existing between Şūfīs and philosophers, and this problem continues to present itself in later Şūfī literature, in which authors owe much to those whom they subject to vicious attacks. It must not be thought, however, that Sanā'ī's Şūfism is systematic: he is more concerned with giving advice, indicating pitfalls and calling for effort than with any considerations of theoretical elaboration. The first long chapter of the *Ḥadīqat* is nevertheless of the greatest importance as a statement of belief in God's Unity and the various aspects of the Şūfī

path—submission, love, reliance on God, etc.—that gives us a general idea of much of what was considered suitable for popular consumption, while not reflecting the high level of speculation and intrepidity shown at the same time by ‘Ain al-Quḏāt Hamadānī. We may also note, later in the *Ḥadīqat*, the presence of misogyny and scurrility.

The Šufī element in Khāqānī (d. 1199) is far less than in Sanāʾī. He does however lay particular emphasis, much of his work being devoted to the Kaʿba, on the vision of the “Kaʿba of the spirit.”<sup>24</sup> We may note here the homology in Šufī poetry between the Kaʿba and the heart (*dil*). The following poem, in which reference is made to the primordial “trust” (*amānat*) accepted by Man (*Qurʾān* XXXIII 72), is typical not of Khāqānī’s *Dīvān*, but of a certain style of Šufī poetry, that of the manifesto:

We are companions of the court of love  
 We are dwellers in the street of *qalandarī*  
 We are both lords of the winehouse  
 And companions of the worshipper of the dregs  
 Striving not for the sake of heaven  
 Boiling not because of the flames of hell  
 We are slaves of the will of the friend  
 And are free from the paradise of delights  
 If the world is created in time let it be so  
 We nonetheless are lovers from past eternity  
 All the year round without the trouble of a shirt<sup>25</sup>  
 We smell the scent of our Joseph  
 For that fire from which love arose  
 Now we are Abraham now Moses  
 We have the caliph<sup>26</sup> as the source of our lineage  
 We are of noble birth even though we are orphans  
 So it is that for the sake of one command  
 We are where the two roads of hope and fear cross  
 In the tavern like Khāqānī  
 We are pledged to the great *amānat*<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. by Ziyāʾ ad-Dīn Sajjādī, Tehran 1959, pp. 88-9.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Qurʾān* XII 93-4.

<sup>26</sup> The *khalfah*, the vicegerent of God, i.e. Adam (cf. *Qurʾān* II 30).

<sup>27</sup> Khāqānī, op. cit., p. 629.

With Nizāmī (d. 1209?), the master of the romantic epic, we encounter a poet extremely hard to understand, owing to his literary virtuosity and the profusion of his imagery. His didactic poem *Makhzan al-Asrār* ("The Treasury of Secrets"), composed in 1176, contains, after a section on the importance of the heart, a very rich description of his personal visionary experience, involving a beloved in human form, the description of nature, and profane beauty and pleasures. Here too we find a link with lyric love-poetry. The rest of the work, in comparison, seems rather disappointing, so far as content is concerned, however rash it must be to pass a premature judgment on a poet whose style may hide the greatest psychological profundity. Nizāmī seems unduly occupied with writing for a king and giving him advice, although he repeatedly speaks out against tyranny. His position is a conservative one, opposed to wine and begging.<sup>28</sup> He proudly declares:

Through me poetry's base became the cell of devotion  
The poet's craft became free from the tavern<sup>29</sup>

He glorifies what he presents as his own practice: *zuhd* (ascetic devotion, often mocked in Sūfī lyric poetry) under the patronage of a king (often attacked in Sūfī literature).<sup>30</sup>

With 'Aṭṭār we find a far purer spirit. He violently rejects the composition of poetry for a patron.<sup>31</sup> His lyrics, which often resemble those of Sanā'ī and Khāqānī mentioned and quoted above, are usually far more mystical, though he also sings of young male beauty. The extended ode quoted below, in which 'Aṭṭār—as, contrary to what is often believed, is normal in Sūfism—rejects the heretical concepts of *ḥulūl* (God's indwelling or incarnation in Man) and *ittiḥād* (unitive fusion with God), anticipates the popularisation in Persian poetry of the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* ("unity of existence") formulated by Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240):

O you who have come your face covered into the bazaar  
A whole crowd captured by this talisman

Whatever is other than you is mirage and appearance  
For there neither a little nor a lot has come

Here *ḥulūl* is unbelief and *ittiḥād* as well  
For this is a unity but come in repetition...

<sup>28</sup> *Makhzan al-Asrār*, ed. by Vaḥīd Dastgirdī, Tehran 1955, pp. 144 and 96-7.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>31</sup> *Manṭiq al-Ṭair*, ed. by Ṣādiq Gauharīn, Tehran 1969, p. 253.

One undivided essence (*‘ain*) besides which there was not an atom  
When it became external all these others came...

O you whose exterior is the lover and whose interior is the beloved  
Who ever saw the object of the search become the searcher?...

If both worlds throw up a hundred thousand waves  
All is one but come a hundred times...<sup>32</sup>

More than half of ‘Aṭṭār’s most famous work, *Manṭiq al-Ṭair* (“The Language of the Birds”) is taken up with the speeches made by a number of birds about a projected journey in search of a king. Eleven named birds speak; afterwards come two more series of eleven speeches (excuses and questions), given by unidentified speakers. It has escaped attention that these two series represent the original series of eleven birds, twice repeated. This is slightly obscured by the fact that the first bird, the hoopoe, which takes the rôle of leader and replies to what every bird says, is given, at the beginning of both of the two last series, an extra, unnamed interlocutor who has no personality, but whose function is to establish, through asking questions, the hoopoe’s personal motif, that of obedience. This “blank” also serves the structural function of linking the series together, and strengthening the dominant position of the hoopoe. With this in mind we can now see, for the first time, the subtle play of continuities and developments through the three series, shown in the table (see p. 122).

The nightingale of course represents the passionate lover; the duck clearly represents the pious ascetic, obsessed with his *nafs*; the sparrow is Jacob, blinded with grief. Eleven birds, ten plus one: when the thirty birds (*sī murgh*) who survive the journey come for the great confrontation with their king, the bird called the *Sīmurgh*, from whom they are then unable to distinguish themselves, they are compared to Joseph’s ten guilty brothers. The book’s epilogue is dominated by a story about a king who condemns his boy-friend to death: the ten slaves charged with his execution are persuaded to spare him, but tell the king that he is dead. Eventually the king and the boy are re-united.

‘Aṭṭār’s *Muṣṭabat-nāmeḥ* (“Book of Affliction”) is heavily structured. A pilgrim, who personifies Thought, asks forty entities (angels, parts of the universe, prophets, organs of the soul) for their assistance, and, confused by their replies, returns to his spiritual director (*pīr*), who explains the spiritual realities which each of them represents. What has escaped attention is that the pilgrim, running away from the *pīr*’s direction, presumptuously starts at the

<sup>32</sup> *Dīvān*, ed. by Taqī Tafazzulī, Tehran 1967, pp. 817-820.

| Bird                      | First series                                                                    | Second series                                                                                         | Third series                                                                                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hoopoe                    | Speech } Appears as instructor<br>Reply }                                       | Asked why it is leader<br>Obedience is extremely important                                            | Asked what happens if it is obeyed<br>Obedience is good                                                |
| Nightingale               | Speech Loves rose<br>Reply Do not love transient form                           | Is weak<br>Die! Love gives force                                                                      | Asks about <i>paḳbāzī</i> <sup>a</sup><br>Abandon everything                                           |
| Parrot                    | Speech Wants Water of Life<br>Reply Abandon life for the Friend                 | Is full of sin<br>Ask for God's kindness                                                              | Has not shown much obedience, asks about <i>himmat</i> (courage, aspiration)<br>This is very important |
| Peacock                   | Speech Wants heaven<br>Reply That is the house of the <i>naḥs</i> (carnal soul) | Is inconsistent, sometimes pious, sometimes profligate<br>That is normal: you nourish the <i>naḥs</i> | Asks about justice and fidelity at the end of the journey<br>They too are very important               |
| Duck                      | Speech Is obsessed with water and devotions<br>Reply That is for the dirty      | Cannot control its <i>naḥs</i><br>The <i>naḥs</i> is a dog                                            | Will boldness be all right there?<br>If one is worthy                                                  |
| Partridge                 | Speech Loves jewels<br>Reply Colours and stones are worthless                   | Cannot escape from the Devil<br>You have the <i>naḥs</i> with you                                     | Boasts of its love<br>Do not boast of love                                                             |
| <i>Humāy</i> <sup>b</sup> | Speech Is obsessed with its glory as king-maker<br>Reply You are proud          | Love of gold and the world have made me full of pretensions<br>Abandon form and everything            | Has obtained perfection, cannot abandon its treasure<br>While you are proud all is worthless           |
| Falcon                    | Speech Likes the hand of the king<br>Reply This world's kings are no good       | My heart is happy in this palace<br>This world does not suit you                                      | How may I become happy of heart?<br>Happiness of heart is through Him                                  |
| Heron                     | Speech Loves the sea<br>Reply It is unsettled, and itself desires the friend    | Cannot abandon its beloved<br>Form is not beautiful; love the Unseen                                  | For what shall I ask Him?<br>Himself, as better than all the world                                     |
| Owl                       | Speech Loves treasures in ruins<br>Reply Reject the love of gold                | Is afraid of death, without provisions<br>Death must come                                             | What merchandise or gift is to be taken there?<br>The burning of the soul                              |
| Sparrow                   | Speech Searches for its Joseph<br>Reply Start on the path                       | My life has passed in grief<br>All passes away                                                        | Our eyes are black; how far?<br>(The description of the journey follows)                               |

<sup>a</sup> "Playing clean", gambling away all one has—an important term of Sufi lyric poetry, often used with reference to lovers.

<sup>b</sup> A mythical bird.

very top of the scale, beginning with Gabriel, who represents the Spirit (*rūh*), and that from the point of view of external appearance the first twenty entities are arranged in descending, and the last twenty in ascending sequences, the fortieth term being none other than the Spirit. It is then explained that the earlier entities are attributes of the Spirit (arranged in a different structure), it itself being derived from the Light of Muḥammad. Thus the pilgrim has been obliged to descend before ascending to the point of departure. Again we have series (entities, attributes) linked by an element that dominates the whole.

The arrangement of ‘Aṭṭār’s *Mukhtār-nāmeḥ*, his own selection of his quatrains, is also symmetrical. The first twenty-one chapters are clearly religious; then come eight in which the poet proceeds through despondency to hope; then come twenty-one which might appear on the surface to be profane. Six chapters on God’s Unity and the ways in which it is realised are followed by six on the Spirit, how its secret is unspeakable and how people are unworthy, six on the stages of the Šūfī path and six on death and sadness; then two chapters on despair and hope and two on the helplessness of the lover flank six chapters on the beloved in general and six that describe him in detail; then six chapters are devoted to *qalandarī*, the rose, dawn, the moth and the candle (a subject used to express the doctrine of annihilation).

‘Aṭṭār’s *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ* (“The Book of the Divine”) has been completely misunderstood. Orientalists have merely repeated the description given by Ritter<sup>33</sup> to the effect that it represents conversations between a “king” and his six sons, whom he urges to look for higher and spiritual goals instead of the gifts for which they ask him.

In reality what happens in the book is on a far higher level. ‘Aṭṭār himself gives the key to the book in the introduction, in his invocation of the Spirit, which is addressed as the caliph, the vicegerent or deputy (*khalīfeh*) of God. The Spirit has six sons, the *nafs* (carnal soul), the Devil, the intellect, knowledge, poverty, which “wants non-existences (*ma‘dūmāt*)”, and *tauḥīd*, the assertion or realisation of God’s Unity, which wants one Essence (*zāt*).<sup>34</sup>

Proceeding to the body of the work, we find first of all that the teacher is clearly designated not as a “king”, as the orientalists have asserted, but as a caliph.<sup>35</sup> This is of paramount importance for the understanding of the whole work. It must be recalled that this is the period of the revival of the power of the caliphate under Nāṣir (1180-1225), and his admission of the princes of the Islamic world into the *futuwwa*, an organization characterized by initiatory

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Hellmut Ritter, *Das Meer der Seele*, Leiden 1955, p. 5.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Aṭṭār, *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ*, ed. by Hellmut Ritter, Leipzig 1940, pp. 28-9.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

rituals. ‘Aṭṭār is writing after the breakdown of the Seljūq empire in Iran, in a period which saw antagonism between Nāṣir, who used leading Ṣūfīs for diplomatic purposes, and Muḥammad Khwārizmshāh (1200-20), who is represented as hostile to Ṣūfīs. In the *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ* he glorifies Sulṭān Maḥmūd of Ghazna (999-1030), the loyal supporter of the caliphate.

The book can be seen as being divided into three parts, corresponding respectively to the *naḥs*, the intellect and the heart, which is transformed into the Spirit or higher soul. These three divisions correspond to the Plotinian triad of Universal Soul, Universal Reason and the One. Thus the work proceeds through an upward development.

In the first part, the first son asks for the daughter of the king of the fairies. The caliph tells him a story in which a beautiful fairy is shown to be the *naḥs*,<sup>36</sup> which must be rendered quiescent. This theme is linked here with that of the Devil’s becoming a Muslim (i.e. “submitting”), which is the point of the dialogue with the second son, who asks for the gift of magic. Magic is the work of the Devil, but if the devil within one “submits” it becomes lawful. Thus the first part of the book is bound together by the common process of transformation of the two forces which can work evil, the *naḥs* and the devil within one (which are seen in Ṣūfism—and notably in Rūmī—as working together, and indeed as being identical), and by their complementarity.

The second part of the book is bound together in a different way: the third and fourth sons ask for the cup in which one can see the whole world and for the Water of Life. One is the intellect, the other knowledge. Here we have not transformation, but simple equivalence, and the relation of subject to object.

The third part is far more complicated, since here the relation between the two halves is that of the dialectic in which Man negates his own existence in order to affirm God’s Unity. The fifth son asks for the ring of Solomon, for sovereignty, but the essence of sovereignty is contentment, and the essence of contentment is poverty. This poverty, however, is also metaphysical, since Ṣūfism (and notably ‘Aṭṭār in *Manṭiq al-Tair*)<sup>37</sup> links it with annihilation (*fanā*): Man must realise that he is poor through lacking existence in comparison with God. So ‘Aṭṭār speaks here of non-existence,<sup>38</sup> in a prelude to the work’s climax. The sixth son asks for the gift of alchemy; but the caliph says that what is important is the spiritual alchemy which transforms body into heart and heart into Spirit. This is effected by the Light of God, into which the Spirit is absorbed.<sup>39</sup> Here the accent is on the disappearance of duality,

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>37</sup> pp. 219ff.

<sup>38</sup> *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ*, p. 294.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 326.

brought about by annihilation and absorption into God. We see here the practical realisation of God's Unity, the sixth of the elements mentioned in the Introduction.

The structure of the *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ* must not, however, blind us to the wealth of unstructured elements which it contains: the contemplation of human beauty, the description of profane love, the practice of magic, the glorification of insanity and the depiction of madmen as mouthpieces for Šūfī wisdom, and much more.

What is most surprising is that it has not been seen that the *Maṣnavī* ("Rhymed Couplets") of Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273), venerated as the "Persian *Qur'ān*", the greatest monument of Šūfī didactic poetry, happens to have a plan, a plan extremely similar to the structure of the *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ*. If one examines the six Books into which the *Maṣnavī* is divided, it is difficult to see how it could have been said that "each Book forms an artistic whole",<sup>40</sup> when the Third Book ends with an injunction to read the remainder of one story in the Fourth.

The reading of the *Maṣnavī* is made greatly easier if one concentrates upon the explanations usually given by Rūmī himself of the meaning of the various stories in it. In the first story of the First Book, however, where a complete explanation is not given, we have no difficulty in recognising the *nafs* in the person of the handmaiden. In the story of the second Jewish king the text speaks of the idol of the *nafs* (I 771 ff.), and in the story of the Lion and the Beasts we are told that the *nafs* is the inward lion (I 1374 ff.). The principal message of the First Book is that one must die from self (cf. I 3000 ff.). At the end of the story of the vision of Zaid it is declared that the body must be delivered from the *nafs* (I 3702), and 'Alī speaks of the arousal of his *nafs* at the end of the Book (I 3976).

The Second Book continues on the level of the *nafs*, which is represented as an ass (II 729 and 1850 ff.) and violently attacked (II 2134 ff., 2445 and 2602-3), but here, as in the dialogue with the second son in the *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ*, the Devil is brought in. The spell of the Devil goes into men's hearts (II 317). We are given a long story about the Devil and Mu'āwiya (II 2604-2792). The Šūfī Shaikh is above the Devil's power (II 3409). The principal theme of the Second Book is that of deception and evil (cf. II 491 ff. and 3004-5). Later on Rūmī explains that the *nafs* and the Devil are really one (III 3197).

The themes of the Third and Fourth Books, which are joined together by their common content (as well, as has been noted, by one story, and also by

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<sup>40</sup> *The Mathnawī of Jalālu'ddīn Rūmī*, edited...with critical notes, translation and commentary by Reynold A. Nicholson, London 1925-40, vol. 6, pp. xii-xiii.

the story of Moses), are those of Reason, the intellect and knowledge. This is anticipated in the introduction to the Third Book. It would be tedious to enumerate the passages and stories in these two books which concern these themes. Here the Angel replaces the Devil (III 3193 ff.).

The Fifth and Sixth Books, like the dialogues with the fifth and sixth sons in the *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ*, are bound together by the dialectic of the negation of Man's existence and the consequent affirmation of the existence of God. They are also bound together by the story of Sulṭān Maḥmūd and his favourite Ayaz, which gives expression to the doctrine of *fanā* (annihilation—cf. V 4146 and 4205). We are now, as in the last dialogues of the *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ*, on the level of the heart, the Spirit and Light—the last two being major themes of these two books, and themselves closely linked (cf. V 288 ff. and VI 4580 ff.). Here, however, the rôle of the Spirit as God's deputy is replaced to some extent by the theme of the Ṣūfī Shaikh, whose importance as a guide is emphasized, and by Rūmī's intimate friend Ḥusām ad-Dīn, to whom the *Maṣnavī* is dedicated and whose inspiration runs through it. Rūmī, writing after the destruction of the caliphate by the Mongols in 1258, addresses Ḥusām ad-Dīn as God's deputy (caliph, *khalīfeh*) in the present age (V 41). We see here a remarkable illustration of the great change in eastern Islam effectuated during this period: the spectacular rise in importance of the Ṣūfī Shaikh.

In the Sixth Book Rūmī stresses the need to make the transition from negation to affirmation (VI 640 ff.). An existence is concealed in non-existence (VI 3578). The incomplete conclusion of the work is obviously deliberate. We are given a long story about three princes, without being told in detail about what happens to the third prince, and a short story about three sons, without being told about the third son. The third term in each series is meant to represent the highest degree of the quality of laziness, praised as the occupation of the mystics, who let God work for them (VI 4886-7), while the last lines clearly refer to the special relationship between Rūmī and Ḥusām ad-Dīn as the source of the inspiration of the *Maṣnavī*.

It would be wrong, however, to lay stress upon the plan of the *Maṣnavī*. It is unlikely that here, or in the case of Ḍaṭṭār, attempts at structural analyses would add anything once the obvious has been pointed out. As for the fact that the plan of the *Maṣnavī* has been so long ignored, this is understandable once one appreciates the essentially fragmentary character of Persian poetry, the use to which it is put as a series of starting-points for the Ṣūfī's spiritual experience, the preoccupation of Ṣūfīs with technical terms, and the prevalence, since the time of Rūmī, of the doctrine of Ibn ḌArabī, which necessarily obscures, in the rigidity of its system, the developments to be found in previous literature. The power of the *Maṣnavī* lies not in its develop-

ment but in the way in which Rūmī is constantly breaking away from it, as well as from the individual stories and arguments. It is in these breaks or lines of flight that we see the lyricism which, constantly straining away from the poem's didacticism, gives it its tension.

This lyricism, in Rūmī's *Divān*, reaches heights unequalled in the rest of Persian poetry, from which it stands apart in the peculiarity of its style, the wealth of its evocations of personal experience, and its domination by the figure of Shams-i Tabrīz, Rūmī's guide and mystical beloved. Here the fragmentation of the short ode receives a powerful acceleration, as the poet breaks the line up into smaller units with internal rhymes and rapid transitions from the objects which he rejects or with which he identifies himself—showing the nomadic character of Persian poetry:

I saw a tree and a fire A cry came My beloved  
 That fire is calling me Perhaps I am Moses son of 'Imrān?  
 I went into the wilderness in affliction and tasted manna and quails  
 For forty years I have been wandering round this desert like Moses  
 Do not ask about ship or sea Come and look at these wonders  
 For how many years I have been sailing a ship on this dry land  
 Come soul You are Moses and this mould your staff  
 When you pick me up I become a staff when you throw me down I am a  
 serpent  
 You are Jesus and I your bird You made a bird of clay  
 As soon as you breathe into me I am flying into the zenith  
 I am the pillar of that mosque against which the Prophet leant  
 When he leans against another I am moaning in the pain of separation  
 Lord of lords formless maker of forms  
 What form are you drawing on me? You know I do not  
 Now I am a stone now iron For a time I am entirely fire  
 Now I am a balance without stone Now I am both stone and balance  
 For a time I graze here For a time they graze on me  
 Now I am wolf now I am sheep now indeed I am the figure of the shep-  
 herd  
 The material came as a token How should a token remain for ever?  
 Neither this remains nor that remains Let him that is mine know I am  
 that<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Rūmī, *Kulliyāt-i Shams*, ed. by Badr' uz-Zamān Furūzānfar, vol. 3, Tehran 1959, p. 192. Cf. *Qur'ān* XX and V 110.

It is not possible to analyse here the variety of themes in Rūmī's enormous *Divān*, which in any case cuts itself off from the line of historical development, except in its glorification of the Sufi master. By making the name of Shams-i Tabrīz the *takhalluṣ*, the proper name which comes as a focus of intensities at the end of a poem, Rūmī expressed a cardinal feature (extremely marked from this time onwards) of Ṣūfī practice, which now dominates the "drunken" school of Ṣūfism—characterized by the mystics' dance of which he often speaks—, namely, the submission to the Shaikh which normally concludes and resettles the free divagations of the spirit, although in his case it appears as accentuating them.

The glorification of the Ṣūfī Shaikh, which runs through the narrative poetry devoted by Rūmī's son Sulṭān Valad (d. 1312) to his predecessors, is the most pronounced common feature of the poetry produced in India at this time by Fakhr ad-Dīn 'Irāqī (d. 1289) and Jamāl ad-Dīn Hānsavī (d. 1260-1). Otherwise, they are usually extremely dissimilar. Jamāl speaks as a preacher, calling for repentance and attacking lust and profane love. He rejoices when Ramazān brings the disappearance of wine and musical instruments. His pious exhortations to asceticism and poverty are in complete contrast to 'Irāqī's poetry, in which we find the themes of *qalandarī* and *naẓar ilā 'l-murd*, the Ṣūfī practice of contemplating beardless boys as an aid to ecstasy and the vision of God's beauty:

In the beauty of the cheeks of the fair apparent all Him I saw  
In the eyes of the pretty faces comely all Him I saw<sup>42</sup>

If we now leave India and the panegyrics addressed to Ṣūfī leaders which continue in the works of Amīr Khusrau (d. 1325) and Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī (d. 1336), we find, in the works of 'Irāqī's Anatolian period, the first appearance in Persian poetry of Ibn 'Arabī's doctrine of the "unity of existence", which, Henry Corbin<sup>43</sup> has suggested, could be designated as "theomonism". This constitutes a revolution fraught with the most serious consequences for the subsequent history of Ṣūfī poetry. It comes in poems consisting of several stanzas with a refrain, speaking of the mystery of God's making Himself manifest in the world:

The sun of your cheek appeared  
In a moment the world became manifest  
It borrowed a look from your beauty  
Saw the fairness of your face and fell in love

<sup>42</sup> 'Irāqī, *Kulliyāt*, ed. by Sa'īd Nafīsī, Tehran 1956, p. 183.

<sup>43</sup> Introduction to Ḥaidar Āmulī, *Naṣṣ al-Nuṣṣ*, ed. by Henry Corbin and Osman Yahia, vol. 1, Tehran 1976, p. 8.

It took as a loan some sugar from your lips  
When it tasted that it began to speak

A drop of dew fell on the ground in the morning  
It saw the face of the sun and was astonished

A little vapour left the sea for the air  
When it joined together it became the sea again

His jealousy allowed no other in the world  
Of necessity He became the identity (‘*ain*) of all things

The relation of power and action to us  
Was from that cause that He became us

We are His world-reflecting cup  
For through us all that was appeared

Until now I did not realise  
Today it has become clear to me

(Refrain)

That all is He all that is in certainty  
Soul beloved heart-ravisher heart and religion<sup>44</sup>

The penetration of Ibn ‘Arabī’s ideas continues in the *Gulshan-i Rāz* (“Rose-bed of Mystery”) of Maḥmūd Shabistarī (d. 1320), who gives explicit expression to Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrine of the Perfect Man (*insān-i kāmīl*), which grants the personality of the mystic immense power and significance. Shabistarī is a philosopher, not a poet: his explanations of various terms found in Šūfī lyric poetry, as having certain symbolic meanings, are obviously not to be given much authority (one has only to compare them with the explanations given in other glossaries from the same period onward to see how arbitrary such exercises are).

With regard to most of the Šūfī poetry produced at this time, it must be said that it seems to be extremely lacking in originality. The real advances are being made elsewhere, in the Arabic prose literature which develops Ibn ‘Arabī’s ideas. Didactic works such as the *Kanz al-Rumūz* of Amīr Ḥusainī (d. 1318?) or the *Rauzat al-Anwār* of Khwājū Kirmānī (d. 1352 or 1361) do not appear to add anything at all to our knowledge of Šūfī doctrine or psychology, whereas by contrast slightly earlier works, such as ‘Irāqī’s *‘Ushshāq-nāmeḥ* and the anonymous *Kanz al-Asrār* and *Miftāḥ al-Futūḥ* attributed to ‘Aṭṭār, are of the

<sup>44</sup> ‘Irāqī, op. cit., p. 75.

greatest value for the study of libertine tendencies, love-mysticism and Šūfī practice.

The works of Auḥādī (d. 1338), however, and notably his *Jām-i Jam*, are, like other fourteenth-century productions, of some historical value. One may note a certain dichotomy, normal and to be expected, between his didactic poetry and his lyrics: like other *maṣnavī* writers, he shows hostility to the *qalandars* in his didactic verse,<sup>45</sup> while in his *Dirvān* he goes beyond what could be dismissed as symbolic or ornamental in giving them a spirited defence:

Look at their outward form from the viewpoint of inner meaning  
For such horsemen are the backbone of the army of inner meaning

Do not look in error at their black sackcloth  
For in the midst of blackness their work is white...

If in this land they are thrown out of the city  
To whichever land they go they are princes...<sup>46</sup>

The most remarkable poetry of this period, however, is to be found in three works attributed to ‘Aṭṭār, and apparently composed by one author: the *Jauhar al-Zāt*, *Ushtur-nāmeḥ* and *Hailāj-nāmeḥ*, of which the first is found in a manuscript dated 1335. We find here a moderate pro-Shī‘ite position, and a Persian that usually seems later than that of ‘Aṭṭār; but one cannot for the moment exclude the possibility that some of this poetry might have been preserved in oral or written form from an earlier date. At present these works cannot be studied properly without further investigation of the earliest manuscripts. They give pride of place to Ḥallāj (d. 922), the great martyr of Šūfism, and to his notorious utterance “I am God (*Anā ‘l-Ḥaqq*)”, which the reader is urged to repeat.<sup>47</sup> It would seem that they are not unconnected with ‘Aṭṭār’s declaration at the end of the *Ilāhī-nāmeḥ*<sup>48</sup> that there are further secrets which can be revealed only on the gallows. One can only regret that literary judgments on these poems, accusing them of weakness and tedious repetitions, should have for so long discouraged the study of the wildest and most “drunken” examples of Šūfī didactic poetry.

With regard to the poetry of Ḥāfiẓ (d. 1389 or 1390), and the views expressed about the extent of its Šūfī content, it may be observed that in the Šūfī poets whom Ḥāfiẓ imitates there is already, as we have seen, a long tradition

<sup>45</sup> Auḥādī, *Jām-i Jam*, ed. by Vahīd Dastgirdī, Tehran 1928, p. 140.

<sup>46</sup> Id., *Dirvān*, ed. by Ḥamīd Sa‘ādat, Tehran 1961, p. 86.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Louis Massignon, *La Passion de Husayn Ibn Mansūr Hallāj*, 2nd edition, Paris 1975, vol. 2, pp. 380-406.

<sup>48</sup> p. 365.

of the mixture of the sacred and the profane; that the symbolic interpretation of the language of lyric poetry was already current in his day; that his short odes often incorporate the praise of patrons along with Šūfī elements; that he appears to have been an *Uwaisī*, a mystic who obtains his inspiration directly, without the intermediary of a Šūfī master; and that his *Dirvān* seems to contain a distinct trace of the influence of the philosopher Yaḥyā Suhrawardī (d. 1191), the founder of the *ishraqī* school.<sup>49</sup> He stands apart from the main influences which from his day onward overshadow Persian poetry: Shīʿism and the school of Ibn ʿArabī.

The *Dirvān* of Maghribī (d. 1406-7) is entirely devoted to the popularisation of Ibn ʿArabī's system. In this respect he appears to be merely an unoriginal imitator of ʿIrāqī. In the *Dirvān* of Qāsim-i Anvār (d. 1433-4), which contains a very clear exposition of Ibn ʿArabī's ideas in a very monistic outlook, but also shows a concern with the resulting dilemmas, Edward G. Browne<sup>50</sup> found a trace of the teachings of the subversive Hurūfī sect, the literature of which unfortunately lies outside the scope of this survey. It is to be noted that Qāsim-i Anvār, like ʿAṭṭār before him, rejects *ittiḥād*, the identification of the mystic with God in unitive fusion, as being incompatible with the position of the *muwaḥḥid*, the assertor or realiser of God's Unity:

I am not You nor are You I Whatever is You are entirely and that's enough

For the inclination of the spirit of the *muwaḥḥid* is not to *ittiḥād*<sup>51</sup>

If we turn to the poet Dāʿī (d. 1466), a pupil of the severe Shāh Niʿmatullāh (d. 1431), the founder of the orthodox Niʿmatullāhī Order, we encounter a certain conservatism. His *ʿIshq-nāmeḥ* ("Book of Love") contains stories about examples of profane love as an initiation to the love of God, but shows violent hostility to the *qalandars*, in contrast to whom the power of the Šūfī Shaikh is extolled.<sup>52</sup> A similar conservatism is to be found in Jāmī (d. 1492), who writes as a member of the stern Naqshbandī Order and advocates its practice of the silent *zikr* (repetition of a formula).<sup>53</sup> In his *Silsilat al-Zahab* we find, as in his prose work, his preoccupation with the classification of the admirers of human and divine beauty,<sup>54</sup> while his *Salāmān o Absāl* shows that he, like other Šūfī writers of the period, is attracted to philosophy and the

<sup>49</sup> Ḥafīz, *Dirvān*, ed. by Muḥammad Qazvīnī and Qāsim Ghanī, Tehran n.d., pp. 96-7.

<sup>50</sup> *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. 3, reprinted Cambridge 1956, pp. 478-9.

<sup>51</sup> *Kullīyāt*, ed. by Saʿīd Nafīsī, Tehran 1958, p. 126.

<sup>52</sup> *Kullīyāt*, ed. by Muḥammad Dabīrsiyāqī, vol. 1, Tehran 1960, pp. 281-4.

<sup>53</sup> *Haft Aurang*, ed. by Mudarris Gīlānī, Tehran 1958, pp. 18 ff.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 204 ff.

patronage of kings. Unfortunately, Jāmī's slavish imitation of his predecessors prevents the reader from profiting from his immense knowledge of the history and theory of Šūfism. He remains the ultimate example of the erudite virtuosity of the fifteenth century.

It must not be thought, however, that this period is poor in developments. On the contrary, it is extremely exciting and tense, but what is happening is taking place in the field of Shī'ism and conflict with the established authorities. With regard to the relations between Šūfism and Shī'ism, one may note the use made by Ḥusain Khwārizmī (d. 1436-7) of the name Ḥusain, as being that of Ḥallāj, the martyr of Šūfism, and that of the martyred Third Imām of the Shī'ites, and the fact that he himself died a martyr.

In the *Mazhar al-ʿAjāʾib* and *Lisān al-Ghaib*, works found in late fifteenth-century manuscripts and attributed to ʿAṭṭār, we find the savage and terroristic outpourings of a violently Shī'ite author. It has been said, and not without good cause, that these works have no literary value; but their use of extended anaphora certainly gives them considerable forcefulness as collections of harangues. In them we find that the privileged position given in the poetry discussed earlier in this article to the Spirit and the Šūfī Shaikh has been taken over by ʿAlī, the First Imām of the Shī'ites, allegiance to whom, it is incessantly repeated, is indispensable for the Šūfī. The reader may find these works trivial compared to those mentioned above, but the union of Šūfism and Shī'ism found in them makes them extremely important when one bears in mind that it is in Shī'ism that the population of Iran will from now onward find the most acute, tragic and intense expression of its mystical tendencies.

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**PERSIAN LITERATURE (BELLES-LETTRES) FROM THE TIME OF  
JĀMĪ TO THE PRESENT DAY**

**BY**

**SHAFI'Ī KADKĀNĪ**



CHAPTER ONE  
TIMURID PERIOD  
(Period of riddle, artifice and repetition)

*Notes*

It has been said that the golden age of Persian poetry ended with the death of Ḥāfiz. This statement is at once true and untrue. If our standards of taste are not confined within prescribed limits and if we prepare ourselves to derive pleasure from the fresh style which gained currency in Persian poetry after the death of Ḥāfiz, we can certainly say that there always have been, and are, great poets in the realm of Persian poetry. It is never too late to derive pleasure from the poetry of Šā'ib—if we are prepared to do so. Besides Šā'ib, there are other poets too whose poetry may, by the same standard, be placed on the level even of the brightest jewels of Persian literature.

In other words, if we pass over some of the exceptional figures of Persian literature who appeared in the first seven centuries of the Islamic era, that is to say Firdausī, Khayyām, Sanā'ī, 'Aṭṭār, Maulavī, Nizāmī, Khāqānī, Sa'dī, Ḥāfiz, the foremost poets of the Safavid era or of the contemporary period are not inferior to the other poets—for example Šā'ib is considerably greater than Khvājū, Salmān Šavejī and Jāmī; and in our own period, Bahār and Nīmā Yūshīj are in no way inferior to them either.

After the time of Ḥāfiz Persian poetry passed through various stages, as did Persian prose; in this survey we shall criticize and review poetry and prose separately; owing to the fact that Persian prose has not been particularly brilliant other than during the present period, we shall start with poetry which is the showpiece of all the artistic endeavour of the Iranian peoples.

Those who have termed Jāmī the last in the line of poets of the Persian language have been greatly mistaken. It would perhaps be correct to use this term for Ḥāfiz, since after him no poet appeared capable of being placed on his level or on that of his equals—Firdausī, Maulavī and Khayyām; but we have certainly had many poets greater than Jāmī. No matter what criterion of literary judgment we employ, Šā'ib will emerge considerably greater than Jāmī; and in our own time, Bahār and possibly some other contemporary poets too will be placed no lower than Jāmī.

It is not known who was originally responsible for this notion—whoever it was, he was ignorant or ill-informed as far as direct contact with the course of history of Persian poetry was concerned and for the most part the basis of his

information rested on the statements of *tagkireh*-writers, some of whom castigated the poetry of the Safavid period. We shall show in the ensuing chapters that the change in critical taste in the Qājār period, in the realm of contemporary Iran alone, led to a blind eye being turned to Safavid poetry. Thus Jāmī is presented as the last great Persian poet. Possibly another cause of this is the sheer bulk of Jāmī's works, for Jāmī, as we shall see, was a most prolific writer whose creative activity covered many fields comprising different varieties of poetry and prose—but in the purview of the critic of poetry who is not concerned with his learned writing, Jāmī is only subjected to criticism in respect of his poetic works; and by this standard, especially if we accept the according of weight to originality, Jāmī loses ground.

When we review the chain of patterns in Persian poetry along the centuries and periods, the fifteenth century is the one barren of climaxes. It has a multiplicity of ordinary poets but no scintillating figure strikes the eye amongst them; and since the mere bulk of Jāmī's *oeuvre*—in poetry and other fields alike—is so tremendously eye-catching, the consequence is that we take him to be the apex of this century; but the history of literary development knows no numbers and reckonings and years—there may be no climaxes during several centuries and yet several apexes in the space of but a century.

Social, economic and political factors in the history of Iran and Central Asia are so complicated and obscure that in my view there is absolutely no question of a cogent reason for the causes of the rise and fall of Persian literature in the fifteenth century being clearly found there. Generally, we know that the emergence and growth of genius is to a large extent the product of historical events—but the why and wherefore of this phenomenon is an extremely complicated matter—and I hardly think that the course of literature undergoes changes answering to those explanations which would connect it with courtly patronage or economic prosperity (or the reverse).

The elements of literary creativity are extremely complicated; the part played in them by factors like economic prosperity and courtly patronage is by no means clear; and even if they have a contribution to make, the connection is obscure to us. One can only analyse a literary development insofar as it is connected with changes in life—and since our knowledge of the changes in the social life of this period is scanty, the drawing of conclusions about the connection between literature on the one hand and life and all its changes on the other, is by no means an easy task.

What is certain is that with the death of Tīmūr (1405) the dominions of his great empire began to split up. The centres which held political power after the death of Tīmūr and under whose protection Persian literature had to grow and flourish, multiplied, and, after a while, besides India and Turkey, the

largest foreign spheres of Persian literature, several centres appeared in Central Asia and Iran—Tabriz, Fārs and ‘Irāq, Herāt.

Of the sons of Tīmūr, Shāhrukh took over the reins of principal power in the centre of Herāt (1405-47) and in fact Tīmūr’s power to a large extent continued and consolidated itself in his person; he ruled for nearly half a century. As we know, this king was gifted with both appreciation and taste in art and literature.

Other Timurid princes too were comparable with, or even superior to him. Of these some were poetically inclined and some displayed brilliant talent in calligraphy and painting. Whilst courts before the Timurid period were interested only in poets (and occasionally in the sciences) this political centre of Khurāsān became the theatre of a whole display of Islamic arts, in which gathered painters, calligraphers, book-engravers, poets and literati—and as we know, the Herāt school is reckoned one of the foremost in the art of Islam.

One may suppose that the very diffusion of talent over the field of a variety of arts was one of the causes of the lack of development in the poetic art. It goes without saying that Persian poetry is a picture-gallery of all the arts of Iran; and in this period a varied selection of arts found individual niches for themselves and became disjoined from poetry to a greater or less extent. To a very great degree there was in this period—by comparison with the great bulk of poetry in the preceding period, and the consequent decline of other arts, a demand for the other arts transcending that for poetry—for the simple reason that good poetry was easily available in great quantities to the reader, whereas painting, miniatures and music were scantily so—for this reason there was a brisk trade in this kind of art. However we are on dangerous ground if we are going to consider the birth and development of one branch of art detrimental to the development of another.

### *Period of Jāmī*

In the period of Shāhrukh (1405-47) Persian poetry did not produce a distinguished figure even to approach ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān Jāmī—some contemporary critics have termed this half-century the beginning of decline in Persian literary history. The foremost poets of this half-century are: Shaikh Āzarī Ṭūsī (d. 1461), Khiyālī Bukhārā’ī (d. 1446), Ibn Ḥusām (d. 1470), Amīr Shāhī Sabzavārī (d. 1453), ‘Iṣmat Bukhārā’ī (d. 1425), Kātibī Turshīzī (d. 1435), Shāh Ni‘mat Allāh Valī (d. 1431), Yaḥyā Sībak Nīshāpūrī (d. 1448), and Luṭf Allāh Nīshāpūrī (d. 1409).

Their poetry has today, by the standards of our age, no particular artistic value—however, by the standards of their own period these poets would not

accept the majority of the Classical masters even as their apprentices! The poetical models of this half-century are Ḥāfiz, Amīr Khusrou Dihlavī, Ḥasan Dihlavī and Salmān Sāvejī and, in mysticism, Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī.

Persian poetry is on the road to decline in this half-century, whether from the standpoint of emotional background, or of imagery, or even of poetic language and considerations to do with its form and outward aspect. The meanings which poets contrive to 'discover' are mere glosses on those of the Classical writers—in fact one might almost be tempted to suppose that there was current in the literary criticism of that period a maxim running something like this: 'the gamut of poetic creativity ought to be a gloss upon the works of the Classical writers so that we can represent ourselves as having burst, in the same fields as the Classical writers, upon whole worlds of whose existence they were unaware'.

Literary criticism in Iran has no explicit written tradition—nevertheless, there are indications to suggest that in practice an oral tradition of criticism existed among poets and literati, and that in this the form of the literary work was basic—though we must bear in mind that their approach to form was bounded within a kind of treasure-hunt for pointers down the margins of Classical works. They conceived of the meanings in Classical poetry as so many inscribed tablets, pre-existent, eternal, and immutable, and they supposed that any kind of activity whatsoever must be carried on in the shadow of these archetypes. 'The more we can discover new nooks and crannies,' their idea ran, 'among these ossified meanings, the stronger will our own poetic craft become.'

This characteristic was particularly prevalent in the period of Shāhrukh and in the second half of the fifteenth century, and it was through its influence that scales of values and literary criticism revolved around outlandish artifice and technical *legerdemain*, for example poetry in several metres, or various kinds of riddles and chronograms (which bear more resemblance to conjuring than to poetry). One can come upon this kind of feature in the pages of the extant *tazkireh*, but perhaps the most vivid document for the history of Persian literature and for the state of culture and thought in Iran and Central Asia towards the end of this period is a book which has recently been published in the Soviet Union and in Iran, from whose pages one can catch the spirit of the people of the age, their tastes, their critical standards and artistic appreciation; a case in point is a story related by Vāṣifī about the king at his court asking the literary figures who were present, 'What is the total number of Jāmī's verses?' They replied, 'Between 90,000 and 100,000.' The king then explained, 'I mean the verses which express his personality and distinguish him from other poets.' The man whom the king was addressing fell silent; the king ask-

ed the same question of Vāṣifī (the author of the *Badāyiʿ al-Vaqāyiʿ*). Vāṣifī said, 'I must go and peruse his *Dirvān* for several days.'

After some days' study he selected a few artificial verses of his (which appear on pp. 339-349 of the Tehran edition, Iranian Cultural Foundation); these contain nothing whatever in the way of true poetry: only stilted and vacuous artifice. Next day the king says, 'Maulānā Qatīlī (another court poet of his entourage) is to make a selection.' After ten days, Qatīlī selects ten poems, identical with Vāṣifī's choice; the author remarks that this was an unparalleled event (p. 350, Vol. 1, Tehran Edition). To give ourselves a further criterion, we could do worse than examine another story in the same book, as follows:—at the court of Sultan Yaʿqūb (*Aq Qoyūnlū*) (1478-1490) the *Shāhnāme* was the subject of discussion; Qāzī ʿIsā (chief minister of Ulūgh Beg) said: 'no matter how much research I have done, I have found no more than sixty *baits* which someone else would have been incapable of producing' (Vol. I, p. 350). These two anecdotes demonstrate the taste of people of this period, and show that their entire interest was centred upon technique and legerdemain. The author says explicitly more than once that the basis of the art of poetry is 'wealth of technique and legerdemain' (Vol. 1, p. 373.)

This then is a true picture of the tastes of the period; on the basis of such a situation, if we wished to make a viable judgment, we should indeed call Jāmī 'greatest poet' and 'last crowning glory of the poets of Iran'—but, as we shall see, Persian literature does not remain in this state, and other developments manifest themselves in it.

Nūr ad-Dīn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān Jāmī (1414-92) was born in Kharjird, one of the villages of Jām in Khurasan, and died in Herāt. In Herāt he enjoyed to the highest degree the position of an authority in the fields of literature, dogma and mysticism and was the object of fulsome veneration on the part of philosophers and statesmen. There is no doubt that Jāmī from the point of view of erudition and the number of his learned and literary works was unequalled in his time. The volume of his works in the fields of Ṣūfī poetry and of other subjects of the day is considerable. Jāmī followed Muḥiyy ad-Dīn ibn ʿArabī in Ṣūfism and wrote commentaries on some of his works. The thought of Ibn ʿArabī had entered Iranian Ṣūfism and Persian poetry before Jāmī, but he was in his time one of the most important figures to labour at the propagation of Ibn ʿArabī's ideas.

We must first enumerate the poetic works of Jāmī, which consist of: *Dirvān* of *ghazals* and *qaṣīdehs*, several *maṣnavī* of a mystical and legendary character. The *qaṣīdehs* and *ghazals* of Jāmī are composed after the style of the Classical poets; generally speaking no new meanings are to be found in them: nevertheless, his poetry gains a certain sophistication from the mere ex-

pression of the meanings of his Classical forbears; it is, however, less endowed with poetic atmosphere and sincerity than that of some of his contemporaries.

The mystical meanings in his *ghazals* are the same as can be found in the poetry of the Classical writers (Maulavī, Ḥāfiẓ, Sanā'ī, 'Aṭṭār). But even in his mode of presentation of the material he has made no effort to innovate or to perfect. If we are being a little harsh, we may perhaps put it in this way—instead of the *Divān* of Jāmī one can read the *Divāns* of the poets before him—and lose nothing in the process. By way of illustration, it is as well to recollect, for example, that he copied and repeated the first *ghazal* of the *Divān* of Ḥāfiẓ six times—it appears in the shape of six *ghazals* in his *Divān*, in all of which one cannot find a single *bait* containing any sign of the writer's own spirit or individual mode of thought. What is reflected in his poetry is the spirit of the age, with all the weakness inherent in the taste of its poets.

There is no doubt that his *maṣnavīs*, comprising seven poems known as the *Haft Aurang*, are considered better than his *Divān* of *qaṣīdehs* and *ghazals*. 1) The first of these seven poems is *Silsilat-aẓ-Zahab*, composed in the metre of the *Ḥadiqeh* of Sanā'ī. It contains three sections (*daftar*); the subjects discussed include mysticism, asceticism and morals; at times Islamic dogmatics enter the discussion, and fatalism, resignation and kindred subjects are touched upon. 2) The second *maṣnavī* of the *Haft Aurang* is *Salmān o Absāl*, based on a Greek source, to which reference is made in the books of Islamic philosophers such as Ibn Sīnā, Khvājah Naṣir ad-Dīn Ṭūsī and others. The translation by Fitzgerald is well known; it can be said that the work is one of Jāmī's best. 3) *Tuḥfat al-Aḥrār*, whose style is modelled on the *Makhzan al-Asrār* of Niẓāmī and the *Maṭla' al-Anvār* of Amīr Khusrou Dihlavī; it contains moral and mystical stories and discourses. 4) *Subḥat al-Abrār*, about the principles of the Ṣūfī Path. 5) *Yūsuf o Zulaikhā*, one of the most famous works of Jāmī; it may be said that amongst those who have versified this story, Jāmī is superior. 6) *Lailī o Majnūn* in the same metre as the *Lailī o Majnūn* of Niẓāmī, which in no way attains to the merit of its model. 7) *Khiradnāmeḥ-i Iskandar* consists of the history of Alexander the Great and stories about him.

All in all his *maṣnavīs* are better than his *Divān* of *ghazals* and *qaṣīdehs*; of the *maṣnavīs* the best are *Salmān o Absāl* and *Yūsuf o Zulaikhā*.

Numerous poets lived in the time of Jāmī; it is difficult to mention each and every one of them, even were there any object in so doing. Amīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī, who is counted as the founder of Uzbekī literature as he wrote works in the Uzbekī language, was a devotee of Jāmī. One *divān* of his is in Persian, and one in Turkī.

Generally, the characteristic of most poets in this period (the same may be said of the works of Jāmī as of the poetry of his contemporaries) can be summed up as repetition of meanings of the poetry of thirteenth and fourteenth century writers, and glossing the imagery (now no more than *cliché*) of previous centuries. Virtuosity is greatest in the writing of *ghazals*, which are erotic and in all of which one may detect a dash of insipid, lacklustre mysticism.

The condition of the lovers and sweethearts of these *ghazals* is so much a matter of illness that, if one makes a scientific study of the poetry of this period, it is found to be quite innocent of 'love' properly spoken. The 'lovers' are afflicted with the illness of masochism and the sweethearts (male or female) are one and all dedicated to torturing their lovers and are bad cases of a sort of sadism.

The language shows traces now and then of street language, but not to any considerable extent, and it shows no deviation or departure from the established norm or from the clichified norm of Persian syntax.

The parts of the sentence are generally to be found in their familiar, accepted position; the images are *clichés*, and the vocabulary of the poets is extremely limited—in fact it may be said that the active vocabulary is limited in their *Divāns* to a number of particular words by combining which they generally produce ever-new patterns. The type of emotion in the *ghazal* is very artificial and signs of deviation in the direction of the male sex are considerably more numerous than in preceding periods.

For word-pictures and style of imagery, and as examples of descriptive poetry, the *qaṣīdehs* which Vāṣifī of Herat composed about 'tulip', 'narcissus', 'violet', 'bud' and 'rose' will repay study. In these *qaṣīdehs* the poet whilst placing the names of these flowers in the refrain (*radīf*) of the poem, has collected from Classical poetry all the common images associated with them and versified them anew. The original kernel of all these images exists in the work of Classical poets; unfortunately, Vāṣifī has failed to make viable use of them in terms of his own emotions—consequently, all these images pass one after another before the reader's eye looking quite done to death—and if, as happens rarely enough, there is some meaning or thought underlying them, it is a thought already experienced by the Classical writers, who introduced that particular image as appropriate to the thought.

For example in the same *qaṣīdeh* of Vāṣifī (quoted in the *Badāyi' al-Vaqāyi'*, Vol. 1, p. 167) the verse

In this garden, since it has found no loyalty, the tulip no more sets its cup upon the ground

depicts the tulip plant whose bloom is like a cup of red wine—the poet says: since the tulip has realised the disloyalty of Fate, it does not put the cup of wine on the ground but constantly passes its life in wine-drinking and drunkenness (forgetfulness of sorrow). This picture, with the same sense underlying it, is to be found also in the fine verse of Ḥāfiz:

Perhaps the tulip has discerned the faithlessness of Time and so it has not dropped from its hand the cup of wine from the time of its sprouting to its departure

One can appreciate the difference in artistic talent and ability to express ideas by comparing these two verses. Indeed one may characterize the poetry of this period as a versified gloss upon the poetic images and meanings of the Classical writers.

### *Literary Criticism and Contemporary Taste*

The poets under discussion, that is to say those who may serve as models of their kind in this period, consist of: Kātibī Nīshāpūrī, Amīr Khusrō Dihlavī, 'Abd al-Vāsi' Jabālī, Kamāl Ismā'īl, Salmān Sāveji and 'Abd ar-Rahmān Jāmī himself. The author of the *Badāyi' al-Vaqāyi'* relates a story from the tenor of which one may conclude that Kātibī was reckoned the great poet and model *par excellence*—in the course of the same story he says that 'Ubaid Allāh Khān, ruler of Bukhārā and parts of Transoxiana, once secured a manuscript of Kātibī for which he had been searching for years. He preferred it to the conquest of Nīshāpūr, and even said outright, 'It is more important to me than the conquest of Nīshāpūr.' Because of his enormous attachment to Kātibī he ordered all the poets to write 'replies' (*javāb*) to match some of his *qaṣīdehs*—that is to say to copy them. Again elsewhere he praised Kātibī's riddles and encouraged poets to compose riddles of a similar nature.

We have no written example of the literary criticism of the period, but some of the oral criticism expressed during gatherings where poetry was recited, is recorded in the *Badāyi' al-Vaqāyi'*, by way of criticism levelled by Vāṣifī at the poetry of some of his contemporaries; this is lexical by nature, and even when it deals with points referring to meanings (imagery), it remains restricted to isolated components only.

In this period riddles are a real part of the poetic craft and Vāṣifī who is the best interpreter of the taste of the time, never fails to mention his skill in riddles and his mastery of this craft with no little pride, telling how he solved riddles without an explanation being given; and how he was sometimes tested in the hardest possible way, inevitably emerging successful from the ordeal.

In actual fact riddles were considered in this period the highest form of poetic art. On the 18th *Zu 'l-Hijjah* 919 (1514) when 'Ubaid Allāh Khān (Governor of Transoxiana) came from Qarshī to Bukhārā he said in an address to poets: 'Riddles are a category of poetry extremely finely balanced in the scales of Nature<sup>2</sup>—and 'well-adjusted natures' delight unconsciously in them' (Badāyi' al-Vaqāyi' I, p. 235). Now by 'well-adjusted natures' is implied, in this period, none other than those individuals who sat about with nothing to do night and day but to discuss and solve riddles for their own entertainment. In fact they were not content with their own riddles, but extracted riddles from the poetry of Ḥāfiẓ (whose shade was perfectly innocent of these interpretations of his words!); one of Vāsiṭī's contemporaries extracted riddles from most of the verses of Ḥāfiẓ (I, p. 492).

It seems that the security of some years' standing after the invasions of the Mongols and of Tīmūr led to people enjoying a kind of relaxation and comparative ease; they consequently spent their pleasant leisure hours solving riddles. It goes without saying that riddles fulfilled to some extent the function of crosswords in our own day.

### *Persian prose in the period of Jāmī*

Just as the Timurid period shows no masterpiece in the field of its poetry, it is weak and defective in prose also. There are not many prose writings which have a true literary character or about which one can talk in terms of literary merit. There are a few books in the fields of the sciences of the time, history and religion, in which one looks in vain for any literary creativity other than a certain amount of artifice and plays on words. The notable historians of the time were: Niẓām ad-Dīn Shāmī (beginning of 15th century), Ḥāfiẓ Abrū (d. 1430), Sharaf ad-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī (d. 1454), Kamāl ad-Dīn 'Abd ar-Razzāq Samarqandī (d. 1482), and Khvāndamīr (d. 1534/5); writers in the field of science and philosophy: Šāyin ad-Dīn 'Alī Turkeḥ (d. 1432/3) and Maulānā Jalāl ad-Dīn Davānī (d. 1502/3); one should add that the best prose of this period is that of 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Jāmī, whether in the *Nafaḥāt al-Uns* or in the *Bahāristān* (copied from the *Gulistān* of Sa'dī).

All in all the general characteristic of the prose of this period is lack of innovation in language, just as in the sphere of form also not the slightest sign of anything new is discernible. Bahār in *Sabkshināsī* (III, p. 208) writes about the prose of this period, 'The authors of this period write sometimes in the introductions to their books and in the openings of their chapters 'preludes' (*tashbīb*) after the Classical style which from the point of view of rhyming prose (*saj'*) may bear something of a resemblance to that style, but are of low

quality where firmness, fluency and the other points of professional skill are concerned. One encounters much less Arabic vocabulary than in Classical works and Arabic poetry, poetic illustrations, proverbial allusions and proverbs are rarely seen. The text of the books is simple and at times characterized by feebleness and bathos. The only innovations one sees in this period are the soubriquets, titles and flummery with which the later writers of the Timurid period dignified their patron at the beginning of their books and the openings of their chapters—sometimes one has to wade through two or three pages and pick one's way through ups and downs of eulogy, balanced and paired sentences, rhyming prose, and vacuous, baseless titles in order to pick out (with some difficulty) the name of some personage to whom the writer is referring and to whom the book is dedicated.'

In the sphere of vocabulary, the prose of this period has taken over a new collection of Mongol and Turkish words—in fact we may say that the Mongol words which had from the preceding century begun to become diffused over Persian literature are even more current in this period or have come to supersede others to a greater extent.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE SAFAVID PERIOD (Indian Style)

The rise of the Safavid dynasty in Iran (1501-1732) must be considered one of the most important developments in Persian history—a history of several millennia. It is perhaps possible to count the Safavid régime the greatest Persian régime since Islam. If one excepts the Samanids, who brought into existence in Bukhārā and Transoxiana the first Persian dynasty after the Arab Conquest, it has to be said that the Safavid régime represents the first movement to come about in the direction of creating an independent country called ‘Iran’ under the authority of men of Iranian race and with aims directed towards total independence (even independence in the sphere of religion).

After the death of Tīmūr, several dynasties or centres of government came into existence in Greater Iran; some of the descendants of Tīmūr ruled in Transoxiana, Khurāsān and Fārs; and in Āzarbāijān and some other regions, the dynasties of the Aq Qoyūnlū and Qārā Qoyūnlū Turkomans. Shāh Ismā‘īl the Safavid (1501-1524) contrived by his sagacity, courage and peculiar capacity for deliberation to force all these domestic and foreign powers (such as the Ottoman régime) to withdraw, and to lay the foundations of a widespread national government.

Throughout the period of Safavid rule, social and intellectual changes took place in Iran which had striking effects upon the fields of religion, science and literature. The Safavids converted the Shī‘eh faith—which had been current in Iran since ancient times and was considered the faith of the majority in certain areas—into an official religion. Naturally enough, together with the according of official status to the Shī‘eh faith, many cultural and intellectual factors too underwent change, not least poetry and literature, the subjects of discussion below.

Since the Safavids came from Persian Āzarbāijān, and Āzarbāijān had adopted the Turkī language in the years of their emergence (the language before Turkī having been an ancient Iranian language called Āzarī), they spoke both Turkī and Persian, but since their soldiers were drawn from Turkī speakers (and perhaps for other reasons as well) Turkī became the Court language of the Safavids: however all literary works of this period, whether poetry or prose, are in Persian, with the rare exception of certain poetry, notably that of Shāh Ismā‘īl, which is in Turkī over the *takhalluṣ* ‘Khaṭāṭ’.

*'Incidental' style*

After the time of Jāmī, Persian poetry began one of its deepest and most basic developments. This major development, which has become known as the Indian style, has not been properly analysed in a scholarly way and it is time that people devoted themselves to research into it in the light of present-day criticism as internationally current. The primary and original period of the Indian style is the eleventh and twelfth centuries of the Hijra but before this date—and after it too—certain poets wrote examples of this style of poetry.

Before we go on to survey the elements in Persian poetry which underwent development under the sway of the Indian style and to discuss its roots and precedents, we have to discuss the interval which elapsed between the period of Jāmī and the rise of the Indian style. During this interval (that is to say, from beginning to end of the tenth century of the Hijra) Persian poetry, for reasons which are not clear to us, made a conscious move in the direction of a kind of innovation (or at least change) and of becoming to a certain extent simple. It is as if the poets, consciously or otherwise, realised that in the interval from Hāfiẓ to Jāmī (and a little later than his time) Persian poetry had no concern other than repetition; 'so (they thought) we must go out in search of fresh worlds to conquer—but how are we to conquer fresh worlds?' It seems that the answer, practically speaking, was that poetry must be made to approach the experience of life. Persian poetry, throughout the history of Persian literature, has started from the poetic imagery closest to experience—pictures of the moments of human life; outstanding examples of this may be found in the poetry of the Samanid and Ghaznavid periods, particularly in the poetry of Farrukhī (pictures of moments of love) and Manūchihrī (pictures of moments of absorption in the beauty of Nature). Persian love-poetry (which accounts for the main mass of our poetic works) escapes in two directions after this period from being based on experience and moves into the realm of the absolute and in the direction of universality. Thus it is that on the one hand because of the growth of Šūfism (which carries everything in the direction of the absolute and of universality), and on the other because the poetic tradition of the Classical writers takes upon itself the aura of an eternal prototype and becomes the model for future generations, the daily experiences of life which are to be seen in the poetry of Farrukhī and those like him, turn little by little into a sort of *cliché*: lover and beloved and moments in the life of lover and beloved take on the attribute of universality—and consequently one may assume the 'love' of all poets to be one and the same, and take the 'beloved' of all of them for that matter to be one and

the same too. Poets from Ḥāfiẓ to Jāmī (and later) did no more than gloss previous writing, and because of such thinking they in fact supposed that there was nothing more to be done.

But the poets of this period (the sixteenth century), that is to say, the interval from Jāmī to the rise of the Indian style, went in search of a kind of innovation and pioneered a mode in poetry which despite not having any particular value (in comparison with a basic development) displays nevertheless some attempt at novelty.

The Indian *taḡkireh* writers (some of whom were excellent critics) termed this school 'the incidentalist style' (*shīveh-i vuqū'gū'ī*, *vuqū'īyāt*). The entire aim and manifesto of the poets of this style is: 'We must once more draw poetry close to the experiences of daily life and turn our faces away from 'universal love', 'universal beloved' and everything that is absolute.' Etymologically, too, *vuqū'īyāt* and *vuqū'gū'ī* have the same meaning, that is to say to set down in poetry that which 'happens' to us in the sphere of the experiences of daily life.

Their achievement was a basic step forward; however, for all the interest they centred upon the question of poetry being a matter of experience, and of its being a kind of human life, they were trapped in the vicious circle of the monotonous life of man in the Middle Ages and supposed that the experience of life was no more than what happens to us in the relationship with the beloved and under the sway of love, whereas had they taken a broader view of the subject they would have been able to effect a basic development in Persian literature—but unfortunately their anxiety for reform confined their interest to this aspect alone and they continued to neglect the broader picture. Nevertheless, even the amount of innovation which is discernible on the sidelines of their love-poetry is deserving of praise in its own right, and represents a bridge to the more basic movement called the Indian style.

We may put down as the basic weak point of the incidentalist style the feebleness of the elements of its pictorial side—that is to say the poetry is devoid of telling images and the poets are concerned rather with artifice based upon juxtaposition (*taqābul*) (or opposition) (*taẓādd*) of words, and not the kind of metaphor (*isti'āreh*) which is the basic core of all the images of Classical poetry.

The poets of the following period corrected this weak point to a great extent in their poetry; we shall revert to this under 'Indian style.'

The poets of the Incidentalist school added nothing by way of novel changes to the elements of Persian poetry: in fact one can say that they subtracted things from it, things which had been troublesome such as outlandish artifice; thus poetry became simpler: all in all it can be said that the only

established feature of their poetry is the interest they showed in the various states of lovers and in the daily experiences of their lives; this tendency, coming after all the former business of aspiring to the Universal where Beloved, Love and Loverhood were concerned, was valuable indeed.

It may be asked why the point of departure originated in the *ghazal* and only appeared in the realm of erotic experience. The answer is clear: after the thirteenth century the *ghazal* forms the greater bulk of the central body of Persian poetry and the poets of this period either wrote *ghazals* alone or the greater part of their *oeuvre* was composed of *ghazals*; and since the first step on the way of development is invariably in the sphere of content and the commonest content (*mouẓū'āt* = *ma'ānī*) in the *ghazal* form is love, they began by putting down erotic experiences in the *ghazal* form, and so stood at this initial stage; thus the Incidentalists school did not make their way into the spheres of other forms (viz: *qaṣīdeh*, *maḡnavī*, *rubā'ī*) and of other kinds of content (viz: description, satire, mysticism).

This style or school, the entire mass of whose work is accounted for by the *ghazal*, was unable to extend to other forms and subjects of Persian poetry, but made comparatively good strides in the *ghazal*. The well-known poets of this style are: Lisānī Shīrāzī (d. 1535/6); Sharaf Jahān Qazvīnī (1560/1); Zamīnī Isfahānī (1579/80); Maīlī Hiravī (1576-7); Muḡtasham Kāshānī (1587-8); Vahshī Bāfaqī (1583-4); Ḥālatī Turkamān (1591-2); Shānī Takkalū (1614-15); Vuqū'ī Tabrīzī (1609-10); Naqī Kamarehī (1620-1); Valī Dashtbiyāzī (1592-3); to a greater or lesser extent, in comparison with poets of the fifteenth century of those and the nineteenth century (in Iran; where they turned away from the Indian style and exhibited an inclination to the style of the Classical writers) their poetry contains experiences peculiar to poets.

Those unacquainted with the field of Persian poetry in the fifteenth century will find inexplicable our insistence upon demonstrating the importance of the Incidentalists—but anyone who knows about the nature of Persian poetry in the fifteenth century will agree that these writers infused poetry with life to a degree—even though this 'life' was neither natural nor viable. In this survey our discussion is not based on the production of evidence in the form of poetry; however, the following few examples may not be out of place:

So crazed am I that I do not understand whatever that beauty says to me:  
I ask others its purport when I leave his gathering.

The characteristics of this style are reflected in this verse: first, the subject is a kind of experience in love; the poet is describing in poetry a condition which overcame him, which he himself has experienced: namely a condition of being so beside himself at the sight of his beloved that he simply does not under-

stand his words, or is simply unable to hear them—afterwards, outside, he is reduced to asking the others who were present their meaning.

Second, the verse contains no artifice other than a kind of exaggeration (*ighrāq*) (which incidentally is hardly appealing); it is simple, and from the point of view of verse technique contains merely metre and rhyme and is to quite an extent close to spoken language. It should be borne in mind that the well-known poets of this style (the names of the most distinguished of whom have been mentioned above) were for the most part affected by love which was 'of the earth earthy'—this 'love' was in fact pervasion and homosexual deviation in poetry, as when Muḥtasham Kāshānī sets down a detailed account of his erotic relationship with a youth called Shāṭir Jalāl Iṣfahānī who captured his affection, in the Jalāliyyeh Treatise (*Risāleh-e Jalāliyyeh*), and recalls in detail, as far as possible, the moments which inspired his *ghazals*. In the Introduction to this Treatise he uses the term 'Incidentalism', possibly for the first time, and says: Mīrzā Sulaimān Ḥisābī ordered the inscribing of the reason for the revelation of these *ghazals*, most of which found their way to versification because of 'the occurrence of incidents (*vuqūʿ-e vaqāyiʿ*) in friendship' (p. 3 of the *Dīvān* of Muḥtasham, publ. Mihr 'Alī Gurgānī, Tehran, Maḥmūdī Bookshop). In this treatise he has set out the reason for the composition of each *ghazal*, and the introduction to each *ghazal* can be instrumental in the understanding of several points, for instance the description of the dress of the Beloved, his mode of dancing, or other particulars.

Poetry has always been experience: poetry is alive and is perhaps nothing more than the experience of life—but because of the stiffness and ossified state that Persian poetry had assumed in the sphere of content of the *ghazal* in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (save in the work of certain exceptional poets), Indian *taḏkireh*-writers supposed this 'Incidental' style to be an innovation: for example one of them says, 'patches (*khāl khāl*) of Incidentalism are found in the poetry of Saʿdī also,' or, 'Amīr Khusrū is the founder of Incidentalism.' These judgments arise from sheer ignorance of the fountain-head of Persian poetry in the fourth and fifth centuries of the Hijra; if these critics had looked at the poetry of Farrukhī and Manūchihīrī, they would have seen that it is Incidentalism from start to finish and they would never have expressed such a view; but since the particular form of the *ghazal* was the focus of the attention of these *taḏkireh*-writers, and few poets continued to set down experiences of daily life in the *ghazal* form, and 'love' in the *ghazal* is absolute and universal love, and the Beloved there is also absolute and universal, the *taḏkireh*-writers were right to look for the beginnings of the recording of such experiences in Saʿdī or Amīr Khusrū, since, in the *ghazals* of these two poets, signs of the recording of experiences of daily life and of events in the lives of lovers are not far to seek.

*Brief conspectus of other types of poetry at this period.* This period deserves to be called 'the period of the *ghazal*' in Persian literature; not so much because of any merit possessed by the *ghazals* as because of the prevalence here of *ghazal* writing; the poets are all *ghazal* writers, or at least *ghazal* writing forms the basic part of their *oeuvre*. This is not to say that *qaṣīdehs* and *maṣnavīs* were not composed during this time: these are mostly modelled on Khāqānī and Anvarī (in the *qaṣīdeh*) and on Nizāmī and Amīr Khusrou (in the *maṣnavī*).

### *The Indian Style*

The Incidental school was a step forward in the restricted area of the *ghazal*—and that only in the sphere of meanings or content—if indeed we may describe these efforts as a step forward in the realm of content of the *ghazal*; the point is that literary innovation should begin in all the elements of poetry (emotion, imagery, language, the music of poetry) and not remain restricted to a specialized form like the *ghazal*, but spread to other forms of poetry as well; efforts of this kind in the Indian style bore fruit (within the restricted scope of people of the period, whose life had not experienced a great deal of development). All in all one can say that in the Indian style Persian poetry (where examples represent the perfection of the style) took a step towards innovation in the sphere of thought and content (which were a continuation and extension of the experiences of everyday life), in the sphere of imagery and also in the domain of the language of poetry. The Indian style is no more than a compound of innovation, after a fashion, in all these fields; in view of the fact that individual efforts towards finding novel experiences to set down in poetry or coining new images or creating elements in the realm of the language of poetry, have to a greater or lesser extent precedents in Persian poetry, everyone tries to discover the roots of the Indian style in the poetry of one of the Classical masters—some have considered Amīr Khusrou its founder, some Ḥāfiẓ, some Jāmī or Fighānī and his circle; but none of these writers is the founder of the Indian school—on the other hand, in their totality they may be considered the founders of the style.

In order better to resolve the discussion, we should bear in mind that in a properly 'Indian' poem, containing all the features of the Indian style, these elements are always to be seen:

1) Novelty or unusual nature of imagery, by means of adopting new connections in the realm of imagery; abstract images; new elements in the construction of images.

2) Novelty in poetic language, in respect of new coinage, or contact with street and bazaar language.

3) Obscurity, as a result of unusual nature of imagery, or grammatical structure, or linguistic coinages; arising for the most part from the discovery of new networks of connections between elements of images.

4) Formal dominance by the poetry (the *bait*) which should be called 'the style of equilibrium' (*uslūb-i mu'ādaleh*) or 'practising equilibrium' (*mu'ādaleh-sāzī*); that is to say, in the technical term of the Classical writers, *tamsīl*, which means that the poet says something in the first hemistich (*mišra'*) and in the second hemistich repeats the very same thing in other words, in such a way that if we are unaware of the connection between the sections of the equilibrium, we feel the *bait* to be disconnected and confused. Since the term *tamsīl* may mislead the reader we employ here the term 'equilibrium' (*mu'ādaleh*) because *tamsīl* is sometimes used in place of *irsāl-i maṣāl*, 'quotation of a proverb' which might lead to confusion.

All these characteristics which plot the boundaries of the Indian style can be seen sporadically in the poetry of the Classical writers:

1) The introduction of novel images is frequent in the poetry of Khāqānī and Nizāmī, also in the *maṣnavīs* of Amīr Khusrou; the unusual nature of the images of Khāqānī is no less than that of the images of Šā'ib.

2) Khāqānī, Nizāmī and Ḥāfiẓ experimented brilliantly in the field of new coinages, as anyone who is acquainted with their poetry will recall.

3) Obscurity arising from unusual imagery or from the grammatical framework of constructions may also have had parallels in the *qaṣīdehs* of Khāqānī and in some verses of Nizāmī.

4) In the field of approximation to street and bazaar language, the poetry of the first half of the fifteenth century is an excellent example: in the majority of the *ghazals* of the poets of this period one can find expressions and words which are taken from street and bazaar language; they are introduced sometimes with success and sometimes in an unnatural and awkward manner, as when we read in the *bait* of Qāẓī Muḥammad Imāmī—

I said to her, 'the colour of your cheek has come up all roses from wine.'  
Her budlike mouth smiled as she said, 'Roses, which rose?'

which is a reference to the children's game 'Roses, which rose?' which has been common in Khurāsān down to the present day—and is still.

5) 'Style of equilibrium' or employment of the language of *tamsīl*, that is to say introducing the content in the first *mišra'* and repeating it in other words in the second, one of the most important characteristics of the Indian style, not only did not begin during this period, but examples of it can be detected in the poetry of the tenth and eleventh centuries; it is even common in the work of poets writing in Arabic in the tenth century; many of the famous verses of

Mutanabbī are in this style. Still, this style is only occasional in the poetry of the Classical writers, whereas in the poetry of the Indian style it is extremely common, to the extent of being found in the majority of *ghazals* and sometimes in several *bait*s of a *ghazal*.

As we have seen, isolated occurrences of these elements and characteristics are found in the poetry of poets of preceding centuries, but the use of all together, and throughout a single *ghazal*, particularly in their most extravagant form, is a feature which begins in the Indian style. The following represent the high points of this style: Persian poets: Šā'ib Tabrīzī, Kalīm Kāshānī, Ṭalīb Āmulī, Naẓīrī Nīshāpūrī, Salīm Tihirānī, 'Urfī Shīrāzī, Qudṣī Mashhadī, Vā'iz Qazvīnī, Ḥazīn Lāhījī, Ghanī Kashmīrī, Nāṣir 'Alī Sarhindī, poets of Transoxiana: Shaukat Bukhārā'ī; Bīdil Dihlavī, Vāqif Lāhūrī, Ārzū, Ghālib Dihlavī; poet of Transoxiana: Shaukat Bukhārā'ī; as we shall see, their extravagant poetry, which contains most of the characteristics of the Indian style and has been much criticized on this account, is the work of writers like Nāṣir 'Alī or Bīdil or Shaukat, not of Šā'ib and Kalīm.

In fact there are two wings of the Indian style; the Iranian and the Indian. If we want to select representatives of each wing. Šā'ib is the perfect representative of the Iranian wing and Bīdil of the Indian. It is undeniable that more than the mere factor of historical passage of time underlies this question—there is a geographical side to it as well; distinction between the styles of Bīdil and Šā'ib depends not upon the fact that they are somewhat apart in point of time (Šā'ib died in 1669/70 and Bīdil lived 1644/5-1721) but upon the difference between the cultural *milieux* of the two and upon the geographical location of their place of life (although Šā'ib also visited India); for Muḥammad 'Alī Ḥazīn, who is later than Bīdil, is nearer to Šā'ib in style; and as it happens his life is not unlike that of Šā'ib; he emerged from Isfahan (his origins were from Gīlān and those of Šā'ib from Tabrīz) and lived in India. Šā'ib, however, returned to Iran; Ḥazīn stayed in India for his whole lifetime. The object of making these points is to demonstrate the difference between the two wings of the Indian school, which cannot be divided by any chronological criterion, but must be studied with reference to geographical factors.

I should add here that the attribution of these two wings to two geographical areas does not at all mean that all Indian poets are in the Indian wing and all Iranian poets in the Iranian, since at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the Indian style begins, Mīrzā Jalāl Asīr Shahrīstānī has a style nearer Bīdil than Šā'ib; on the other hand one can find poets among those of the Indian style living in India and in fact Indian, who are nearer to the style of Šā'ib: however in general the majority of the Indian poets follow-

ed the style of Bīdil and the majority of the Iranian the style of Ṣāʿib. The characteristics of Ghālib in the style of both wings will be discussed later.

The Indian style was current till the middle of the twelfth century of the Hijra in the whole Persian area: Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan, Bangladesh; after the twelfth century (except for Iran) it continued its existence in these climes: even down to the present day there are poets in all these territories who continue this style in their poetry, and in spite of all the modernization which has taken place in the poetry of Tajikistan and Afghanistan, the elements of the Indian style may still be seen here and there in their poetry.

Similarly in the poetry of India and Pakistan, Ghālib Dihlavī is still the model *par excellence* of this style in the nineteenth century; and in the poetry of Muḥammad Iqbāl Lāhūrī also one can trace here and there the signs of this style and the effects of its imagery and characteristics. Even in Iran after the Second World War the style had a new lease of life, and has devotees among poets of the archaic style, who enjoy honour and distinction at their gatherings.

If we are to take the poetry of the Timurid period as the norm of Persian poetry, the Indian style is a deviation from this norm. The following noticeable elements appear in this 'deviation':

I) In the sphere of subjects and thought.

A) The area of concepts and subjects dealt with by the poets expanded—questions entered poetry with which the Classical writers dealt sparingly, if at all: some of these concepts are extremely novel and represent new departures.

B) The *ghazal* loses its erotic character; description, moralizing, social criticism, praise of wine, philosophy, theology (just as seen in the *ghazal* of Ḥāfiẓ) (Sūfism far removed from the sphere of terminology) all make their appearance.

C) Generally speaking, in the work of the Classical poets (more particularly from the sixth century of the Hijra onwards) contradiction in thought may be found—but in the Indian style contradiction in thought is carried so far that in a particular *ghazal* the first *bait* may present a thought—which is promptly contradicted in the second *bait*. The reason is that the poets have in mind 'How to say it' and not 'What to say.' This contradictory advice is extremely common in the work of poets of this period—almost to the point of being a basic principle.

II) In the sphere of imagery.

A) The commonest image is one which one must call 'The style of equilibrium', which Classical authorities called *tamṣīl*. It is found, relatively

speaking, in the poetry of every poet—and sometimes, with noticeable frequency, in every *ghazal*: if someone were unfamiliar with the Indian style, he might suppose that the two *mišra'* had no connection with each other, whereas they not only have a connection, but partake of the most complete identity.

B) Simile (*tashbīh*) complete with words and comparative adverb does not occur; the point of comparison is not quoted either—it is metaphor (*isti'āreh*): nothing can be found in the way of simile—thus metaphor inside metaphor is produced, leading to obscurity.

C) The elements of metaphors are sometimes unprecedented in poetry of the preceding period; this is the germ of one of the most important tendencies of the Indian style and emphasizes that the Indian style has been considered a real innovation in Persian literature—since by comparing the poetry of this period with that of the preceding and following periods, the reader can see clearly how many new elements the poets of the style introduced into Persian poetry, either elements arising from the life of the period, and in all likelihood without precedent, such as 'clock glass' (*shīsheh-e sā'at*), 'kite' (*kāghaz-e bād*), or 'paper flowers' (*gulhā-ye kāghazī*) or elements which had existed but had not been considered by others suitable to be introduced into the realm of poetry, such as 'picture flowers' (*gulhā-ye taṣvīr*), 'picture birds' (*murghhā-ye taṣvīr*), or 'carpet pattern' (*naqsh-e qālī*)—which have introduced extremely graceful pictures and ideas into Persian poetry. This *bait* of Ṭālib Āmulī may serve as an example

With her body she makes scented the picture flowers of the cushion,  
With her foot she wakes the sleepers of the carpet pattern

or 'paper flowers' in the *bait* of Shafī'ā Aṣar—

Do not blame me for being without sorrow, for artificial  
Like paper flowers, is my blossoming in this garden.

D) Creation of a special tradition in the realm of metaphors (*isti'āreh*) such as 'the flying away of colour' (*parīdan-i rang*)—very many images and allusions (*kināyeh*) have come into being in the poetry of the Indian style through this metaphor.

E) Those who are acquainted with Persian poetry, particularly the *ghazal* form, will know that the key to the meanings, to the chain of words and the network of pictures in every *ghazal* is the set of rhyming words (*majmū'eh-i kalimāt-e qāfiyeh*). Whatever the word standing in the rhyme, the poet presents a picture or meanings by association with it. Of course it is a matter of the poet's ability to what extent he contrives to impose the atmosphere of his own psyche upon this 'bunch of keys'—that is to say, what doors he opens

with these 'keys'—whether he opens doors to his own psychic problems and mental processes, or opens anew doors which others before him have opened. Ḥāfiẓ opens with these 'keys' doors to his own problems, and thus to the problems of mankind in all ages; some poets now open doors to their own mental problems, now to those of mankind; others, the majority in fact, open anew doors already opened—this explains why the pictures, the network of meanings and the chain of words, all become repetitive and bathos begins.

The poetry of the ninth century of the Hijrah is a matter of opening open doors; the 'key of words' is devoted to the opening of doors already open; but in the Indian style the poets turn the 'keys' to open new doors not so far opened by anyone. For example, in the first *ghazal* of the *Dīvān* of Ḥāfiẓ to which most poets have written 'replies' (*javāb*) he has the verse:

Dark night, fear of the waves, whirlpool so dreadful  
How do those with light loads on the *shores*<sup>1</sup> know our state?

Jāmī says:

Die to yourself, if you want security from the mounting waves of distress,  
For the sea quickly throws up the dead one on the *shore*

It is a sentiment which was common in Šūfī poetry and prose before Jāmī and had been expressed by different images and allegories (*tamāsīl*) before his time; in another *ghazal* with the same metre and rhyme he says

The divers are in danger for their very lives in the sea for the sake of  
pearls  
Those who pick shells on the *shores* sit immune from danger

where the same contrast between the ease of those sitting on the shore and the distress of those venturing on the sea as was seen in the Ḥāfiẓ *bait*, is repeated with small changes.

Halālī Chaghtāʾī, in the same century as Jāmī, writes:

I am caught in a whirlpool by the flood of my tears  
Such that even were I to obtain the life of Noah I would not catch sight  
of its *shores*

where only in the mention of 'Noah' and 'flood' does a sort of congruity occur: there is no novelty in this set of words—however the poets of the Indian style basically present both chain of words and network of meanings after their own taste; Šāʾib says:

<sup>1</sup> In this and the following verses the rhyming word in the Persian original is italicized.

Do not give your body up to despair even though you fall into the jaws of  
the sea-monster:

For the ocean of love has *shores* in the heart of the whirlpool

Salīm says:

In the sea in which like Noah I have cast anchor

The ship on top of the wave is the coffin of the *shores*

Nāṣir 'Alī Sarhindi says:

When you become cupbearer, distress from the shallowness of the vessel  
remains no longer

The width of the embrace of the *shores* matches the ocean

Bīdil says:

The margin of safety was slight in the ocean of questing,

Shipwreck blossomed from our wave and created *shores*

From a comparison of these *baits* it may be gathered that the 'key of the rhyme' in the hands of the poets of the Indian style is at the very least a way towards uncovering a novel picture or fresh images; in the *bait* of Ṣā'ib the meaning is pretty and new in spirit: in the poem of Salīm the conception of the ship as a coffin which carries the shores on top of the waves (the shores are dead, have become obliterated; the actual meaning is as follows—it is as if the poet were to say: 'the ocean has no shore'); in the poem of Nāṣir 'Alī the effecting of equilibrium (*mu'ādaleh*) between his two *miṣra'* so as to express one meaning in two ways: in the poem of Bīdil the 'blossoming' (*gul kardan*) and blooming (*shigiftan*) of 'wreck' (*shikast*) (= helplessness) and the 'overspilling' of the shores—all these are, from the point of view of imagery, extremely revolutionary and novel. We are not here concerned with tortuousness (or the lack of it)—we have dealt elsewhere with this subject. It can be seen that the chain of words connected to the 'keyword' (rhyme) (*qāfiyeh*) is in the work of the poets of the Indian style not tightly meshed—each part has preserved freedom both in imagery and in language.

F) Preponderance of abstract over familiar images; it is precisely because of this that one can only sense some of their poetic meanings: they are not susceptible of exposition and detailed analysis. The innovation introduced by these writers in the field of imagery is reminiscent of that of the Surrealists. Today a poet of the twentieth century wrote, 'violet scream' (*jīgh-i binafsh = faryād-i binafsh*), evidently, a scream from the anger and violence of which a person goes violet; the writer was apparently under the influence of the Sur-

realists. He has been the object of ridicule for more than thirty years, and anything meaningless in modern Persian literature is called 'violet scream'; but in the poetry of the Indian style that kind of deviation from the usual norm of images is frequently seen. For instance 'lapis lazuli glances' or 'marble glances' or 'pale blandishments', as can be seen in these *bait*s:

Although the eyes of my gay one of gold eyebrows are blue  
From her look lapis lazuli glances are attractive

(Ashraf)

or:

One winks as if to say, 'Here, come buy from me  
Pale blandishments and marble glances'

(Fawqī)

It is an attempt to break the accepted norms in constructing images, something that the Surrealists consciously did, and which is called Synaesthesia (*dar ham rīkhtegī-ye ab'ād-e ḥavās*) in the terminology of modern literary criticism.

G) Personification (*tashkhiṣ*) is commoner in the poetry of this period than in that of any other; everything, from natural elements to abstract and spiritual objects, is personified:

Our cry puts a ring in the ear of response  
For we are among the early risers of the morning of his cheek

(Şā'ib)

III) A) In the sphere of poetic language: the discovery of new networks of meaning added a new chain of words to the 'key of rhyme'. As a result innumerable combinations were created, some of which are extremely attractive and in the final analysis are themselves a kind of image, for instance 'fresh spark' in this *bait* of Şā'ib:

At night when that fresh spark passed through the gathering  
The sweat of shame passed through the shirt of the moon

Striving to this end in the poetry of the central writers of the Indian school, especially Bīdil, reached the point where the poet forms all the components of his poetic language from combinations of this kind.

It may be a useful guide to refer to dictionaries such as the *Āṣaf al-Lughāt*, *Armaghān-e Āṣaf*, or *Muṣṭalahāt ash-Shu'arā*.

Some of their compounds overstep the limits of the *izāfeh*, or are without the natural construction of the *izāfeh*, such as *shahādat intiẓār* 'expecting

martyrdom', *hairat damīdeh* 'blossoming astonishment', *'ibrat nigāh* 'of warning look', *'adam furṣat* 'whose opportunity is nothingness'—which sometimes militates against understanding. One can see this kind of compound in the poetry of Nizāmī and of some Classical writers, for example, *bāligh naẓar* 'far-reaching sight'. This kind of compound is more widespread in the Indian wing than in the Iranian, since the basis of the formation of compounds is analogy, and from the point of view of philology, I imagine, someone who is not naturally a native speaker of a language and has learnt the language is better able to extend analogy, whereas native speakers of the language because of habit or possibly because of the particular logic of the language, which is dominant over them, are unable consistently to put into effect rules for the analogical proliferation of words—this is borne out by the learning of language by children—in whom the talent for analogy is lively and strong—who instead of *dūkht* say *dūzīd* and instead of *sūkht*, *sūzīd* and instead of *biband* say *bibast*.<sup>2</sup>

B) Poets draw very close to the language of street and bazaar, although poetry has at all periods taken much from the street and its language—for instance the poetry of Anvarī in the sixth century bears signs of the effect of contemporary language and in the poetry of the Timurid period it is possible to see widespread practice of this as a matter of course; but in the poetry of the Indian style the feature becomes even more widespread to the point where explanations of many of these terms find their way into dictionaries like the *Muṣṭalahāt ash-Shu'arā* where they have a folkloric value today. One of the reasons for the obscurity for us today of the Indian style is this excessive interest which the poets felt for street and bazaar language; many of these words and expressions have been forgotten today and are not even recorded in dictionaries. A small number of them, in the poetry of most of the poets who were well known and favourites with readers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the beginning of the present century, were recorded in certain books such as the *Chirāgh-i Hidāyat* and the *Muṣṭalahāt ash-Shu'arā*; some of these words are Indian, some are Persian dialect words, and some are Western words which found their way to India through English and gained currency in Persian; for instance the word *kāpītān* which in the form *Kapī tān* was used to mean a leader of the Christians or a person who is a chief of the Western people (*firang* = *masīhī*). Taṣṣīr writes:

Your coloured cheek steeps the wine-house in blood;  
Your Western-like beauty makes the saint a 'Captain.'

<sup>2</sup> Rough equivalents would be 'goed' for 'went', 'seed' for 'saw', 'sitted' for 'sat', 'was!' (imperative) instead of 'be!'

Altogether the range of vocabulary of the poetry of the Indian style, by comparison with the preceding and following periods, is very wide: words which in the poetry of the preceding and subsequent periods had no licence to enter the realm of poetry, now find the chance of making their appearance there; naturally each new word brought with it a new meaning too. One only has to refer to the general dictionaries of the period to highlight the extension of the vocabulary of Persian poetry which is found in the Indian style.

C) It is natural enough that when the aim of poetry was fresh meanings and new images, it would be too much to expect in poetry like this the impeccable neatness of language which can be seen in the poetry of the Classical writers; this is why, from the point of view of the principles of rhetoric and of poetic virtuosity (such as is shown by the Classical writers), weaknesses can be found in the poetry of the Indian style. This weakness is well worth a discussion. Basically in Persian literature, because of the perseverance in poetry of convention and conventional language, any kind of innovation from the clichified Classical language was apt to be called 'weakness.' If we accept their criterion, namely that 'solidity and staying power are to be equated with proximity to the clichified Classical language', there is no doubt that in many instances the Indian style (and for that matter the poetry of the Constitutional period and of the present day) is 'weak'; similarly Bahār, who was himself hidebound by the principles of Classical verse and the fixed norm of the Classical writers, rejected the Indian style precisely on these grounds. However, if we take language to be something living and involved in the mass of humanity, proximity to mobile and fluid elements of language is no weakness, rather a sign that poetry is alive and on the move.

The poetry of the Indian style, in a way, effected earlier what Nīmā Yūshij and some poets of the Constitutional period effected in our time—in some instances the attempt met with defeat, in others with success. At all events, the language of poetry in the Indian style is sometimes alive and departs from the clichified norm of the Classical writers and is an experiment on the road of reform—not every experiment is successful.

D) Play on dimensions of words (*ab'ād-e kalimeh*) is extremely common in the poetry of this period. Although it is by no means without precedent in the poetry of the preceding period, its prevalence in the poetry of this period is striking; it may be supposed that the reason behind it is the extension of the area of Persian poetry into areas where Persian was not the original language of the people. For instance, in Persian *bi sar āmadan* means 'to come to an end' and *bi sar-e...āmadan* means 'to come to someone's bedside' (e.g. an invalid). An Indian poet says:

In my death agony there was no one *at my bedside*, so friendless was I;  
I am ashamed of my life that *drew to a close*

(Ghanī Kashmīrī)

This sort of amphibology (*ihām*) or concentration upon dimensions of words is extremely widespread at this period; the writer is inclined to guess that it is because individuals whose native language was not Persian took to composing poetry in this language that they concentrated in this way upon dimensions of words and gave currency to this kind of virtuosity in poetry of the Indian style.

IV In the sphere of music of poetry and questions allied to the complete form of the *ghazal*.

A) The poetry of the Indian style is not different from poetry of the previous period except that repetition of rhyme (*takrār-e qāfiyeh*) (which the Classical writers practised either seldom or not at all) is extremely common in this period—sometimes one can see a poet repeat the rhyme without leaving any gap. This repetition of rhyme was probably in itself a kind of convention and a stage for virtuosity, rather than a sign of weakness—the poets wanted to show that they could use a single rhyme (which is one word, whose capacity for association with meanings is restricted) for effecting association in several different ways, that is to say, they could cope with different networks of meaning and various chains of words with the ‘key of the rhyme’; open several doors, in other words, with one key.

Thus in the case of each rhyme which is repeated, the meaning or picture which emerges together with the repeated form of the rhyme is something which has no connection with the initial stage; a poet who manifests this characteristic in most of his *ghazals* is Mīrzā Jalāl Asīr Shahrīstānī; others are not far behind him.

The metres of the *ghazal* in this period are the same as were current in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Some poets write most of their fine *ghazals* in short metres. Very long metres are found, but are not common.

B) The refrains (*radīf*) which are common in the *ghazals* of the Indian style are for the most part of scant precedent, or of none at all. Most of these poets place a picture which is itself a kind of complicated metaphor (*isti‘āreh*) in the refrain of the poem, for example ‘breaking of colour’ (*shikast-i rang*) which is a nominal refrain, or ‘strikes a chain’ (*mīzanad zanjīr*) which is a verbal one, and when these words are the key to association, it is clear how restricted is the room in which the poet has to manoeuvre! However that may be, the poets refuse to be baffled in their production of new and startling images, although

it was possible for the straitjacket of these refrains to lead their work into networks of meaning which were distant and even remote. Bīdil Dihlavī has a *ghazal* with the refrain 'breaking of colour' (going pale), (*shikast-e rang*) in which he writes:

To whom is the inner voice of the breaking of colour (= going pale)  
 anxious to give the glad news  
 that we have become beside ourselves on the shoulder of going pale

*Shikast-e rang* means 'paling of colour' or in the present-day phrase, 'going pale' and it is this linguistic term which is responsible for the creation of metaphors such as *surūsh-e shikast-e rang* ('the inner voice of going pale'), *dūsh-i shikast-i rang* ('the shoulder of going pale'), *jūsh-i shikast-e rang* ('the boiling of going pale') and so on with words having the rhyme *-ūsh* and capable of producing meanings alongside that compound.

C) Conciseness and compressed diction; all the content is expressed in one *bait*; it is outlandish for meanings to trespass from one *bait* to the next, other than accidentally. Now everyone acquainted with Persian and Arabic poetry knows that this characteristic is found in all periods of the poetry of these two languages; but in the poetry of the Indian style the independence of the *bait*s is carried to the point where one might call it 'dissonance of *bait*s', that is to say, not only is there no connection of syntax or of subject, but for the most part a sort of mutual repulsion or aloofness is felt in all the *bait*s.

Generally, the Indian style is one to appreciate which we must keep before our eyes certain prime considerations:

First, it has its own special conventions, and until we are acquainted with their basis we cannot appreciate the poetry of the Indian style—for example, knowledge of folklore lies at the centre of most of its images and virtuositities; if you do not know that the popular belief was that the voice of anyone who eats collyrium goes; that is to say, eating collyrium makes people voiceless and silent, you cannot appreciate this *bait*:

Never has a cry gone up from those slain by your look  
 You would say they tempered your sword with collyrium

The connection between the silence of those slain by love of the beloved and the collyrium of her eye, which has a fatal beauty, is the central core of this *miṣraʿ*; all in all the poetry possesses a kind of perspective or special geometry—or, to express it better, a kind of esoteric language, the learning of which has nothing to do with learning the words or syntax of the poem—rather it is familiarity with the symbols and their interrelation that has to be cultivated, in order that we may orientate ourselves with the poem.

The poetry of the opening periods in Persian is poetry to appreciate which and to move in whose *ambience* necessitates no more than learning its vocabulary and the syntax of its language—but Šūfī poetry moves in its own *ambience*, and its appreciation depends on a number of preliminaries; these are to some extent general and ubiquitous, that is to say, in the literature of Islamic mysticism (in Arabic, Persian and, in the recent period, Turkish and Urdu) a kind of informed familiarity is sufficient to enable one to enter the *ambience* of mystic poetry in these languages, but in the Indian style it is otherwise—primary points like peculiar conventions of the poets, and elements which they themselves have created or extrapolated from folklore and invested with the status of symbols, have consolidated themselves, and fundamental matters of this kind must simply be learnt.

Appreciation of the poetry of the Indian style in fact results from a kind of surprise—the theory that the function of poetry is to surprise has many adherents among modern critics—but in the poetry of the Indian style the theory has been vindicated by practical observation. If someone develops familiarity and sympathy with the standards of this style, little by little the level of his surprise will tend to increase; step by step with this process his artistic appreciation will grow.

One can draw up patterns to represent the production of surprise by the Indian style—after drawing these patterns it becomes second nature to the reader to listen to half the *bait* (first *mišraʿ*) and then to guess for himself what the second half will be, since he has become familiar with the ‘pattern of surprise’—he nevertheless derives pleasure; (being informed in this way has nothing whatever to do with the sort of ‘clairvoyance’ that works by means of the rhyme).

It may be as well to mention yet once more that in the Indian style ‘poem’ is synonymous with ‘*bait*’; whereas in other styles ‘poem’ means *ghazal* or *rubāʿī*, *qaṣīdeh*, *maṣnavī* etcetera—one might call any *ghazal* of the Indian style a collection of poems, as it were a collection of Persian ‘*Haikū*’. Every poet of the Indian style who writes a *ghazal* of twelve *bait*s is in fact composing twelve short independent poems: accordingly, right from the time of the foundation of the Indian style the *tazkireh* collections and *jungs* are full of single *bait*s of the Indian style, since the Classical authorities had themselves realized that there was no connecting factor between the *bait*s of a *ghazal* other than that they have in common metre and rhyme.

The writers of this style are numerous, whether in Iran, the Indian sub-continent, Transoxiana, Afghanistan, the Ottoman Empire in Iraq and Asia Minor, or even in the Balkan peninsula; the Indian style is the product of a period when the Persian language enjoyed the most widespread prevalence of

the history of its life—only in Iran of the Qājār period did this style yield place to the style known as 'Return' (*bāzgasht*); in the other areas it continued its life and to this day, in some of these regions, poets compose poetry in the Indian style.

One of the subjects worthy of study in the Safavid period is the class background of the poets. The history of Persian poetry and social analysis of the class background of literati in the Islamic Middle Ages show that the poets belonged to classes connected with the nobility or to the nobility itself; only rarely do we find poets who have risen from the working or trading classes. In the Safavid period, the number of poets who are traders and workers gradually increases, and reflects the spread of poetry into a wider audience.

The majority of coffee-houses in the Safavid period were the centres for meetings of the literary societies of the age. Safavid kings too visited these centres and sometimes showed interest in hearing the work of poets; these coffee-houses, centres of the growth and spread of poetry, were the scene of the comings and goings of traders and workers. It was this mingling of poetry with the life of the trading class which led to elements from the life of this class appearing in poetry, now in the subjects of poetry, now in the sphere of vocabulary, now in the realm of the elements of poetic imagery.

The *tazkireh Tuḥfeḥ-e Sāmī* contains the names of a considerable number of trader poets, some of whose *dīvāns* survive today, comprising most of the poets of the seventh chapter of the *Tuḥfeḥ-e Sāmī*: Nūrī (locksmith), Sakinī Qumī (baths manager), Bismilī Qazvīnī (sheep's-head cook), Ustād Shujā' (crown-seamster), Gulū 'Alī (barber), Buhlūl Qazvīnī (goldsmith), Khayyāṭ Sāveji (tailor), Ḥāfiẓ Mīrak Kāshānī (butcher), 'Abdul Kāshānī (paper seller), Muḥtasham Kāshānī (cloth merchant), Qāsim Kamāngar Hiravī (bowmaker).

Also in the *Tazkireh-e Naṣrābādī* there are no less poets, such as Qismat Mashhadī (gold-embosser), Mullā Mufrad (blacksmith), Āqā Zamā (gold thread maker), Amīnā (posteen maker), Āqā Ismā'īl (mosaic maker), Nāfi' Qumī (cook), Mullā Mushfiqī (cloth merchant), Mullā 'Alī Naqī Qumī (builder), Āqā Muṣayyib (cotton-printer), Muḥammad Qāsim Lāhijī (café waiter), Zahīrā Lāhijī (baker), Vāsiq Rashtī (baker), Shaftī Rashtī (carpenter), and Ustād Muḥammad Riẓa Khurāsānī, who was a workman at the age of eighty. Perhaps one can say that half of the poets are members of some craft or other.

One of the poets of this period who took his *takhalluṣ* from his occupation and trade is Qaṣṣāb Kāshānī. This Qaṣṣāb (Butcher) writes poetry both readable and attractive, in whose elements the life of a trader appears scene by scene; in one of his *ghazals* which has become well known, and some of whose lines have become proverbial, he writes:

When there are no teeth in the mouth smiling is misplaced—  
Why should someone open a shop without stock?

We have sold this world and the next for a single glance:  
It is best for someone to make this sort of deal in a lump sum.

In these two *bait*s, which have subsequently become proverbial, facets of a trader's life—'shop', 'stock', 'dealing in a lump sum' can be seen and in some of his similes elements of the butchery trade may be glimpsed—for instance when he writes:

Butcher! round her eyes, in her gay eyelashes  
On every side hang *hooks* (*qanāreh*) for our hearts  
—*qanāreh* is a hook from which butchers hang meat.

#### *Persian prose during this period*

From one point of view the prose of the Safavid period is a continuation of that of the Timurid period; from another, innovations are discernible in it. One may say that Persian prose was set on the road to development and variety by two new factors—the first of these was the religious movement of Shī'ism, which formed the basis of the political system and rule of the Safavid monarchs in Isfahan (Iran), its centre; this inspired new writings in the sphere of religion; and even, under its shadow, influenced non-religious writing as well and was responsible for a culture based on Shī'eh doctrines coming into existence in the sphere of the learned sciences. The second factor which was the cause of change and development was the establishment of the court of India, which was the basic patron of Persian language and culture—so much so that one has to admit that the service rendered to Persian poetry and prose in this period by the court of India is several times greater than that rendered to it by the court of Iran (in its centre, Isfahan). The Safavids, as we have pointed out before, were not interested in poetry or literature in general; not that they had absolutely no interest whatever, but by comparison with the Timurids and Qājārs, the rulers before and after them, their affection is less. But in India, all was Persian—the language inside the harem of the Emperor, the language of administration and government, the language of books of learning and literature—by and large, all writing was in Persian.

This new geographical area, this fresh region with its substructure of Indian and Sanskrit culture, was in its turn responsible for changes taking place in Persian literature; one effect of these changes was to draw prose towards simplicity; Persian prose divested itself little by little of the heavy burden of

Arabic rhyming prose and secretarial jargon and came nearer to natural speech.

One can see this characteristic in the translations made from Sanskrit such as the ornamental version of the *Ṭaṣṭnāmeḥ* written by Muḥammad Qādirī (the original *Ṭaṣṭnāmeḥ* was by Zia Nakhshabī) and the translation of the *Rāmāyana* by ‘Abd al-Qādir Badāūnī.

An example of the secretarial and mannered prose in this period is the prose of Vahīd Qazvīnī, many of whose essays survive. The historians of this period, too, wrote somewhat more simply than those of the preceding period, for example Iskandar Beg Munshī, author of the *‘Ālamārā-ye ‘Abbāsī*. The prose of the religious *‘ulamā*, for instance Majlisī and others, is simple but weak—in the phrase of Bahār, ‘childish’. The prose of the *tazkireh*-writers is also simple, for example the prose of the *Tazkireh-e Naṣrābādī* and of the *Tuḥfeḥ-e Samī*, also the autobiography left as his memorial by Ḥazīn Lāhījī the distinguished poet of the end of the Safavid period.

A final point worth mentioning is the difference in Persian prose between its Iranian and Indian wings—the Indian writers, just as in poetry they are over-given to tropes (*isti‘āreh*) and metaphorical compounds (*tarkībāt-e mu-jāzī*), make free with tropes in prose also. Examples of trope-ridden prose in the Indian style are the prose writings left by Bīdil, the Four Members (*Chahār ‘Unṣur*) and the ‘Points’ (*Nukāt*).

### CHAPTER THREE

#### QĀJĀR PERIOD

(Period of Return (*bāzgasht*) and repetitiousness)

The fall of the Safavids and the disturbances caused by people of Iranian race who had been made desperate by at one and the same time the injustice and weakness at the centre; the advent of Nādir, his attacks on India and other neighbouring territories, then the fall of the house of Nādir, the rise of the Zand rulers—all had a marked effect upon the state of Persian literature. We have no space in this short survey to refer in detail to this subject—what is worth noting is that Persian poetry in Iran to some extent lost the pristine brilliance it had once enjoyed; basically, the brilliance of poetry has been the product of a quiet and secure life; *à propos* the fact that poets are men of leisure and the products of quiet periods in community history, the author of the *Tazkireh-e Naṣrābādī*, writing about one of his contemporaries called Qismat Mashhadī says: ‘in the art of gold-beating he was unequalled, but his being a poet (for which the prerequisite is being leisured) barred him from this craft’ (Naṣrābādī, 313). One of the distinguished poets of this period, Ḥazīn Lāhījī, has left an autobiography which gives a picture of the way of life of the literati, intellectuals and poets of the period; he himself was one of the many poets and literati who were compelled to seek refuge in India, where he remained till the end of his life.

With the establishment of the Qājār dynasty, whose régime was accompanied by consolidation of government and somewhat greater security, and with the interest they displayed in eulogistic poetry (in fact, poetry of propaganda), the market of poetry began little by little to look up, and, as we shall see, poets in Iran abandoned the mode of the Safavid period and turned to the style of the writers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries (in the *qaṣīdeh*) and of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (in the *ghazal*).

#### *Characteristics of the style of Return (bāzgasht)*

The Indian style, because of the extravagance and prodigality of poets in its use, gradually took on such a form that its understanding was difficult even for experts, let alone ordinary readers and lovers of poetry. For this reason a reaction came into being in Iran (Isfahan and Iraq); a number of poets opposed the style—in the manifesto which has survived them and which is recorded in the *tazkirehs* they express the opinion that:

- 1) the Indian style has carried poetry beyond the bounds of understanding;
- 2) the Indian style is weak in respect of Persian language;
- 3) the model for language and poetry should be sought in the works of the great Classical writers (the poets of the tenth and eleventh centuries).

By virtue of this basic idea, whereby it seeks the highest degree of artistic perfection in the works of the great Classical writers, and in past periods, and claims that one must return to their principles, this movement is called in books on Persian literature 'the school of Return' (*maktab-e bāzgasht*).

One cannot call the 'Return' (*bāzgasht*) a 'school' because it did not of itself put forward anything new in any sense—it is a regression to the past, in whose balance-sheet a single item of profit is counterbalanced by a thousand losses. The only profit worthy of note in the manifesto of the poets of the Return is the question of language. It goes without saying that poetry is an art concerned with language; the whole creative process of poetry is effected in the sphere of language. Again, we have mentioned above that the poetry of the Indian style barely accepted rule and order in the matter of vocabulary; furthermore, where compounds were concerned, it sometimes operated in defiance of analogy and the effect of the poets' inventions and creations (individual or stylistic) forming the basis of imagery and meanings, was that these became difficult to understand.

This call for 'Return' rescued Persian poetry (in Iran) from the danger of obscurity by exaggeration, and the poets who accepted the manifesto of the 'Return' (almost all the poets of Iran), as far as language was concerned, turned their poetry back to the language of the Classical poets. However, language and thought are not separate—this archaic language brought with it the meanings and images of the Classical writers, which meant that Persian poetry, instead of moving forward, returned historically speaking to centuries long left behind. Perhaps if this principle had been mentioned in the manifesto of the group: 'The basics of the Classical language should be pressed into service for modern meanings', Persian poetry would have achieved real reform far more quickly than we have seen it do. But they only had the question of language in view, and were unaware of meanings and images. Precisely because of this, in the words of one contemporary critic, in this period synthetic Saʿdīs, Ḥāfīzes, Farrukhīs and Manūchihīrīs repeatedly appeared, in whose poetry no new content is to be found. It is as if we were to remove a living organism from its natural habitat and place it in alien surroundings—it follows that its life in those surroundings is an unnatural one.

However we have not discussed the aim of these poets. Iranian society was still at this period oblivious of the currents passing in the world around it; precisely because of this, it had not severed connection with the thought of the

Middle Ages; people had the same picture of life—and therefore of poetry—as man in the Middle Ages; however they could find a solution to their needs in the art of the Middle Ages—albeit in an unnatural and synthetic form, the more so as political forces aided the process.

The Qājārs adopted a policy towards poetry quite in contrast to that of the Safavids. Everyone knows that the Safavid regime was aware of the poetry of propaganda (eulogy) and of its role in society, and knew what sort of role had been played by the *qaṣīdehs* of 'Unṣurī (courting the affections of Maḥmūd of Ghazna or those of Mu'izzī (exhibiting Sanjar in an aura of greatness); everyone knows, too, that it could make good use, in the propaganda machine which it had brought into being, of this long-range loud-speaker which was one, if not the only, important means of propagating ideas and of communicating with the people. But the regime laid down a foundation even deeper than this—since it relied upon its descent from the prophet it demanded of poets instead of eulogy of itself, eulogy of its forbears (the *imāms* of the *Shī'eh*); some poets complied, others went to India. Thus in the Safavid period poetry was by way of being a direct medium of propaganda for the governmental machine; and if eulogy was recited to the *Imāms*, its benefit redounded indirectly upon the government and its effect was several times multiplied. Historical sources show that at the start the Safavids were patrons of poetry. It is not known what their motive was. The author of the *Badāyi' al-Vaqāyi'* writes that Shāh Ismā'īl ordered poets to 'reply' to *qaṣīdehs* of Kamāl Ismā'īl and of Salmān Ṣavejī. Why should Shāh Ismā'īl (who himself wrote poetry in Turkī—we possess his *Dīvān*) have patronized Persian poetry? Possibly it was a riposte to his rivals in Transoxiana who, though themselves speakers of Turkī (some knew no Persian at all), were patrons of Persian poetry—some even composed it. But the Qājārs, who did not want to follow in the footsteps of the Safavids, and were in fact following the rules of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, once more brought eulogistic poetry into the service of their propaganda machine. For such a purpose the tried and refined language of the Classical writers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries was the ideal medium—thus it was that the poets who found themselves in the eulogy department of the machine saw that the best course was to make good use of all the experience gained in past centuries in the area of the poetry of the eulogistic *qaṣīdeh*—and once having come upon it gratis, they sat tight on their windfall. Eulogistic poetry in the Qājār period started its life (if 'life' is the right word!) anew; and alongside it other *genres* of Classical poetry, *maṣnavī* and *ghazal*, found a ghost life.

In the period of Return, whilst there exists no detailed and particular manifesto such as might have been published in a book, the poets gave prac-

tical expression to their rejection of the mode of the writers of the Indian style, and to criticism of their complicated imagery and weak language, perverted from the Classical style; thus the author of the *Ḥadāyiq al-Jinān* (Mīrzā ‘Abd ar-Razzāq Beg Dumbulī), quoted by Bahār, *Sabkshināsī* III p. 318, writes on the subject of Mushtāq (one of the first poets of the Return period, who was the pioneer of departure from the Indian style): ‘when the lawn of the plot of verse suffered battering from the steps of the raw thought of Shoukat, Šaʿib, Vaḥīd and their like and from their insipid metaphors (*istiʿāreh*) and frigid proverbial allusions (*tamṣīl*), and quite lost its splendour and freshness, Mushtāq came to view the rose-garden of poetry and folded up the scroll of that company’s diction for all the world like a bud.’

Such in fact is Persian poetry in Iran of the Qājār and Zand periods that if it were excised from the history of Persian literature it would be no kind of loss, since its archetype copy, so to speak, survives in the *Divāns* of Saʿdī, Manūchihīrī, ‘Unṣurī and Amīr Muʿizzī.

In the poetry of the Indian style artistry was based upon the surprise of the reader, by means of factors to which we have alluded (varieties of imagery, meanings etc.) and in the poetry of the Qājār period too the basis of enjoyment rests upon another kind of surprise—surprise at imitation. I myself have at times enjoyed the poetry of Surūsh and Šabā (two distinguished poets of the Return style)—and when I have reflected upon the reason for this, I have realised that they have reduced me to surprise—surprise, that is, at how they have contrived to imitate the language of the Classical writers and the music of Classical poetry. Today in Iran, amongst the much older generation, we have literati who enjoy the poetry of the Qājār period, and in the final analysis the cause of their enjoyment is traceable back to this basic point—they are astonished at, and enjoy, the ability these poets display in imitating the Classical writers.

The language of Classical poetry, pressed into service for the eulogistic *qaṣīdeh* of the Qājār period, in the poetry of Šabā, Surūsh and Qāʾānī (with some alteration in the poetry of Qāʾānī) was virtually the basis of the poetic art up to the end of the reign of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh; when these writers turned to poetry other than the eulogy (for the most part erotic poetry) they availed themselves of the style of Saʿdī and sometimes of Ḥāfiz. Thus the *ghazals* of this period are in fact the *ghazals* of Saʿdī and Ḥāfiz whose pen-names (*takhalluṣ*) have been changed to those of Furūghī Bistāmī, Nishāt Iṣfahānī, and Yaghmaʾī Jandaqī—but which lack the beauty and freshness of the poetry of Saʿdī and Ḥāfiz.

To sum up, one can say that Persian poetry in this period attempts:

1) In the sphere of meanings and types of emotion—to speak of the same love with which the poetry of Sa'dī and Ḥāfiz was infused and which bears the stamp of the life of people of the time; and (without the slightest alteration) to speak of the same morals, pride, satire, asceticism, philosophy, mysticism as they had. Descriptions of nature, too, are identical with those which one can find in the poetry of Manūchihri and Farrukhi.

2) In the sphere of imagination; the poetic images of this period are absolutely the same as may be found in the *Divāns* of Farrukhi and Manūchihri (in the sphere of Nature); and in the field of love-poetry the repertoire of images is none other than the very one which gave yeoman service in the work of the Classical poets (particularly Sa'dī and Ḥāfiz) and went into honourable retirement.

3) With respect to poetic language, both in the sphere of vocabulary and in that of the syntax of language, the poetry of the Qājār period is a clichified repetition of the language of Sa'dī (in the *ghazal*). It is as different as the poetry of the Timurid period (first half of the fifteenth century) from popular parlance and living currents of language. No freshly coined proverb or new symbol has found its way into the poetry of these writers.

4) Metre and rhyme are identical with those of the tenth and eleventh centuries, and prosodical technique is similarly identical. In the realm of refrains and lexical compounds they were unable to take even as much of a step forward as the Indian school.

5) Formally, the *qaṣīdeh* is devoted to eulogy and elegy (the common function of this form); the *ghazal* to erotic subjects—however, in the 'love' involved, not the slightest hint of the personality of the poet appears; it is pointless to look for personal experiences of the poets even to the extent of the Incidental style of the first half of the tenth century. Persian poetry, at the stage of making the break from the Indian style and attaching itself to official Court poetry—examples of which we shall see in the poetry of Šabā and Qā'anī and Surūsh—half turned back on its heels without moving from its position, and stirred; the ancestors of this quasi-movement were several poets for the lives of most of whom Isfahan was the centre. These poets are a little different from their successors (who as a matter of course hastened to copy and repeat laureate and court poetry as current at the court of the Ghaznavids); they identified themselves more with the *ghazal* than with *qaṣīdehs*. For the period is still the period of the *ghazal*; but in the *ghazals* of these poets, as we shall see, no kind of novelty is to be seen. The most famous of them are: Ḥatīf Iṣfahānī (who has a *tarjī'band* on mysticism, simply comprising words expressed by the Šūfīs time and time again in various forms; still, it is one of the best works of this period), Āzar Begdilī (author of the *tazkireh Ātishkadeh*), 'Āshiq Iṣfahānī and Saḥāb.

As we pointed out at the beginning, the only poet in the Qājār period who stands out at all as a personality and whom one can distinguish by comparison from his fellow-poets is Qā'ānī Shīrāzī. His contemporaries count him as one of the greatest poets in the history of Persian literature, and the strongly-felt influence which he had on contemporaries was responsible for a number of them being counted as his followers and imitators.

Before we say something about Qā'ānī Shīrāzī (d. 1854), we must mention the name of a poet relatively famous but of much less worth, Fath 'Alī Khān Šabā Kāshānī (d. 1822/3), since he is considered the ancestor of the eulogistic poets of this period, and the history of the renewal of the life of the *qaṣīdeh* and eulogistic poetry (if indeed we may call it the 'renewal of its life') is synonymous with him. This man, who was the eulogist of Fath 'Alī Shāh Qājār, left many *qaṣīdehs* in praise of him, all in the Classical language, repeating the poetic clichés of the Classical writers. He also wrote a poem imitating the *Shāhnāme* of Firdausī, describing the wars of Fath 'Alī Shāh, which he called *Shāhānshāhnāme*. It is difficult to find verses in it which bear comparison (in point of firmness and beauty of expression) with the lamest verses of the imitators of the *Shāhnāme* in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Qā'ānī Shīrāzī on the other hand effected a restricted change (if we may call it so) in the sphere of the form of Persian poetry (dedicated to the customary purposes and meanings of a thousand years' standing)—this was not so much a change as a kind of relative felicity in selecting a particular manner of imitation; that is to say, he tried to create, from the experiments of the Classical writers in the field of the outward side of poetry, an amalgam to some extent personal to himself. This is what led to his being treated as the originator of a style. But by no standard can one treat this as a separate style. We are not here concerned with any new definition of style (such as is given by modern linguistics and semantics); we mean method of using metres and rhymes and the words of poetry. In contrast to his contemporaries, who most frequently based themselves upon the metres of the fourth and fifth centuries of the Hijra, (with their special pauses) (Surūsh and Šabā look to Farrukhī and Manūchihīrī), Qā'ānī tried to use rhythmic, gay metres such as some of the metres of Khāqānī, or metres in which one can employ double rhymes. True, he has left much poetry in the forms and metres of his contemporaries (or better, the corpus of plagiarism of his contemporaries), but his personal idiom, which they have termed the 'style of Qā'ānī', involved the type of poetry just described. The rhyming metres, use of assonance, use to saturation point of Classical simile and metaphor, predilection for the description of Nature, here and there boldness in the employment of words defying the grammar of

literary language, all have contributed towards Qā'ānī's being considered the originator of a 'style'.

It seems that Qā'ānī knew French also; he wrote a book too in imitation of the *Gulistān*, called *Parīshān*.

Another poet who deserves mention along with Qā'ānī is Yaghmā Jandaqī (d. 1859). Mīrzā Abū 'l-Ḥasan Yaghmā is mainly famous for his satirical poetry; he may be reckoned the last great satirist in the history of Classical Persian poetry. His satire, based on obscene words and terms connoting sexual deviation, follows in this respect the poetry of Sūzānī and his like; now and again it waxes social—a welcome trait indeed. In a period when all poets made an art of describing imaginary sweethearts or hackneyed patrons dating from the Ghaznavid or Seljūq eras, even this amount of deviation from the norm is praiseworthy. Yaghmā has also left a certain amount of 'laments' (*nauḥeh*) (a kind of religious poem performed at mourning sessions during special ceremonies); if we want to examine this facet of the Persian literary *oeuvre*, Yaghmā is considered one of the distinguished writers of this type of poetry also.

Two relatively good *ghazal* writers of this period, some of whose poetry has achieved a certain fame, and who emerge with some measure of success when measured against their contemporaries, are Nishāṭ Iṣfahānī (d. 1828/9) and Mīrzā 'Abbās Furūghī Biṣṭāmī (d. 1857), whose *ghazals* have gained more renown than those of Nishāṭ, and whose poetry has a mystic burden to it.

Other poets of this period are: Mijmar Iṣfahānī (1810/11), Viṣāl Shīrāzī (1848/9), Hidāyat Jāristānī (1871/2), Maḥmūd Khān Ṣabā (1893/4) and many more.

Two poets must deliberately be separated from the main body of these eulogists; we mention them in conclusion, in spite of the fact that from the point of view of the merit of their work they should take pride of place in the discussion—Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī and Faṭḥ Allāh Khān Shaibānī. Qā'im Maqām is one of the earliest literati of this period (d. 1835) and Faṭḥ Allāh Khān one of the last (d. 1891); but these two poets are truly considered the avant-garde of the Constitutional movement, because of the interest in social questions found in their work. We deal with them at the end of this discussion as the first blossoms at the end of Winter who bear the glad news of Spring.

Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī, who used the *takhalluṣ* Ṣanā'ī, and lived from 1779 to 1835, is a figure in both politics and culture—and in both fields he enjoys great honour. In the realm of politics and government he may be considered one of the most honourable and devoted *vazīrs* of Iran in recent times and, like all honourable politicians of our land, he came to a bad end—he was strangled in the Nigāristān Garden on the orders of Muḥammad Shāh as the

result of a plot by his political rivals, who were traitors (1835). Qā'im Maqām is considered to be the prime mover in every kind of innovation in Persian prose of the modern period; we may not have had any prose as stylish as his from the time of the *Gulistān* of Sa'dī down to today. The essays of Qā'im im Maqām, despite the fact that they come under the heading of mannered prose, are eminently graceful. One must also count him the first flash of reform in the sphere of poetry, since the first sign of development in Persian poetry had its beginnings in the realm of meanings and of the aim of poetry—and it was Qā'im Maqām who drew poetry, in the plainest manner possible, into the area of social questions.

One can see in his *qaṣṭdehs* glimpses of social issues of the Iran of his day, when he looks at the situation with a critical eye. He has one poem called '*Jalāyirnāmeḥ*' which he wrote in a more or less humorous vein: he has contrived to bring the poetry close to street and bazaar language; in fact he had an effect upon one of the greatest poets of the recent period, Īraj Mīrzā: Īraj wrote his most famous work, the '*Ārifnāmeḥ*', after the style of Qā'im Maqām's work.

After Qā'im Maqām, Faṭḥ Allāh Khān Shaibānī (1825/6-1891) holds a pre-eminent place in poetry. Qā'im Maqām tried to escape to some extent from imitation of Classical writers, but Shaibānī tried to imitate their language as well as possible. However, unlike his contemporaries, he now and again employed this language as a medium for sharp social criticism. Some of his poems which describe chaotic political and social conditions, pulsate with blood and thunder and real life—and remind one vividly of the firmness of Classical poetry. The history of the Persian literary renaissance in the modern period will be inextricably linked with the names of Qā'im Maqām and Shaibānī.

### *Persian prose in this period*

#### *from the end of the Safavid period to the beginnings of the Constitutional movement*

From the latter period of the Safavid dynasty, or rather somewhat later than its demise, Persian literature (in Iran) took a different road from India, Transoxiana and other Persian-speaking areas. Poetry took on a new complexion. Prose too made a start in the direction of rather more description coupled with more firmness and sophistication. In fact one can say that in the Qājār period, till the beginning of the Constitutional movement, Persian prose continued the old style, becoming more sophisticated and attractive by comparison with the Safavid period. The prose writers of the Qājār period

knew Persian better than their Safavid predecessors; and among prose writers of this period figures like Mīrzā 'Abd al-Vahhāb Nishāt, Fāzil Khān Garrūsī, Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī (who must be considered virtually the originator of modern prose) and some historians like Rīzā Qulī Khān Hidāyat and Muḥammad Taqī Sipihr created models of comparative excellence; it was out of their experiments that the simple prose of the Constitutional period was born. In actual fact the inventor of simplicity coupled with adherence to rules and, at times, description, was Qā'im Maqām Farāhānī, whose prose notwithstanding his use of conventions such as rhyming prose, Arabic phrases and at times quotations from Classical poetry, is extremely simple, natural and pleasant. Perhaps we may not have had since the *Gulistān* of Sa'dī any prose (in this style) as attractive as the essays of Qā'im Maqām.

The prose writers of the Qājār period whose writing has literary worth are: Muḥammad al-Malik Sīnakī (d. 1880), the author of the *Risāleh-e Muḥammadīyeh*; Farhād Mīrzā Mu'tamad ad-Dauleh, a Qājār prince (1817/18-1888) and author of essays and some other books; Ḥasan 'Alī Khān Amīr Niẓām Garrūsī (1820/1-1899/1900); Nādir Mīrzā (1826/7-1884/5), the author of the History of Tabriz, *Tārīkh-e Tabrīz*; Mīrzā 'Abd al-Laṭīf Ṭasūjī (d. before 1879/80), the able translator of the very well known book *Hazār o Yek Shab* ('The 1001 Nights'), who translated the work from Arabic into extremely stylish Persian prose (the original of the '1001 Nights' was Persian; then it was translated into Arabic, and was yet again rendered into Persian by this translator, since the ancient Persian text has disappeared). Another writer is Qā'im Maqām, who has been discussed above.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE CONSTITUTIONAL PERIOD

(Literature of life, literature of people)

The literature of the Constitutional period (the chronological span of this literature cannot be accurately reckoned in years and months) comprises that section of Persian letters dating on the one hand from the last third of the reign of Naṣir ad-Dīn Shāh, and whose general characteristics, on the other, appear in Persian literature down to the years round about the *coup d'état* of 1299 (H.Š), and even some years later.

To put it in another way, it is literature in which (be it prose or poetry) are reflected all the searching and effort expended by the Iranian nation towards the attainment of statutory government and severance of the thread of the order of despotism. One can say that the appearance of this kind of literary work is contemporaneous with the apprehension of the idea of 'freedom' in the European sense; the word 'freedom' (*āzādi*) was much used in Classical Persian poetry and we can find many poems about it, but the Western meaning of 'freedom', which is statutory government and a social order based on equality, is something which has been reflected in the thought and emotions of the poets and literati of Iran as the result of acquaintance with the West.

Progressives in Iran had some slight acquaintance with European modes of thought and social order and the way of life of people in the West, from the end of the Safavid period onwards. Some gained acquaintance with this kind of life by way of India. Perhaps one of the first people to pay attention to this question is Ḥazīn Lāhijī (1692-1766), the distinguished poet of the latter part of the Safavid period. He refers in one of his works to the order of government and way of life of the Europeans and to its advantages, and writes: 'Perhaps the only way of setting to rights the situation in Iran is by organizing the administration of the country on the lines of the methods of the Westerners.' Side by side with him, and a little later, 'Abd al-Laṭīf Shūshtarī in the *Tuḥfat al-Ālam* gives many descriptions of the life of the people of England, which are an indication of his acquaintance with statutory government in Britain. He wrote this book at the beginning of the Qājār regime and published it in India. His discussion of Freemasonry and of the equality of all Englishmen in the eyes of the law is well worth reading. His contemporary and friend Mīrzā Abū Ṭalīb (1769/70-1806/7) also, in the travelogue he wrote known as *Masīr-i Ṭalībī* describes in detail the way of life of the people of England, which he saw with his own eyes. He may be considered the first

Iranian to have had direct acquaintance with British democracy and to have recorded it and drawn it to the attention of others.

The idea of freedom gradually gained currency in Iran by way of India and Russia, as well as by way of the Ottoman Empire, that is to say by crossing the bridge of the Turkish language (of Istanbul); a number of progressives of this period, Mīrzā Fath 'Alī Ākhundzādeh (1813-1878), Malkam Khān (1833/4-1908/9), and Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn Afghānī (1838/9-1896/7) were active in publishing it abroad. Malkam as a politician and reformer, Mīrzā Fath 'Alī as a writer and revolutionary critic, and Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn as a social and political thinker basing himself upon religion—all in their various ways prepared the way for the publication of the new thought and the principles of the idea of freedom.

Naturally, somewhat later, these ideas are found reflected in Persian poetry and literature (literature in the sense of its creative aspect, not just any writing which happens to be in Persian).

*A poetry which is life*

In the Constitutional period and the years contemporary with Constitutional ideas, several literary manifestos were published in Iran. The first, by virtue of having historical precedence rather than of being hard-hitting and violent, is the declaration of Mīrzā Fath 'Alī Ākhundzādeh (1813-1878) who in the middle of the period of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Shāh vigorously criticized Classical literature and the style of eulogy and laudatory writing; he gave expression to his criticisms by himself writing several plays, the first examples of the drama in the published literature of Iran. After him, Mīrzā Āqā Khān Kirmānī (1853/4-1896/7) extended the principles behind the words of Ākhundzādeh and in a new declaration he thus criticizes and judges Classical literature:

'We must see what fruit the plant which our poets have planted in the garden of poesy has borne, and what result it has produced; where they have exaggerated, the result has been to implant lies in man's simple nature; where they have eulogized and flattered, the effect has been the encouragement of *vazīrs* and kings to various kinds of depravity and vilification, where they sing of mysticism and Šūfism, no fruit has been produced other than laziness and animal torpor, and the engendering of beggars, wandering dervishes, and shameless reprobates; where they have concocted lyrics about roses and nightingales, the product has only been the deterioration of the morals of the young.'

That is an example of criticism of poetry in the fields of thought and subject in the Constitutional period. One can see the same thought in the writings of

Malkam Khān also, as well as in the poetry of the Constitutional period, such as that of Adīb al-Mamālik Farāhānī, who criticizes the clichified images of poetry thus—

O Poets! How long will there be left on the plate of thought  
The 'lime-like breasts' of the Beloved and her 'apple chin'?

but Adīb al-Mamālik was himself one of those who from the point of view of the technical questions of poetry was hidebound by the 'lime-like breasts of the Beloved' and the 'apple of the chin'—with the difference that his poetry is full of burning social themes and of firmness of form in the province of wording.

The poets of this period for the most part declare themselves in a manifesto; 'Ishqī who is one of the most radical of them (he lived at the end of this period) takes a reformist view of rhyme—other poets too talk of literary reform: this does not generally go beyond the boundary of subject-matter.

The first experiments in this vein reflected in Persian poetry were those of poets like Qā'im Maqām and Shaibānī; we have mentioned them above as the pioneers of the idea of freedom in the sphere of literature. However the fiery spirit of patriotic poetry and the commotion of the Constitutional struggle are basically reflected in the poetry of writers such as Adīb al-Mamālik, Sayyid Ashraf, Dihkhudā, and Bahār: these were men whose poetry, simultaneous with political and social activity in the cause of democracy, enjoyed recognition and publication.

From the beginning of the reign of Muẓaffar ad-Dīn Shāh, Persian poetry completely took on the character of Constitutionalism, and one must place Adīb al-Mamālik before all the writers of this circle in point both of precedence and of chronological order.

### *Characteristics of Constitutional poetry*

The general characteristics of the Constitutional poetry of Iran, by comparison with previous periods, are:

In the sphere of content and the aims of poetry, poetry leaves the court and moves to the street and the bazaar, and is full of blood and thunder, the heat of life and ideals. It is poetry which, whatever criticism may be levelled against it, is free from the accusation of lacking contact with life.

For centuries Persian poetry had become far divorced from life. All the efforts which the poets of the Safavid period made to arrive at development, reform and (in their own term) a 'new mode', amounted to no more than change on the surface of poetic expression and in the nature of imagery. But

the poetry of the Constitutional period changed the content and emotional range of Persian poetry to such an extent that in a sense all its connection with the past was cut off.

What can be read in the poetry of the Constitutional period—spanning the time from the reign of Muẓaffar ad-Dīn Shāh to a few years after the *coup d'état* of 1299 H.Š., falls into a number of general 'waves', in point of language, form and technical questions of poetry:

- 1) supporters of the common people
- 2) 'wave' of traditional literati
- 3) moderate 'wave' (supporters of reform based on tradition).

Before we proceed to analyze the characteristics of each of these 'waves' we must mention some points about the general characteristics of poetry of the Constitutional period, or 'Constitutionalism' (in poetry):—

A) In the sphere of thought and content—issues which entered Persian poetry for the first time and which are imports from the West, stemming from acquaintance with Western culture and thought—

- 1) 'homeland' (*vaṭan*)
- 2) freedom and law
- 3) new culture and modern education
- 4) praise of modern science
- 5) women—the question of women and of sexual equality
- 6) criticism of traditional morals
- 7) campaign against religious superstition (and sometimes against religion itself).

Of course, the poets do not adopt an identical approach in confronting these problems, for instance 'homeland' has different senses in their various views. The 'homeland' of which Sayyid Ashraf (*Nasīm-e Shimāl*) speaks is 'homeland' conceived with all its full Islamic and *Shr'eh* flavour; whereas when 'Ishqī talks of the 'homeland' he is seeking 'Iran' in the purest sense—like all romantic progressives, he is seeking it in the Sassanian period and the time before the Arab Conquest. Thus a certain anti-Arab feeling can be seen in the poetry of 'Ishqī, whereas Sayyid Ashraf praises the Arabs and says:

Why should I not give my heart to the Arabs, as Muḥammad is an Arab?

(It so happens that both these poets are *sayyids* and are of Arab race.)

Freedom and law too have no particularly determined boundaries and acceptations; there is no pre-created Utopia on the basis of which one can establish freedom and law in society; but one can find much praise of the general idea of freedom and law in the poetry of this period.

The question of the campaign against religious superstition, or religious fundamentals, too, has more than one aspect, and the poets' approach to it is varied. Some criticized incidentals of religion which have a superstitious underlay, for example the question of *rauḡehkhvānī* (mourning sessions for martyrs) and *nauḡeh-e sīnehzanī* (lamentations accompanied by self-mutilation)—as Īraj did—whilst others denied the basic proposition, such as 'Ishqī who is a Darwinist and says with the utmost clarity—

The story of Adam and Eve, too, is imagination and a lie;  
I am of the race of monkeys—it is a story that I am from the earth.

B) In the sphere of poetic language:—it is clear that the entry into Persian poetry of such feelings and emotions (a poetry which once addressed itself to the sphere of the nobility, usually educated and acquainted with literary matters, and now wants to establish a relationship with the common people and the masses) leads to the search for a language to cope with the confrontation with these ideas. Thus Persian poetry in order to fulfil a deep social need (and not merely with the object of the 'artifice for artifice's sake' which characterized the poets of the Timurid period) draws close to the language of street and bazaar. In this period words and expressions taken from the language of people of the street and bazaar become common. European words, bringing with them new meanings in the sphere of the social order and politics, to say nothing of industry and technology, enter the language of Persian poetry—with some slight cosmetic touching-up on arrival.

A precedent for the employment of European words in Persian poetry (not so much, however, from sheer necessity) can first be found in the poems of versified works of Mīrzā Abū Ṭalīb, author of the *Mas̄r-i Ṭalībī* (approximate year of the travelogue 1804/5)—he sometimes perseveres in using words and even near-sentences from English and French in his verse—but one cannot consider him a poet in the proper sense of the word; nevertheless from a historical point of view he must be given credit for having been first in the field with such experiments—as far as the writer is aware, he is the very first person to have taken a step forward on this road—in fact, as we have pointed out above, some poets of the Indian style, by way of the *milieu* of India, used in their poetry foreign (European) words common in that *milieu*; however in the Constitutional period the use of this kind of word among distinguished progressive poets is very common indeed. Adīb al-Mamālīk is one of those who is more or less prodigal in this field; also Īraj, who with his special tastefulness tried now and then to introduce French words into his poetry (in such a way as not to shock the taste of the Iranian reader):

*All the time* 'give 'cartons' and 'take 'dossiers',  
*All the time* 'bring credit from the shop door!',  
*All the time* I sat contentedly behind the table  
*All the time* I stuffed files inside the 'chemise'<sup>1</sup>

where the juxtaposition of the French words '*carton*', '*dossier*' and '*chemise*' with the colloquial Persian words '*hey*' ('all the time'), *tapāndam* ('I stuffed') and *lā* ('inside') illustrate his efforts in the field of reform of the Persian language.<sup>1</sup> Political terms coined after political and social terms of the West are extremely common in the poetry of this period. Some poets resorted to these borrowings of necessity; others by way of artifice—they supposed that reform of poetry and literature in Persian could be carried out in this way.

C) In the sphere of imagery: the poetry of the Constitutional period is so passionate, strong and fast-moving that it does not leave any scope for pictures or images—that is to say, the basis of the poet's art in this period does not rest on innovation in the field of imagery. Thus it is that the inexperienced critic of today who is using later standards, standards developed in Europe after the war, when he sits in judgment over poetry of the Constitutional period, approaches it as 'verse' since one can hardly find in it new imagery or elements of 'new expression'. Even traditional critics dislike the basic central works of Constitutional poetry (the poetry of Sayyid Ashraf, 'Ārif, 'Ishqī and Farrukhī); nevertheless, in the experiments made by Iraj and 'Ishqī in the poetry of this period and in some of the works of Bahār towards the end of this period also, examples of the effort made towards the attainment of 'new expression' can clearly be seen, and if we count the pioneer world of Nīmā Yūshij and Abū 'l-Qāsim Lāhūtī at the end of this era as part of the poetry of this period, a fresh complexion is increasingly obvious in the expression of poetry. We shall revert to this topic below.

D) In the sphere of the configuration of poetry: the configuration of poetry in this period consists of the familiar Classical and traditional forms, with this difference that the traditional way of employing these forms has undergone a certain change. For instance the *mustazād* (increment poem) which was an experiment in artifice in Classical Persian poetry, examples of which were sporadic in the extreme in Persian literature before the Constitutional period (that is to say from the fifth to the thirteenth centuries of the Hijra), suddenly becomes so common in this period that it may be considered the basic and common form of poetry of this era. The *qaṣīdeh* no longer retains the popularity it had in the Qājār period; nevertheless it is one of the basic forms, particularly in the 'wing of literati' in poetry—that is to say, Bahār, Adīb

<sup>1</sup> The words in question are italicized.

al-Mamālik, Adīb Pīshāvarī; but in the 'populist' wing the *qaṣīdeh* is not a favoured form. The *ghazal* is infrequent; where it occurs, it has a political flavour. There are simply no good or even middling erotic or mystical *ghazals*, that is to say, of the level of the choice *ghazals* of the Qājār period—save in the poetry of some writers standing outside the field of Constitutional poetry—for instance, Ṣafā Iṣfahānī and Ḥabīb Khurāsānī. The same can be said of the *maṣnavī*, particularly long *maṣnavīs*: the best examples are to be sought in the poetry of Īraj.

At the end of this period, under the influence of European literature, a variety of form

|   |   |     |   |   |
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was the subject of experiment by Īraj, Bahār and Jaʿfar Zāminehī—it is also seen in the works of Nīmā Yūshij. One of the best varieties of poetry which grows up towards the end of this period is the *taṣnīf*. The *taṣnīf*, whose erotic and, at times, social form is seen in the *ḥarāreh* or popular songs (which for the most part are not recorded in books and which have a folkloric side), and which has a long history in popular culture, entered the service of the poetry of the élite during this period; they invested it with a social flavour: the most effective form which Constitutional poetry introduced among the common people was the *taṣnīf*. Here the greatest poet, and one who scored outstanding success in this field, is ʿĀrif Qazvīnī; after him comes Bahār.

Constitutional poetry, in view of the changes which took place deep in society, and of the different classes which had to do with it, is extremely varied; that is to say, this is the first period when Persian poetry, in a limited section of time, shows so many styles and modes. The general 'waves' of poetic taste during this period are:

1) the literati on the side of tradition, who despite all the interest they may have had in social questions, are not prepared to contravene the letter of the law of tradition—Adīb al-Mamālik, Adīb Pīshāvarī, Adīb Nīshāpurī, Vaḥīd Dastgirdī, Kamālī,...

2) poets with an eye to approval by a wide section of the people, especially the popular reader—the struggle for the Constitution is the predominant feature in their poetry:—ʿĀrif, ʿIshqī, Sayyid Ashraf (Naṣīm-i Shimāl), Far-rukḥī Yazdī, Dihkhudā and Bahār (the poetry of the last two poets is varied and falls under two or three groups.)

3) poets on the side of reform but reform based on tradition, firmness of form and poetic language—Īraj, Lāhūtī, Dihkhudā (in some poems), and Bahār (in some poems.)

4) there is a fourth 'wave' also in the poetry of this period which is oblivious to worldly events; there is no point in naming all the poets, but Ḥabīb Khurāsānī, Ṣafā Iṣfahānī and Ṣafī 'Alī Shāh are three mystic poets whose poetry is typical of the mystic poetry of this period.

The main figures of the poetry of this period are:

1) Bahār (1886-1951), politician, journalist, scholar and University professor: from Tehran, undoubtedly the principal poet of his time; because of the variety and volume of his literary activities, he has left his mark everywhere in the history of the Constitutional movement. In spite of all the variety displayed in the forms of his poetry, he must be considered the last great *qaṣīdeh*-writer of Persian poetry. Without any doubt no *qaṣīdeh* writer of his eminence has appeared since the time of Khāqānī.

2) Īraj (1874-1926). In point of volume of work, he does not equal the rank of Bahār, but because of his acquaintance with European literature, and because of having attained to a stage in poetic language marked at once by firmness and fluency, he had (and still has) an unusually great influence both in his own period and subsequently. Since the time of Sa'adī, his is the most fluent poetic language.

3) Adīb al-Mamālik (1860/1-1917/18); the first poet of masterly experience to compose poetry of the most vigorous kind in traditional forms and Classical language; his poetry, for all its strangeness in point of vocabulary and of the general culture of the poet (who was extremely learned in literature) still overflows with the blood and thunder of the Constitutional period.

4) 'Ārif (1882-1934); The best ballad-writer of this period. He is a poet of the masses whose political *taṣnīfāt*—which the poet himself sang in a melodious voice at his political concerts—were sung everywhere. His political *ghazals* too are recitable and attractive, although his language is weak.

5) 'Ishqī (1894-1924); a young revolutionary journalist who paid with his life for his patriotism and self-sacrifice during the synthetic popular disturbances set on foot by the British in order to overthrow the Qājār regime. His language is fast-moving and abusive, but sincere and patriotic. He made experiments in the realm of the reform of poetry some of which can be considered the starting-point of literary reform in his time. The first verse dramas in Persian literature are by him.

6) Dihkhudā (1297 H.Q.-1334 H.Š.): politician, man of letters; exceptional scholar and distinguished writer of this age. Dihkhudā wrote little prose and verse, but what there is is sufficient to merit him the title of pioneer of modern Persian prose, and father of the language of the story in our literature: he is a reformer and pioneer in poetry too—the level of his scholarship is unequalled;

the largest dictionary of the Persian language (*Lughatnāmeḥ*) is by him (it exceeds 100 volumes).

7) Sayyid Ashraf (1870/1-1933/4); Sayyid Ashraf, editor of the populist and influential newspaper *Nasīm-i Shimāl*, who himself became famous under the name of his newspaper, is the most thoroughgoing populist poet to appear in this period. His poetry is in the language of the common people, in respect both of outward form and inner meaning.

8) Lāhūtī (b. 1305 H.Q.): Politician and revolutionary poet, who had a most eventful life—after the guerilla warfare of the struggle for Communist revolution in Iran, he was forced to flee his country and appeared in the Soviet Union, where he remained for the rest of his life and where he died. He is one of the most active and versatile poets of this period; it is difficult to find his equal. Lāhūtī is responsible for many experiments in the field of the content, language and form of Persian poetry, which are extremely important in its development.

9) Farrukhī Yazdī (1889-1939): Marxist revolutionary poet and liberal journalist who rose from the depressed working class of Iranian society; till the end of his life (which was a long story of struggle, prison and ill-treatment) he showed steadfastness in defence of the under-privileged; he is the greatest *ghazal*-writer of this period; his political *ghazals* are unequalled in Persian literature. Although Farrukhī was not particularly well educated, his poetry is more sophisticated and coherent than that of his contemporaries. He was killed by air injections by order of Rīzā Shāh in 1318 H.Š. in the *Qasr* prison (once it was realised that even prison and torture were not turning him from his beliefs.)

10) Nīmā Yūshīj (1897/8-1960), the pen-name of ‘Alī Isfandiyārī, is the father of modern Persian poetry and the founder of its principles. He began writing his poetry at the end of this period. He should be reckoned a poet of the post-Constitution era, since he became famous as a poet after the coup d’état of 1299 H.Š., and in particular the publication of his distinguished works took place, and their influence and effect were felt, after the Second World War and the collapse of the regime of Rīzā Shāh. Nīmā was also a shrewd critic, who, under the influence of his study of Western literature, made a basic change in the course of Persian poetry, and presented it with a new dimension. We shall discuss him separately.

11) Parvīn I’tīšāmī (1906/7-1941/2); one of the most independent of the poets of the latter part of this period, and the most influential of them, is Parvīn I’tīšāmī. The poetry of Parvīn is a mixture of the Classical ‘Wisdom and Advice’ with a certain sympathy and reaction to environment which at times recalls the brilliant works of Classical writers and sometimes has

something of Romanticism about it, where one can descry the influence of Western literature. The concern for the lives of the depressed and working classes found in her poetry surpasses that of all her contemporaries. She revived the *genre* of 'Disputation' in Persian poetry in the most stylish manner; it was pressed into service for subject-matter of concern to the poet. Parvīn belongs to the period of the coup d'état but she can be placed at the end of the poets of the Constitutional Movement.

### *Prose in the Constitutional period*

Journalism in the Constitutional period brought Persian prose down from the sky of worthless artifice and technique to the earth of daily life, with all the frustrations that attend it. The prose of newspapers in the Qājār period can normally be criticized from the point of view of grammar, but it is simple and not at all inept at expressing its meaning. The history of the development of this kind of prose—which may also be considered the father of the language of the story—goes back to the middle of the reign of Naṣir ad-Dīn Shāh. If we exclude the simple writing (mixed with technique) of Qā'im Maqām, we must say that it began with the work of writers like: 'Abd ar-Raḥīm Ṭalibof Tabrīzī (1834/5-1911/12), Ḥāj Zain al-'Ābidīn Marāghehī (1839/40-1910/11) and the translation of the 'Ḥājī Bābā of Isfahān' of James Morier by Mīrẓā Ḥabīb Iṣfahānī (d. 1897/8).

It would not be erroneous to say that the *Charand Parand* (a collection of political and social treatises) of 'Alī Akbar Dihkhudā (published in the newspaper *Šūr-i Isrāfīl* 1907/8) is the beginning of experiments in the language of the story. Although his object was not to write stories, he paid close attention to the question of 'tone' (*lahn*) in his writings. That is, before his time every individual Iranian, in story and narrative writing, to whatever class he belonged, spoke the same language as the writer used for his writing—but Dihkhudā in this work tried to represent each individual by a particular tone. Thus in these writings *ākhunds* (religious brethren) have their own special tone, old women have theirs, and so on. Muḥammad 'Alī Jamālẓādeh, who has concentrated somewhat on the question of tone in his short stories, is without doubt under the influence of Dihkhudā here.

In the interval between the Constitutional movement and the rise of modern writing (*Yekt bād o yekt nabūd* of Jamālẓādeh 1922) the prose of the writers who wrote historical stories, such as Shaikh Mūsā Naṣrī Hamadānī (publ. c. 1919) and San'atīẓādeh Kirmānī (b. 1895/6) is worth mentioning; so also is the prose of these novel-writers—Mushfiq Kāẓimī and 'Abbās Khalīlī, who wrote social and critical novels.

The writing of political, social and critical articles in the newspapers of this period was extremely common, and assumed a peculiar type of prose which may be called 'article prose'; possibly the best example of it is the prose of Muḥammad ʿAlī Furūghī (d. 1321 H.Š.) which is at one and the same time simple and sophisticated; every single word has been carefully chosen.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### AFTER THE COUP D'ÉTAT OF 1921

(Buds of renewal of black winter)

In the first years of the coup d'état of 1921, Constitutional poetry made its last attempts to preserve the freedom and independence of Iran and to protect the seed which at the cost of so much heartbreak was little by little growing in Iranian society—but it could not kick against the pricks of demagoguery and foreign money. The British, who had no liking for the Qājār regime, but realised that if democracy took a hold in Iran, the danger of Bolshevism was inescapable there—and a thousand and one dangers elsewhere, for instance in India—by taking advantage of the weakness of the government, were able to bring forward a man who by virtue of certain traits in his personality was able to appear in a much whiter sheet than the Qājār kings.

First, Sayyid Zīā al-Dīn Ṭabāṭabāʾī (a young journalist) came on the scene through the coup d'état which he effected in Isfand 1299 (March 1921) by various cheating means; he brought with him the Army commander (later Rīzā Shāh). After a while, in accordance with British instructions, he left the stage (though it was said that he was in touch with events behind the scenes till the last days of his life).

The government of Sayyid Zīā ad-Dīn presented a front calculated to deceive the masses; when he came to Tehran with money from the British—and through careful planning on their part—he set out from Qazvīn near Tehran with a detachment of Cossacks and took Tehran by night!) he announced that his aim was to end corruption and aristocratic government; when Aḥmad Shāh was compelled to write out the decree making him Prime Minister, he said, 'I accept on condition that in the form of address of my Prime Ministerial decree the words 'Exalted Highness' (*ḥaẓrat-i ashraf*), customarily employed in the case of other Prime Ministers, are not used.' This was in fact arranged and in a short while, through the plans of the British and by dint of his own native cleverness he was able to attract popularity—so much so in fact that when his mission was completed and he left the scene, a poet like ʿĀrif Qazvīnī (of whose good motives and patriotism there is not the slightest doubt) composed one of his most famous *taṣnīʿ*<sup>1</sup> in praise of him and as an appeal for his return. This poem is so sincere that some of its *miṣraʿ* have become proverbial; analysis of the content of the poem enables one to gather that the British had put their finger on one of the most sensitive nerves of

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<sup>1</sup> ballad

Iranian society—the feeling of detestation of aristocratic government—since it was popularly supposed that with the advent of people like Sayyid Zīā the day of aristocratic government in Iran was over. ‘Ārif writes in the poem:

You whom the hand of Truth seeks as her refuge, come back!  
 My eye longs to look on you—come back!  
 You whose army is the mass of the nation—come back!  
 May I be a sacrifice before your ‘Black Cabinet’—come back!

The Cabinet of Zīā ad-Dīn was known as the ‘Black Cabinet’; he says elsewhere in the same poem:—

The cabinet of the aristocrats is only a disgrace,  
 These colours are nothing but sleight of hand—  
 Although ‘there is no colour beyond black,’  
 May I be a sacrifice before your black colour—come back!

The general current of popular feeling, which could quite simply be brought under the influence of such propaganda, together with a certain amount of foreign money and domestic pressure relying on foreign sources, created such popularity for the leaders of the coup d’état that respectable, popular and patriotic men like Mudarris were unable to resist. After the departure of Sayyid Zīā ad-Dīn the power of General Rīza Khān (who had become War Minister) gradually increased until by various means the sovereignty was transferred from the Qājār dynasty to his person; this development has been amply enlarged upon; opponents could make no headway in the face of British money and diplomacy; the government of Rīza Khān, after gaining control of the situation, pursued its objectives with vigour—there was no stopping the process, since the British, who were controlling events, were operating with some skill.

Of the literati, those who left the scene included the following: ‘Ishqī, Farukhī Yazdī and Bahār. As for Sayyid Ashraf (Nasīm-i Shimāl), who had no real head for politics and was towards the end of his life afflicted with madness, his paper was taken over; many people failed to realise that that sincere and simple poet now had no connection with the paper or with its stilted and formalist poetry.

Lāhūtī for his part had fled and taken refuge in the Soviet Union; ‘Ārif, who had repented of what he had done (that is to say the poetry he had initially written) and had realised what the influence of his writings had been, became a recluse in one of the passes near Hamadan and, save for a dog, had no contact with anyone whatever and regarded humans as evil, lying creatures. Dihkhudā too bade farewell to politics. Thus the very kernel of

poetry and letters of the Constitutional Movement fell on evil days. The politicians in whose activities there was no literary flavour fared no better, for example Mudarris.

### *Currents of Persian Poetry*

In such a situation, what was Persian poetry to do but give up its basic aim—contact with the very depths of life and society—or at least close its eyes to it for a time; and should it want to say anything about it, make its words abstruse and obscure. The experiments and procedures which were employed in these circumstances are not all of one kind; one can distinguish at least two groups of poets:

- 1) those who had nothing to do with politics and life;
- 2) those who wanted to preserve their contacts with politics and life. Within both groups were supporters of reform and supporters of tradition—in all, four groups.

The first group were those who had more or less nothing to do with politics and were more or less in the service of the interests of the Establishment, which they eulogized, their eulogy being for the sake of attracting benefit rather than preventing harm; Vahīd Dastgirdī (editor of the magazine *Armaghān*), Afsar (president of the Literary Society of Iran, *Anjuman-i Adabī-ye Irān*), Amīr ash-Shu'arā Nādirī, Ghammām Hamadānī, 'Ibrat Muṣāhibī, Ṣādiq Sarmad and 'Abbās Furāt; their poetry consists of *ghazal*, *qaṣīdeh*, *qiṭ'eh*, *rubā'ī* and the old candle, rose, moth, nightingale and repetitious advice; their numbers are great and their worth, nil. They had a comical approach to the meaning of poetry and the poetic art—the literary organ of the majority was a paper called *Kānūn-e Shu'arā*, published by an individual who was an agent of the government called Ḥusain Muṭṭī. Its first number was published on 16th Farvardīn 1313 H.Š. In order to give some idea of the mode of thought of this band—whose number was more than a thousand—one could do worse than read the list of headings of their poetic manifesto:

- 1) achievement of excellence in patriotism and loyalty to the throne;
- 2) serious struggle against intoxicants;
- 3) creation of interest throughout the Iranian community in the useful technologies of Europe;
- 4) development of the produce and manufactures of Iran.

In each number, on the front page, there was reproduced a photograph of Rīzā Shāh together with some poetry in his praise. As for what has been said above about their number exceeding one thousand persons, incredible as the statement may seem, one can gather from the announcement printed on page

7 of No. 3 of the first year of the paper that they intended to publish a number to celebrate the millenary of Firdausī, which was to contain a photograph, plus a poem (*rubāʿī*) of one thousand and one contemporary poets!

Their poetry for the most part comprised, basically, trite erotic *ghazals*, clichified moralizing, eulogy of Rizā Shāh, discussion of the harm done by gambling and drugs, the degradation of wine and the importance of physical exercise. Persian poetry was borne on a popular, universal wave towards this kind of nonsense masquerading as poetry. Before the Constitutional period, there may have been eulogy of the king—but at least language and poetic art (if repetitious) rejoiced in strength and a certain firmness; all these poets in this period quite lacked even the modicum of strength and firmness of the Qājār poets. One cannot find a Qāʾānī or a Surūsh amongst them.

These individuals also claimed at times to be reformers. The extent of their 'reform' was the introduction of expressions about 'electric light' and new European manufactures. One such is a poem printed in one of the numbers of *Kānūn-e Shuʿarā* (No. 53 p. 3) by one of these gentlemen called Ḥāzrat-e Ajall Āqā Sarhang Akhgar; the publisher has written 'Praise God that this poem possesses a content 'virginal' and 'generally beneficial.' It is, in point of fact, extremely feeble, weak poetry to the effect that 'one night in the street I saw that moths were flying round the electric lamp and approaching it wildly and passionately—suddenly I saw the electric lamp go out and as a result all the moths went away; I thought to myself, "one must find the source of the light, for the light of the electric lamp has no genuineness."'

At all events the duty of the poets of this group was to keep people neglectful of the basic question, freedom and profundity of life.

As for the second section of this group, who either had nothing to do with politics or were in its service but continued to effect a certain relative reform, one must name Šūratgar, Rashīd Yāsāmī and Raʿdī. Their number is very small; their poetry is much stronger and more poetic than that of the Constitutional period in respect of form and technique and among their works one can as a matter of fact find poems which are good and readable.

As for the second group, who were involved in politics and the problems of life, those who were supporters of tradition, few in number, were: Bahār, Farrukhī Yazdī, Parvīn Iʿtišāmī, ʿĀrif Qazvīnī and Dihkhudā; they did not have scope for poetic activity. Their poetry, albeit in Classical forms, was redolent of the blood and thunder of politics and of interest in the deep issues of life. In particular Bahār, Farrukhī Yazdī, Parvīn, Dihkhudā and ʿĀrif laid aside poetry at the climax of events.

The second section of this group, who were supporters of reform, were: ʿIshqī, who was killed during the first days of power of the régime; ʿIrāj, who

died towards the end of the reign of Rīzā Shāh; Bahār (a tendency towards reform is seen in some of his works; at all events he should be numbered in this 'wing'); Lāhūtī, who became an exile and worked outside Iran; and Nīmā Yūshīj, who throughout the period was in seclusion, busy with experiment and meditation, publishing nothing except in the last years of the rule of Rīzā Shāh, when some free verse of his was published (1318 H.Š.); this poetry was understood by no one at all in those days: it was generally received with amusement.

### *Nīmā Yūshīj and his experiments*

Generally speaking, the reform proposed in Persian poetry by the different 'wings' supporting reform was for the most part merely theoretical and unsuccessful in practice, or, if applied in practice, restricted to one of the elements of poetry—for instance rhyme, subject-matter, metre, vocabulary. Thus if we examine the innovations of the reformist poets of Iran before Nīmā Yūshīj with respect to the extent to which they deviate from the conventional mode of tradition, we see that most of them have deviated only in point of one or two elements, in a restricted field; but the deviation of Nīmā Yūshīj from the norm of tradition is all-embracing, covering all the elements of poetry—language, imagery, music, thought, techniques of poetry.

From the first years of his youth when he began writing poetry, Nīmā rebelled against accepting traditions. Even in his initial poetry—written in Classical style—a certain departure from the traditional norm is visible (*Barāyi Dilhā-ye Khānān*). This departure from the norm is to a certain extent the result of his lack of mastery of tradition and of the traditional language of Persian poetry.

We should not forget that the Classical language of Persian poetry is only capable of being imitated if the mind and memory of the poet is saturated with the works of poets of the past. The versification of the traditional language of Persian poetry involves a special 'chainlike' structure whereby each word may only have a particular collection of words beside it—thus if one has not complete mastery over this versification, professionals in the craft and *cognoscenti* of the traditional language will sense a kind of unfamiliarity or strangeness in the 'chain structure' of one's wording.

The traditional poetry of Nīmā shows this characteristic. This is a fault, in the view of literati and of those who have grown accustomed to that special versification—but at the same time the secret of the excellence of Nīmā's work lies precisely in the fact that the language of his poetry remains wild and rough (ready to undergo any kind of drawing out or flexibility). It is precisely the

fact that his language is rough that enabled him to pour it like so much liquid-into freer moulds.

The deviation effected by Nīmā from the norm of Persian poetry of his time may be summed up as follows:

A) In the sphere of emotions and thought, the theme of his poetry is taken directly from life and Nature. That is to say, he speaks of his own direct experience, whether about man or whether about social life, individual love, or Nature. Generally, such a close approach to Nature is unprecedented in Persian poetry of recent centuries.

The lyricism, close to Nature, displayed in *Afsāneh* (1301 H.Š.) is very similar, in respect of emotions and of experiences of the poet, to the work of the French Romantic poets; Nīmā was familiar with their work and greatly attracted by it.

B) In the sphere of imagery—perhaps the most important task which Nīmā carried out is the change he effected in the poet's view of Nature—this feature is a product of the pictures of his poetry—that is to say, his images are outside the norm of those of Persian poetry.

This change in point of view meant that everything found its way into his poetry and many things which in Classical poetry could not be placed in juxtaposition were found side by side in his. For instance, the Spring which he pictures in *Afsāneh* differs from the Spring of other poets.

Nīmā revived the regional character in Persian poetry. He had been brought up among the far-stretching beaches of the North and the forests of Māzandarān, among the birds, plants and special colours of those regions. The poets of the province before him had looked at Nature through the same eyes as the poets of Khurāsān in the fourth and fifth centuries of the Hijra. But he described Nature and life as they are in that part of the world.

C) In the sphere of language—Nīmā made such a clean break with the traditional norm as to bring about an innovation; this break with the traditional norm was achieved in his poetry in two ways:

- 1) in the syntax of poetic language;
- 2) in the range of vocabulary of poetic language.

One definitely cannot defend all sides of Nīmā's work: his departure from the traditional norm of language has the advantage that he freed language from the bonds of limitation and the concept of a 'particular role' for each word. In his poetry, any word can take up its position beside any other. The advantage of this is the extension of the scope and range of vocabulary in his language; its disadvantage is that he in fact treats many of the worth-while experiments of the Classical writers as though they had never been made—it is as if he wants to start from scratch: thus, a large number of those involved in

Altogether, his departure from the traditional norm in the range of vocabulary of his language led to tangles in the expression of his meaning—it is impossible to tell to what extent he was acting intentionally here and to what extent this may have sprung from weakness or lack of attention on his part.

D) Another deviation effected by Nīmā Yūshīj in Persian poetry is that in the music of poetry:

- 1) metre;
- 2) rhyme.

This prosody is simply Classical prosody from the point of view of the ‘family’ of metres—with this difference that in Classical prosody the poet (with two exceptions, the *mustazād* [increment poem] and the *Ṭawīl* metre [in Persian]) had no freedom in the choice of feet—that is to say, however many feet his first *miṣraʿ* contained, he had to keep to the same number through the whole of his poem. For instance the *Maṣnavī* of Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī begins with the *miṣraʿ*

and the poet all the way through (right to the end of the book) has maintained the number of feet exactly on this pattern. Nīmā says, 'If we make the metre the basis of poetry, we can ignore the rule of 'exact equality in prosodical feet', as in the scheme

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in accordance with the requirements we may have for the expression of our intended meaning.' This trial on his part is the most successful and striking step ever taken in the history of Persian literature (for the extension of the form of poetry and its adaptation to any mood and idea). Nīmā transformed the limited kinds of metre of Persian poetry into an infinite amount, without the reader feeling any strangeness or ugliness from the point of view of the ear.

2) On the subject of rhyme, too, he put forward an extremely interesting view. He says, 'Classical Persian poetry is based on the *bait*;<sup>2</sup> each *bait* has to have a rhyme—but in 'free' prosody (or 'Nīmāī' prosody) the unit of poetry is not the *bait*; in effect, it is possible for several lines one after another to constitute a 'bait'. So rhyme is not necessary everywhere. Whenever we need a rhyme (according to the pattern followed by the rhyme in the music of the poetry), we introduce it.

However it must be noted that he did not attain to these results all at once—they are the fruit of nearly twenty years' experiment and thought on his part, lasting from after the publication of *Afsāneh* in 1301 till about 1318 H.Š. (when he published the first examples of his free verse).

Nīmā Yūshij published the first examples of this kind of poetry, free verse, in 1318 H.Š. in the Music Magazine (*Majalleh-e Mūsīqī*): there was no reaction for some years—it was after the demise of the régime of Rīzā Shāh and the appearance of free publications, that young poets began to search for new avenues and discovered Nīmā. After this point, the appearance of free verse in publications expanded day by day; we shall discuss the growth and perfection of free verse in the next chapter.

Much of the material in the work of Nīmā Yūshij was inspired by the modes of Western poets—due to his acquaintance with Western literature through the French language. One can find in his critical writings, which were published separately in the form of a number of pamphlets, detailed critical views about poetry and the poetic craft which are extremely valuable and worthy of attention both for their historical structure and for the evidence they give of his exceptional intelligence and acumen.

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<sup>2</sup> See p. 7.

## CHAPTER SIX

### AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

(Period of extension of experiment and innovation)

Till about *Shahrivar* 1320 H.Š. and a little later, only Nīmā in his solitude was writing poems of the kind we have described, opposed to the entire metrical system of tradition. About 1318 H.Š. he succeeded in publishing a few examples of it. But till *Shahrivar* 1320 or a little later no one paid attention to this mode. His voice had not found an echo save in a tiny restricted audience, influenced only by his *Afsāneh*: a few young men bent on exploration—Ferīdūn Tavallūf should be mentioned as the chief of these.

After *Shahrivar*, with the collapse of censorship and liberty of publication, the way was open for the country to breathe. New periodicals came into being—*Nāmeḥ-e Mardum* (a good magazine of the common people of Iran, *Mihr* 1325 H.Š., *Paiyām-e Nou* (1323 H.Š.), *Sukhan* (the well-known literary journal which is still published and began publication in 1322 H.Š.) as well as ephemera, all of which yielded place to others after a few numbers; orientation and content, however, were the same in all.

When one leafs through the different series of these periodicals, one finds here and there poems of Nīmā Yūshīj and of those who looked towards his poetry.

### *Poetry after the Second World War*

One may mention among the first generation to publish poetic work after *Shahrivar* or contemporary with it: Dr. Parvīz Khānlārī (who, after Nīmā, had the most profound effect upon the generation which followed him; in fact, one could perhaps say that in the first years his influence was greater than that of Nīmā), Muḥammad ‘Alī Islāmī Nadūshan, Majd ad-Dīn Mīr Fakhra’ī (Gulchīn Gīlānī), Manūchihr Shaibānī, Ferīdūn Tavallūf, Ravāhīj (Javāhīrī), Iḥsān Ṭabarī and some others.

Dr. Khānlārī went on a different road from Nīmā with the publication of the magazine *Sukhan*, that is to say he viewed Nīmā’s ‘avant-garde-ism’ as being far removed from the path of moderation; in these years he said about him, ‘Nīmā Yūshīj first sought new, outlandish metres and wrote his lyric poetry under the influence of the French Romantic poets, especially de Musset and Lamartine; he poured it into the moulds of these metres. Afterwards, he broke this rule too and pioneered a kind of free verse with strange and obscure

meanings, which is peculiar to him. Nīmā's style has still (date of writing of the article, 1324 H.Š.) not succeeded in appealing to the common people nor become accepted by the upper classes' (*Paiyām-e Nou*, Year I No. II, p. 32).

This moderate stance of his was to the liking of those who published poetry in *Sukhan*. Amongst them, Ferīdūn Tavalluṭī, Gulchīn Gīlānī and later Nādir Nādirpūr were representatives of moderation in Modern Persian poetry; should we want to quote avant-garde figures, nearer to Nīmā, it is difficult to mention more than Manūchihr Shaibānī. But in 1327 and the years following, the number of young poets who were tired of Classical forms and metres gradually increased and the influence of Nīmā spread. Translations of European poetry (French, Russian and English) were published; articles about the limits and scope of reform also appeared, better-informed and with greater freedom. These factors led to a great variety in the sphere of modern Persian poetry. Persian poetry, whether moderate or avant-garde, moved in two schools: those whose view was concentrated upon social questions and those who looked inward to love and the heart, or stood in wonder before Nature. Among those the majority of whose work had a social orientation one can mention: Nīmā Yūshīj, Āyandeh, Shaibānī, Kisrāʾī, Sāyeh (in some poems), A. Bāmdād; of those who turned to inner worlds or to wonder at Nature and to a kind of lyricism we can mention: Ferīdūn Tavalluṭī, Khānlarī, Gulchīn Gīlānī, Islāmī Nadūshan and Nādir Nādirpūr.

The first 'wave' in modern Persian poetry which emerged into publication after the appearance of Nīmā's poetry and which was contemporary with Shahrīvar 1320 H.Š., was one which should be termed a kind of Romanticism. The prominent figures in it were: Khānlarī, Tavalluṭī, Gulchīn and Nādirpūr; these held views on the elements of poetry the gist of which can perhaps be seen in the preface which Ferīdūn Tavalluṭī wrote to his first Collected Poems (*Rahā*, Tehran 1330 H.Š.)—in this prepossessing and hard-hitting preface, Tavalluṭī attacks the supporters of tradition and Classical style with elegant badinage and convincingly criticizes the clichified images of their poetry as well as their repetitive and archaic vocabulary, usually worlds away from music. It would not be far from the truth to call this preface the poetic manifesto of the Romantics: the principles and rules which he puts forward for modern poetry (accepted by himself and his colleagues and to a degree practised by them in their poetry) are as follows:

- 1) careful harmony of metres and moods;
- 2) novelty of content, similes, metaphors;
- 3) no hidebound use of prosodical conceits;
- 4) avoidance of the introduction of licences in the metre of poetry;
- 5) avoidance of the introduction of difficult rhymes and refrains;

6) creation of melodious compounds and use of living words which have been forgotten;

7) recognition and selection of the optimum vocabulary;

8) abstinence from 'stuffing' in metres.

In this manifesto some of the headings are to a certain extent contradictory but, however that may be, the manifesto itself and the actions of its supporters kept Persian poetry for several years in a *milieu* which was 'melodious' and full of 'twilight of sleepy moonlight' and on the other hand restricted to romantic, erotic and sad experiences and description of sunset, till after the *coup d'état* of 1332, as a result of the publication of some collections of modern poetry and certain articles, once again another 'wave' appeared in Persian poetry. In actual fact, a number of poets, including Nīmā Yūshīj, did not accept any of the points of this manifesto and in the years when this *genre* formed the main current of Persian poetry, went a way of their own.

The events after the *coup d'état* of 1332 changed everything—poetry was no exception. In fact this change in poetry was accomplished only little by little. Poetry after 1332 moved in two directions—those of the 'hopeful' and the 'desperate' mentalities respectively, while Romanticism came gradually to a close. It cannot, however, be said that it did so completely, but it yielded its place as the main 'wave'; the social branch of poetry laid aside its blood and thunder because of the censor. Poets took refuge in solitude, the winehouse, thoughts of death, the twilight of imagination and opium. Praise of death, a silent and terrified revolt against 'Night'—'Polar Night' coursed through the veins of Persian poetry.

If we look at the poems written during those years, we see on all sides 'dread,' 'Winter,' 'wall'; poetry gradually inclined to a kind of social symbolism. The poets of this decade—which may be called the decade of the growth of modern poetry, are: Ferīdūn Mushīrī, Nuṣrat Raḥmānī, M. Umīd, A. Bāmdād, Muḥammad Zuhārī, Sāyeh, Kasrāʾī, Maftūn Amīnī, Suhrāb Sipihrī, Furūgh Farrukhzād, and Nīmā Yūshīj, who was still alive for six of the ten years of this decade. (Nīmā died in 1338 H.Š.)

The second prominent 'wave' which arose in modern Persian poetry after Romanticism—and may still be reckoned the most important—is a movement which began from inside the poetry of Nīmā. It should be termed a kind of social symbolism. Its best writers are: Aḥmad Shāmlū, Akhavān-i Šālīs (M. Umīd), Furūgh Farrukhzād, Suhrāb Sipihrī and some other poets. Perhaps one may consider the words written by Furūgh Farrukhzād in 1339 (ten years after the publication of the manifesto of the Romantics [preface to Raḥā by Ferīdūn Tavallūh]) a summary of the views of all these (although not all of

them would agree with Furūgh about some headings). Farrukhzād criticized in that year the state of Romantic poetry (having herself been involved in it for several years). She wrote:

1) Poetry of today is afraid to mention the names of things and places with which we have to do from morning till night.

2) The content of today's poetry is empty of depth—the poet plays with childish words and images and the images are like a beautiful woman whose look, when you open her eyelids, expresses no thought whatever.

3) Love is merely surface love in this poetry: at the surface level of sex and sexual desire.

4) Epic is missing in the poetry.

5) It has a mendacious language; words which stand in a general line of meaning yield place in the poetry of today in favour of others deemed the most beautiful and musical. The poet concentrates on the beauty of words and not on their meaning.

6) Persian poetry needs a number of new words: it should find the courage to include them within itself (*Āzhang-e Jum'eh*, *Mihr* 1339 H.Š. [quoted in *Dukhtarhā-ye Zamāneh*, special *Furūgh* number]).

Nīmā Yūshij, Furūgh, Shāmlū and to some extent Akhavān-i Šālīs practised these principles in their poetry—and in fact they find their way into the poetry of other writers as well. It was these manifestos and this kind of poem that sounded the death-knell of Romantic poetry. In the years when the manifesto of the Romantics was published (four years after the appearance of the preface to *Rahā*), Aḥmad Shāmlū had written in his verse manifesto (1333 H.Š.):

This dry discussion about the meaning of 'special words' too  
Is no good for poetry,  
If poetry is life.

(*Havā-ye Tāzeh*)

He writes in this poem about the necessity of taking words from the street and from everyday life; he himself constitutes a very successful advertisement for this manifesto, as he contrived, by means of a wide range of words (Classical and modern) to widen further and further the scope of his poetry. Furūgh Farrukhzād is to be found treading the same path after him (Furūgh observing a kind of metrical prosody). True, younger poets subsequently worked hard at the problem of language but they only went as far as the collection of words—they did not write 'poetry.'

From about the year 1348 H.Š. onwards, because of events which began in the *milieu* of the progressives of Iran, Persian poetry stirred itself again and

blood circulated in its veins. The old mood of despair and despondency gave way to hope and longing—'blood,' 'poppies,' 'forests,' and 'stormy petrels' infused new life into the sleepy, drugged atmosphere of Persian poetry and refreshed it. Several young poets wrote for a time in such a way as covertly to reflect the new spirit of the social scene. However such books as have recently been published contain the poetry of people who compose poetry in the style of a thousand years ago, about candle, rose, moth and nightingale and eulogy of the Establishment—or about the benefits of physical exercise or description of the opium pipe.

One may look for the most recent 'wave' which has appeared in modern Persian poetry in the last ten years, and which at present commands a following, in the works of writers like Ismā'īl Khū'ī, M. Āzarm and Āzādeh (Maimanat Mīr Šādiqī). Certainly a large number of the poets of the preceding decades are today, in the general 'wave' of Persian poetry, worthy of discussion and critical examination; we have mentioned their names above, but to repeat them, they are:—

Nīmā Yūshīj, M. Āzād, Āzādeh, M. Āzarm, M. Umīd, A. Bāmdād, Ferīdūn Tavallūtī, Parvīz Khānlārī, Rīzā Barāhanī, Ismā'īl Khū'ī, Nuṣrat Raḥmānī, Ru'ya'ī, Zuhārī, H. E. Sāyeh, M. Sirishk, Suhrāb Sipihī, Ismā'īl Shāhrūdī (Āyandeh), Manūchihr Shaibānī, Furūgh Farrukhzād, Siyāvush Kasrā'ī, Kushābādī, Kiyānūsh, Gulchīn Gīlānī, Ferīdūn Mushīrī, Maftūn Amīnī, Nādir Nādirpūr, Manūchihr Naiyistānī, Ḥasan Hunarmandī, Sharaf ad-Dīn Khurāsānī, Muṣṭafā Raḥīmī.

### *Modern Story-writing in Iran*

If we take into account the story in its widest sense, far removed from the special techniques of the last century or two in Europe, the story has a history of several thousand years in Iran—from the time of legends. Familiar to European readers is the 'Thousand and One Nights'. This is an example of the story in ancient Iran which later found its way into European languages through its Arabic translation. Various other stories exist also in both popular and élite literature and are of common currency among the people.

But the 'story' in the modern sense does not have a very long history—little more than half a century. With the developments to which we have alluded above, literature in the Constitutional period drew far closer to the common people than could have been expected. One evidence of this is the prevalence and publication of various new literary *genres*, for instance plays and stories. Just as the story in its widest sense has a long history in Iran, so the play too, in its primitive Oriental form, has a history of several centuries. But these

stories and plays have no sort of relationship or connection with what would today be called the theatre or new story-writing of Iran.

Modern story-writing begins in the form of the historical novel with the works of writers like Mūsā Naṣrī and San'atīzādeh Kirmānī; these stories are from the point of view of technique and basic principles extremely primitive and shallow, like any new-born cultural discovery. One might unhesitatingly say that in the field of the short story the starting point is the *Yekt bud o yekt nabūd* of Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Jamālzādeh, which was published for the first time in Berlin in 1922.

The author of this collection, who has since brought out other works in the same field, though without scoring the success of his first, says in the preface to this book, 'My purpose is to create a story in literary style which, from the point of view of language, may contain words and expressions in current use by the common people and the man in the street—and from the point of view of description of the life of different classes, may be a mirror to describe society.'

The publication of this collection represents in more ways than one a point of departure in the Persian language; firstly, from the point of view of popular or colloquial language—as opposed to written or, to use the term, 'pen'-language. Secondly from the point of view of detailed description of the personalities of the characters in the stories, which, compared with that in earlier works—the historical novels of Jamālzādeh's predecessors—is detailed in the extreme and close to Nature. Jamālzādeh published other stories in later years: *Rāh-e Āb Nāmeḥ*, *Ma'ṣūmeh-e Shīrāzī*, *Dār al-Majānīn*, *Talkh o Shīrīn*, *Ṣaḥrā-ye Maḥshar*, *Sar o Tih Yek Kirbās* and *Ghair az Khudā Hīchkas Nabūd*.

Jamālzādeh opened up a road which subsequent writers (Ṣādiq Hidāyat, Buzurg 'Alavī) and succeeding generations followed. Today modern story-writing in Iran is extremely vigorous. Prominent figures have come forward in the field of story-writing whose presence, in the intellectual and cultural circumstances of our country, is of the greatest value. Here and there one can feel the effect of Western literature—from the point of view of technique, French, Russian and (later) American story-writing but people, scenes, the nature of events, are Iranian and of the country—as indeed they ought to be.

If we wish to trace the course of story-writing in Iran from the historical point of view, we must mention two extremely well-known writers: 'Alī Dashtī and Muḥammad Hījāzī side by side with Jamālzādeh, Hidāyat and 'Alavī (who may be considered the most famous of the first generation of story-writers in Iran). True, Jamālzādeh, considered as a pioneer is, from the point of view of practising principles and techniques, much more successful than

Hijāzī and Dashtī and closer to the realm of the story—but the influence of Hijāzī and Dashtī through their works may well be greater with the public than that of the writings of Jamālzādeh; that is, with the general reading public.

Hidāyat and 'Alavī are considered to be the most successful writers of their generation. The variety of their works, the strength and power of the depiction of events and people, are so excellent and striking in the writing of these two that subsequent generations, for all their acquaintance with the ins and outs of the business and their tremendous show of concentration on technique, have so far been unable to take any substantial step past the achievement of Hidāyat and 'Alavī.

The fame of Hidāyat in Iran and abroad is greater than that of any other writer. His works have been translated into many oriental and Western languages. He represents several characteristics of the spirit of the progressive class of the Iran of his time; we may follow them in all his works. The first is the detestation which he has for the political and social *milieu* of his time (the years 1299 to 1320 H.Š.). Perhaps we may best see this detestation in an indirect way in his best works—*Būf-e Kūr*, *Seh Qaṭreh Khūn* and some other stories. It could be said that the most striking theme or train of thought is the picture of this detestation, which sometimes appears in the form of a hatred of life.

Hidāyat, like many of the young people of his generation, went to great lengths in a form of patriotism (which was given impetus by the political conditions of the time). Hidāyat also, like many deviationary nationalists, who pay no attention (at any rate consciously) to historical process and to economic and political causes and factors, tried to fasten all sins round the neck of Islam and the Arab Conquest. An idea of this kind is to be seen among those of his generation and even among some of the present-day progressives of Iran, but Hidāyat was one of the first to reflect this trait in his works. Thus the second factor visible in the writings of Hidāyat is the problem of Islam and anti-Arabism. He accordingly lays about him at everything indiscriminately without wanting to distinguish one from another.

Altogether, the characters of his best stories are cynical beings like invalids—so much so that the title of *Būf-e Kūr* ('The Blind Owl') has attained such celebrity in Persian literature that any kind of life consumed with detestation and cynicism is apt to be called 'a *Būf-e Kūr* world.' The best-known works of Hidāyat are: *Seh Qaṭreh Khūn* (1311), *Sāyeh Roushan* (1312), *Sag-e Velgard* (1321), *Hājī Āqā* (1324); Hidāyat also left some historical plays, critical articles and translations from Old Iranian literature.

In authority, scope and the variety of his field of work, Hidāyat may be counted the foremost figure of modern Persian prose.

Buzurg 'Alavī stands beside Hidāyat. Though his works do not have the volume or variety of Hidāyat's *oeuvre*, both spring from the same generation and the same social conditions and are close together in some respects. The breath of life and a kind of social concern meet the eye everywhere in the work of 'Alavī, eloquent of the connection he has had with the politics of a period of twenty years or more. 'Alavī's characters are generally sturdy, lively and substantial. *Chashmhāyesh* (a novel) is one of the best stories in the Persian language; in it the darkness of the twenty-year period is vividly portrayed. Prison plays a part in 'Alavī's writings, since he himself spent years in prison. 'Alavī's best-known works are: *Chamedān*, *Bāreh-hā-ye Zindān*, *Panjāh o seh Nafar*, letters and *Chashmhāyesh*.

Hidāyat committed suicide in Paris in 1951; 'Alavī fled from Iran during the events of the period of 1332 and now lives in East Germany; these two writers are considered the best examples of their generation in the literature of the story in Iran.

After *Shahrīvar* 1320 H.Š. a younger generation entered the scene, which started a new 'wave' in the sphere of the modern story-writing of Iran. Šādiq Chūbak signalled the appearance of an able writer with the publication of *Khaimeh-e Shabbāzī* in 1324; along with him, several younger story-writers published collections, among whom Jalāl Āl-e Aḥmad (d. 1969), Ibrāhīm Gulistān and Bih Āzīn found recognition and fame in the years following. Along with these writers one may mention Sīmīn Dānishvar who published some collections of stories.

Šādiq Chūbak published some works after *Khaimeh-e Shabbāzī*—*Antarī kih Lūṭiyesh Murdeh Būd*, *Chirāgh-e Ākhir*, *Rūz-e Avval-e Qabr*, *Sang-e Šabūr* and *Tangsīr*; these works are not all of a piece or of a comparable level of worth. In general Chūbak's early works strike one as better than his later writing. He is masterly in his descriptions of the lower sections of society.

Jalāl Āl-e Aḥmad was a cross between a story-writer and a pamphleteer. Thus, whether when he was a member of the *Tūdeh* party or when he branched off from it and together with Khalīl Malikī and a number of others created the 'Third Force' (*Nīrū-ye Sevvum*), his political face was discernible all through his works till the end of his comparatively short life. Jalāl was a political writer in the full sense of the term; he is accordingly one of the most popular contemporary writers of Iran; possibly the sphere of his influence is even greater than that of Hidāyat. Jalāl rather specialized, in the works of the second half of his working life, in the language he had created. This language, from the point of view of its movement, the speed of its sentences, its com-

pressed phrasing and its astonishing closeness to the conversational, was a departure from the basic norm of Persian prose and found many imitators, particularly in the field of pamphlet-writing. His best-known works are:—*Did o Bāzdīd*, *Az Ranjī kih mībaram*, *Sehtār*, *Zan-e Ziyādī*, *Sarguzasht-e Kandūhā*, *Mudīr-e Madraseh*, *Nūn wa 'l-Qalam* (all in the field of the story), *Gharbzadegī* and *Roushanfīkrān*, articles and scholarly work. *Roushanfīkrān* was published in his lifetime and has been censored for some years.

Ibrāhīm Gulistān started originally from the *Tūdeh* party and trod virtually the same path as Āl-e Aḥmad. But afterwards when he chose a life in better circumstances he altered his views on art as well, to a sort of 'Formalism in Art'. His early collections were not particularly influential but in the last fifteen years, with the publication of two or three books and the development of a musical language in most of his stories, he has been able to appeal to a particular class of reader. He is under the influence of American writers and is one of the first to have translated Hemingway into Persian. His works are: *Shikār-e Sayeh*, *Āzar Māh va Ākhir-e Pā'iz*, *Jāy va Dīvār va tishneh*, *Mīhr o Māh*. His prose is poetic and attractive—not a single one of his characters stays in the mind, however.

Muḥammad I'timādzādeh (M. Bih Āzīn) is one of the most distinguished writers and translators of this generation—he is in a way a supporter of socialist realism and was at first captivated by Russian literature and criticism. He has translated several French and Russian literary classics and has shown mastery in so doing. Stories of his worth mentioning are: *Bih Sā-ye Mardum*, *Dukhtar-e Ra'īyat* (novel), *Naqsh-e Parand* (prose pieces), *Muhreh-e Mā* and *Shahr-e Khudā*. Bih Āzīn writes sophisticated and firm prose accompanied by human feeling, even if the technique of his stories is not equal to the power of his thought and the firmness of his prose.

Although Sīmīn Dānishvar, the wife of Jalāl Āl-e Aḥmad, did not have a marked success with her first collection of stories, *Shahr-i Chūn Bihisht*, she made a niche for herself in the foremost rank of contemporary writers of Iran with the publication of her very successful novel *Sāvushān*; critics consider this novel of hers to be if not the best, one of the two or three pre-eminent novels in Persian.

Contemporary with the coup d'état of 1332 H.Š. and a little later, several young writers of another generation appeared who are today considered the most active story-writers of Iran. In approximate order of appearance and publication of their works, they are: Taqī Mudarrisī, Jamāl Mīr Šādiqī, Bahrām Šādiqī, Ghulām Husain Šā'idī, Maḥmūd Kiānūsh, and a little later than these, another 'wave' consisting of Nādir Ibrāhīmī, Ferīdūn Tunkābunī, Hūshang Gulshīrī, Maḥshīd Amīrshāhī, Gulī Taraqqī and some others.

Dr. Taqī Mudarrisī became famous with the publication of the story *Yakulyā va tanhāʔ-ye Ū*. The prose of this book was attractive and pleasant and signalled the appearance of an able writer. The author has not published any short stories. He did publish another long story, *Sharīf jān*, *Sharīf jān*, which did not have the success of his first book. He is a doctor and lives in America.

Jamāl Mīr Šādiqī, with the publication of his first collection called *Shāhẓādehkhānum-e Sabz-chashm*, emerged as a successful figure in the field of a kind of Socialist realism, perfectly describing the business fraternity of Iranian society (in Tehran). Other collections of this writer's works are: *Cheshmhā-ye Man Khasteh*, *Shabhā-ye Tamāshā va Gul-e Zard*, *Dirāznā-ye Shab* (novel), *Shekasteh-hā*, *Insū-ye Talhā-ye Shen*, and *Na Ādam Na Haivān*.

Bahrām Šādiqī and Jamāl Mīr Šādiqī started their work in the magazine *Sukhan*. Bahrām Šādiqī was more interested in form than in content and his work is arresting for a kind of satire. He published a long story called *Malakūt* and later a collection of his short stories (including the story *Malakūt*) in a book called *Sang va Qumqumeh-hā-ye Khālī*. Although the volume of his work is not great, he still belongs to the first rank of writers of his generation. He has given up writing for some years now.

Dr. Ghulām Ḥusain Sāʿidī (*Gouhar-e Murād*) is a most successful and influential writer, who occupies the rank of Jalāl Āl-e Aḥmad in his own generation, with the difference that in place of pamphlets (at which Āl-e Aḥmad shone) he has written plays and is of great eminence in this *genre*. His collection of stories comprises: *ʿAzādārān-e Dil*, *Vāhimeh-hā-ye bī Nām o Nishān*, *Tars o Larz*, *Dandīl*, *Gūr o Gahvāreh*. Sāʿidī possesses extraordinary power in story-telling—he can make a story out of anything under the sun. The characters of his stories, like those of Chūbak, are drawn from the humblest and most unfortunate people of Iran, either in Āzarbāijān (*ʿAzādārān-e Dil*) or in Tehran (*Gūr o Gahvāreh*).

Although Sāʿidī is a realist writer, he sometimes crystallizes the dimensions of time and place in such a way as to divert his work, on the one hand, from consistency within the event and, on the other, to increase the beauty of the piece he is writing.

Ferīdūn Tunkābunī is also a story-writer of this particular generation who has become well-known by the publication of some collections of stories called *Piyādeh-e Shatranj*, *Sitāreh-hā-ye Shab-e Tīreh*, *Mardī dar Qafas*. He writes excellent prose but does not set much store by the technique of the story. For him, thought is worth more than form.

Hūshang Gulshīrī is another young writer who carved himself a niche among the story-writers of his generation with the publication of a long story called *Shānzdah Ihtijāb*. A collection of stories entitled *Misl-e Hamīsheh* and a story called *Kristīn va Kīd* have also been published. He is influenced by American writers and is an adherent for the most part of form and technique, in imitation of Faulkner's 'Stream of Consciousness'.

Nādir Ibrāhīmī is a prolific writer who has published his works during the last fifteen years. He is a great experimenter; his works are not consistent in merit.

Maḥmūd Kiyānūsh is a poet and story-writer of the same generation whose prose is extremely sophisticated and poetic. He is a poet who writes stories; he is more active in the sphere of poetry than in that of the story. In spite of this, some collections of his stories have been published: *Ā'neh-hā-ye Siāh*, *Ghuṣṣeh-ī o Qīṣṣeh-ī*, *Dar Ānjā Hīchkas Nabūd* and *Mard-e Giriftār*.

Another young writer, who was mysteriously drowned in the river Aras and who achieved great popularity and published widely, is Ṣamad Bihrangī (1318-1347 H.Š.). Ṣamad mostly wrote stories for children but the story *Māhī-ye Siāh o Kūchūlū* is read by adults as well. He was one of the most dedicated writers of his generation. Some of his work is a *rifacimento* of Iranian folklore (of Āzarbaijān).

In conclusion, mention must be made of other writers who have been responsible for excellent work but whom it has not been possible to note individually:

First generation: Sa'īd Nafīsī, Shīn Partou, Jahāngīr Jahīlī, Muḥammad Mas'ūd.

Second generation: Darvīsh, Rasūl Parvīzī.

Third generation: Bahman Forsī, Bābā Muqaddam.

Fourth generation: Gulī Taraqqī, Mahshīd Amīrshāhī, Aḥmad Maḥmūd, Amīn Faqīrī, Shamīm-e Bahār, Nāṣir Taqvā'ī, Maḥmūd Daulatābādī.

### *Literature of the Theatre in contemporary Iran*

The theatre, in the proper sense of the word, did not exist in the East until a century ago. Possibly the first person to write a play in Asia was Mīrzā Faṭḥ 'Alī Ākhundzādeh, who wrote several plays in the Āzarbaijāni language in Āzarbaijān (Caucasus) (1859). They were immediately translated into Persian under his own direction by Mīrzā Ja'far Qarajehdaghi and reached the general public (1291 H.Q.)

Before Mīrzā Faṭḥ 'Alī, who, under the influence of European literature of the Russian variety, was the pioneer in this field, the play in the European

sense did not exist. Thus we can say that it was from the time of Naṣīr al-Dīn Shāh that theatre and the drama came into existence in Iran.

Before this period, there were works which contained the kernel of a drama or play, namely some comic pieces, pale reflections of which may still be seen from time to time in the provinces. Terms are used in Classical Persian literature which give clues to something akin to drama, although we have no precise or reliable data about the details—for instance ‘magic lantern show’ (*bāzī-ye fānūs-e khiyāl*).

According to some sources, play-like works were composed in the Safavid period about the life and martyrdom of the *Imāms* of the *Shī‘eh*, especially the *Imām* Ḥusain son of ‘Alī and his companions—and the disaster of Kerbelā; these are still common as *ta‘zieh* (Passion-play) or *shabīhkhvānī* (religious dramatic performance) and have enjoyed great currency from Safavid times down to the present day.

It is not known whether performing *ta‘zieh* or presenting religious plays was an institution which existed before the Safavid period in the form whose ancestry goes back to Safavid times. It is likely that the Safavids, because of their familiarity with the West, created these play-like performances in imitation of the plays which were common about the saints of the Christian faith. But ‘*azādārī*’ (ritual mourning) for the *Imām* Ḥusain is very ancient, going back at least to the fourth century and the period of Buwayhid rule in Baghdad.

At all events, the important point is that the literati of Iran and Islam were ignorant of the concept of ‘drama’. Thus the ‘Poetics’ of Aristotle, in the section dealing with Comedy and Tragedy, was untranslatable—when the Muslim commentators on Aristotle wanted to express their views on these terms, they for the most part wrote nonsense, or tried to equate Tragedy with threnody (*marsīeh*) and Comedy with satire (*hajv*)—*hajv* and *marsīeh* being current in Arabic literature.

The question of why dramatic literature has not existed in Iran goes back to class structure and system of government, the latter consistently dictatorial. There has simply been no scope for the growth of this kind of literature, whose very life-blood is criticism. Experience has shown that at moments when a slight breeze of freedom has begun to blow in Iran, a movement has always started in the field of drama—at the establishment of the constitution, after the second world, on the demise of Rīzā Shāh.

Although many plays were written and performed in Iran after those of Mīrzā Faṭḥ ‘Alī Khān Ākhundzādeh, it has to be said that the modern theatre begins in Iran after 1320 H.Š., when people were free for some years. However at the same period when the plays of Ākhundzādeh were published,

Malkam Khān wrote and published plays in Iran—up to the end of the second world war, writers such as Rīzā Kamāl Shahrzād, 'Ishqī (the famous poet), Ḥasan Muqaddam ('Alī Naurūz), Abū 'l-Ḥasan Furūghī (versified play), wrote and published plays which were for the most part performed. Plays written during the period of dictatorship were mostly infused with a kind of nationalism and had no scope for moral or social criticism.

After *Shahrīvar* 1320 H.Š. there was excellent scope for the growth of the arts. Dramatic literature, well fitted to undertake the task of criticism, felt itself grow. Translations of many classics of world drama began in these years—Shakespeare, Aeschylus, Schiller, Molière, Gogol, Chekhov, Gorki, Sartre, Camus and others. Iranian writers turned their attention to writing plays, such as Ṣādiq Hidāyat, 'Abd al-Ḥusain Nūshīn and Ṣādiq Chūbak; theatres came into existence in Tehran and in the provinces.

A prominent figure in the Iranian theatre, after the Second World War, is 'Abd al-Ḥusain Nūshīn.

After the coup d'état of 1332 H.Š. the theatre gradually lapsed into decline. Still, several fine and distinguished dramatists have appeared in Iran during the past twenty years; the chief of them is Dr. Ghulām Ḥusain Ṣā'idī (*Gouhar-e Murād*) whose short stories we have discussed above; there are also Bahrām Baizā'ī and Akbar Rādī.

All the plays performed in Iran in recent years have been translations from Western literature—mostly the literature of the absurd.

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Compiled by Gabriele BRAUNE (Hamburg)

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