

ABD AL-RAHMAN JAMI: "NAQSHBANDI SUFI, PERSIAN POET

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

The era of the Timurids, the dynasty that ruled Transoxiana, Iran, and Afghanistan from 1370 to 1506 had a profound cultural and artistic impact on the history of Central Asia, the Ottoman Empire, and Mughal India in the early modern era. While Timurid fine art such as miniature painting has been extensively studied, the literary production of the era has not been fully explored. Abd al-Rahman Jami (817/1414-898/1492), the most renowned poet of the Timurids, is among those Timurid poets who have not been methodically studied in Iran and the West. Although, Jami was recognized by his contemporaries as a major authority in several disciplines, such as science, philosophy, astronomy, music, art, and most important of all poetry, he has yet not been entirely acknowledged in the post Timurid era.

This dissertation highlights the significant contribution of Jami, the great poet and Sufi thinker of the fifteenth century, who is regarded as the last great classical poet of Persian literature. It discusses his influence on Persian literature, his central role in the Naqshbandi Order, and his input in clarifying Ibn Arabi's thought. Jami spent most of his life in Herat, the main center for artistic ability and aptitude in the fifteenth century; the city where Jami grew up, studied, flourished and produced a variety of prose and poetry. Religion during the Timurid era obviously left a profound mark on Jami, especially

through the Naqshbandis who formed the most influential Sufi order of the realm in the fifteenth century. Living in a vortex of political, cultural, and social settings, Jami became the poet laureate of the era.

In his historical work, *Habib al-Siyar*, Khwandamir, the celebrated historian of the Timurids, writes the name of 211 poets and men of learning of the era, one of whom was Jami. The sheer number of poets and writers was the result of the patronage of Timur's offspring, who were semi-independent rulers of different parts of the vast territory that Timur conquered. The competition among these minor courts created an appropriate condition for artisans and learned ones to produce quality works. Unlike most of his contemporaries, Jami was not attached to the court or to the house of any noble, and he never reached out to anyone to receive monetary rewards. Yet he was generously paid for his works, which were professionally bound and copied by some of the best calligraphers of Herat, thanks to funding provided by his close friend and follower, Ali-shir Nava'i who would send out Jami's works to rulers, nobles, and dignitaries.

Jami was a highly respected and renowned figure in the Timurid dynasty, because besides his status as the poet laureate of the era and because he was affiliated with the Naqshbandi Sufi *tariqa*, the most prominent order in the region at the time. The sheikh (leader) of the order, Khwaja Ahrar (d.1490), was enormously powerful and influential in Central Asia and Transoxiana. Jami acted as the caliph (representative) of Khwaja Ahrar in Herat. He lived at a time when the social condition of the population in the Timurid domain was not at its best, due to high taxes and oppression by the dynasty. Jami was

able to reduce people's suffering through his position at the court and as the poet and Sufi of the Naqshbandis in the city.

From this study the reader should emerge with a deeper understanding of Jami's poetry and how it reflects the world in which it was written.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my beloved family Ali, Sara, Sandra, and Ali John, whose support and encouragement made this project enjoyable. I am truly grateful for your love, endurance, and pride on me.

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TRANSLATION SYSTEM

In the transliteration of Persian words, I have adopted the system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. I use the system for Arabic words too. I have omitted all diacritical marks, although ‘*ayn* and *hamza* are shown. Long *a* and short *a* is written *a*, long *u* and diphthong *ou* is written as *u* and short *e* (*kasra* sound) is also written as *i* to be consistent with IJME system. Place name and personal names with accepted English spellings are spelled in accordance with English norms, unless quoting from another source. As for dating system, I have chosen to write both Gregorian and *Hijra* date. All translations, especially poetry are by the author unless cited.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

'Abd al- Rahman Jami (1417-1492), one of the most prolific writers in Persian literature, enjoyed fame and prestige during his lifetime unlike any other Persian poet, not only in his homeland of greater Khurasan and Herat, but also at the Qara-Quyunlu, Aq-Quyunlu, Ottoman courts, and even as far as in India. The purpose of this study is to provide an overview of the life and work of 'Abd al-Rahman Jami, the so called "the last great classical Persian poet" whose work has been largely neglected or overlooked by scholars in Iran and the West. Jami's literary reputation in the Timurid court and his connection with the Naqshbandi Sufis granted him a celebrity status in Central Asia and Transoxiana at the time. Although a few studies have been published in the twentieth century, a small number of contemporary scholars have recognized his contribution to Persian literature and his importance in the Naqshbandis, which was the most influential Sufi order in Central Asia in the fifteenth century. In spite of his celebrity status especially outside of Iran,¹ there is a lack of scholarly material on Jami's contribution to Persian literature. The current study will bring to light not only Jami's contribution to Persian literature, his important position in the Naqshbandi Order, and his commentaries on Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy, but also his humanitarian deeds through which he was able to ease the

¹ Such as in Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Russia.

suffering and hardship of those who appealed to him.² And finally, this work offers a critical study of Jami's works, which has not been covered before.

As was noted, not many contemporary Iranian scholars have done any extensive study about Jami and his works. Those that have contributed are: Hashim Razi who edited Jami's *diwans* and has written a preface, covering his life and works. While Razi's prelude is over two hundred pages long, it falls short of analyzing Jami's work critically and covering the social and political era of Jami. Additionally, Ali Asghar Hikmat's work, *Jami: Mutizamin-i Tahqiqat dar Tarikh-i Ahval va Asar-i Manzum va Mansur-i Khatimat al-Shu'ara*, is probably the only critical study of Jami's work by an Iranian,³ though it is rather limited and sugarcoated. However, Hikmat does not provide citations for the material he borrows from fifteenth-century works on Jami, such as *Taklama*,⁴ *Rashahat A'in al-Hayat*,⁵ *Maqamat-i Jami*,⁶ or *Khamsat al-Mutahayyirin*.⁷ Moreover, a comprehensive study of Jami's life and works was written by Najib Mayil Heravi,⁸ who occasionally has been critical of Jami's character and works. For instance, he objects to Jami's imitating his predecessors, even though that has been the general practice among

² Jami's philanthropic activities, which he implemented by writing letters to dignitaries, elites, and specifically to 'Ali-shir Nava'i, his friend and devotee, have not been explored yet. Jami was able to utilize his position as the poet laureate of the Timurids and as the sheikh of the Naqshbandis in greater Khurasan and Herat, to relieve people from the economic hardships or other social injustices that they had to deal in daily life. Jami's philanthropic activities will be covered in Appendix C. The collection of letters are important from historical point; because the time of the Timurids as it could be extrapolated from historical works was an era of oppression, censorship, and restriction on expression and movement. The Timurid historians, who were few in numbers and mostly commissioned by the court, could not maintain an objective, intellectual continuity with the past. Finally, this work offers a critical study of Jami's works, which has not been covered before.

³ Recently, Sazman-i Chap va Intisharat-i Vizarat-i Farhang va Irshad-i Islami has published the work: *The Gnosticism of Jami in His Corpus*, by Susan Al-i Rasul, which was printed in 1383/2004.

⁴ This work, a preface to Jami's work *Nafahat al-Uns*, was written by 'Abd al-Ghafur Lari, Jami's disciple.

⁵ This work, a biographical dictionary about the Naqshbandi Sufis, was written by Maulana Fakhr al-Din 'Ali b. Hussein Wai'z Kashifi, Jami's disciple and nephew.

⁶ This work, a more complete biography of Jami, was written by Abd al-Wasi' Nizami Bakharzi, another disciple of Jami. It has a flowery verbatim prose, but provides interesting information about Jami.

⁷ This work was written by Jami's friend and patron Ali-shir Nava'i.

⁸ Heravi has also edited *Maqamat-i Jami* written by Nizami Bakharzi, another disciple of Jami.

poets. One of the most complete critical editions on Jami's life and works was done by a Tajik scholar A'lakhan Afsahzad.⁹ While this is a credible study, Afsahzad's admiration for Jami's work and character is excessive.

As was noted, despite the celebrity status that Jami enjoyed during his life, and honor and respect that have been bestowed on him in Afghanistan and Tajikistan, there is not a comprehensive study in the West about this great Sufi poet either, though some of his *mathnawis* such as *Salaman va Absal*¹⁰, *Yusuf va Zulaykha*¹¹, *Laily va Majnun*¹² have been translated into English, Arabic, and Turkish languages. There are at least three explanations for the lack of scholarship on Jami: First, his heartfelt devotion to Sunni beliefs, easily recognized in his writing, was his main liability that was used against him by the Safavids, the Shi'i dynasty that ruled over the territory after the fall of the Timurids. Jami, particularly, was accused of having anti-Shi'i sentiment¹³, in addition to his association to the Naqshbandi Sufi order.¹⁴ Of course, Safavid Shi'is were not the only one opposed to Jami, even some Sunni authorities such as Qazi Mir Hussein Maybudi, a Shafi'i scholar has denounced Jami in a *qiti'*, in which he writes:

اسدالله لقبش نامی آن امام بحق ولی خدا
 یکی از ابله‌ی، یکی از خا می دو کس او را به جان بیا زردند

⁹ Afsahzad also edited *Diwan-i Jami*, and *Baharistan va Rasa'il-i Jami*.

¹⁰ 'Abd al- Rahman Jami, *Salaman va Absal, A Study by Jami*, trs. A.J. Arberry; Edward Fitzgerald, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1956. Forbes Falconder also has translated this work.

¹¹ Samuel Robinson, *Analysis & Specimens of the Joseph and Zulaikh, A Historical Romantic Poem*, London: Williams and Norgate, 1873. This *mathnawi* has been also translated into French, German, and Russian.

¹² 'Abd al- Rahman Jami, *Layli va Majnun*, tr. Muhammad Ghunaymi Hilal, al-Qahira: Dar Nahdat Misr, 1979.

¹³ Vasifi, *Badayi' al- Vaqayi'*, v. 2, p. 250. Safavid animosity against Jami was to the point that after the Safavid army conquered Herat, the Qizilbash army even burned Jami's grave. It has been reported that his son and some of his followers already had transferred his remain to a safe place.

¹⁴ The Naqshbandis were an ardent follower of the *shari'a* and strictly against Shi'i thought, which from the Sunni point of view is regarded as *bida'* – innovation or heterodoxy in the religion.

That rightful Imam, whose popular name was Asadullah – God’s lion (the name that ‘Ali was referred to), was hurt by two people the most. One hurt him from ignorance and their other one from immaturity. Both names were ‘Abd al-Rahman, This one- the immature one was ‘Abd al-Rahman Muljam (the Kharajite who assassinated ‘Ali, and the other one- the ignorant one was ‘Abd al-Rahman Jami.¹⁵

The second reason was the influence of *Sabk-i Hindi*, the style of poetry which for almost two centuries was the popular style in Iran and India, where numerous Persian poets had migrated. Besides, *Sabki-Hindi* poets particularly did not have any preference for Jami's poetry which they regarded as imitation and cliché of master Persian poets.¹⁶ However, Jami penned more than fifty works of prose and poetry, most importantly his three *diwans* (collection of poetry), containing *qasidas*, *ghazals*, *quatrains*, *qit'as*, *tarkib-bands*, and *tarji'-bands*.¹⁷ Jami’s most famous work, *Mathnawi-i Haft Awrang*, includes seven different *mathnawis*.¹⁸ Among his celebrated prose writings are *Nafahat al-Uns min Hazarat al-Quds*, a biography of over six hundred Sufis; *Baharistan*, a work in imitation of Sa'di's *Gulistan*; and *Naqd al-Nusus*, a commentary on Ibn 'Arabi 's celebrated Sufi treatise of the thirteenth century, *Naqsh al-Nusus*.¹⁹

Primary Sources

The following primary sources were valuable to this study: *Taklama*,²⁰ a short biographical account on Jami, was written by Jami’s disciple ‘Abd al-Ghafur Lari in the

¹⁵ Heravi, Jami, p. 288. Heravi sights Nurollah Shushtari’s work, *Majalis al-Mu'minin*, v.1, p. 133.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 293. Poets such as Sa’ib (1601-1678), Kalim of Kashan,(d.1650), regarded Jami’s work as a *nazm* – a poetry, in which prosody rules has been followed by does not have a deep meaning that is in real *shi'r*.

¹⁷ Each of these will be defined in the chapter on Jami’s poetry.

¹⁸ In spite of its fame, the *Mathnawi-i Haft Awrang* has detractors who have criticized Jami for imitating Nizami and Amir Khusrau, though only two of the *Mathnawis* *Layli va Majnun*, and *Khirdnama-yi Iskandari* share titles and some other similarities with Nizami's and Amir Khusrau works.

¹⁹ A condensed work of Ibn Arabi’s *Fusus al-Hikam*.

²⁰ ‘Abd al-Ghafur Lari, *Taklama*, ed. Bashir-i Heravi, Herat: Az Nashrat-i Anjuman- Jami, 1343.

hashiya-border of Jami's celebrated work *Nafahat al-Uns*. Though it provides valuable information about Jami, the work is not written in logical order and its information is scattered among verbatim and flowery praise. For example, Lari writes "the light of *vilayat* [sanctity and holiness] shines from his blessed face..."²¹ In addition, its prose in the *dari* dialect²² is occasionally problematic.

Rashahat-i A'yn al-Hayat,²³ written by Wa'iz Kashifi, who was known as Safi, is a biographical dictionary of *Khawajagan*—Sufi leaders of the Naqshbandi. The section on Jami is fifty-three pages long, written in a logical order, beginning with the various titles and names by which Jami was known, his place of birth, his childhood, education, and other relevant information about his life. Safi's prose is clear and simple. While he has borrowed some of his accounts from Lari, on the whole, he provides more extensive account of Jami's life.

Maqamat-i Jami,²⁴ written by another of Jami's disciples, 'Abd al-Wasi'-i Nizami-i Bakharzi, begins with a prayer asking for God's help in following the steps of his master, Jami. It is longer than previous works, providing the most information about Jami, his era, and his encounter with others. In addition, it offers some information about Jami's contemporaries. Since Bakharzi was a scribe at the court of the Timurids, his prose style is much more flowery and verbatim than that of Lari or Safi, and he uses a great number of Arabic phrases.

²¹ Ibid., p. 2.

²² The dialect of the greater Khurasan region.

²³ Maulana Fakhr al-Din Ali b. Hussein Wa'iz Kashifi, *Rashahat-i 'Ayn al-Hayat*, ed. 'Ali Asghar Mu'iniyan, Tehran: Intisharat-i Bunyad-i Nikukari Nuriyani, 2536/1977.

²⁴ 'Abd al-Wasi' Nizami-i Bakharzi, *Maqamat-i Jami*, ed. Najib Mayil Heravi, Tehran: Nashr-i Nay, 1371/1992.

Khamsat al- Mutahayyirin,²⁵ written by ‘Ali-shir Nava’i after Jami's death to comfort the author’s own grief, does not provide significant information. Containing five chapters, *muqadama* (preface), three chapters, and *khatima* (conclusion), the work mostly discusses the special relationship that Nava’i had with Jami. For example, the two men appear to have exchanged their work and positive commentaries about each other’s writings. Nava’i writes about persuading Jami to provide a specific title for his *diwans* similar to Amir Khusrau’s practice. In actuality, the work is a self-proclamation of Nava’i's talent, as well.

In addition to the above-mentioned works, I benefited from Jami's own works: *Diwan-i Jami*,²⁶ *Mathnawi-i Haft Awrang*,²⁷ *Nafahat al-Uns*,²⁸ and *Baharistan*.²⁹ My main secondary sources include *Jami: Mutizamin-i Tahqiqat dar Tarikh-i Ahval va Asar-i Manzum va Mansur-i Khatimat al-Shu'ara, Jami*, and *Naqd va Barisi Asar va Sharh-i Ahval- Jami*, which are discussed before.

This dissertation contains a brief biography of Jami, the so called "last classical poet of Persian literature", contextualized by a short history of the Timurids, the successors to the Timur or known to his contemporary as "*Sultan-i Sahib Qiran*- the Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction", and known in the West, as Tamerlane. This work also provides an overview of the religious and sociopolitical context of the Naqshbandis as well as Jami’s viewpoint on poetry and Sufism. Religion during the Timurid era

²⁵ ‘Ali-shir Nava’i, *Khamsat al- Mutahayyirin*, ed. Abduqadir Maniyzov, Toshkent: Rahim Hashim, n.d.

²⁶ ‘Abd al-Rahman-i Jami, *Diwan-i Jami*, ed. A'lakhan Afsahzad, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1378.

²⁷ ‘Abd al-Rahman-i Jami, *Mathnawi-i Haft Awrang*, eds. Jabliqadad Alishah, Asghar Janfada, Zahir Ahrari, and Hussein Tarbiat, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1378.

²⁸ ‘Abd al-Rahman Jami, *Nafahat al-Uns Min Hazarat- al-Quds*, ed. Mehdi Tuhidipur, Tehran: ‘Elmi, 1375.

²⁹ ‘Abd al-Rahman Jami, *Baharistan*, eds. A'lakhan Afsahzad, Muhammadjon Umaruf, Abu Bakr Zuhur al-Din, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1379.

obviously left a profound mark on Jami, especially through the Naqshbandis which became the most influential Sufi order of the realm in the fifteenth century. Since, Jami became the poet laureate in this vortex of political, cultural, and social settings of the era, this study will also describe the status of poetry under the Timurids. Finally, the current study will underscore the literary works which Jami produced, and briefly comment on *Sabk-i Hindi*³⁰— the Indian style of poetry, the dawn of which is said to have been in the fifteenth century. This study will provide a deeper understanding of Jami’s poetry and a reflection of the world in which it was written.

³⁰ *Sabk-i Hindi* is regarded as the last development in classical Persian poetry before the birth of the free verse in the twentieth century.

CHAPTER 2

BIOGRAPHY OF JAMI

Jami³¹ is one of the few medieval Persian poets about whom sufficient biographical information exists. One of the main sources of his biography is the *qasida* that he wrote, "Rashaha bal basharh-i hal,"³² composed five years before his death, in which he summarized his life. This *qasida* provides information about when Jami was born, what he did in his childhood, what subjects he studied, his talent in composing poetry, as well as his various other achievements. Useful biographical information is also provided by Jami's disciples, Abd al-Ghafur Lari³³, Nizami Bakharzi³⁴, and Fakhr al-Din Ali b. Hussein Kashifi (known as Safi)³⁵, and his friend Mir Ali-shir Nava'i.³⁶ In addition, two

³¹ Jami's lifespan almost concurs with the Timurid era. 'Imad al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman Jami was born in the evening on the 23rd of *Sha'ban* 817/ Nov. 7, 1414, almost nine years after Shahrukh took the reigns of the dynasty, and he died in 1492, fifteen years before the dynasty was overthrown by the Shaybanids.

³² Jami *Diwan- Wasitat al-Iqd*, ed. A'alakhan Afsahzad, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1378, pp. 35-39.

³³ 'Abd al-Ghafur Lari, *Taklama*, ed. Bashir-i Heravi, Herat: Nashrat-i Anjuman-i Jami, 1343/1964. *Taklama* is part of the commentary that Lari wrote on the work *Nafahat al-Uns*. In this short work (43 pages), Lari writes a brief biography of his mentor.

³⁴ 'Abd al-Wasi' Nizami Bakharzi, *Maqamat-i Jami*, ed. Najib Mayil Heravi, Tehran: Nashr-i Ney, 1371/1992. This is a more detailed account of Jami's life (267 pages). Bakharzi was a scribe during the late Timurid era. Besides being Jami's disciple, it is believed that he wrote some of Jami's letters, which have been compiled under the title *Namaha va Munsh'at-i Jami*.

³⁵ Fakhr al-Din 'Ali b. Hussein Kashifi, *Rahsahat 'Ain al-Hayat*, 2 vol. ed. 'Ali Asghar Mui'nian, Tehran: Bunyad-Nikukari Nuriyani, 2536/1977, pp. 233-286. This is a two-volume work about Khwajagan-Naqshbandi. Kashifi, Jami's nephew, married Jami's sister in-law (the second daughter of Sheikh Kalan, son of Sa'd al-Din Kashghari, who was Jami's mentor. In this work, Kashifi writes about the origin of the Naqshbandi Order and a short biography of the Naqshbandi sheikhs. This is a valuable source about the Naqshbandis and their leaders. The prose style of the work is simple and accessible, compared to Bakharzi's prose or other works produced in the fifteenth century.

³⁶ Mir 'Ali-shir Nava'i, *Khamsat al-Mutahayyirin* (n.d., n.p.). In this work Nava'i also writes a biography of Jami, his friend and colleague, but the work offers limited biographical information about Jami. Nava'i also

famous biographical dictionaries (*tazkiras*), *Tuhfa Sami*³⁷ and *Tazkira Dulatshah-i Samarqandi*,³⁸ contain information about Jami's life, and a brief account of his life is offered in Khwandamir's *Habib al-Siyar*,³⁹ a historical work. Below are presented highlights of Jami's life.

‘Imad al-Din ‘Abd al-Rahman⁴⁰ Jami was born in the evening of the 23rd of Sha’ban 817/ Nov. 7, 1414.⁴¹ His birth place was Kharjard,⁴² a village near the city of Jam in the province of greater Khurasan, Iran. His family was originally from Dasht, a small town in the province of Isfahan. ‘Abd al-Rahman’s grand-father, Shams al-Din Muhammad was an honest respected judge (*qadi*). Disturbed by the *turktazi* (atrocities and plunder) of the Turcoman rulers of the region, Shams al-Din Muhammad left Dasht with his family and settled in Kharjard in the province of Khurasan. ‘Abd- al-Rahman's father Nizam al-Din Muhammad b. Shams al-Din was a respected scholar in Kharjard.⁴³ He engaged in the same profession as his father, acting as a judge and jurist in Kharjard.⁴⁴

wrote *Tazkira*—a biographical dictionary, under the title *Majalis al- Nafa'is* on poets who were his contemporaries, yet he provides no more than two-three lines about Jami.

³⁷ Sam Mirza, *Tuhfa Sami*, ed. Vahid-i Dastgirdi, Tehran: Kitabfrushi Frughi, 1352/1973, pp. 85-90.

³⁸ Amir Dulatshah- Samarqandi, *Tazkirat al-Shu'ara*, ed. Muhammad Ramazani, Tehran: Intisharat-i Padida, 1366, pp. 362-368.

³⁹ Ghiath al-Din b. Humam al-Din al-Husseini, known as Khwandamir, *Tarikh-i Habib al-Siyar, fi Akhbar-i Afrad-i Bashari*, v. 4, Tehran: Intisharat-Khayyam, n.d., pp. 237-238.

⁴⁰ According to Muhammad Ali Mudarris Tabrizi, *Rayhanat al-Adab*, v. 1, Tehran: Intisharat-i Khayyam, 1995, p. 385. In biographical dictionaries, Jami is mostly referred to by his pen-name, ‘Abd al-Rahman. Yet his name was ‘Imad al-Din (pillar of religion), and he was later known as Nur al-Din (light of religion) Abd al-Rahman.

⁴¹ ‘Abd al- Wasi’ Nizami-i Bakharzi, *Maqamat-i Jami*, ed. Najib Mayil Heravi, Tehran: Intisharat-i Ney, 1992, p. 12.

⁴² A’lakhan Afsahzad, *A Critical Study of Jami's Biography and Writing*, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1378, p. 107. Kharjard is a place between Herat and Mashhad. The place later was called Kharjard. Now, the village, almost ruined, exists inside the borders of present-day Iran. According to Afsahzad, the place is different from Kharjard-i Jam, the village near Turbat-i Jam, the place that is the burial place of Sheikh Ahmad-i Jam.

⁴³ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 40. Also Fakhr al-Din ‘Ali b. Hussein Wa’iz Kashifi, ed. ‘Ali Asghar Mu’iniyan, vol. 1, Tehran: Intisharat-i Buniad-i Nikukari, Tehran: 2536/1977, p. 234.

⁴⁴ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 106.

‘Abd al-Rahman’s ancestors were linked to Muhammad Ibn Hasan Shaybani, one of the important successors of Imam Abu Hanifa.⁴⁵

According to ‘Ali Safi and Abd al-Wasi’ Nizami-i Bakharzi, when Abd al-Rahman began to write poetry, he used the penname *Dashti* as his *takhallus* (nom de plume), in reference to the place of his ancestors in Isfahan,⁴⁶ and he later changed it to *Jami*. Jami has explained that he chose his *takhallus* for two reasons: one because of the famous Sufi of Jam, Sheikh al-Islam Ahmad Jam,⁴⁷ and second, because his birth place was Jam.⁴⁸ Jami's disciple, Abd al-Ghafur Lari, in his *Taklama*, indicates that Jami’s choice for his penname is best explained in this *qit’a* (poetical segment) below.

مولدم جام و رشحه قلمم
جرعه جام شيخ الاسلامي است
لاجرم در جریده اشعار
بدو معنی تخلصم جامی است

My birthplace is Jam and dripping from my pen,
Is from the Sheikh of Jam,⁴⁹
So undoubtedly, in the registrar of poems,
For two reasons my penname is Jami.⁵⁰

Jami was eleven years old when his father took him to Herat where he studied under Maulana Junayd Usuli⁵¹ in the *Madrassa-i Nizamiyya*⁵² (Nizamiyya School).⁵³

⁴⁵ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 40. Jami's grandmother was one of the children of Imam Muhammad Shaybani.

⁴⁶ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p.127.

⁴⁷ Muhammad Mu’in, *Farhang-i Farsi*, v. 5, Tehran: Intisharat-i Amir Kabir, 1371, p. 423.

⁴⁸ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 127.

⁴⁹ Sheikh-i Jam, is the reference to Sheikh Ahmad Jami (d.1141), the famous Sufi mystic of Jam.

⁵⁰ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 40. Also sighted in the work of Ali Asghar Hikmat, *Jami*, Tehran: Intisharat-i Tus, Tehran; 1363/1984, p. 59.

⁵¹ There is scarce information about Junayd Usuli. Sources (*Maqamat-i Jami*, and *Rashahat*) state that Usuli was renowned for his knowledge in Arabic language and literature.

⁵² There is a contradiction between the reports of ‘Ali Safi and Nizami Bakharzi. In *Rashahat* (p. 235), Safi reports that Jami lived in Nizamiyya, which means, as was a custom in *madrassas* (religious schools), he was given a room in the school while he studied there. However, in *Maqamat* (p. 51), Bakharzi writes that Jami lived in the Nizamiyya district while he attended the Dilkash School. Nava’i in *Khamsat al-Mutahayyirin* confirms Safi’s account.

⁵³ Nizamiyya Schools were established by the famous Saljuqid vizier Khwaja Nizam al-Mulk in most of the major cities of the Islamic world, such as Baghdad, Nishabur, and Herat.

Jami's teachers in Nizamiyya were well-known scholars such as Khwaja 'Ali Samarqandi, a former student of Ali b. Muhammad b. Ali Hussein Jurjani (b. 1339) and Shahab al-Din Muhammad Jajirmi (d. 1459), whose mentor was Sa'd al-Din al-Taftazani.⁵⁴ While Jami studied logic and philosophy with them,⁵⁵ it seems that most of his study explored *kalam*-scholastic theology and *hadith*.⁵⁶ Jami has noted that he learned Arabic, its grammar and syntax, from his father, so he has regarded his father as his primary teacher, since he taught Jami how to read and write both Persian and Arabic.⁵⁷

From the earliest stage of his education, Jami's teachers noticed his extraordinary talent and wit. Although he was not a diligent student, he seemed to absorb knowledge with ease. According to his classmates, he would take their notes, look them over on his way to class, and by the time class began, his retention of the material would be as well as that of the other students who had worked harder. On the whole, Jami strongly resisted a disciplined approach to education.⁵⁸ As he grew older and continued his studies under renowned masters of his era, he quickly incorporated whatever knowledge his teachers were able to transmit.⁵⁹ He challenged them successfully in discussions, which meant that he had to continuously search for thought-provoking teachers.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ Jami, *Al-Durrat Al-Fakhira*, tr. Nicholas Heer, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1979, p. 1. Taftazani (1322-1390) was the renowned scholar of grammar, logic, rhetoric, law, Quran exegesis, and theology of the fourteenth century.

⁵⁵ A'alakhan Afsahzad, p. 114. Muhammad Shahab Jajirmi was a student of the scholar 'Allama Sa'd al-Din Taftazani; Maulana Khwaja 'Ali Samarqandi was a student of another scholar, Sharif Jurjani (1339-1413).

⁵⁶ Jawid A. Mujaddidi, *The Biographical Tradition in Sufism*, Great Britain, Curzon Press, 2001, p. 151.

⁵⁷ Razi al-Din 'Abd al-Ghafur Lari, *Taklama*, ed. Bashir Heravi, Herat: Nashrat-i Anjuman-i Jami, 1343, p. 11.

⁵⁸ Hadland Davis, *Wisdom of the East: The Persian Mystic Jami*, Lahore: Northern Army Press, n.d., p. 5.

⁵⁹ 'Abd al-Wasi, Nizami Bakharzi, *Maqamat-i Jami*, ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, Tehran: Nashr-i Ney, 1371, p. 56. Both Bakharzi and Lari have pointed out that Jami spent forty days with Khwaja Samarqandi; it

Finally, Jami began to study independently. The sources do not reveal the length of time he studied alone, incorporating into his well of knowledge, in addition to languages, history, and literature, subjects such as math, and astronomy. Afsahzad indicates that Jami worked on a farm during this period, too, although it is unclear whether he farmed to earn a living or to further his education.⁶¹

Then, in order to continue his education, Jami went to Samarqand,⁶² but the exact date of this journey is unclear.⁶³ Jami studied under Qazizada Rumi (d. 1436),⁶⁴ the scholar-researcher in the service of Ulugh Bag, working in the astronomy center which the latter had established. Ali Safi has confirmed Lari's account in this regard.⁶⁵ According to Safi, while Jami was in Samarqand, Maulana Fath Allah Tabrizi, Ulugh Bag's vizier (d.1462),⁶⁶ arranged for him to be tested by the chief scholar of the court, Qazizada Rumi. At the completion of this session at the court, the sage declared that "no one as knowledgeable as this young man [Jami] has crossed the *Amu Darya* (Oxus River)

seems Samarqandi could not add to Jami's knowledge beyond those forty days, advising him to find another teacher.

⁶⁰ Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v. 3, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951, p. 507.

⁶¹ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 118.

⁶² Safi, *Rashahat*, pp. 238-239. Safi writes that Jami was interested in a beauty (*giriftari dil ba yiki az mazahir husn va jamal buda ast*). One day Jami's feelings were hurt by the latter (probably a young man) so he left Herat for Samarqand and continued his education there.

⁶³ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 119. Though the sources do not clearly state an exact date, Afsahzad notes: "Herat and her suburbs were hit by cholera in 1435. Many died (He writes six hundred thousand in the city and four hundred thousand in the suburbs.) So Jami left the city and went to Samarqand.

⁶⁴ Muhammad Mu'in, *Farhang-i Farsi*, V.6, p. 1431, *Intisharat-i Amir Kabir*, Tehran;1371. Musa b. Mahmud Rumi Chalabi was originally from Bursa went to Transoxiana in the service of Ulugh Bag. He had studied math, astronomy and philosophy and wrote commentary on Ptolemaios (d. 167).

⁶⁵ Afsahzad, p. 122. Since Qazizada died in 1436, and as reported Jami could not benefit from his knowledge for too long, Afsahzad suggests that Jami probably was around twenty- one or two so the date of his arrival must be 1435.

⁶⁶ Safi, *Rashahat*, v.2, p. 677-8. Khwandamir, *Habib al-Syar*, v.4, p. 102. Tabrizi, according to Safi and Khwandamir, was one of the scholars of the fifteenth century. He also was vizier at the court of Abu Sa'id. He, because of his interest in knowledge, besides his responsibility at the court, participated in scholarly discussion. When Abulqasim Babur campaigned in Transoxiana intending to conquer Samarqand in 1454, Abu Sa'id sent Tabrizi as the mediator for peace treaty with Babur. Tabrizi died in Herat.

since the city of Samarqand has been built.”⁶⁷ It seems that the scholarly circle of Samarqand must have known of Jami in advance for them to be eager to attend the session in the court.⁶⁸ One may safely assume that Jami initially encountered Sufism while in Samarqand.⁶⁹ While Jami lived in Samarqand, ‘Abd al-Latif,⁷⁰ occupying the seat of the Timurids, invited him into his inner circle of companions, because of his accomplishments. Jami, however, declined the invitation.

Jami lived in Samarqand for almost sixteen years during the city’s zenith of splendor and beauty. The city that Timur did his best in glorifying, later Ulugh Beg completed, making it the center of knowledge and learning. However, apparently, the struggle of succession between Timur's offspring following the death of ‘Abd al-Latif (d. 1450), Ulugh Beg's son, made the city unsuitable for the Sufi poet so Jami left it for Herat. Yet no record verifies the exact date when he departed. He must have left Samarqand in the early reign of Abu Sa'id (1451-1469). According to Afsahzad,⁷¹ Jami wrote *Hilya-yi Hulal*⁷² in Herat in 1452, so he could not have stayed long after Abu Sa'id took the throne. There is not enough information to construct Jami’s biography concerning the time he spent in Samarqand; neither Nizami, nor Lari, nor Safi were around him then.

⁶⁷ ‘Ali Safi, *Rashahat*, p. 236.

⁶⁸ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, pp. 122-123.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 126.

⁷⁰ For the account of Abd al-Latif, see Chapter 3 in this dissertation on the History of the Timurids.

⁷¹ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 128.

⁷² This work is a treaty on *mu'mma* (riddles) and is known also by the title of *Risaliy-i Kabir*. Jami dedicated this work to Abulqasim Babur b. Baysunqur b. Shahrukh (1422-1457), the ruler of Khurasan at the time.

According to Safi, Kashghari called Jami in a dream to return to Herat.⁷³ When he returned, Jami spent his time in self study and writing. Not long after his return from Samarqand this accomplished man joined the Naqshbandi Order, probably around 1452-53.⁷⁴ Jami, in a poem at the beginning of one of his old *diwans*, implicitly states that he was around forty at the time.⁷⁵

در چهل و عمی داده چهل سال ز دست

I lost forty years being blind and ignorant.⁷⁶

Jami chose Sa'd al-Din Kashghari as his sheikh,⁷⁷ whom he profoundly respected.⁷⁸ He spent a few years under Kashghari's tutelage before the latter's departure from this world in 1456.⁷⁹ He wrote a touching elegy for Kashghari after his passing.⁸⁰

Safi reports that after Jami joined the order, Kashghari put him through a strenuous training, to the point that Jami did not want to be around people any longer and spent his time in isolation. When he finally came out of seclusion, probably after his training was complete, he could not speak clearly. Safi writes: *alfaz-i ma'nus, vahshi*

⁷³ Safi, *Rashahat*, v.1, p. 239. Safi notes that one night Jami was suffering from separation from a dear person whom he left in Herat (see also note # 32). In his pain and agony he dreamed that Kashghari told him "o brother, go find someone who also wants you." Safi adds that Jami became so affected by the dream that he immediately returned to Herat and soon after joined Kashghari's circle.

⁷⁴ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, pp. 87-88. Bakharzi notes that one day at the court of 'Abd- al Latif a *ghazal* of Jami was read. The latter said that "this young man has a high position among the Sufis of Bukhara", so it seems Jami at least somehow was involved with the order at the time that he lived in Samarqand.

⁷⁵ Jami was born in 817 years after Hijra (1414), so the year 857/1452-3, he would have been almost forty years, according to lunar calendar.

⁷⁶ *Diwan-i Jami*, v.1, p.10.

⁷⁷ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 129. Jami's connection to Baha' al-Din Naqshband is as follows: Jami was a disciple of Sa'd al-Din Kashghari, while the latter was a disciple of Nizam al-Din Khamush, who was a disciple of A'la al-Din 'Attar Ghujduwani, who was directly a disciple of Khwaja Bah' al-Din Naqshband.

⁷⁸ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 43. Jami, it seems, had asked to be buried next to Kashghari in Khiyaban district of Herat.

⁷⁹ Kashghari died in Jamadi al-Akhir 860/May 1456.

⁸⁰ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 129.

gashta (friendly familiar words have become wild). Eventually, Jami regained his ability to communicate.⁸¹

Jami's Characteristics

Humility was not among Jami's virtues, and his pride in his own superb intellect meant that he believed himself to be equipped with inborn talent and innate skills to be able to grasp what others needed to be taught in long-term relationships with older, 'superior' scholars. Safi writes that Jami attended discussion sessions in Samarqand, but that he also believed he had quickly surpassed his teachers.⁸²

ایشان را احتیاج به تلمذ کسی نبود، بلکه بر مدرس حوزه غالب می بودند.

He did not need to be anyone's student, yet he overcame the school's teachers.⁸³

And if Jami believed that he needed no teacher, he certainly did not feel obliged to be humble before them. Certainly his reputation for brilliance and sagacity from an early period in his social life fostered this attitude of overconfidence. Bakharzi reports what his master said one day:

With his blessed tongue he said, 'we neither in childhood nor youth did humiliate ourselves as most disciples do, walking behind our mentors (people) such as Qazizada Rumi or Khwaja Ali Samarqandi.'⁸⁴

⁸¹ Safi, *Rashahat*, v.1, p. 240.

⁸² Ibid., p. 236. It is clear that Jami's disciples exaggerated their mentor's knowledge and ability. Of course they echoed Jami's remarks in this regard. Safi writes: "One day in Herat, Ali Qushchi, wearing a *chamta* (some kind of Turkish belt), entered the session of that honorable one (reference to Jami). He asked Jami some questions, to test his knowledge, as was the custom. That honorable person gave the correct answer for all. Then Jami jokingly asked, 'O' Maulana Ali you do not have anything else in your *chamta*?' From that day on, Ali Qushchi admitted that the honorable one had divine knowledge." Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, pp. 284-285. Qushchi was a mathematician and theologian who lived in the fifteenth century. He was one of the peoples who participated in building of Ulugh Beg's astronomy center in Samarqand. After Ulugh Bag he left the city for pilgrimage to Mecca. After making the *hajj*, he stayed in Tabriz in the court of Uzun Hasan Aq-Quyunlu. The latter sent him to Istanbul for a peace treaty with Sultan Muhammad II, the Ottoman Sultan.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 237.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 238.

Jami apparently found such diffidence beneath him.

Because he lacked a disciple's humility, Jami also did not have the traditional loyalty that a student normally feels for his teacher. In fact, he wrote that he did not feel obliged to any of his teachers. There is a prophetic saying that states: "Whoever teaches me one word makes me her/his slave for the rest of my life." In this regard, Jami was definitely by his nature a "free" man. He remarks:

I have found no master with whom I have studied superior to myself. On the contrary, I have invariably found that in argument I could defeat them all. I acknowledge, therefore, as far as obligation of a pupil to a master is concerned, I have obligation to none; for if I am the pupil of anyone, it is of my father, who taught me how to read and write.⁸⁵

Of course, one should not be surprised by Jami's pride. After all, his mentors made him feel unique. Safi reports that one day, when Jami entered the session of Khwaja Shams al-Din Kusou'i,⁸⁶ the latter said:

امروز شمع در مجلس ما افروخت

Today, a candle is lit in our gathering.

Then, Safi adds, "more truths and knowledge came to [Kusou'i's] tongue."⁸⁷

Yet, Lari reports that Jami, his mentor, was really a humble, generous man.

Whenever Jami received a large sum of money or gifts from nobles and rulers, he secretly spent it on the poor, or spent it as endowment on schools, hospices, or *khaniqahs* (dervish dwellings).⁸⁸ He adds that Jami always ate simple foods moderately and that he dressed

⁸⁵ Browne, *A Literary History of Iran*, v.3, p. 509.

⁸⁶ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, pp. 294-295. Kusuya was west of Herat. Khwaja Shams al-Din Muhammad Kusu'i, one of the renowned Sufi religious scholars of the fifteenth century, had many disciples; the most famous of them was Khwaja Sa'd al-Din Kashghari, Jami's mentor. The latter believed he was a family member of the Sheikh Ahmad Jam. Khwaja Kusu'i died in 1458 and was buried near Jami' Mosque in Herat.

⁸⁷ Safi, *Rashahat*, v.1, p. 245. Safi means that Khwaja Kusu'i delivered more information that day.

⁸⁸ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 20.

in plain, unadorned clothes. In fact, if a stranger entered a room looking for him, he could not distinguish him from others, because of his simple appearance.⁸⁹ In literary sessions, he sat among the ordinary people despite his status.

Jami's Love of Poetry

Jami appears to have had an innate interest in poetry. As he wrote in his biographical *qasida*, "Rashaht bal basharh-i hal":

زطور طور گذشتم بسی ولی هرگز
ز فکر شعر نشد حاصلم فراغت بال
هزار بار ازین شغل توبه کردم لیک
ازان نبود گیرم چو سایر اشغال

I circled the Mount Sinai many times but,
My mind never was free of thinking of poetry,
I repented from this practice 1000 times, but
I was not able to do it like other jobs.⁹⁰

Lari writes that his master's mind, from his youth to his old age, was always occupied with poetry. He was either writing, or thinking about it, though it did not take much time for him to do so.⁹¹ He adds: "Poetry was a cover for the secrets, and being a poet was a cover for that *buzurgvar* (honorable one). Thus, poetry and being a poet in reality was a mask over his *fazl va kamal* (virtue and perfection.)"⁹² Lari continues to praise his master by saying that Jami "could easily absorb knowledge in different subjects when he was full of excitement and love and his mind was occupied with poetry."⁹³ Nor, Lari adds,

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 20.

⁹⁰ Jami, *Diwan Wasitat al-'Iqd*, p. 37.

⁹¹ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 7.

⁹² Ibid., p. 9.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 9.

was his master, from his youth to his maturity, ever free from the bliss, pain, and agony of love.⁹⁴ One might recall that Jami wrote:

کار جامی عشق خوبانست و هر سو عالمی
در پی انکار او ، او همچنان در کار خویش

Jami's work is love of beauties from the whole world,
Denounce him, yet he is [still] busy with his work.⁹⁵

It seems, then, that composing poetry was a means by which Jami expressed himself best. There are several *ghazals* by Jami whose subject matter includes social issues such as injustice, hypocrisy, or oppression, and there are also some *ghazals* in his *diwan* that can be interpreted as being about divine love; yet there also are some *ghazals* that he wrote, especially those in which he describes the physical beauty of the beloved, that can be interpreted as referring to either divine or worldly love. Nonetheless, I interpret love in Jami's *mathnawis* as divine love, despite the subject matter of some of them, such as *Laily va Majnun*, *Salaman va Absal*, or *Yusuf va Zulaykha*, which may imply worldly love. My argument is that since Jami definitely wrote his *mathnawis* in his old age, after years that he had joined the Naqshbandis, his understanding of love must have been mystical love.

Jami's Final Year

Lari writes that his master recited the following line under his lips in the last year of his life.

بسی تیر و دیمه و اردیبهشت
بیاید که ما خاک باشیم و خشت

⁹⁴ The word "love" that Jami uses could mean earthy love or divine love, because Jami believes that a worldly beauty is the reflection of God's creation on earth. So love of God's creation is equal to love of God.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Many Teer, Daymah, Urdibihisht (names of three months in the Persian calendar) will come that we will be dust and brick.⁹⁶

Lari continues that a few days before his illness Jami left the city and went to his village.

When his stay lasted longer than usual, his disciples went after him and asked him to return, so he did. Then, three days before he fell ill, he told one of his closest disciples:

“You are my witness that there is no connection left for me to this world.”⁹⁷

Jami, the last great classical poet of Persian language,⁹⁸ passed away on the eighteenth of *Muharram* 898/ Nov.11, 1492 after a few days of sickness.⁹⁹ Nava'i also covers a detailed account of Jami's death in *Khamsat al- Mutahayyirin*.¹⁰⁰ He writes: Sultan Hussein, while he was bitterly crying, came to offer his condolences to me. All the nobles and courtiers came. Jami's body was carried on the shoulders of Sultan Hussein's sons to the *musalla* (praying place). Many people came; their noise was so overwhelming that it seemed several thousand people were there. Then his body was carried to the gravesite of Sa'd al-Din Kashghari, who was that person's [Jami's]¹⁰¹ mentor.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ The poem is from Sa'di.

⁹⁷ Lari, *Taklama*, p.40.

⁹⁸ Khatam al-Shu'ara, was the title by which he was called after the sixteenth century.

⁹⁹ Lari, *Taklama*, pp. 40-42. Lari writes: "He became sick after a few days." Then Lari offers a detailed description of Jami's final hours, writing: "*aan hazrat* (the honorable one) repeated a verse [from the Quran]. Then he got up and prayed. The second time that he recited the prayer, it was incoherent. Yet he started chanting a *ziker* (religious chant). After a while, we could only hear one word: 'Allah'. Then we heard the call for Friday prayer. People began to pray; at that moment the honorable one left this temporary life for the permanent one."

¹⁰⁰ 'Ali-shir Nava'i, *Khamsat al- Mutahayyirin*, pp. 76-79. Nava'i writes that he checked Jami's condition the day before his death. But Thursday night he could not sleep, so he rode his horse to Jami's place. He explains that Jami was semi-conscious, but when Nava'i inquired about his health, Jami was able to respond. Jami's condition deteriorated by Friday. So a certain Khwaja Abd al-Aziz turned Jami's head toward *qibla* (Mecca), while a certain Khwaja Hafiz Qias al-Din recited verses from the Quran. Before people had finished the noon praying "Jami closed his eyes to the world."

¹⁰¹ Nava'i refers to Jami as *aan kas* (that person), in *Khamsat al- Mutahayyirin*.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 78. Nava'i continues that he, because of his special relationship to Jami, received people's condolences from everywhere. Those who could not come personally to pay their condolences sent a representative, like the heir Badi' al-Zaman, who sent someone to the mourning session.

In his long life, Jami witnessed the shrinking of the Timurid Dynasty that was founded by Timur. Having been born in the reign of Shahrukh, he spent his youth during Shahrukh's relatively peaceful time, followed by the turbulent times of Abulqasim Babur, Abu Sa'id, and finally, the relatively calm era of Sultan Hussein, whose period coincided with the highlight of Jami's productivity and accomplishments.

Before further discussion of Jami's poetry, the reader needs to encounter the world in which and about which that poetry was written. Therefore, the next section provides a brief history of the Timurids.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORY OF THE TIMURIDS

Jami, by all accounts, during eighty-one years of his life (1414-1492) enjoyed relative peace and tranquility; so if political-social calmness and stability are inducement for creation and progress, one can assert that Jami benefited from the late Timurid era.¹⁰³ In order to have a better understanding of the period a brief review of the epoch after death of Timur would be helpful.

Timur was a nomad, who built cities; he was a Turk, but promoted Persian literature and culture; he was restorer of the Mongol order through conquest of new territories,¹⁰⁴ but he grew up in Islamic traditions, thus "he had a religious view of kingly office."¹⁰⁵ While in power he installed his sons and grand-sons in different regions of the empire. But as soon as his offspring realized that the sovereign authority over them was gone, the empire disintegrated¹⁰⁶, "the history his successors was one increasing political fragmentation and

¹⁰³ Heravi, *Jami*, p.14.

¹⁰⁴ Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Temur and the Problem of Conqueror's Legacy" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series 3,8,1 (1998) pp. 21-41.

¹⁰⁵ Ram Prasad Tripathi, "The Turko-Mongol Theory of Kingship", in *The Mughal State, 1526-1750*, ed. Muzaffar Alam, Sanjay Subrahmanya, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 117. Tripathi states that Timur was regarded by his contemporaries as a "promoter and renovator (Murawwaj wa mujaddid) of religion of Muhammad".

¹⁰⁶ Manz, "Temur and the Problem of Conquer Legacy", p. 30. As Manz put it the question is, "where all Timur's achievement went."

economic stress," though they have been credited as supporter of art and literature.¹⁰⁷ Hence, since none of his offspring had the charisma and ability to maintain the land intact, the vast empire disintegrated and in its place multi local government was created.¹⁰⁸ Anyhow, Timur died in Feb 1405 in Atrar, while he was en-route to campaign in China. His choice for an heir, a last minute selection before his death, was his grand-son, Pir Muhammad (1376-1407), son of his eldest son, Jahangir (1355-1375).¹⁰⁹

Timur's Successors

Pir Muhammad was not nominated on the basis of his merits but his connection to the Mongols.¹¹⁰ Timur probably thought that the Mongolian connection would not only guarantee Pir Muhammad acceptance but also legitimize his position.¹¹¹ But, in a Turco-Mongol society, the ruler's triumph was mostly guaranteed through overcoming his competitors by defeating them in the battle, and in most cases killing them. So, since Pir Muhammad did not go through the normal process, he was not the choice that could be accepted by all the Turko-Mongol factions.

Pir-Muhammad could not occupy the throne of Samarqand, because before he could reach the capital his cousin, Khalil Sultan (1384-1411), who was the governor of Tashkent, rushed to Samarqand. He entered into the city on Wednesday 18th of March as astrologers advised him to do, while the city's nobles and *'ulama* welcomed and offered their obedience

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁰⁸ *Tarikh-i Iran: Duriy-i Timurian*, tr. Yaghub Azhand, Tehran: Intisharat-i Jami, 1378/1999, 108-9.

¹⁰⁹ Manz, "Temur and the Problem of Conquer Legacy", *Mythes historiques du monde musulman*. Ed. Denise Aigle. Special issue of *Revue du monde musulman et de la Mediterranee* (2000): 129-49 ,p.29.

¹¹⁰ Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Mongol History Rewritten and Relived ", p. 136. Timur after installing a puppet Chingizi Khan, Ogedeyid khan, married a Chaghadayid wife. Jahangir was the son of the latter, so his mother was a Mongol.

¹¹¹ - Manz, "Temur and the Problem of Conqueror's Legacy", p. 21.

to him.¹¹² He was soon enthroned as the successor of the Timur, had coins minted on his name, and had his name read in the *khutba* of Friday prayer. He did not allow Timur's army who returned from Atrar with Pir-Muhammad to enter into the capital. Thus, the struggle over the power began.

Khalil Sultan could rely on the military as long as he spent the treasury lavishly and rewarded emirs, so when he lost the huge treasury that Timur accumulated through out his years in campaign and conquest;¹¹³ he lost the support of the military.¹¹⁴ Shahrukh Mirza (1377-1447), Timur's fourth son,¹¹⁵ whom Timur had assigned the governorship of Khurasan, was able to gain the support of elites and 'ulama through his spies whom he had in Samarqand and Bukhara. Thus the elites and religious parties revolted against Khalil Sultan. The latter tried to conquer Herat, but was captured by Emir Khudadad in spring of 1409. Shahrukh used the latter's action as an excuse and began a military campaign in Transoxiana in 1410. He defeated Emir Khudadad, freed Khalil Sultan, whom he granted the governorship of Ray. Therefore, Shahrukh was able to get rid of other claimants of the throne,¹¹⁶ pulled the empire together, and reined for forty-two years, though he was not his father's choice.¹¹⁷

It should be noted that the major dilemma of Timur's successors, besides their rivalry

¹¹² Sharaf al-Din Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, ed Muhammad 'Abbasi, Tehran: Amir Kabir Pub., 1336/1957, p. 505.

¹¹³ Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, pp. 512-513.

¹¹⁴ Manz, "Temur, and the Problem..." p. 32.

¹¹⁵ *Tarikh-i Iran: Duriy-i Timurian*, pp. 108-109. Timur's sons were Jahanigir (d. 1375), 'Umar Sheikh (d. 1394), his third son, Miranshah, fell off the horse and was inflicted with a brain problem.

¹¹⁶ Shahrukh, was the only son of Timur who survived the conqueror. Two of Timur's sons died before him. Jahangir died in 1375, 'Umar Sheikh in 1394. His third son Miranshah died a few years after his father in 1408.

¹¹⁷ *Tarikh-i Iran: Duriy- i Timurian* , pp. 110-111. Timur, at his deathbed told his entourage that he wanted his grand son, Pir Muhammad b. Jahangir, whose father, Jahanigir, pre-deceased Timur (d. 1375), to be his lawful successor. Though, his emirs promised alliance to Pir Muhammad, who at the death of Timur was the governor of Qandahar, he could not have the support of his relatives, so did not reign for long and finally was assassinated by one of his emir in 1406.

Tarikh-i Iran: Duriy-i Timurian, p. 91.

among themselves over territory, was the transition from a period of conquest to a static one. During the former stage the ruler usually could rely on the loyalty and obedience of the fighting forces that had a stake in obeying the leader, whose success would guarantee booty and wealth for them too. But in a static era, not only the fighting army was not receiving booty; it also had to pay taxes to the treasury. Thus, naturally, after a while the latter did not feel any obligation to support the ruler. Besides, urban life, as Ibn Khaldun rightfully stated, weakened the zeal, energy, and sense of fellow feeling-*'asabiyya* among the fighting force.¹¹⁸

Shahrukh's Era

Shahrukh, the eventual winner of the succession struggle was able to reconstitute the dominion that his father had created and for a while maintain almost the same frontiers.¹¹⁹ Although he took over the Transoxiana and the Timurid capital, Samarqand, he transferred his capital to Herat, as was noted, installing his son Ulugh Beg, who was fifteen years old at the time as the governor in Samarqand.¹²⁰ Historians have portrayed Shahrukh's nature different, to say the least, from Timur. He was less militaristic, and more cultured. Moreover, he is regarded as almost obsessively pious, peace-loving, and unwilling to exercise strong personal power. His reign is regarded as a switch from a Turco-Mongolian rule to a more Perso-Islamic one. His time in power was the beginning of cultural growth, but territorial decline.¹²¹

As a pious Muslim, he was very observant of the Islamic law. Shahrukh's revocation

¹¹⁸ Manz, "Temur, and the Problem...", p. 31.

¹¹⁹ - Ibid., p. 31.

¹²⁰ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, pp.57-58

¹²¹ Manz, "Temur, and the Problem", p.31.

of *yasa* and re-imposing *shari'a* as the law of his realm in 1411 earned him the title of "*padishah*- Islam and refueled his pretensions to be recognized as caliph of the Muslim world."¹²² The primary means for promoting his orthodox policy was building *madrassa* complexes in Herat.¹²³ The main subjects taught in these schools were *Qurananic* exegesis-*tafsir*, the sciences of Islam- '*ulum-i Islam*, sciences of jurisprudence (*fiqh*); in addition to Arabic grammar, logic, and rational theology-*kalam*. The *waqf* – charitable endowment documents that are left from his reign point to the above subjects as the main courses taught at the school. He, as the endower of the complex, had the right to choose the *muddaris*-teachers, whom he made sure to be either adherents of *Shafi'ite* or *Hanafite mazhab*; a policy that signifies the acceptance of the two *mazhabs* by the Timurids.¹²⁴

Shahrukh's policy from the beginning was very calculated and political. His decision, transferring the capital from Samarqand to Herat, might be perceived as his inclination to Iranian culture. But Manz argues that Timur had stationed many of his Turco-Mongol-indigenous army throughout his new dominions. Thus, by moving the capital to Herat, Shahrukh was in closer proximity of the Timur's loyal army, while staying in Samarqand would have left him in the mercy of troops from Syria, Khurasan, Azerbaijan, with little loyalty to the dynasty.¹²⁵ So Herat held a safer and more central location than Samarqand, besides being closer to Chaghatai¹²⁶ army garrisons throughout Iran. And lastly, one might

¹²² Ibid., p. 35.

¹²³ Maria Eva Subtelny; Anas B. Khalidov, "The Curriculum of Islamic Higher Learning in Timurid Iran in the Light of the Sunni Revival under Shah-Rukh", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, V. 115, No.2 (Apr.-Jun., 1995), p. 211.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 213.

¹²⁵ Manz, "Temur, and the Problem...", p. 32. Manz states that lack of those troops's loyalty was the reason behind the fall of Samarqand by Khalil Sultan.

¹²⁶ His indigenous Turco-Mongol army.

argue that Shahrukh's peaceful nature demanded to distance from the frontiers¹²⁷, or perhaps it was a calculated decision to legitimize his position among the settled, culture inhabitant of the realm.¹²⁸

Shahrukh assigned governorships of different parts of his realm to his sons and grandsons. While Ulugh Beg received the capital of Timur, Samarqand, the governorship of Kabul, Ghazna, and Qandahar was assigned to Soyurghatmish b. Shahrukh (1399-1426). Muhammad Jahangir became governor of Hisar Shadman, Balkh became domain of Muhammad Juki b. Shahrukh (1402-44), and governor of Herat, new capital, was assigned to Baysunghur b. Shahrukh (1397-1434) in 1417. Shahrukh continued this policy during his reign. He created a new governorship for his grandson, Sultan Muhammad (1418-52), son of Baysunghur in 1442. The latter domain included Qazvin, Qum, and Ray while its capital was Sultaniyya. In reality, however, the domains were run by emirs and *atabegs*¹²⁹ who were assigned to these "young, inexperienced governors".¹³⁰

Therefore, Shahrukh succeeded in reconstituting Timur's empire and in holding it almost for another forty years. The core of his army and the ruling elite stayed the same, the emirs of the Ulus Chaghatay remained at the center of the Timurid army, while Timurid princes were assigned governing positions and were involved in oversight of provincial and financial administration and worked closely with Iranian viziers. On the whole Shahrukh's reign has been labeled a peaceful era by historians. He attempted to hold on to the territories that were conquered by his father. He did not have any expansionist policy, did not engage in

¹²⁷ Shahrukh probably wanted to avoid the confrontation with either Uzbeks or those Timurid princes who were ruling in the proximity of Samarqand and Ulugh Beg had to confront them numerous times.

¹²⁸ Manz, "Temur, and the Problem...", p. 32.

¹²⁹ Atabegs were trusted Chaghatai emirs sent with young princes to different provinces. In reality they were the rulers and princes were figure head governors.

¹³⁰ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 60.

campaign unless he was certain of victory.¹³¹

However, at the end of Shahrukh's life his domain turned to the battlefield for his son and grandsons who fought each other for control of more territories.¹³² After his death, Sultan Muhammad conquered Fars and Gorgan. Astarabad was conquered by Abulqasim Babur b. Baysunghur b. Shahrukh,(1422-57). In Khurasan, Herat, the capital was conquered by 'Ala'uddula b. Baysunghur b. Shahrukh (1417-60). The cities of Balkh, Khatalian, Qunduz, Baghalan, Sali Saray, Ankhuy, Shabirghan, Meymana, and Farab were domain of 'Abd al-Latif b. Ulugh Beg b. Shahrukh (d.1450). After Shahrukh the empire experienced two years of struggle, atrocity, and bloodshed. Finally the Timurid Empire was divided into three sections. Iraq-i Ajam and Fars was held by Muhammad b. Baysunqur, Shahrukh's grand-son, Khurasan held by Abulqasim Babur b. Baysunqur, and Transoxiana by Ulugh Beg, Shahrukh's son by Guharshad.¹³³ Having in mind that the actual heir was Ulugh Beg, the only son that survived him,¹³⁴ nevertheless the transition did not go smoothly for him. For two years Ulugh Beg had to spend his time either confronting his opponents, mostly his family members who were after his throne, or calming the upheaval, which usually was instigated through *'ulama* and cooperation of a few of the Ulugh Beg's emirs, in his capital, Samarqand.¹³⁵ The intrigues of the religious class and courtiers with co-operation of his son, 'Abd al-Latif who was bitter about mistreatment that he received from his father, brought the downfall of Ulugh Beg in 1449. He was killed by direct order of Abd al-Latif after being

¹³¹ Manz, "Temur, and the Problem", p. 32. Hafiz Abru, *Zubdat al-Tavarikh*, Tehran: n.d., p.559-563.

¹³² *Tarikh-i Iran: Duriy-i Timurian*, p.112.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp.115-120.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.114-115. Shahrukh did not designate an heir, but it seemed that he wanted Muhammad Juki, his son who was governor of Balkh to be his successor. The latter died three years prior to death of his father.

¹³⁵ Ulugh Beg chose Samarqand, where he was the governor during Shahrukh's reign, as the capital of the domain. He ruled the city almost for half century.

defeated in the confrontation with the latter near Samarqand.¹³⁶ Abd al-Latif could not hold on to the power either and was killed by one of his emir in 1450.¹³⁷

The Time after Shahrukh

Timur's Empire again witnessed the bloody struggles for power and territories among his offspring; while some were more successful than others for gaining more lands, their struggles over the throne offered nothing but mayhem and atrocities for the region. On the whole injustice and oppression was a routine practice of the Timurids. Dulatshah-i Samarqandi reports that when Abulqasim Babur was governor of Astarabad, he had a Hindo, Amir al- Umara, in his court who acted as his advisor for him. One day he told the former:

O the Sultan of the world, your brothers and cousins rule in one part of the land independently, have army and treasure; if you listen to my advice, you also will have it.

Babur asked him what his advice was. He said:

Train the low people, who have no tie to anyone, so the elite would not run you over. Be generous, so because of that people would like you. Do not be harsh on army or people so they would feel safe and secure around you. Do not prevent the troops from plunder so for their own benefit they fight for you. Do not hesitate following these steps, because it is crucial for reigning effectively.

Abulqasim followed his advice earned a kingdom.¹³⁸

Other parts of the empire also were not free from turmoil. Khurasan was under constant attack from the Uzbeks, and other Timurid princes. Samarqand finally fell into hands of Abu Sa'id b. Muhammad b. Miranshah (b. 1424), who had the support of the Uzbeks. Abu Sai'd, by conquering Samarqand, Herat, Ghazna, Kabul, Sistan, and Khwarazm

¹³⁶ Barthold. *Four Studies on Central Asia*, Leiden: Brill, 1958, pp.158-159.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 162. Abd al-Latif according to Abd al- Razzaq Samarqandi had "neither respect for old age, nor leniency toward youth." So he was killed through conspiracy headed by the former *nukars* of Ulugh Bag and Abd –al-Aziz, the other Ulugh Bag's son.

¹³⁸ Dulatshah-i Samarqand, *Tazkirat al-Shu'ara*, p. 324, Tehran: Intisharat-i Padida, 1366/1987. Also cited in *Critical Study of Jami*, pp.64-5.

was able to rule over some parts of the empire till 1468. His reign was one of the bloodiest and brutal among Timur's descendants; he did not hesitate to get rid of the people who opposed him or did not comply with his rule in the most gruesome way.¹³⁹ As Afsahzad rightfully states "the reign of Abu Sa'id was era of ludicrous belief, thievery, bribery, corruption, lewdness, and indecency."¹⁴⁰ It should be noted that the historians of his era are silent about the growth of literature or science.¹⁴¹ This game of conquest and loss continued among the Timurid princes until finally Hussein Bayqara was able to hold the power in Herat for a longer period. It is his reign that has been regarded as the glorious era for artistic creation.

On the whole, the long reigns of Shahrukh, Abu Sai'd, and Hussein Bayqara provided a certain stabilization of the affairs in comparison with the intervening periods. Nevertheless in view of the never-ending incursions of the Turkmen in the west, the Uzbeks and Mughals in the east, the endless succession disputes, military campaigns and troop movements, it is not reasonable to speak of general peace and prosperity, even though the conjunction of all these occurrences was generally confined to a few limited areas. The suffering of the people in the domain had long -lasting effects, one of which was a population decline in the province of Khurasan, compared to the pre-Mongol invasion.

Although the Timurid dynasty lasted hundred years after the death of the founder, Timur, its domain gradually declined from a world power into local principedoms; while these local powers, from the artistic, creative, and cultural standpoint, were able to help in creation

¹³⁹ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p, 63-4. Afsahzad further notes that Abu Sa'id sentences included: skinning people alive, the case of certain Sheikh Ahmad, the money exchanger, who then was hanged at the gate of the city (1462), boiling in the pot, the case of his vizier, Mu'iz al-Din Shirazi, and cruel death of Guharshad, Shahrukh's benevolent wife, at the Ikhtiar al-Din castle.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 64

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p.64

of artistic productions over a vast areas. No doubt this phenomenon, as many scholars have stated, was attributed to the character of the Timur's successors; to their adaptation of Persian culture and to settled urban life.

Timurid Patronage of Artistic Production

On the other hand, the sources present the Timurids as patrons of art and poetry. The existence of many small courts provided an appropriate ground for poetry and architecture. Timurid princes were patrons of scholars, scientists, and poets. During the era some of the scientific fields thrived, such as astronomy, and math. Trigonometry, an important branch of math progressed impressively. Though trigonometry entered the Islamic world in the ninth century, it was advanced in Samarqand under patronage of Ulugh Beg. Persian poetry continued to flourish, though the brilliant period of Persian literature before the Mongol invasion did not return. Favorable circumstances and patronage increased the number of poets but not the intellectual and artistic worth of their production. Some of the princes such as Khalil Sultan, Abulqasim Babur and Sultan Hussein composed poetry in Chaghatai, but Sultan Hussein's poems are not considered outstanding from the literary point; only Ali-shir Nava'i's poetry had earned him credit as a prestigious work in Turki.

Although the court language was Persian and majority of works were written in Persian, Ali-shir's works *Khamsat al-Mutahayyirin*, and *Majalis al-Nafa'is* are in Chaghatai.¹⁴² He also translated Jami's *Nafahat al-Uns*, and 'Attar's *Mantiq al-Tair* into Turki. Zahir al-Din Babur's memoir, *Vaqay-i Babur* or *Baburnama* is also a remarkable

¹⁴² Chaghatai is the old Uzbek language.

Turki prose.¹⁴³

However, other major works were written in Persian. A vast volume of historical works were written by historians of the epoch. Hafiz-i Abru, whose work, *Majmu'a*, is an interesting evidence of the historical methods and the historical interests of the age. Abd al-Razzaq-i Samarqandi is another historian of the era. His work *Matla' al-Sa'dayn*, is also a universal history. His writing about the Timurid period is based on Hafiz Abru's work, *Zubdat al-Tavarikh*. This work, *Matla' al-Sa'dayn* is considered a valuable source because of the events that the author experienced in person.¹⁴⁴ Muhammad b. Khwavand Shah b. Mahmud, known as Mirkhwand was another historian of the era, whose work *Ruzat al-Safa*, is a valuable source for covering the time of Hussein Bayqara.¹⁴⁵ However, Timurid historical works were commissioned by princes whose intentions were mainly transmitting their own prominence, or that of the dynasty's achievements. Thus, one has to be prepared for a colored presentation of the era; while the life and suffering of common people are ignored. In the field of religious and social history certain works such as: hagiographical writings have become very important in the modern period for evaluating the social condition of the people. There are some political documents and some financial writings from the era, in which the literary style "*insha*" has been applied.¹⁴⁶

It is in the scope of this setting of the court and the social environment of the later Timurids that Jami grew up and flourished as a distinguished writer, scholar, Naqshbandi leader, and poet. He earned his prestige and position through his intellect and talent so he

¹⁴³ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol.3, p. 453.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 430.

¹⁴⁵ Maria Eva Subtelny, "The Poetic Circle at the court of the Timurid, Sultan Hussein Bayqara, and its Political Significance." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1979, p. 41.

¹⁴⁶ Subtelny, p. 60.

could make a difference in an era that trickery, court intrigue, alliance and animosity between different members of the royal family was tearing the empire apart. It is in this environment that Jami's writing,¹⁴⁷ besides its literary significance, is important for social and political history of the Timurids, especially given that the most renowned historical works of the era were commissioned by the court. For example while, Hafiz Abru's work *Zubdat al- Tavarikh*, was commissioned by Shahrukh, and the author covers the early part of the Shahrukh's reign,¹⁴⁸ 'Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi covers the second part of Shahrukh's reign in *Matla' al-Sa'dayn va Majma' al-Bahrayn*. His work, similar to Hafiz-i Abru's is a dynastic work written for the ruler and concentrating on the activity of the court.¹⁴⁹ As Manz rightfully points out, it would be hard to evaluate and study a true political history of the dynasty on the basis of these two historical works. Thus, while, most of the historical works offer sugar coated and bright aspects of the dynasty, a careful study of Jami's literary work would shed light on the history of the Timurids. Yet, it is necessary to have a glimpse at the state of religion during the Timurids and activity of the Naqshbandis, who were the most influential Sufi order at the time and closely cooperated with the Timurids.

¹⁴⁷ Among Jami's writing, the collection of his letters stands out, because of its contents, in which numerous social and political issues have been presented. Jami also subtly refers to social problems in his poetry when he advises the rulers that they must implement justice, be fair to the subjects, and avoid oppression. A brief discussion of Jami's letter is covered in Appendix C.

¹⁴⁸ Beatrice Forbes Manz, *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 51. Manz, states that Hafiz-i Abru is very careful to present "chronicles of each year major events from standpoint of Shahrukh's government," while summarizing other parts of the realm.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 52. 'Abd al-Razzaq finished the work in 1470.

CHAPTER 4

RELIGION DURING THE TIMURID DYNASTY

The era between the thirteenth and the sixteenth century is important because of the increase in the development of different Sufi orders and mysticism; this development was different from the era prior to the Mongol invasion. This was an important era for the development of religious identity for the people of Iran and Central Asia. The era, of the later Middle Ages, as Marshal Hodgson rightly points out, was a period that religious creations and earlier cultural identity were stabilized; in addition to new institutions which went on to affect the future centuries.¹⁵⁰ However, since the focal point of this study is the Timurids, the state of the religion during the Timurid dynasty will be discussed.

Religion was dealt with differently during the era of Timur and his successors. On the whole, the rulers of the dynasty were lenient to followers of different schools of thought, and different religious orders. Although Timur was an ardent adherent of the *Hanafi* School, he paid respect to ‘ulama of other schools and Sufi Sheikhs. His successors were even more tolerant, following, basically, a *laissez-faire* policy. This policy continued till 1470 and the government treated both Sunnis and Shi’is the same, as long as they did not claim heresy or innovation.¹⁵¹ Afsahzad writes that the governor of Shiraz asked Kamal-i Ghiyath (d.1444), a

¹⁵⁰ Marshal Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, V.2, Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1974, 371-372.

¹⁵¹ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study of Jami’s Bibliography and Writings*, p.67.

poet at his court: “followers of which religions are more virtuous?” The poet answered, “Pious people of any religion and sect.” Abulqasim Babur also said “let anyone have whatever belief and religion that he wants to have, I am fervent follower of *Sunna* and Imam *Hanafī*.”¹⁵²

In other words, there was an evolution in religious identity in Iran, the beginning of which started with the Ilkhanid dynasty (1256-1335). The era witnessed a rapid growth of Sufi orders.¹⁵³ Before the invasion, Sufi orders were an abstemious group gathering around a *murshid*-leader. Then the invasion made them an organized group loyal to a specific beliefs and thoughts, which created a sense of brotherhood or comradeship among them.¹⁵⁴ It might have been a sense of insecurity that people felt about the Islamic religion being in danger, as Potter suggests, that drove them more toward the Sufism. The latter was especially appealing in the rural regions where Muslims were more inclined to informal and emotional forms of religion presented by Sufis than the traditional one of the “*ulama*”.¹⁵⁵ Thus, one of the outcomes of the fall of Abbasid Caliphate was Muslims’ interest in seeking comfort and guidance from spiritual Sheikhs instead of *ulama* who often criticized them for what they did or did not do. In this chaotic era, people wanted peace and tranquility, which they sought in the presence of sheikhs and Sufis not *ulama*. While the society was going through social and political disruption, the messianic message of the Sufi orders was appealing for inhabitants of the region.¹⁵⁶

The other drastic change in the traditional practice of Muslims that was centered on

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 68.

¹⁵³ Muhsin Kiyani, *Tarikh-i Khaniqah dar Islam*, Tehran: Zaban va Farhang-i Iran, 1369/1990, p. 122.

¹⁵⁴ Lawrence Potter, "Sufis and Sultans" *Iranian Studies* V. 27, #1-4, 1994, p. 78.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 78.

¹⁵⁶ Shahzad Bashir, *Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions: The Nurbakhshiya Between Medieval and Modern Islam*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003, p. 39.

the theological aspect of the Islam taught in the restricted environment of the mosques, was an increase in veneration of saints, pilgrimages, belief in miracles, admiration of *Ahl-i Bayt*-family of the Prophet, especially the veneration of Ali and expectation of the Mahdi, the savior. Two factors helped to organize "the basis of *mahdistic* tenet: the effective affinity of the masses, nurtured by popular Sufism, for this-worldly salvation through millenarian political action, and political decentralization," which was able to mobilize the masses for political action.¹⁵⁷ However, the Sufism that was practiced in the regions that were under the influence of Persian culture was distinguished from other regions. The main character of the Iranian Sufism emphasized individualism, divergent tendencies, and heterodoxy in doctrine and practice.¹⁵⁸ These Sufis were extremely different in their religious practice from Central Asian orders such as the traditional and somber *Naqshbandiyya*- the Naqshbandis, or non-conventional *Qalandariyya* dervishes.¹⁵⁹

Although in the pre-Mongol era a great number of the people in rural and urban areas were Sunnis, after the invasion, people were affected by Shi'ite influences or at least pro-'Alid tendencies, which were combined with "Sufi currents." Furthermore, the Mongol invasion created a transitional period in which the tension between the Sunnis and Shi'is

¹⁵⁷ Sa'id, Amir Arjomand, *Shadow of God and Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order, and Social Change in Shi'i Iran from the Beginning to 1890*. London: the University of Chicago Press, Ltd., 1984, p. 82.

¹⁵⁸ John Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Order in Islam*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971, p. 52

¹⁵⁹ Qalandariyya is referred to a Muslim *tariqa*. The name was given to a movement which probably began after the appearance of the Malamatiyya (see n. 99 on Naqshbaniyya chapter) (3rd/9th century) whose adherents, holding in general to Malamati doctrines, gave them a different interpretation; as manifested in the 7th/13th century. The movement was strongly under Buddhist influence in the first phase, the basic principles of the Qalandariyya movement consisted of a kind of existentialism. Whereas the Malāmātīs without boasting or ostentation carried out scrupulously God's commands, the Qalandarīs sought to destroy all custom and tradition and to conceal their actions from public view. Cited from Yazici, Tahsin, "Kalandariyya." *Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. P. Beaman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs, Brill, 2007. Brill Online. [cited July 17, 2007]; available from <http://www.encyislam.brill.nl.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu>.

decreased and differences between schools of law became less significant.¹⁶⁰ In addition, among the followers of the two major branches of Islam, Sunnis and Shi'is, there were many *tariqa*- orders, such as: the *Khalvatis*, *Mulavis*, , *Suhravardis*, *Ni'matullahis*, ...and *Naqshbandis*¹⁶¹; the latter were the most active of all, and had many supporters.¹⁶² Some of the Sunni orders such as the *Kubraviyya* and the *Ni'matullahis* even evolved into Shi'ite ones.¹⁶³ This blend of the Sunnis, Shi'is and Sufis elements created a kind of environment that was favorable in spreading different heretical activities, which often is explained as a reaction to the atrocities of Turko-Mongol regime.¹⁶⁴ What these heretical movements had in common was the goal of establishing social justice for all.¹⁶⁵

The Sufis kept the core of their religious affiliations with either Sunnism or Shi'ism. Despite the fact that the majority of the population belonged to different Sunni schools, inhabitants of Gilan, Qum, Ray, Kashan, Sabzivar, and major parts of Iraq-i Ajam- Khuzistan were Shi'is, mostly twelvers or some were Ismai'lis (seven imamis) but out fear of persecution were forced to pretend to be twelvers. Yet, there were some Shi'i orders such as the *Hurufiyya*, and *Safaviyya*¹⁶⁶ that were very active.¹⁶⁷ Nevertheless, most of the populations of Central Asia were followers of Abu *Hanifa*;¹⁶⁸ and they practiced the teaching

¹⁶⁰ Lawrence G. Potter, "Sufis & Sultans in Post-Mongol Iran," *Iranian Studies*, V. 27, # 1-4, 1994, p. 77.

¹⁶¹ These orders were mostly active in Iran and Central Asia.

¹⁶² Afsahzad, *A Critical Studies*, p. 71-2

¹⁶³ Potter, "Sufis and Sultans" p. 81. Heravi dispute the claim that the Ni'matullahi was a Shi'i order. He notes that there are some Shi'i ideologies in the writing of the founder of the order, Shah Ni'matullah-i Vali, but he rejects the claim that the order was originally Shi'i.

¹⁶⁴ Maria Eva Subtelny, "The Curriculum of Islamic Higher Learning in Timurid Iran in the Light of Sunni Revival under Shahrukh", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, V. 115, No.2 (Apr.-Jun., 1995), p. 211. Subtelny cites Roemer's work *Persian* 160-162.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

¹⁶⁶ The Safaviyya at the earlier stage were Sunnis.

¹⁶⁷ Maria Eva Subtelny, "The Curriculum of Islamic Higher Learning in Timurid Iran in the Light of Sunni Revival under Shahrukh" p. 210.

¹⁶⁸ Abu Hanifa al- Nu'man b. Thabit (d. 767), originally from the Greater Khurasan, grew up in Kufa. He studied under Malik b. Anas, but later his religious understanding changed from Anas. Abu Hanifa's

of the renowned *Hanafi faqih*- religious jurist, Burhan al-Din Abul Hasan Ali b. Abi Bakr b. Abd al-Jalil Farghani al-Marghinani (d.1135), the author of the celebrated work *Hidaya*.¹⁶⁹ Therefore, this work was a guideline for religious practice in the region; the Timurids, as *Hanafi* Sunnis adopted it too.

Religion under Shahrukh

Though the dynasty including Timur was, on the whole, tolerant toward other practices, specifically Shi'i; after Timur's death, not all the Timurids, necessarily, treated the followers of Shi'is the same. In order to prevent the growing threat of extremist Shi'ite religious movements and to ensure, as Subtelny rightly states, maintenance of the "status quo," Shahrukh promoted the Sunni orthodoxy.¹⁷⁰ Transferring the capital from Samarqand to Herat,¹⁷¹ one of the important centers of Islam, actually was a conscious decision to shift the focus away from Transoxiana toward the old Khurasan, not only the center of Islamic law, learning, and piety, but close proximity to the Persian culture and power.¹⁷²

Shahrukh abandoned Turco-Mongolian customary laws, *yasa*, and restored *shari'a*-

teaching was based on logic and analogy and not on tradition and *hadith*. So he is regarded as a *Rationalist*. Followers of his school of thought are more than followers of the other Sunni School, though he was a controversial figure at his own time and remained so because of his opinion and teaching. "

Encyclopedia Iranica, ed. Ehsan Yarshater, 1996-2007. <http://www.iranica.com/> newsite.

¹⁶⁹ Heffening, W. "al-Marghinani" *Encyclopedia of Islam*. Eds. By P. Beaman, Th. Bianquis, C.E.

Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W. P. Heinrich. Brill, 2007, Brill Online. [04.March 2007], Online site:

<http://www.encyislam.brill.nl.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu>. Al-Marghinani's principal work was *Bidayat al-*

mubtadi. On this work, he wrote a large commentary in eight volumes, the *Kifayat al-muntaha*. But before he had completed it, he thought it was much too diffuse and decided to write a second commentary, the celebrated *Hidaya*, the work that numerous writers repeatedly edited and annotated.

¹⁷⁰ Subtelny, "The Curriculum...", p. 211. The subjects that must be taught at these religious schools were prescribed. They were the "sciences of Islam" (*'ulum-i Islami*), such as science of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*) and *hadith*. Shahrukh even established libraries which contained books on substantial law (*usul o furu'*) and on both rational and traditional sciences (*ma'qul va mashru'*). Because Shahrukh was the endower of the *waqf* for these schools, he even assigned mudarris (teachers), making sure that they were either Hanafi or Shafi'i.

¹⁷¹ Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Temur and the Problem of a Conqueror's Legacy.", p. 32.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

religious law.¹⁷³ He attended the mosque like any other Muslim especially for Friday prayer, and strictly observed fasting in Ramadan even when he was traveling. He had Quran recitation sessions four times per week; on Monday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. In other words, he was a Muslim monarch "per excellence".¹⁷⁴ Shahrukh pushed the notion of his being caliph of the Islamic world. The coinage inscription issued in Herat during his reign, with the formula '*Khallada al-lahu khilafatahu*' (may God perpetuate his caliphate)¹⁷⁵ is representative of this claim. The *ulama*, at the time, perceived him as the *mujaddid*, renewer of Islam, who according to a *hadith* was to appear at the beginning of each century in order to revive the *sunna*-deeds of the Prophet and his companions,¹⁷⁶ which meant the prohibition of practices such as wine-drinking, prostitution, and gambling.¹⁷⁷ The values of the Sunni judicial *mazhabs*, the *Hannafite* in particular were exalted.

Was Shahrukh's emphasis on Islamic practice really an awakening call of a pious Muslim monarch? His acts might be perceived as a piety; yet it was a conscious decision to conquer his subjects' mind, whereas his father, despite his pretence, could not do it. Timur was able to conquer and rule over the vast lands, claiming his legitimacy as being the *Gurkan*-son in law of a Chingiz Khan's offspring. The title entitled him to recapture the territories once conquered by the Chingizids. In addition, Timur had to pay homage and respect to the Sufis and the high ranking '*ulama* whenever he conquered or recaptured a territory. Timur's act was a facade for the ruthlessness and atrocities that he imposed on the conquered territory. So, in order for Shahrukh to establish his dominion on the conquered

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁷⁴ V.V. Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*, v. II, Ulugh-Beg, trs. V& T Minorsky, Netherlands, Leiden :E. J. Brill, , 1958, p. 113.

¹⁷⁵ Subtelny, "The Curriculum", p. 211.

¹⁷⁶ Barthold, *Four Studies*, v. II,p.113.

¹⁷⁷ Subtelny, "The Curriculum of Islamic Higher Learning in Timurid Iran in the Light of the Sunni Revival under Shahrukh", p. 212.

lands, he needed cooperation and approval of religious authorities; in reality, Islam acted as a crucial element for legitimating his political ambition.¹⁷⁸

Religion under Ulugh Beg

Shahrukh's son, Ulugh Beg (1393-1449), the most learned and enlightened of Timurid princes, did not feel it necessary to have a close relation with the *'ulama* or with Sufi orders. So in spite of almost forty years of service and achievements during the era when he was governor of Samarqand, when he succeeded his father as the Timurid ruler in 1447, he could not hold on to power for too long and after two years was removed and eventually killed by his son Abd al-Latif.¹⁷⁹ He was accused of not adhering to the Islamic law. His failure has been remarked due to his inclination to Mongol tradition and Chingizid law- *yasa* more than his devotion to Islamic law.¹⁸⁰

It was after the demise of Ulugh Beg that eventually the influence of the Naqshbandi order, under the leadership of Khwaja 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar, increased in government affairs. Khwaja Ahrar's influence in the political affairs of the state began in 855/1451, when he expanded his support to the Timurid prince Abu Sa'id. This political involvement was crucial because it enabled Abu Sa'id to capture the Timurid capital of Samarqand. The account of Khwaja Ahrar's assistance, according to the authors of Ahrar's biographies was as follows:

¹⁷⁸ Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Temur and the Problem of a Conqueror's Legacy," p. 22.

¹⁷⁹ The conspiracy among some of the Timurid emirs, the religious class, and dissatisfaction of Abd al-Latif, who was the first son of Ulugh Beg, while his father's favorite and apparent heir supposedly was his second son Abdullah, brought the downfall of the enlightened Ulugh Beg. However, Abd al-Latif, the father killer as he was nicknamed, could not hold on to power either and was killed within one year.

¹⁸⁰ On Ulugh Beg's internal affairs and final years, see Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*, v. II, p. 113-176.

Abu Sa'id was defeated in a battle by one of the Timurid rival princes, Abdullah Mirza, so he fled northward to Tashkent. On his flight to Tashkent, he had a dream in which the celebrated saint Ahmad Yasavi appeared and introduced him to a radiant person, who would assist him in gaining power. When Abu Sa'id reached Tashkent and described the person in his dream, he was informed that the person was Khwaja 'Ubaid Allah Ahrar. At the time, Khwaja Ahrar was not in Tashkent; he was in Parkent (Farkat), a small town outside of Tashkent. Abu Sa'id hastened to seek his assistance. Khwaja Ahrar accepted to aid him if he promised, as the ruler of the land, to enforce the *shari'a*, and improve the people's life. As it has been reported Abu Sa'id was victorious in the subsequent battle against Abdullah Mirza. After he conquered Samarqand, he was soon followed by Khwaja Ahrar. In reality, Abu Sa'id would not have succeeded in the battle against Abdullah Mirza if it were not for the assistance of the Uzbek leader, Abulkhayr Khan.¹⁸¹ After his success over his rival, Abu Sa'id felt that he owed his reign to Khwaja Ahrar. According to the chronicler Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi, Abu Sa'id considered himself as Ahrar's subject and followed his orders. In 861/1457, when Abu Sa'id transferred the seat of the government to Herat, Khwaja Ahrar's authority over the city, Samarqand, became complete. Abu Sa'id carried out a campaign against Jahan Shah Qara- Qyunlu and was killed in the course of the disastrous battle in 874/1469, the unfortunate battle that he undertook based on the advice from Khwaja Ahrar. After Abu Sa'id, his son, Sultan Ahmad rose to power and was more loyal to Khwaja Ahrar than his father. Some other events, besides the conquest of Samarqand in 855/1451, have been reported about Khwaja Ahrar's influence in the political affairs such as, organizing the defense of

¹⁸¹ The biographers wrote that Abulkhayr Khan intervened at the request of Khwaja Ahrar, though this is uncertain.

Samarqand against the army of Abul Qasim Babur from Khurasan in 858/1454. Khwaja Ahrar was successful in persuading Abu Sa'id to abolish the *tamgha* in Bukhara and Samarqand in 865/1460, and to promise the abolition of all other non-*shari'a* taxes throughout his dominion. Khwaja Ahrar also acted as an arbitrator between Abu Sa'id and Muhammad Juki, another Timurid prince, at Shahrukhiyya, twice, in 865/1461 and 867/1463, and finally mediated in three contradictory claims over the possession of Tashkent in 890/1485.¹⁸²

Yet, the close relationship between the Sufi orders and the government was not unusual at the time. The practice started centuries earlier. For example, Jalal al-Din Rumi (d.1273) had close relations with the Anatolian Saljuqids. Additionally, Ala' Al-Dula Simnani (d.1336) who was in the service of the Ilkhanid Arghun, was another example of Sufis who had a close relationship with the rulers. The need for tying a bond with ruling sultans eventually became crucial for the success of the most powerful orders of the fifteenth century, the Naqshbandis and the Safavids, who were close to the Aq-Quyunlus (1469-1508).¹⁸³ Since the Naqshbandis were the most important and influential *tariqa*- order with the largest number of followers during the Timurid era, and Jami was the representative of the order in Herat, a brief history of the order is important.

¹⁸²Cited from Algar, Hamid, "Ahrar, Khwaja 'Ubayd Allah b. Mahmud Nasir al-Din (806-95/1404-90)", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Edited by: P. Beaman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Brill, 2007 Online. [17 July 2007],<http://www.encylam.brill.proxy.lib.ohio>.

¹⁸³Edward Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, V.4, Cambridge at the University Press, 1953, p. 47. According to Browne, Sheikh Junayd the grand-father of Shah Isma'il, the founder of the Safavids, after succeeding his father as the sheikh of the order, went to Diyar Bakr and "won the favor of Uzun Hasan, the celebrated ruler of the "White Sheep" Dynasty, who bestowed on him the hand of his sister Khadija in marriage."

The Origin of the Naqshbandi order

The Naqshbandis associated the order with the first righteous caliph of Islam, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, because in their belief, he was the closest to the Prophet *yar-i ghar*- the companion of the cave, and best of all people after the Prophet.¹⁸⁴ Abu Bakr received the title *al-Siddiq* from the Prophet because he was the first who believed in the Prophet's ascension to heaven.¹⁸⁵ In addition, according to Sunni Muslims, he was the first male who accepted the Prophet's invitation to Islam; hence he has the unique place among the Sunni Muslims. Furthermore, the Naqshbandi practice of *silent zikr*¹⁸⁶ was first practiced in the cave that the Prophet and Abu Bakr took as the hiding place en-route migration from Mecca to Medina. This practice is in reference to the Quranic verse (9:40) the phrase "then God sent down His peace (*sakinatho*) upon him." The word 'peace' has been assessed as a silent *zikr*.¹⁸⁷ It is based on this historical background that the order's original doctrine is said to be orthodox Sunni Islam.

The order believes that after Abu Bakr the *silsila* passed through Salman al-Farsi, Qasim b. Muhammad b. Abi Bakr, and from Ja'far al-Sadiq to Bayazid Bastami. Algar states that in retrospect, the order prior to Bayazid was referred to as *tariqat-i bakriya*- the path of Abu Bakr.¹⁸⁸ That is the reason that Muhammad Murad al-Bukhari (d. 1729), who besides being credited as introducing the Mujaddidi branch of the order to the western Asia, has defined the order as the group who follows "the way of the Companion with neither addition

¹⁸⁴ Hamid Algar, "A Brief History of the Naqshbandi Order", in *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et Situation Actuelle, d'un Order Mystique Musulman: Actes de la Table Ronde de Sevres*, ed. By M. Gaborieau, A. Popvic & T. Zarcone, Paris: Institut Francais d'etudes Anatoliennes d'Istanbul, 1985, p. 4.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 5. Algar notes that the silent *dhikr* especially distinguishes the Naqshbandis from the orders that have originated their foundation to Ali, who was given vocal *dhikr* by the Prophet.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

nor subtraction."¹⁸⁹

The early history of the order was in the Arabia, however, Khwaja Yusuf Hamdani (d. 1141), the leader of the order, left Baghdad for Marv,¹⁹⁰ where he established a *khaniqah* there. The *khaniqah* was referred to as “Ka’ba of Khurasan.”¹⁹¹ It was through Khwaja Hamadani¹⁹² that the order acquired the name *tariqat-i khwajagan*¹⁹³. Hamadani in “imitation of the fourfold pattern of the Rightly Guided Caliphs” chose four successors; two of them, Ahmad Yasavi (d. 1126)¹⁹⁴, and Khwaja Abd al-Khaliq Ghujdavani¹⁹⁵ (d.1220)¹⁹⁶, “the next link in the Naqshbandi *silsila*.”¹⁹⁷ The latter is the Sufi leader of the order that insisted on silent *zikr*, so in the history of the order he is referred to as the *sarsilsila-yi khwajagan*- head of the entire masters.¹⁹⁸ Ghujdavani is also the one who handed down the eightfold set of principles known as *kalamat-i qudsiyya*- sacred words of the Naqshbandi order.¹⁹⁹

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁹⁰ The city is in Turkmenistan now.

¹⁹¹ Hamid Algar, “A Brief History of the Naqshbandi Order”, p. 7. Algar’s reference is *Tazkirat al-Shu’ara*, written by Dulatshah-i Samarqandi in the fifteenth century. Algar writes that among those who visited Hamidani in the *khaniqah* were Sana’i the first renowned Sufi poet and his nephew Sheikh Sa’id, father of the celebrated Kubravi saint, Razi al-Din Ali Lala.

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 7. Khwaja Hamidani was born in Buzanjird near Hamidan. He studied under the Shafi’i master Abu Ishaq Shirazi, though he (Khwaja Yusuf Hamidani) was a Hanafi. He became a scholar in *fiqh*. While in Baghdad, he became acquainted with Sheikh Abd al-Qadiri Gilani, founder of the Qadiri Order, who encouraged Hamidani to change his practice of being a preacher and *faqih* to become a Sufi. He turned to Sufism at age thirty-five.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁹⁴ Maulana Fakhr al-Din Ali b. Hussein Wa’iz-i Kashifi, *Rashahat ‘Ayn al-Hayat*, v.1, p. 18. According to a legend at the time, the leader of the order was Ahmad Yasavi, whose center of activity was Bukhara; he received an inspiration that he must migrate to Turkistan, so when he was leaving the city he asked followers of the order to acknowledge the leadership of the Khwaja Ghujdavani.

¹⁹⁵ Ali Akbar Dihkhuda, *Lughatnama*, v.11, Tehran: Intisharat-i Ruzana, 1377/1998, p.16606. Dihkhuda writes that Ghujdavan also has a Ghijdavan pronunciation and it is a village near Bukhara.

¹⁹⁶ Safi, *Rashahat*, v.1, p. 15. The first successor that he chose was Khwaja Abdullah-i Barqi, and the second one was Khwaja Hasan Andaqi.

¹⁹⁷ Algar, “A Brief History of the Naqshbandi Order”, Ibid., p. 7

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁹⁹ DeWeese, “Khojagani Origin and the Critique of Sufism”, p. 507. Also Kashifi, *Rashahat*, p. 38. These principles are: *hush dar dam*-awareness in breathing, *nazar dar qadam*-watching over one’s steps, *safar dar watan*- internal mystical journey, *khalwat dar anjuman*-solitude in the crowd, *yad kard*-recollection, meaning *dhikr* from heart and tongue, *baz gasht*- meaning every time a Sufi in his heart says a *dhikr*, then he must also say to God that he means Him, in another word restraining one’s thoughts, *nigah dasht*-

The next important Khwaja of the order was Khwaja Baha' al-Din, who was a *murid* Amir Kulal. Khwaja Baha' al-Din broke away from his mentor who apparently practiced vocal *zikr*, a practice that Baha' al-Din disapproved.²⁰⁰ The latter established the silent *zikr* once for all in the order, believing that the *zikr dar qalb naqshbandad*- must imprint in the heart. It seems that the crucial point "for the crystallization of the Naqshbandi order under his aegis was rather his emphasis on the silent *zikr*", in addition to solemn devotion to *shari'a* and *Sunna*.²⁰¹ It was Khwaja Baha' al-Din's insistence on the silent *zikr* that the order from then was called "*Naqshband*"- imprinted one.

After Khwaja Baha' al-Din Naqshband, two of his important *khalifas*, Khwaja Ala' al-Din 'Attar and then Khwaja Parsa, succeeded him. The latter was the one that Jami met in his childhood and according to him, the love towards the Naqshbandi Order was imprinted in his heart. The next two important leaders of the orders that were important in Jami's life were: Khwaja Sa'd al-Din Kashghari, who "trapped Jami into the order", and the famous influential leader of the order in the fifteenth century, Khwaja Nasir al-Din 'Ubaydollah Ahrar (1404-1490), who is the most studied leader of the order. He has been referred to as *pir-i sani*, (second elder), a borrowed term from the Bektashi Order for him.²⁰² It was during the leadership of Khwaja Ahrar that the order spread beyond the Transoxiana and Khurasan and acquired followers in Anatolia and Sub-continent through *khalifas*- representatives sent by Ahrar. Ahrar perceived himself as being appointed by God and the Prophet to "protect the

watching one's thought, according to Sa'd al-Din, another of Khwajagan, Jami's mentor, a Sufi for one or two hours concentrates on thinking about God, and *yad dasht*- concentration upon God.

²⁰⁰ Rashahat, p. 96. Kashifi has written that whenever, in a session the followers of Amir Kalal were engaged in vocal *dhikr*, Baha al-Din would leave the session.

²⁰¹ Hamid Algar, "Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History", in *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et Situation Actuelle, d'un Order Mystique Musulman: Actes de la Table Ronde de Sevres*, ed. By M. Gaborieau, A. Popvic & T. Zarcone, publies par l'Institut Francais d' Etudes Anatoliennes d' Istanbul, E'ditions Isis, Istanbul-Paris, 1990, p. 125.

²⁰² Ibid., p. 126.

Muslims from the evil of oppressors" through relationship and connection with rulers and kings in order to conquer their souls, therefore "achieving the purpose of Muslims." In other words, he carried Baha' al-Din's assertion on adherence to *shari'a* "beyond the devotional and spiritual realm into the political sphere and demanding the suppression in Transoxiana, of certain Turco-Mongol customs and laws."²⁰³

In the next section before reviewing Khwaja Ahrar's involvement in the state affairs of the Timurid rulers that he closely associated with, brief accounts of his predecessors with the court will be discussed.

The Role of Khwajagan²⁰⁴

As it was pointed out, the Naqshbandis were the most prominent order of the Timurid era. This *Hanafi* Sunni order advocated the *Sunna* of the Prophet and his companions. The order not only gave importance to worldly affairs and accumulation of the wealth, but was also quite involved with the court though not at the initial stage.²⁰⁵ These trends, at least some of them, were not among the general doctrines of the most important leader of the order, for example, Sheikh Baha' al-Din Naqshband,²⁰⁶ who was regarded as the founding

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 126.

²⁰⁴ Jo-Ann Gross, Asom Urunbaev, *The Letters of Khwaja 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar and his Associate*, Brill, Leiden-Boston-Köln, 2002, p. 9. According to Gross, the term Khwajagan was the name of the order prior to the succession of Baha' al-Din Naqshband(1389). Though the leader of the order was not based on heredity, "the Ahrari line traces its lineage from Khwaja Abd al-Khaliq Ghujdavani through Khwaja Baha' al-Din Naqshband (d.1389) through Maulana Ya'ghub Charkhi (d. ca. 1400) to Khwaja Ubayd Allah Ahrar (d.1490).

²⁰⁵ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 74. Afsahzad writes that Naqshbandi sheikhs were some of the greatest land holders of the domain. Khwaja Ahrar had five thousands *dinar* (each *dinar* contained 4/23 grams of gold).

²⁰⁶ Naqshband, the later name of the order when Sheikh Bah' al-Din Naqshband emphasized silent *dhikr* or *dhikr khifya* and said: *dhikr dar qalb naqshbandad*.

father of the order.²⁰⁷ Nevertheless, the cooperation²⁰⁸ between the order and the court started when Khwaja Parsa (d. 1420),²⁰⁹ supported Shahrukh in the succession struggle against other claimants of the throne. Shahrukh returned the favor by reestablishing Khwaja Parsa in Bukhara²¹⁰. Apparently, an alliance between Khwaja Parsa and Shahrukh was the initial step to further "growth in the political influence of the Naqshbandi order,"²¹¹ in the following years.

The Naqshbandis built the identity of the order differently from other *tariqas* in the region. While the others were mainly labeled as extremists, the Naqshbandis presented themselves as strict followers of Islamic laws. Besides the *shari'a*²¹² oriented policy that the Naqshbandis pushed, at least during the Timurid era, the order revolved around a charismatic leader, Khwaja Ahrar. Khwaja Ahrar not only felt obliged to defend Muslims and maintaining virtue and righteousness, but consciously reaffirmed his power in implementing

²⁰⁷ Najib Mayil Heravi, *Jami*, p. 26. Heravi refers to the work *Masmu'at*, written by a certain Qazi Muhammad. Heravi adds to the same reference that the close political involvement with the government was a practice that started with Khwaja Ahrar and Jami.

²⁰⁸ Maria Eva Subtelny, "The Library of Khwaja Muhammad Parsa", article in the work, *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, Edit. Devin DeWeese, Bloomington: Indian University Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2001, p.89.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 84-89, Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Mahmud al Hafizi al-Bukhari, better known as Khwaja-i Parsa, who beside being traced to Hafiz al-Din al-Kabir al-Bukhari (d.1249), a towering religious figure of Bukhara, was also related to Ja'far al-Tayyar, a nephew of 'Ali, the fourth caliph of Islam (Subtelny's reference is from *Habib al-Siyar*, v. iv, p. 4.). Khwaja Parsa, was a *mufassir* – commenter of Quran, *muhaddith* –traditionist, and *faqih*-jurisprudent.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 89. Khwaja Parsa's title, 'Parsa- chaste-devout', was given to him by Khwaja Baha' al-Din Naqshband. Subtelny states that Khwaja Parsa's political involvement was not well received by the *ulama* of Bukhara. Khwaja Parsa's devotion to the mystic Ibn 'Arabi, was not well received by his colleagues in Bukhara either. As a matter of fact, he had to leave the city and his position was reestablished during the reign of Shahrukh in the city.

²¹¹ Ibid., p. 89. Subtelny also cites, Safi, *Rashahat* v.I, p. 109; cf. Hamid Algar, "Naqshbandiyya," El 2, v.II, pp. 934-935, and Yuri Bregel, " Bukhara," Elr, IV, p. 516.

²¹² Devin DeWeese, " Khojagan Origins and Critique of Sufism: The Rhetoric of Communal Uniqueness in Manaqib of 'Ali 'Azizan Ramitani" in Frederick de Jong and Bernd Radtke, eds., *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and polemics*(Leiden, 1999), p. 496. Also in Jo- Ann Gross, *The Letters of Khwaja 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar*, p. 15. Gross writes that " Dewees suggests that, in the context of competition among opposing Sufi groups, strict adherence to Shari'a may have been invoked by the Naqshbandi community as a means to distinguish itself from other established Sufi groups as well as to legitimize itself.

his agendas. For him, the political world was not separated from the order's doctrine, other than "the ground upon which the Sufi tenets were acted upon."²¹³

The political teaching and practice of the Naqshbandi order, which was dictated by Khwaja Ahrar, empowered them to apply their influence in the government. The practice turned the Naqshbandis into a political order with the backing of the court. Thus many of the *khaniqahs*- abode of dervishes, were either built or financially supported by the court.²¹⁴ For example, the most famous *khaniqah*, 'Ikhlasiiyya', was built by Mir 'Ali-shir Nava'i. It was in this *khaniqah* that Jami held his sessions with the followers.²¹⁵ Of course Jami's prestige among the courtiers deepened when Nava'i joined the Naqshbandis. Nava'i was referred as the *Makhdum*- the served one, and he (Nava'i) called Jami "*Maulana Nura*"-our enlightened master.²¹⁶

The Naqshbandis were hostile toward other orders, and not only treated the followers of *Mu'tazilis*, *Hurufis*, and *Nurbakhshis* harshly, but were also skeptical of Greek philosophy and rationalism.²¹⁷ Nevertheless, the Naqshbandis were the most respected Sufis for several reasons, one of which was the status held by the order among the people and the court. Another reason was that the members earned their living either from farming or business, and did not have a dependent life style, residing in *khaniqahs* and receiving donations from the state or courtiers.

²¹³ Joan A. Gross, "Multiple Roles of a Shaikh", p. 115, in *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et Situation Actuelle, d'un Order Mystique Musulman: Actes de la Table Ronde de Sevres*, edit. By M. Gaborieau, A. Popvic & T. Zarcone, publiés par l'Institut Français d' Etudes Anatoliennes d' Istanbul, E'ditions Isis, Istanbul-Paris, 1990.

²¹⁴ Ibid., p.27.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 28.

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 54.

²¹⁷ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 73.

Jami's Interest in the Order

Jami's attraction to the order was twofold: First, he had a high regard for the Naqshbandi doctrine of inner seclusion with God, while being among people- *khalvat dar jam'*; and second, he appreciated that the order required the members to earn their living with some form of labor jobs.²¹⁸ In addition, Jami marveled at the Naqshbandi's non-reliance on ancestral achievements and reputation.²¹⁹ His belief in this regard is expressed in one of his quatrains as following:

هر پسر کو از پدر لافد، نه از فضل و هنر
فی المثل گر دیده را مردم بود ، تا مردم است
شاخ بی بر گر چه باشد از درخت میوه دار
چون نیارد میوه بار ، آن در شمار هیزم است

A son who brags about his father (ancestral back ground) not on his own crafts and knowledge,
Though looks like people but is not a human being,
A fruitless branch though is a part of a fruit bearing tree,
Since it does not bear fruit, its value is equal to a burning wood.²²⁰

To have a better understanding of the order's influence on the Timurids, a brief account of the dynasty after Shahrukh, and the role of Khwaja Ahrar in the politics of the dynasty will be helpful.

The Role of Religious Leaders after Shahrukh

Historical records report that, for the most part, the influence of the *'ulama* gradually increased during Ulugh Beg's reign, in response to the latter's careless observance of religion. He was accused of adhering to *yasa* more than *shari'a*. He especially offended the *'ulama* on the celebration that he arranged for his son circumcision, in which wine was

²¹⁸ Ibid., p.75.

²¹⁹ Ibid., p. 75.

²²⁰ Ibid., p.76.

openly served in public.²²¹ Thus, after being defeated in the power struggle with his son ‘Abd al-Latif, when his fate was decided by ‘*ulama* in the session arranged by ‘Abd al-Latif, except for one religious jurist, Qadi Miskin,²²² the rest of the jurists issued a *fatwa*- religious decree that Ulugh-Beg must be punished for his behavior. Ulugh-Beg was killed supposedly by consent of his son, Abd al-Latif²²³ but, in reality, Ulugh-Beg the representative of the urban culture²²⁴, was defeated by “rustic sheikh”²²⁵.

Abd al-Latif, similar to his father, was knowledgeable in secular science, such as astronomy and history. He treated the "men of God", i.e. the dervishes with the uppermost respect. He attended the religious meetings, and participated in discussions with them.²²⁶ In contrast to the religious sectors, the army and the population had a more difficult time under Abd al-Latif. He had "neither respect for old age, nor leniency toward youth."²²⁷ He also ended up sharing the ill-fate of his father, falling into the conspiracy trap of the unhappy emirs and Ulugh-Beg’s *nukaran* -loyal servants. After his death, the plotters freed Mirza Abdullah b. Ibrahim b. Shahrukh (b.1433), Ulugh-Beg’s nephew whom Abd al-Latif had spared and imprisoned after conquering Samarqand.²²⁸ Mirza Abdullah was put on the throne as the new ruler of Samarqand.²²⁹

The change of the ruler was not welcomed by Bukhara’s *ulama*. The governor of the

²²¹ It has been reported that the sheikh al-Islam of the city reproached him about his careless behavior. Ulugh Beg that was upset from the Sheikh criticism told him: “ I see that you are old and you wish to be a martyr, but I will not grant your wish.”

²²² During the reign of Ulugh-Beg, Qazi Miskin was the one that courageously opposed Ulugh-Beg’s religious practice, yet in Ulugh-Beg’s trial he was the only one that was against his punishment.

²²³ Barthold, *Four Studies, Ulugh-Beg*, p. 159.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.176.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 174. This term was quoted by the Sheikh al-Islam, Burhan al-Din, the enlightened sheikh of Samarqand, who was in a constant defensive position because of his rival, Khwaja Ahrar in the city.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 161

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 161, Barthold quotes Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi, the contemporary historian of Ulugh-Beg, whose work’s title is: *Matla’ al-Sa’dayn*.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.160.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, P. 163.

city released Abu Sai'd b. Sultan Muhammad b. Miranshah (1424-1469), whom Abd al-Latif had imprisoned in Bukhara after occupying the throne. Abu Sa'id attempted to conquer Samarqand but was resisted by Mirza Abdullah's army. Abu Sa'id allied himself with the Uzbek's Khan, Abulkhayr, whose troop helped Abu Sa'id's army defeat Mirza Abdullah's army near Samarqand in 1451.²³⁰

Abu Sa'id's victory supposedly was foreseen by the influential Naqshbandi Sheikh, Khwaja Ahrar.²³¹ Barthold rightly states that the story was propagated by the followers of the Naqshbandi order. The sources downplay the role of the Uzbeks in achieving victory for Abu Sa'id.²³² However, Abu Sa'id did follow Khwaja Ahrar's instructions fervently throughout his reign, not opposing him "even when it was possible."²³³

Thus, the era of Abu Sa'id, in contrast to that of Ulugh-Beg, has been recorded as supremacy of the dervishes who "were hostile to any form of culture."²³⁴ The forty-year enlightened reign of Ulugh-Beg was followed by forty years of domination by Khwaja Ahrar, who was brought to Samarqand by Abu Sa'id.²³⁵ According to hagiographers and chroniclers,²³⁶ he was a powerful sheikh who had tremendous power over Abu Sai'd. Basically, according to them, Abu Sa'id owed his reign to Khwaja Ahrar, who encouraged

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 165

²³¹ Ibid., p. 166. The biographer of Khwaja Ahrar has reported that Khwaja Ahrar had predicted that Abu Sa'id will conquer Tashkent, Bukhara, and Samarqand, when Abu Sa'id was unknown. In response to his gratitude to Ahrar Sa'id promised that he will strengthen the *Shari'a* and will be compassionate to his subjects.

²³² Ibid., p. 167

²³³ Ibid., p. 167 & 'Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi, p. 298.

²³⁴ Barthold. *Four Studies* Vol. II, p. 168.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 168.

²³⁶ Joan Gross, "Multiple Roles of a Shaikh", p. 116, 'Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi (1413-1482), author of *Matla'-i Sa'dayn*, Mirkhwand (1433-1498), author of *Rawzat al-Safa*, Khwandamir, began his work *Habib al-Siyar* in 1523. However, according to Gross, the contemporary historians are reluctant to credit Ahrar for his intermediary activities because he was outside of the "Timurid political infrastructure", while the chroniclers all referred to him as the one that Abu Sa'id and Sultan Ahmad always consulted.

him to seek the throne ²³⁷ Abu Sa'id took Khwaja Ahrar's advice because he had assumed that the latter "understood on a higher level"²³⁸. Although Khwaja Ahrar was a leader who, even by his panegyrist, was referred to as "stranger to book-learning" and even theology, his charisma and righteous life style won him fame, prestige and bestowed upon him "the fame of a religious ascetic and miracle-worker."²³⁹ During the reign of Abu Sa'id, Samarqand was the residence of two prominent religious leaders, Khwaja Ahrar and Sheikh Burhan al-Din. Barthold refers to Khwaja Ahrar as "destroyer of the traditions of Ulugh-Beg days", and Sheikh Burhan al-Din as "preserver" of his era.²⁴⁰ While Khwaja Ahrar was influential among people and the army, Sheikh Burhan al-Din was popular among the government workers and representative of cultural class.²⁴¹

After conquering Transoxiana and Khurasan, although Abu Sa'id transferred his government to Herat (1459), the influence of Khwaja Ahrar was present. It was Khwaja Ahrar who advised Abu Sa'id to attack Qara-Qyunlu Turkmen after the death of Jahan Shah. Khwaja Ahrar not only persuaded Abu Sa'id to campaign against the Qara-Qyunlu but also offered his blessing. Although the out-come was not favorable and Abu Sa'id was killed in the battle (1469), the latter's ill-fate did not decrease the popularity of the Khwaja Ahrar.²⁴²

Time after Abu Sa'id

The transition era after Abu Sa'id was a period of turmoil. After Abu Sa'id's death,

²³⁷ Joan Gross, "Multiple Roles of a Sheikh", p. 116.

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 116 & p. 119. Abu Sa'id had full trust in Khwaja Ahrar and he took his advice willingly, though he met his end based on the advice of Khwaja Ahrar.

²³⁹ Barthold, *Four Studies*, Vol. II, p. 169.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 171

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 171

²⁴² Ibid., p.174i

Sultan Hussein (1438-1506) b. Mansur, b Bayqara, b. ‘Umar Sheikh, b. Timur, who overcame other rivals, was enthroned in Herat in 1470. During his thirty-three year reign, Herat was the cultural, artistic, and industrial center of the Islamic world, in addition to being the center of pleasure and carnal entertainment.²⁴³ His era was also marked by a decline of morality and ethics. Zahir al-Din Babur, one of the cousins of Sultan Hussein, wrote in his famous memoir, *Baburnama*, that Sultan Hussein, his troops, and civilian men of Herat were often drunk.²⁴⁴ No wonder the ‘*ulama* issued numerous laws and orders prohibiting drinking or shaving beards during Sultan Hussein’s time.²⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Babur asserts that Herat under Sultan Hussein was a town unequalled in the rest of the world in term of art, splendor, and culture.²⁴⁶

It is important to acknowledge the relative comfort and stability that existed during Sultan Hussein’s reign. A great part of Khurasan enjoyed the economic growth which was equal to the pre-Mongol era.²⁴⁷ In spite of economic growth and artistic creation, the era lacked the scientific advances that were prominent during the reign of Ulugh Beg. Sultan Hussein and his courtiers spent most of their efforts and resources on architecture, music, and artistic productions at the expense of science, i.e. astronomy; however, they promoted astrology. While the environment was suitable for Sufi and Gnostic study, the teaching was different from the thirteenth century Sufism of Rumi. The Sufi centers-*khaniqahs* were built next to schools, and Sufi doctrine was mixed with theology teaching.²⁴⁸

It is in this setting during the reign of Sultan Hussein, that Jami reached the highest

²⁴³ Najib Mayil Heravi, *Jami*, p. 19.

²⁴⁴ Babur, *Baburnama*, tr. Wheeler Thackston, New York: the Modern Library, 2002, p. 194. Also cited, Heravi, *Jami*, p. 19,

²⁴⁵ Bakharzi, *Mansh’ al-Insha’*, p. 159-160, and 164-65. Also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 20.

²⁴⁶ V.V. Barthold, *Four Studies*, v.II, p.176

²⁴⁷ Mayil Heravi, *Jami*, p. 19.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

point of his career as the poet of the capital and acting Sheikh, or representative of Khwaja Ahrar in Herat. And it was because of the unique position that he acquired through his prestige, fame and his close affiliation to the influential Chaghatai emir, Mir Ali-shir Nava'i, that he was able to enforce his philanthropic agendas. As Heravi draws attention, it seems that from ancient times the 'pen' and 'sword' have had a strong union. It is because of political, social, and economic reasons that they have been attracted to each other.²⁴⁹ Heravi validates his point by referring to a certain poet, Malik Mas'ud Qumi, who was a talented poet at the time of Jami. He came to Herat after fleeing from the Aq-Quyunlu's court. Qumi tried to have a literary life away from Sultan Hussein's court and his court's poets, but was not able to do so. Out of his frustration he composed *Mathnawi Sword and Pen*, in which he finally admitted that the pen survives because of sword.²⁵⁰ Thus, it seems, in order to have any standing in the literary field, the attachment to a court, an influential courtier, or a powerful dignitary was required- *lazim va malzum*, for a carrier poet, which otherwise would not have been recognized. In the next section, the political, social, and cultural setting of the era will be discussed.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 63.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 63.

CHAPTER 5

JAMI IN POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND RELIGIOUS SETTING

Prior to the Mongol invasion, dervishes and Sufis usually stayed away from the court and avoided any involvement with the courtiers. They believed that kings and governors usually had usurped rule, captured the territories by force and hence did not have legitimacy for governing. They also believed that in order to remain in power, the kings and governors usually committed injustice and oppressed their subjects. Dervishes or Sufis could not prevent them from committing atrocities, or even expose these injustices, therefore, their policy was that of hostility to rulers and they avoided any involvement in the affairs of the state. However, during the Timurid era, this policy changed, probably because of the social and political setting, or the beliefs of some orders, especially the most influential Sufi *tariqa* of the era, the Naqshbandis.

The Naqshbandis did not hesitate, at least at the time Jami joined the order, to cooperate with the government, or get involved with its affairs. Because of the order's ideology, Naqshbandi dervishes had a close relationship with the court, believing that close ties with the court would enable them to help the unrepresented people by engaging the rulers in practicing fairness and implementing justice.²⁵¹ It has been recorded from Khwaja Ahrar, the leader of Naqshbandis at the time of Jami, that: "some people

²⁵¹ Mayil Heravi, *Jami*, p. 65

condemn worldly affairs and belittle the kingships and dynasties; these two are not completely evil. Human beings have natural needs for food, shelter, and clothing, and without it, religious practice and worship cannot be done genuinely. Besides, the monarchy has a high value and is close to prophecy. In other words, the monarchy holds the second position, the first being the prophecy. Additionally, only kings and sultans have the power to promote religious practices, or prevent inequality and injustice and enhance the position of the religious authorities."²⁵²

At the beginning of his literary career, before he joined the Naqshbandis, Jami was not interested in being identified with the court. In his first *diwan*, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, there are poems that express his ideology in this regard. He writes:

لب نیالاید اهلِ همت از خوانِ خسان
هر که قانع شد به خشک و تر، شه بحر و برست
طامعان از بهر لقمه پیش هر خس سر نهند
قانعان را خنده بر شاه و امیر کشور است

People of dignity do not stain their lips eating from the spread of wicked people,
Whoever is content with plain bread and water, is the king of land and sea,
Greedy ones for a crump of bread bend their head for the misers,
The contented ones laugh at kings and viziers.²⁵³

However, after Jami joined the Naqshbandis, as an ardent member of the order and loyal follower of Khwaja Ahrar, he advocated the principles of the order and its leader's policy. Khwaja Ahrar in a letter had specifically requested Jami to establish relations with the court, and seek its cooperation and assistance for the order.²⁵⁴ Jami, in

²⁵² Heravi cites the quote from the dissertation of 'Arif Nushahi, which title is *Malfuzat-i Khwaja Ahrar*, ed. 'Abdul Avval Nishaburi, p. 327. He does not provide date or the University of the Publication. Heravi, *Jami*, p. 66.

²⁵³ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 72

²⁵⁴ Abd al-Rahman Jami, *Makatib* eds. 'Esam al-Din Urnunbaev & Asrar Rahmanuf, Dushanbe: n.p., 1989, p. 330. In Nava'i's collections there are two letters, in which Ahrar indirectly asks Nava'i to remain in the court. In the other one, Ahrar reminds Jami that he should ask Nava'i, who wanted to leave the court, to

the letter to one of his followers, Sheikh Najm al-Din Zargar, who was a scribe in the court, wrote, "Closeness to kings, which should be apparent to intelligent ones, is the best means for spiritual and worldly gains, because it provides a means to assist the poor and needy ones."²⁵⁵ It was due to this specific teaching of the Naqshbandis that Jami readily participated in the literary sessions at the Timurid court of Abulqasim Babur, in 1452, and wrote him a *ghazal* which is full of praise for this Timurid ruler.²⁵⁶

After the death of Abulqasim Babur in 1456, Jami, though had established relationship with his successor Abu Sa'id when he transferred his court to Herat, his relationship was not deep with Abu Sa'id. Jami mostly went to the court in order to participate in religious and theology debates;²⁵⁷ especially after his first unpleasant visit to the court. It has been recorded that Jami, in response to an invitation from the court went there; but he heard that the courtiers and Abu Sa'id were engaged in behavior that Jami thought was not considered respectful to religion. Therefore, he returned home without meeting the sultan. Abu Sai'd was informed of the situation, and ordered the discontinuation of the music, dancing, and drinking, but Jami did not return to the court. He explained his refusal in a *ghazal*.²⁵⁸

Jami continued to write more *ghazals* for Abu Sa'id, referring to him as "shadow of God." As a matter of fact, he composed his first *diwan* or collection of poetry during

remain at his post. Cited from: Abd al-Rahman Jami, *Namaha va Munsha'at-i Jami*, eds. 'Esam al-Din Urunbaev & Asrar Rahmanuf, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1378/1999. pp. 36-7.

²⁵⁵ Heravi, Jami, p. 67. Heravi cites Jami, *Makatib*, p. 285, letter #6.

²⁵⁶ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 67. Jami also offered Abulqasim Babur *Risala Hilyat al-Holal*, which is an essay on riddles.

²⁵⁷ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 77.

²⁵⁸ *Diwan-i Kamil-i Jami*, ed. Hashim Razi, Tehran: Piruz Press 1341/1962, p. 401 *ghazal* #598. In this *ghazal*, Jami cleared the Sultan from any wrong doing.

his reign,²⁵⁹ writing a preface full of praise for Abu Sa'id. However, after the latter was killed, Jami changed the preface of his *diwan* and replaced Abu Sa'id's name with Sultan Hussein's name.²⁶⁰ He even wrote in his preface: "though the value of the word is high and is like pure gold, no one pays any attention to it till the word pleases the king." In other words, if one wants to be heard one must flatter the king.²⁶¹ Dervish Dahaki Qazvini, one of the contemporaries of Jami, wrote, "Jami brags about his poetry because he has been patronized by the court, I wonder what kind of poetry he would have written if he was a plain dervish."²⁶² Dervish Dahaki's point is that Jami's popularity at the time was because of his attachment to the court and because of the support that he received from the court that he could produce literary works.

Political: Jami's Influence on the Court

After Sultan Hussein Bayqara took the throne in 1469, Jami's bond to the court strengthened, especially when Sultan Hussein's friend, advisor, and companion, Mir Ali-shir Nava'i joined the Naqshbandis. Jami not only enjoyed a high status at the court but also was a respected celebrity among the religious class and ordinary people. Hence, due to his spiritual position and his influence, he was able to reduce the severity of the court, and occasionally pacified people at the time of unrest and turmoil.²⁶³ Jami's status was enhanced after he returned from the Hijaz. Because of his position, he was able to create

²⁵⁹ Khwandamir, *Habib al-Siyar*, v. iv, p. 344.

²⁶⁰ This act of Jami represents the value and importance that he regarded for having a good relationship with the court.

²⁶¹ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 70.

²⁶² Heravi, *Jami*, p. 70. The quote from Darvish Dahaki is a translation of a line of poetry that he wrote for Jami.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 70. See also Jami, *Namaha va Munsha'at*, letter# 6 p. 33. This letter is one of the numerous letters that Jami wrote in this regard.

a special affiliation, which Heravi calls a triangle bond between Sultan Hussein, Nava'i, and himself, in which "Jami was at the head of the triangle", so he did not need to go to the court, the courtiers came to him.²⁶⁴

Nevertheless, Jami occasionally expressed his repugnance at being identified with court and courtiers. Yet he was aware that he could not implement his thoughts, or enforce his agenda without the support of the court. He pointed out his abhorrence for the court in his maturity and old age too, but in a more subtle way in the form of stories. He wrote in his *Mathnawi Subhat al-Abrar*, the story of a vizier who was passing through the city with a great grandeur. People were stunned by his glory. Someone asked in the crowd, "who is this person?" A wise woman responded:

رانده ای از حرم قرب خدای
کرده در کوبه دوران جای
زیر این دایره پر خم و پیچ
مانده ای از همه محروم به هیچ
آمد آن زمزمه در گوش وزیر
داشت در سینه دلی پند پذیر

He is the one rejected from the God's sanctuary,
And has been deceived by worldly ornaments,
In this crooked circle (world),
Has been debarred from people and values,
The vizier heard the woman's whisper,
Because he had a heart in his chest, that would take advice.

Jami adds that the vizier left the court, went into seclusion, and was allowed to enter into God's sanctuary.²⁶⁵

Jami had liaisons with other courts too. He had friendly associations with the Qara-Quyunlu's ruler Jahan Shah (841/1437-872/1467), whose literary penname was Haqiqi. It is been reported that Jahan Shah sent his *diwan* along with two thousand *kepeki*

²⁶⁴ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 38.

²⁶⁵ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 73

dinar to Jami for a critical evaluation. Jami in a poem praised his work and thanked him for the money. Yet, his relationship with the Qara-Quyunlu was not as strong as the one he had established with the Aq-Quyunlu dynasty, whose ruler, Uzun Hasan, overthrew Qara-Quyunlu. Bakharzi states that the Qara-Quyunlu's affiliation with Shi'is was the reason for Jami's distanced relationship with the dynasty,²⁶⁶ while Heravi argues that the animosity between the Qara-Quyunlu and the Timurids was another reason that Jami did not want to be associated too closely with them.²⁶⁷

Jami, nonetheless, had a secure relationship with the Aq-Quyunlu's ruler, Uzun Hasan (871/1466-883/1478). Uzun Hasan, through his governor of Hamidan,²⁶⁸ provided a safe passage for Jami and his entourage when they were returning from Hijaz going through Kurdistan,²⁶⁹ which was in turmoil. Jami met Uzun Hasan in Tabriz, who along with his elites and courtiers welcomed him warmly and offered him magnificent presents. Further, Uzun Hasan invited Jami to stay in Tabriz, but Jami declined the invitation with the excuse that he had to return to Herat immediately because of his mother's illness. Uzun Hasan compassionately sent him off. Jami refers to Uzun Hasan as a "just king"²⁷⁰ and after his death; Jami continued his friendship with his son, Yaqub Beg (884/1479-896/1490). Jami composed his work *Salaman and Absal*, in Yaqub Beg's honor. In a *qasida*, he also gave fatherly advice to Yaqub on how to rule justly.²⁷¹

²⁶⁶ Bakharzi, *Maqamat-i Jami*, pp. 139-141, also cited in Heravi, *Jami*, p. 78.

²⁶⁷ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 80. Jahan Shah, the Qara-Quyunlu ruler, tried to conquer Herat during Shahrukh's reign but did not succeed so made a peace pact, in which each side recognized each other's domain. However, later when Abu Sa'id started a campaign against the Qara-Quyunlu's ruler, Jahan Shah, he was killed in the battle.

²⁶⁸ A province located in the west of Iran.

²⁶⁹ Another western province, which is located north of Hamidan.

²⁷⁰ Kashifi, *Rashahat*, v. 1 pp.262-263.

²⁷¹ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 78-79

Jami had a friendly relationship with the Ottoman court, in particular, Mehmet, the Conqueror, (855/1451-886/1481). Mehmet gifted Jami a large number of gold coins. In return, Jami thanked him in a verse, praising him as the one that has the ability of *vilayat and hukumat*- custodianship of religion and sovereignty.²⁷² Jami's affiliation with the Ottoman court continued with the Mehmet's successor, Sultan Bayazid II (886/1481-918/1512).²⁷³ Jami, welcoming the new sultan, sent him a *qasida*, imitating the eulogy style of Anvari,²⁷⁴ in which he wrote:

“Although there are many kings in the world, none has the quality of this Sultan.”²⁷⁵

The Ottoman court probably thought that having a close relationship with a renowned Persian poet, who was also an authority in Islamic teaching, enhanced the court's prestige! Besides, the Ottomans often invited Persian scholars to Istanbul.

Jami was popular among almost all sections of society because he supported dervishes and the needy people through his connection with the courtiers and elites, and their financial support. He accumulated a great wealth through their gifts and offerings, which his followers regarded as his *kiramah*-miracles. A great number of needy people and dervishes were provided for through financial gains that Jami received.²⁷⁶ Their dependency on his donations reached a point that when Jami wanted to go to Hijaz, they told him, "providing for us is equal to going to Hajj ten times on foot". Jami, with the wit

²⁷² Jami, *Namaha va Munsha'at-i Jami*, #413. pp. 272-274.

²⁷³ Jami, *Namaha*, p. 269-270. Also, Heravi, *Jami*, p. 80.

²⁷⁴ Awhad al-Din Ali Anvari of Abivard (d.1187), who is referred to as the master of panegyric verse; he was contemporary with Sultan Sanjar Saljuqi (r. 1118-1153). His *qasida* has been criticized as “superfluity of erudition”. Wheeler Thackston, *A Millennium of Classical Persian Poetry*, Bethesda: Iran books, 1994, p.26.

²⁷⁵ *Diwan-i Jami*, pp. 131-133. This is a long *qasida*, in which Jami exaggeratedly praises Sultan Bayazid II. Also, Heravi, p. 8.1

²⁷⁶ Heravi, *Jami*, p.82-83

that he was known for, humorously responded, "I have gone to Hajj on foot numerous times that I am tired. This time I want to go by a carrier".²⁷⁷ Jami, besides providing for dervishes, spent his wealth on building *khaniqah* or *langar* – dervishes' dwelling, and mosques. He also provided for his disciples' expenses, as well as for spreading Persian culture and literature.²⁷⁸ Yet, he personally lived a simple modest life and lived modestly.²⁷⁹ In addition to his philanthropic practices which eased the lives of many needy people, his prestige and social status enabled him to write letters on behalf of the poor or disadvantaged people in that society, or people who were afflicted by injustice in the system. For example, some people requested his help in reducing tax rates or in receiving an exemption from paying taxes during the drought years. Further, through his letters, he requested financial help for *tullab*-students, and demanded justice in social or private disputes.²⁸⁰

Because of his position and influence, Jami could lighten the pressure on the society through advice inserted subtly in his *qasidas* that he composed for Sultan Hussein.²⁸¹ His advice that he subtly offered in his literary works played a significant role in guiding the Timurid princes in reigning justly in their domain.²⁸² Jami wrote numerous stories about previous just kings and rulers, how they ruled their domains or how some Muslim rulers reigned according to the Quranic teaching and *sunna* (saying and doing of the Prophet); so history refers to them as the just rulers. Jami has passages about Khwaja Nizam al-Mulk, the famous Saljuqid vizier, under whose guidance the Saljuqid dynasty

²⁷⁷ Kashifi, *Rashahat*, v.1,p.254.

²⁷⁸ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 220

²⁷⁹ *Lari, Taklama*, p. 19.

²⁸⁰ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 86. In the chapter on Jami's letters, its importance and significance had been discussed.

²⁸¹ Jami, *Diwan Fatihat al-Shabab*, pp. 102-106. This qasida is one example, in which after a few lines of praise he gives advice to the Sultan.

²⁸² Heravi, *Jami*, p. 87.

(1040-1157) was regarded a formidable empire, emphasizing on the guidance of wise companion for the ruler.²⁸³ Bakharzi points out incidents when the court had to seek Jami's advice in handling religious conflicts in the realm. Sometimes, Jami had to impose his opinion on the matter which was crucial for his own principles and the foundation of the Hanafi School too. For example, the time that one of the Shi'i 'ulama convinced Sultan Hussein that on Friday Prayer, the name of twelve Shi'i Imams must be read in *Khutba*, instead of the four righteous caliphs. Jami persuaded the sultan to reverse his decision ordering the return of the old practice instead.²⁸⁴ However, Lari²⁸⁵ points out that Jami did not offer his advice to people whom he thought were not worthy of his guidance. In fact, he avoided a relationship with those whom he thought there is no advantage of being identified with.²⁸⁶

Jami, the Social Critic

Jami, from his mid-life to old age acted as a social critic of the Timurids. Two groups were particularly the target of his criticism. The first were religious authorities who were in charge of sensitive positions but were not familiar with *shari'a*, so out of ignorance they mixed *shari'a* with *yasa*- Mongolian law.²⁸⁷ The other groups included some Sufi sheikhs and their followers who used Sufism as a means for worldly gains. They attached themselves as parasites to some *khanigahs*, and lived as tramps on people's donations. He states that these groups of so called Sufis spent the day time in

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 89.

²⁸⁴ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 148.

²⁸⁵ Jami's dedicated disciple and author of *Taklama*.

²⁸⁶ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 38, also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 88.

²⁸⁷ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 93.

chanting and reciting *zīkr*, while at night they danced and sang. He writes in *Silsilat al-Zahab*:

این نه صوفیگری و آزادیست
بلکه کیدیگری و قوادیت

The practice is not Sufism or struggle for liberty,
It is deceiving, and a practice of pimps.²⁸⁸

In addition, Jami denounced some conventional religious practices and traditions of the people through examples and stories in *Daftar-i Avval*, the first part of the *Mathnawi Silsilat al-Zahab*,²⁸⁹ which he calls *nafy and isbat*-negation and proof. His points were so critical that when he finished the work his disciple, Bakharzi warned him that the work may cause him trouble. However, Jami emphasized that the purpose of the work was to inform the public and protect the oppressed ones. Besides he adds that his criticism did not target any specific person.²⁹⁰ In fact, Jami was able to ease peoples' economic pressure and other agonies through letters which he wrote to the court, Nava'i, judges, and other influential people.²⁹¹ And finally, Jami has not ignored regular people either, he criticizes craftsmen, tradesmen, and farmers stating that their goal in life is hoarding money. Thus, in order to achieve their goal they do not hesitate to commit deceitful acts.²⁹²

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p.192

²⁸⁹ This part of Jami's work is a valuable record of the Timurid social and historical events.

²⁹⁰ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, pp. 141-2

²⁹¹ Jami, *Namaha va Munsha'at-i Jami*. This work of Jami edited by 'Esam al-Din Urunbaev & Asrar Rahmanuf, contains 433 letters that the subjects of more than 61% of them are related to political and social issues ranging with requesting lower taxes, petitioning on behalf of people for justice, asking to reduce prison terms, and most important of all, requesting Sultan Hussein to not engage in war while suggesting that the conflict could be solved with dialogue and negotiation. At least in 19% of letters, he requested financial assistance for the poor people either for their daily expenses or educational purpose. Only 20% of the letters are personal letters, which he wrote to his acquaintances.

²⁹² Heravi, *Jami*, p. 100

In Jami's era, Islamic culture did not tolerate *'ulum- 'aqli*- theoretical sciences especially in the Sunni cultural center. At the time majority of *'ulama* were against philosophy.²⁹³ They believed studying philosophy made one less of a true believer.²⁹⁴ Though majority of the population in the region were followers of the *Hanafi* school of thought, whose founder, Imam Abu Hanifa believed in applying reason and analogy in decision making, the majority of the *'ulama* were against philosophy and convinced Sultan Hussein to discontinue the subject of philosophy in the schools. A minority group believed that the subject should be part of the curriculum and asked Jami to present their concern in the court. Although Jami unsympathetically rejected the idea, he remarked that by "teaching logic no harm is done to the religion."²⁹⁵ Thus, philosophy left religious schools in Herat. Nevertheless, the pro-philosophy group did not completely concede and took the subject to court. Sultan Hussein called upon both groups to present their case and listened to both sides of the argument. Finally, he decided to seek Jami's opinion on the issue. Jami, who was yet not in favor of philosophy, stated that having a few scholastic theologians at religious schools would not be harmful; and that philosophy could be taught at the religious school under condition that the subject would be discussed at the end of daily class hours.²⁹⁶ His opinion was not accepted by other oppositionists.²⁹⁷ This episode is another example of Jami's influence on the court.²⁹⁸

²⁹³ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 101.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp101-102

²⁹⁵ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 204

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.205-206

²⁹⁷ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 104

²⁹⁸ After Sultan Hussein heard the argument against philosophy, teaching of Avicenna's *Isharat* and some other philosophy works were banned in Herat. However, after the second session in which Jami argued for teaching some of the works, teaching of philosophy returned to schools, in spite of opposition of some religious authorities. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

Jami continued to oppose philosophy; in particular, he was against philosophy of Avicenna, (980-1038 CE). In a *qasida*, Jami denounces Avicenna's works.²⁹⁹ He does not spare Avicenna in his other work *Haft Awrang* either. In the latter work, in the section of 'Tuhfat al-Ahrrar', Avicenna, yet again, is the target of Jami's sharp criticism. Jami condemns Avicenna's *Isharat* as blasphemy, and claims that his *Shafa*,³⁰⁰ causes sickness, and his *Qanun*,³⁰¹ has gone beyond the rule and regulation of grammar.³⁰² Yet, Jami, in third section of *Silsilat al-Zahab*, surprisingly, refers to Avicenna "as the one aware of all knowledge of medicine."³⁰³ It could be possible that he respected his knowledge and skill in medicine, but was opposed to his philosophical ideas. On the whole Jami did not hesitate to attack his contemporaries who were engaged in philosophy. Maulana Jalal al-Din Davani (1426-1502) was one of the hardworking teachers of philosophy.³⁰⁴ Bakharzi reports that when Jami read one of the Davani's commentaries on philosophy³⁰⁵, he said, "none of the religious scholars and philosophers is impressed by themselves as he is! One can feel that he is afflicted by melancholy, one can not understand a thing from his writing."³⁰⁶ Jami did not think highly of Maulana Kamal al-Din Sheikh Hussein, a

²⁹⁹ Jami, *Diwan*, ed. Razi, p. 54.

³⁰⁰ The famous work of Avicenna in philosophy.

³⁰¹ Another well-known work of Avicenna in Medicine.

³⁰² Jami, *Haft Awrang*, p. 526

³⁰³ The praise in the story is related to an episode that Avicenna was summoned to the court to treat a certain crazy prince that he was under impression that he was a cow, so he did not eat anything. He became so thin that he got sick. Jami, *Haft Awrang*, p. 369

³⁰⁴ He was well-known outside Timurid territory too. When Sultan Bayazid sent a gift to Jami, he also sent some presents to Davani in Shiraz.

³⁰⁵ His well-recognized work is *Lawami' al-Isharat fi Makarim al-Akhlaq* known as *Akhlaq-i Jalali* in Persian. He dedicated this work to Uzun Hasan of Aq-Qyunlu. The other work is *Albadr Al-Taali'*. His commentary is *Tahzib al-Mantiq va al-Kalam* of Taftazani (d. 791/1389). Cited from Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 287.

³⁰⁶ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 69

scholastic theologian/ philosopher, who was a *qadi*, at the time of Maj al-Din Khavafi³⁰⁷ either. Jami criticized him as not having enough knowledge of *shari'a*, so some of his judgment was based on *yasa*. Jami added that the *Qazi* has covered Islam with the garment of *kufir*-blasphemy.³⁰⁸

Jami's Critique of Others

Jami was not only intolerant of other orders or those scholars who had a different opinion on religious issues, but he also looked down on poets and on women. Some poets, in Jami's judgment, wasted their talent for material gains. Jami writes that the some of his contemporaries read the works of their predecessor poets at night, "skinned off" their real meaning and presented it to whoever offers them more in the morning.³⁰⁹

Jami expresses his disgust for these poets in the following poem:

شعر در نفس خویشتن بد نیست
پیش اهل دل این سخن رد نیست
نالۀ من ز خستت شرکاست
تن چو نالم ز شرّ ایشان کاست

Poetry by itself is not dreadful,
The practice is not rejected by warm hearted ones,
My lamentation is for greedy poets,
Why shouldn't I lament? Because of their wickedness I am shrinking.³¹⁰

His attitude toward women is reflected in his remarks about Bija Khanum, a religious scholar in Herat. When she asked Jami to pray in the mosque that she built in

³⁰⁷ Majd al-Din Khavafi became seal holder of Sultan Hussein when Nava'i gave up the position. He was a scholar. He also held the position of the scribe at the court of Abu Sa'id. Cited from Khwandamir, *Habib al-Siyar*, p. 160.

³⁰⁸ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 144.

³⁰⁹ Bija Khanum uses an *iham*- ambiguity, by using the word *khargard*- *kharjard* which was the birth place of Jami, but also in Persian means as someone who is slave of an ass-donkey.

³¹⁰ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 124.

the city, Jami refused the request in a poem, in which he wrote that he would not pray in the *mihrab* (praying place), which is built by a woman. Bija Khanum, being a sharp and clever woman responded to Jami's insult in the following poem:

جامیا زین سان خری چندی که در گرد تو اند
گر تو خر گردی ، تخلص سازی از جامی بهست

O' Jami as many asses that are around you,
If you use *khargardi*³¹¹ , it would be more appropriate pen name for you.³¹²

On the whole, Jami did not have a positive opinion about women. He expresses his disregard for women in *Haft Awrang* in the following poem:

زن از پهلوی چپ شد آفریده
کس از چپ راستی هرگز ندیده
بداند هر که بشناسد چپ از راست
که از چپ راستی مشکل توان خواست

The woman has been created from left side of the man³¹³
No one has seen virtuous behavior from the left³¹⁴
The one that recognizes the left from the right
He knows that is difficult to make virtuous a dishonest one.³¹⁵

Jami has a piece in *Salaman va Absal* in which he concludes that women are ungrateful beings. In this poem, he expresses his disregard for women in the sharpest way, writing:

زن چه باشد ناقصی در عقل و دین
هیچ ناقص نیست در عالم چنین
گر دهی صد سال زن را سیم و زر
پای تا سر گیری او را در گهر
هم به وقت چاشت هم هنگام شام
خوانش آرایی به گوناگون طعام
چون شود تشنه ز جام گوهری
آبش از سر چشمه خضر آوری

³¹¹ Bija Khanum uses an *iham*- ambiguity, by using the word *khargard*- *kharjard* which was the birth place of Jami, but also in Persian means as someone who is slave of an ass-donkey.

³¹² Heravi, *Jami*, p. 124.

³¹³ This is the old belief about the creation of Eve in the Garden of Eden in Muslim tradition.

³¹⁴ Use of another *iham* –ambiguity, meaning one can not expect righteousness from a crooked one.

³¹⁵ Jami, *Haft Awrang*, V.1, p. 139

در جهان از زن وفاداری که دید
غیر مگاری و غداری که دید

سالها دست اندر آغوشت کند
چون بتابی رو فراموشت کند
گر تو پیری یار دیگر بایش
همدمی از تو قویتر بایش
چون جوانی آید او را در نظر
جای تو خواهد که او بندد کمر

Woman is not but a creature incomplete in religion and wisdom,
There is no incomplete person such as the woman the world.
If you give a woman gold and silver coins for hundred years,
Cover her from head to toe with pearl,
Provide for her food in the morning and night,
Setting the table with different foods,
When she is thirsty, offer her water from a jewel goblet,
Pulled out from khizr³¹⁶ stream,
Who has seen loyalty from a woman?
Except cheating and deception what else do women offer?
She embraces you for years,
When you turn your face, she would forget you,
If you are old, she must have another companion-yaar,
Someone stronger than you.
If she sees a young man,
She would replace you with him,³¹⁷

It is with this mentality that Jami advised his friends and disciples to remain unmarried. In a piece of poetry, he writes that men should have Jesus Christ as a model, not ever marry. He believed that marriage handcuffs men and remaining single prevents them from being in bondage.³¹⁸ It seems that Jami preferred the companion of young men. It is reported that he never stopped admiring the beauty of young men, arguing based on the prophetic saying: “Indeed God is beautiful, He loves beauty.” Bakharzi reports about a gathering, in which an audacious person questioned Jami as to why even

³¹⁶ The prophet Khizr supposedly discovered the water of life and drank it, so he became an immortal. In Oriental tradition, he was also Alexander’s vizier. The information is from the book *Comprehensive Persian English Dictionary*, written by F. Steingass, p. 465.

³¹⁷ Jami, *Haft Awrang, Salaman va Absal*, p. 411.

³¹⁸ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 125.

in old age he does not stop looking at beauties. Jami responded, using a reference to an episode in which a dervish went to ‘the great sheikh, Khwaja Baha’ al-Din Naqshband’ telling him that he has been trying to avoid the companionship of young men and has not succeeded; asking the great sheikh what he should do? Khwaja Baha’ al-Din responded: “for over seventy years, I have been trying to do the same thing and I have had no luck yet; how could I help you in that regard?”³¹⁹ However, in spite of this mindset, Jami finally married when he was in his fifties.³²⁰

Jami’s Preference for Seclusion

Although Jami spent his time in a mosque, *khaniqah*, at the court, or among scholars, students, courtiers, military men, and scribes, he preferred seclusion. According to his disciples, he even avoided the companionship of Sufis.³²¹ Jami has expressed his fondness for seclusion in a poem in *Silsilat al-Zahab* as following:

سالها شد که روی در و دیوار
دل بر آرم به گرد شهر و دیار
تا بیابم نشان آدمی
کآید از وی نسیم محرمی
بروم خاک پای او باشم
نقد جان زیر پای او باشم

وه کزین کس نشانه پید نیست
اثری در زمانه قطعا نیست
ور کسی را برم گمان که وی است
چون شود ظاهر آنچنان که وی است
یابمش معجبی به خود مغرور
طورش از اهل دین و دانش دور

طالبان را شود به توبه دلیل
بنماید به سوی زهد سبیل

³¹⁹ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 138-139

³²⁰ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 126

³²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 128

رهنما نیست آن که راهزن است
بر سر راه خلق چاه کن است
گر کسی را بود شکیبایی
وقت تنهایی است و یکتایی

For many years I looked all over the city,
So I could find a companion whom I could trust with my secrets,
Then I could become the dust under his feet,
And sacrifice my life for him,
But there is no sign of such a person,
And if wrongly I assume one is the one I am looking for,
When I get to know him,
I find out that he is an arrogant person,
Ignorant of rules and knowledge about the religion,
Though he guides his followers to the right path,
He makes veils on the path,
He is not the guide but the highway robber,
With his guidance, one would be lost from the path,
If one is patient,
It is time to be alone.³²²

Of course Jami sought isolation not just for seclusion's sake; he rather spent his time on research, writing, and composing poetry. Lari reports that Jami's preference for seclusion was to the point that he did not want to see his close disciples, including him (Lari) either. Yet, Lari points out that even when Jami spent with different groups of people, he never stopped thinking about God, genuinely *khalvat dar jam'* (seclusion while among people), which was one of the main doctrines of the Naqshbandis.³²³ However, it was during the time that he spent in seclusion that he was the most productive. He produced more than fifty works which definitely have been so far identified as his, though some anthologies refer to more than that. The important works of his will be discussed in the review of his works.

³²² Jami, *Silsilat al-Zahab*, pp. 136-137(part of the poem).

³²³ Razi, *Diwan-i Jami*, p, 166.

On the other hand, one of the people whom Jami enjoyed spending time with was Mir Ali-shir Nava'i. Especially after the latter joined the Naqshbandis, the friendship between him and Jami grew deeper. The two complemented each other. Nava'i enhanced Jami's position among the courtiers and elites and offered Jami generous gifts. Jami in return, encouraged him in his literary activity, praised his famous Turkish work, *The Khamsa*, though Jami did not know Turkish, he remarked "it is a miracle verse", which competes with Nizami's *Khamsa* and Khusrau's.³²⁴ Nava'i's success in politics was due to the guidance and advice that he received from Jami.³²⁵ The best example of this relationship is seen in the correspondence between the two in the collection of Jami's letters.

³²⁴ Ilyas b. Yusuf Nizami, known as Nizami-yi Ganjavi (1141-1209) composed a *diwan* that is known as *Khamsa-yi Nizami*, which has five different stories. Abul Hasan Yamin al-Din Amir Khusrau of Delhi (1253-1325) was the first series of poets who emulated Nizami's work.

³²⁵ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 71.

CHAPTER 6

THE NAQSHBANDI CONNECTION

Jami joined the Naqshbandi order in his middle age, when he was already regarded as an eminent poet; yet, the narratives which have been inspired from his own writing suggest he was in touch or familiar with the Sufi path from an early age in life. Jami wrote in *Nafahat al-Uns*³²⁶ that he met Khwaja Parsa, the Sheikh of the Naqshbandis, who was en-route to Hejaz (1419), when he was five years of age. Khwaja Parsa gave Jami a *seer*³²⁷ of sugar candy; so he felt special connection and love for the order.³²⁸ However, there have been similar episodes narrated about known Sufis, when for the first time they met a spiritual Sufi/mystic leader and were inspired by them. For example there are similar stories about young Abu Sa'id Abulkhayr from Mihna (967-1048) who along his father went to dervishes' gathering and met the Sheikh of Mihna, Abul Qasim Bishir. The most important example is the meeting which took place in Nishabur between young Jalal-Din-Balkhi, known as Rumi, with the great mystic Farid al-Din Attar (1142-1220) on his way to Qunia.³²⁹

³²⁶ 'Abd a--Rahman Jami, *Nafahat al-Uns Min Hazarat al-Quds*, ed. Mehdi Tuhidi Pour, Tehran: Intisharat-i 'Elmi, 1375. This is a prose work that Jami wrote about Sufis from different orders from the early Islamic era till his time.

³²⁷ Seer is seventy grams in metric system

³²⁸ Jami, *Nafahat al-Uns*, p. 393. Also Lari, *Taklama*, p. 35.

³²⁹ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 219.

Although Jami has stated that his love and inclination to the order began from the first meeting with Khwaja Parsa, he did not join the order in his youth; in his own words: “*I lost forty years being ignorant and blind.*”³³⁰ Thus, his early life was spent in *madrasa*, not at *khaniqahs*. While none of the primary sources reported the exact date, it seems when he was in Samarqand, he was a member of the order.³³¹ Bakharzi writes in *Maqamat* that his master was a companion of Khwaja Sa'd al-Din Kashghari, the Naqshbandi leader, when he was young.³³²

However, according to Safi, Sa'd al-Din Kashghari was very much interested in attracting Jami into the order.³³³ Safi adds: “Kashghari held sessions prior and after praying in the Herat Mosque. Jami was regularly in the mosque too. Whenever, Kashghari saw him passing by, he would say: “this young man has extraordinary aptitude, I like him, and I don't know how to trap him.”³³⁴ When finally Jami entered into Kashghari's circle, the latter said: “today a falcon fell into my trap,” and he immediately added that “God blessed us with the companionship of this young man.”³³⁵ After Jami joined Kashghari's circle, Maulana Shahab al- Din Muhammad Jajurmi said:³³⁶ “within

³³⁰ Abd al- Rahman Jami, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, ed. A'lakhan Afsahzad, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1378, p.10.

³³¹ Abd al-Wasi' Nizami Bakharzi, *Maqamat-Jami*, p. 88. Bakharzi, was one of the Jami's disciples that wrote a biography about his mentor. He died in 1503. He writes that one day Kamal al-Din Abd al- Razzaq, vizier at the court of Abd al-Latif, read one of Jami's *ghazals* at the court. The latter said “that 'honorable one' is skillful in different sciences, the power that he has in *tasavvuf* is higher than with these matters, poetry.” So since Abd al- Latif came to power in 1449 and Jami was born in 1414, he must have been less than forty at the time, yet, it does not mean that he was affiliated to any specific order.

³³² *Ibid.*, p. 132.

³³³ Kashifi, *Rashahat 'Ayin al-Hayat*, v.1,ed. Ali Asghar Mu'iniyan, Tehran: Intisharat-i Bunyad –i Nikukari, 1997. Kashifi, who is also known as Safi was Jami's nephew. He also married the sister of Jami's wife. Maulana Kashifi's book is a biography of the Naqshbandi's sheikhs.

³³⁴ Kashifi, *Rashahat...* , p. 239.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 239., Lari, *Taklama*, p. 13. It seems Khwaja Kashghari could foresee the importance of Jami's connection to the order.

³³⁶ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 280. Jajurumi was one of the scholars of Khurasan. He was a disciple of Sa'd al-Din Taftazani. He died in (864/1459) and was buried at the *Takhtgah- Herat*, which is the place known as the burial of Sheikh Zayin al-Din Khavafi.

past five-hundred years Khurasan has not seen a great scholar like this man and Maulana Kashghari caught him.”³³⁷

Jami had a deep respect for Sa’d al-Din Kashghari, referring to him as *Maulana*-our master.³³⁸ After Kashghari passed away, though Jami had permission from him to become a sheikh³³⁹, he was not interested in having *murids* or disciples. He used to say “*tahammul-i bar-i sheikhi nadareem*- we can not bear the burden of sheikhdom.”³⁴⁰ Jami, evidently, took the advice of Khwaja Abd al-Khaliq Ghujdavani³⁴¹, one of the founders of the Naqshbandi order, who had said “close the door of sheikhdom, open the door of friendship, lock the door of seclusion and unlock the door of companionship.”³⁴² While some scholars believe that Jami probably lacked the political and social fame that was needed to be a sheikh at the time,³⁴³ I argue that he was socially well-known and had sufficient knowledge of the order’s doctrine, but he might have been too young for the position. After Kashghari, Jami could not have the same close relationship with his son, Khwaja Kalan, his future father-in-law; though, Jami remained close to other Naqshbandi’s sheikhs such as Baha’ al-Din ‘Umar Jagharagi and Shams al-Din Muhammad Kusu’i, Jalal al-Din Abu Yazid Purani and finally Abu Nasr Parsa, son of

³³⁷ Kashifi, *Rashahat...*, v.1, pp. 239-240.

³³⁸ Jami, *Fatihah*, pp. 155-159. Jami had so much respect for Kashghari. The latter’s death had profound effect on Jami. He wrote a long passionate *Tarkib-band*, a form of poetry that consists of different sections, in which the lines are equal while each section has a different rhyme. Each is connected to each other with a line that also has different rhyme.

³³⁹ Kashifi, *Rashahat...*, p.252, Lari, p. 31.

³⁴⁰ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 31.

³⁴¹ Jami, *Nafahat...*, pp.377-380. Ghujdavani was one of the four caliphs of Khwaja Yusuf Hamidani, the chief founder of the order. After the latter’s death, his caliphs continued his path. While Khwaja Yasavi went to Turkistan, Ghujdavani remained in Transoxiana.

³⁴² Lari, *Taklama*, p. 28. Kashifi, *Rashahat...*, v.1, p. 252. Khwaja Ghujdavani probably meant it’s preferable to be among the people than to remain in seclusion, and try to help them than act as their sheikh.

³⁴³ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 222.

Khawaja Parsa. Jami formally became active in the order when he acknowledged the authority of Khwaja Ahrar (1404-1490)³⁴⁴ as the sheikh of the Naqshbandis.³⁴⁵

Jami's Relationship with the Leader, Khwaja Ahrar

When Khwaja Ahrar became the leader of the Naqshbandis, the order entered into the new stage which was not the norm among the Khurasani orders. The new trend not only did not require political indifference, but also advocated active participation and involvement with the state affairs. Ahrar, through association with court and the Timurid princes, was able to establish his position as the most powerful sheikh of the order in the realm and played a powerful role in social and political affairs of the state.³⁴⁶ By recognizing Ahrar as the leader of the order, Jami, because of his position at the court, enhanced the status of Khwaja Ahrar among the nobles and courtiers in Herat. Thus, Khwaja Kashghari was right when he said: "praise God, Who, with granting the companionship of this young man to us, the distressed poor ones, bestowed a big favor on the Naqshbandis."³⁴⁷ While Jami was recognized as the poet laureate of the kingdom, his association with the Naqshbandis enhanced the status of the order among the courtiers. Jami was able to attract nobles and elites to the order. One of the nobles that Jami

³⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 222. Jami had a great deal of respect for Ahrar, so when Ahrar demanded that he should quit his teaching job at the *madrassa*, Jami complied. In addition Khwaja Ahrar demanded that Jami must engaged in practicing the Naqshbandi doctrines more vigorously and take an active role in the order. However, the primary sources do not agree on the time that Jami officially joined the order. While Lari states Jami joined the order when he was over sixty, meaning in 1480's, Kashifi and Bakharzi recorded sometime before 1456. Since Khwaja Kashghari died in 860/1455, Jami must have joined before 1456.

³⁴⁵ Heravi, *Jami*, pp 221-222. Ahrar established his position as the chief of the order in 1437 in Tashkent. However, his political career started when he supposedly foresaw that Abu Sa'id would be victorious over his rival prince Abd Allah Mirza. Ahrar moved to Samarqand when Abu Sa'id was enthroned in that city. However, Abu Sa'id did not stay in the city through his reign, so when Abu Sa'id left Samarqand for Herat in 1457, Khwaja Ahrar basically became the ruler of the city.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 226. See note 337.

³⁴⁷ Bakharzi, *Maqamat...*, pp. 87-88, also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 230.

attracted to the order was the celebrated Ali-shir Nava'i, the influential Timurid emir. It was through the latter's position, influence and financial support that the order attracted more followers and consequently gained power during the late Timurid era and was able indirectly to influence some policy changes such as lower tax rates, postponement of tax collection, tax breaks for farmers.³⁴⁸

Jami was essentially Khwaja Ahrar's representative in the city, acting as his *khalifa*.³⁴⁹ Although Khwaja Ahrar appreciated Jami's status at the court and among the elites, he was unwilling to share the leadership of the order with Jami. Khwaja Ahrar believed the Naqshbandi order could be more effective under single leadership. Nevertheless, Ahrar benefited from Jami's position and influence at the court.³⁵⁰ The relationship between Khwaja Ahrar and Jami was unique in the Sufi history of Khurasan. Khwaja Ahrar was a simple farmer with hardly any traditional education but was aware of Sufi teachings, while Jami was a well-known scholar, familiar with contemporary sciences such as astronomy and religious studies. Besides by then Jami's knowledge about Naqshbandi doctrine was probably more than his *murshid*. Yet, he had profound loyalty, respect, and dedication to Ahrar.³⁵¹ Thus in the *Mathnawi Tuhfat al-Ahrar*, Jami refers to Ahrar as Junayd (860-910)³⁵² of the fifteenth century. He writes:

زین پیش اگر چه بود بغداد
از یمن جنیدیان بس آباد
بغداد شده کنون سمرقند
باشد ز عبیدیان خطرمند³⁵³

³⁴⁸ Jami, *Namaha va Monsha'at*, p. 37, # 310. In this letter, Khwaja Ahrar asks Jami to use his influence on Nava'i, who was the seal holder and companion of the Sultan Hussein.

³⁴⁹ The Sufi leaders usually sent their favorite disciples as their representative- *khalifa* to different cities.

³⁵⁰ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 228.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

³⁵² Junayd was one of the great early Sufis in Islam, originally from Nahavand, Iran, but grew up in Baghdad.

³⁵³ Jami, *Mathnawi Haft Awrang: Layli va Majnun*, p. 238.

Although Baghdad was in the past,
Prosperous because of the Junayd's blessing,
Now Baghdad has become Samarqand
Because of the 'Ubaydis, Baghdad would be in danger now.³⁵⁴

In spite of Jami's status in the society, his dedication to Ahrar was such that he refers to himself as the dog of Ahrar. He writes in *Mathnawi Khiradnama Iskandari*:³⁵⁵

چو شد طوق گردن مرا شوق تو
ببین شوقم ای من سگ طوق تو

Since the neck choker became my desire for you,
Look at my longing o' the one; I, dog of your choker.

Jami's Contribution to the Naqshbandi Order

In addition to Jami's prestige and reputation as a poet, his affiliation with the order not only attracted nobles such as Mir Ali-shir Nava'i to join, but also enhanced the status of the Naqshbandis among the other orders. The order had become so well established that it was able to maintain its position in Central Asia, and India, as well as among the Shaibanids, who later overthrown the Timurids in Herat and Transoxiana.³⁵⁶ Jami provided systematic explanation of the Naqshbandi doctrine in the fifteenth century and enhanced the status of the order by writing useful, educational works such as, *Ashi'atu'l Lama'at, Lawa'ih, Lawami', Naqd al-Nusus* (a commentary on the celebrated *Fususul Hikam* of Ibn 'Arabi), and *al-Durrat al Fakhira*. He attracted the attention of his contemporaries and following generations to the Naqshbandis, and also helped to spread

³⁵⁴ Jami's point is: now that Khwaja Ahrar is in Samarqand , the city of Baghdad that was prosperous and cultivated in the past because of Junayd , now a day does not shine any longer.

³⁵⁵ Jami, *Mathnawi Haft Awrang: Khiradnama Iskandari*, p. 424. Jami wrote this *Mathnawi, Khiradnama*, in 1484, eight years before his death, and five years before Ahrar's death. The latter's passing had a profound effect on him He wrote: "world is very ruthless and disloyal." Also cited in Heravi, p. 226.

³⁵⁶ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 230.

the Naqshbandi doctrine through his prose and poetry. Some of his work such as *Nafahat al-Uns*, *Silsilat-al- Zahab*, *Subhat al-Ahrar*, and *Salaman va Absal* have become references for studying the order's history and doctrines. Overall, Jami's Sufi works heightened the prestige of the Naqshbandis among the other orders.³⁵⁷

Furthermore, Jami's writings have clarified some of the practices of the order such as *zikr-i khafya* or silent reciting. Jami justified this unique practice of the Naqshbandis, writing:

ذکر گنج است ، گنج پنهان به
 جهد کن، دادِ ذکر پنهان ده
 به زبان گنگ شو به لب خاموش
 نیست محرم درین معامله گوش
 به دل و جان نهفته گوی که دیو
 نبرد پی بدان به حیل و ریب
 حرفها را به وقت نطق و بیان
 شفه آمد منصفه اعلان
 گر تأمل کنی درین کلمه
 بنگری حال حرفهائش همه
 بی کمان دانمت بدان گروهی
 که یکی نیست زان میان شفوی
 مخرج حرفهائش جز شفه است
 نسبت آن سوی شفه ، سفه است
 وین اشارت بدان بود که مدام
 بآیدش در حریم ستر مقام

Reciting is a treasure, a hidden one is better,
 Try to recite it hidden (in your heart),
 Be dumb with the tongue and lips,
 The ears are not confident in this matter,
 Recite silently in your soul and heart so demons,
 Through tricks and deceptive not find out about it,
 Words at the time of speech,
 Must be announced through lips,
 If you reflect on this account,
 You understand the state of this word,
 I am sure you do the same thing,
 Because none of reciting should be through lips,
 The exit of his words is through clipping the lips,

³⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 231.

The relation beyond the lips is silliness.
The purpose of this point was,
That his place is always in the secluded harem³⁵⁸

Jami continued in this section to say that one should recite day and night without making noise, because in the eyes of those with clear heart, recitation of God's attributes are like pearls and heart is the sea that holds them; so one must grow pearl deep inside the sea.

Jami adds: "Grow a pearl in the deep, so the lips do not see any trace of it."³⁵⁹

Jami had unconditional loyalty to the Naqshbandi order. Jami in *Nafahat al-Uns* writes:

نقشبندیه عجب قافله سالارند
که برند از ره پنهان به حرم قافله را
همه شیران جهان بسته این سلسله اند
روبه از حيله چسان بگسلد این سلسله را

The Naqshbandis are the chiefs of the caravan,
Who'll take the caravan from the hidden path to the haram-Ka'ba³⁶⁰,
All the worlds' lions are related to this order,
How could foxes tear apart this order?³⁶¹

Besides loyalty, Jami not only promoted the order's doctrine, he defended it.

Nevertheless, the order that Jami faithfully endorsed was intolerant of others and because of its position and influence, it could oppose other orders. Jami, in order to conform to the order's policy, did not hesitate to confront other orders that did not have the same beliefs that the Naqshbandis had. Jami closely followed the policy of the Naqshbandi leadership which sought, in general, restraint of other orders, regardless of being Shi'is or Sunnis. For example, Suhriwardis were a prominent Sunni order in Khurasan and

Transoxiana in the fourteenth and fifteenth century. Their leader at the time, Sheikh Zain

³⁵⁸ Jami, *Silsilat al-Zahab*, pp. 80-81.

³⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 81.

³⁶⁰ Haram is the reference to Ka'ba, the sacred place for Muslims, built by Abraham, located in Mecca. Each Muslim is required to go pilgrimage to Ka'ba at least once in his/her life time.

³⁶¹ Jami, *Nafahat*, p. 413.

al-'Abidin Khavafi was a well-known scholar in Herat who had supporters at the court of Shahrukh, and had many followers in Khurasan.³⁶² The Naqshbandis not only disregarded his position, but also tried to decrease his popularity and influence.³⁶³ This intolerant policy was inconsistent with general Sufi teachings of forbearance. It was because of this attitude that Jami was accused of having biases especially toward Shi'is; his omission of Shi'i Sufis in *Nafahat* is an example of this practice.³⁶⁴ This course of action that he adopted cost his reputation after he passed away.³⁶⁵

Jami was criticized for his bias against Shi'is during his entire life. After writing *Nafahat al-Uns*, Jami was condemned by some of the Shi'i orders such as Ni'matollahi,³⁶⁶ whose members believed that Jami's lack of recognition of Shi'i Sufi leaders was bigotry on his part against the Shi'is. Jami intentionally omitted the name of the founder, Sheikh Ni'matollah-i Vali in the *Nafahat*. At the time, Ni'matollah Vali had followers in the region and was the main rival of the Naqshbandis.³⁶⁷ The competition between the two orders finally forced the Ni'matollahis to leave Khurasan and Transoxiana for Kerman.³⁶⁸

Yet, Jami's lack of acknowledgment of some Sufi orders, regardless of Shi'i or Sunni inclination, was not just because of his unconditional loyalty to the Naqshbandis; occasionally it had a political motivation. For example, the Nurbakhshis were against the

³⁶² Ibid., p. 235. Heravi cites Hafiz-i Abru, *Zubdat al-Tavarikh*, v.1, p. 333.

³⁶³ Ibid., p. 235. The order is still active in Iran and the shrine of the founder is a pilgrimage place.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 235-236. Jami's disregard for Shi'i mystical teaching and his lack of mentioning Shi'i Sufis in his book, *Nafahat al-Uns* are some of the issues that hindered his literary recognition in following centuries in Iran.

³⁶⁵ The animosity of the Safavids toward Jami was to the point that after the Safavids conquered Herat, the army chief ordered destruction of Jami's grave. Since then, Jami's works have not received the appreciation that it deserves in Iran.

³⁶⁶ Heravi, *Jami*, 242. Heravi rejects the argument that the omission was because the order was Shi'i. He states, despite the fact that there are some Shi'i thoughts or inclination exists in the writings of the founder Sheikh Ni'matullah, there are also points in his work, *Rasai'l-i Shah Ni'matullah* that clarify his Shafi'i affiliation.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 242.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 242-243.

Timurids. During the reign of Shahrukh, Sayyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh along with his sheikh and mentor, Khwaja Ishaq Khatlani revolted against Shahrukh. After Khatlani was killed, Nurbakhsh³⁶⁹ was brought to Herat, put on trial and sent into exile.³⁷⁰ Jami, of course, does not make any reference to the revolt, but accuses Nurbakhsh of claiming to be the Mahdi – the expected twelfth Imam of the Shi'is.³⁷¹ Moreover, Jami claims that Nurbakhsh was not well acquainted with either *'ulum batin*- intrinsic knowledge nor with *'ulum zahir*- external knowledge.³⁷² Jami's opinion about the Sayyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh echoed the Naqshbandi's slander, which was meant to discredit Nurbakhsh.³⁷³ In evaluating Jami's contribution to the order, a question that arises is why Jami, the scholar / Sufi, engaged in a practice that was against the Sufi teaching of advocating tolerance toward others. Two possible reasons could explain this: Jami's political motive and second, his unconditional loyalty to the Naqshbandis. It was crucial for Jami to safeguard his position at the court; hence he did not support or defend any group or person who was hostile to the dynasty. For example, Jami did not acknowledge Qasim Anvar, a poet/Sufi, who was accused of collaborating with a follower of the Hurufi order.³⁷⁴ Leaving out the Nurbakhshi Order from the *Nafahat* was another case of political reservation that Jami took. During the late Timurid era, the Naqshbandis were the most powerful and influential order of the time. Since the order's policy under the

³⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 236. Muhammad Nurbakhsh became the leader of the order after Khatlani's death. The order is referred to as the Nurbakhshis, after his name and it is a Shi'i order. Jami referred to Nurbakhsh as a "tasteless fruit", Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 191-2.

³⁷⁰ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 193. Also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 236.

³⁷¹ Ibid., p. 193.

³⁷² Ibid., p. 193. Also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 236.

³⁷³ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 191. Bakharzi, Jami's disciple, echoes his master's song, writing that Nurbakhsh was a tasteless fruit from the trees of people's gardens- "*az ashjar-i hadayiq-i khlayiq samara-i ba ghayat bimaza bud.*"

³⁷⁴ One of the members of the order, Ahmad Lur, had stabbed Shahrukh after he was leaving the Jami Mosque in Herat.

leadership of Khwaja Ahrar was involved with the affairs of the state, Jami did not desire to jeopardize his position either with the order, or the court.

With a view to maintain his position among the *'ulama*, Jami did not mention Hussein Kharazmi, although he was a Sunni Sufi/poet who followed Ibn Arabi's teaching.³⁷⁵ During the reign of Shahrukh, Kharazmi was shunned by the Hanafi jurists for writing lines in a *ghazal* that were offensive to the *shari'a*:

ای در همه عالم پنهان تو پیدا تو
هم درد دل عاشق هم اصل مداوا تو

O' you the hidden in the whole world and visible one,
You are the cause of lover's pain, and (his) remedy.

In this *ghazal*,³⁷⁶ the Hanafi jurists labeled some lines as blasphemy against the *shari'a* and as a result, Kharazmi was summoned to Herat, and put on trial even though the jurists could not find any evidence against him. Not jeopardizing his own social position among the *'ulama*, courtiers, and the Naqshbandis, Jami found the omission of Hussein Kharazmi in *Nafahat* to be in his best interest.³⁷⁷ He did so despite the fact that Kharazmi was also a fervent follower of Ibn Arabi, and Jami was aware that Kharazmi's point in the poem is *vahdat-i vujud*-unity of existence, the core teaching of the Ibn Arabi. Heravi states that while Jami adopted some of the commentary of Kharazmi on *Fusus al-Hikam* of Ibn Arabi in his own work, *Naqd al-Nusus* without giving credit to Kharazmi, he did not recognize him as a Sufi in *Nafahat al-Uns*, with a view that perhaps, the memory of

³⁷⁵ Hussein Khwarazmi also believed in unity of existence.

³⁷⁶ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 241.

³⁷⁷ Heravi, *Jami*, pp.240- 241.

the trial was still fresh in the mind of *'ulama* and the court, thus “pretension of ignorance was a more suitable course of action.”³⁷⁸

Despite his loyalty to the Naqshbandis, Jami rejected some of the Naqshbandis who accepted Imam Ghazali's³⁷⁹ belief that emphasizes: “in order to succeed in mystic path, one must enter into it with the mind clear of scientific knowledge.”³⁸⁰ It was probably the Naqshbandis' lack of interest in seeking knowledge that prompted Jami's refusal to be a sheikh of the Order or to have any disciples.³⁸¹ Though Jami enhanced the knowledge of mystic thinking in the fifteenth century, he often criticized the activities that went on in *khaniqah*. His criticism is mostly reflected in *Silsilat al-Zahab*, the work that he wrote in the first decade after joining the order. Jami portrays the activity of the *khaniqah* as a group of dervishes sitting around, doing nothing useful, and not even chanting unless an emir or elite entered. Jami believed that the dervishes *sama'*, their musical chanting was a pretentious act to attract the attention of a certain emir or people.³⁸² Because of his critical opinion of the Sufis, Jami rarely appeared as a Sufi in the public. He seldom taught mysticism, not even in the school that he built in Herat and even though he was one of its teachers. He was not interested in discussing Gnostic issues in his sessions either. In spite of his negative opinion about most dervishes who he

³⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 241.

³⁷⁹ Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiat*, v.2, pp.932-935. Imam Ahmad Ghazali (1058-1111) is one of the celebrated Muslim theologians from Tus, Iran. He was also a philosopher, followed Shafi'i school of thought, and his view on philosophy was opposite to those who were followers of Greek Philosophy.

³⁸⁰ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, pp. 226-227.

³⁸¹ Safi, *Rashahat*, v.1,p. 252, also Heravi, *Jami*, p.281.

³⁸² Heravi, *Jami*, pp. 282-283.

identified as parasites to society, he built a *langar*,³⁸³ where he fed the poor people especially the wandering dervishes.

Jami's lack of interest in teaching was due to some ignorant so called "Sufis" who lived off of charities with little interest in learning; otherwise he spent four decades of his life thinking about Sufism. Yet, in one of his prose essays on Sufism, *Al- Durrat al-Fakhira fi Tahqiq Mazhab al-Mutikalimin wa al-Hukama' al-Mutiqadimin wa al-Sufyya*, he shows his familiarity with the history of theology and defends Sufi thought. It was because of his disposition that he, among Sufi paths, preferred the main belief of Malamatiyya³⁸⁴; but as much as he wanted to behave as a Malamati, his affiliation to the Naqshbandis and his connection to the court prevented him from doing so.³⁸⁵ Nonetheless, he believed his inclination to Sufism was the best course of action that he took in life.³⁸⁶ After all, Jami composed his most important work, one of the best literary works of Persian literature, *Mathnawi Haft Awrang*, after he joined the Naqshbandis and became more familiar with mysticism of the fifteenth century.³⁸⁷

³⁸³ It seems that his philanthropical nature had a better hold on his logic, which was against lazy dervishes who were fed through handouts.

³⁸⁴ The basic doctrine of the Malamatiyya is that any outward appearance of piety and religious activities is pretension. The most important tenets of the order are: "the display of 'ibadat-worship is *shirk*; the display of *hal*-ecstasy in Sufi terms is *irtad*- defecting; in all *ahwal*-conditions, suspicion of one's *nafs* is obligatory" in addition one must not find satisfaction in doing good deed. In addition a Malamati must have "a despised profession and refuse a prestige one", and wear an ordinary cloths and "conceal one's poverty" so not to attract attention. However, Jami with the high standing and position that he had in society and his status at the court could not heartedly behave as a *Malamati* especially that the latter occasionally behave strangely that might have been object of ridicule and blame. The word Malamatiyya comes from the word *lama*, which in Arabic means "to blame." Jong, F. de; Algar, Hamid; Imber, C.H. "Malāmatiyya." in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Edited by: P. Bearman , Th. Bianquis , C.E. Bosworth , E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Brill, 2007[cited July 11, 2007]; available from <http://www.encylam.brill.nl.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu>.

³⁸⁵ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 284.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

³⁸⁷ Jami's usage of tradition, stories, and examples from pre-Mongol Sufi/ poets such as Rumi, 'Attar, Sana'i, in poetry and his celebrated prose work *Nafahat al-Uns*, which is a biography of Sufi orders and Sufi leaders from the beginning to his time he kept the movement connected. *Ibid.*, p. 285.

Therefore, the role of Jami in Sufism can not be ignored. He lived in an era, when most of the Sufis and dervishes of the fifteenth century were preoccupied with the teaching of Ibn ‘Arabi, and apart from *Fusus al-Hikam* and *Futuh al-Makiyya*³⁸⁸, no other work was discussed and studied in the *Khaniqahs*. Poets, including Jami also promoted Ibn ‘Arabi’s teachings in their works.³⁸⁹ Yet, what distinguished Jami’s prose and poetry from the other famous poets of the fifteenth century, were his stories, examples, and occasional references to Khurasani Sufis’ thoughts.³⁹⁰ In other words, Jami’s works not only had the main elements of fifteenth century mysticism, which were based on Ibn ‘Arabi’s knowledge of God, human beings, and the world, but also contain the pure and simple thoughts of Iranian Sufism of the pre-Mongol era.³⁹¹ These distinguishing features of Jami’s works differentiate his writings from his contemporaries; the witness to this claim is Jami’s writing in *Baharistan (Ruzayya-i Nakhustin)*, in which he devoted the section to Sufi sheikhs, especially, Khurasani ones. Also, in his second and third *diwans* and in his *Mathnawi Haft Awrang*, numerous times he refers to Bayazid Bastami (d.874)³⁹², Abu Sa’id Abulkhayr (d.1049) and Sana’i Ghaznavi (d.1130).

Jami was quite familiar with Maulana Jalal al-Din Balkhi’s³⁹³ works, both *Mathnawai –i Ma’navi* and *diwan*. Besides, the Naqshbandis read Maulana’s *Mathnawi* in their *Khaniqahs*. It has been reported that Khwaja Muhammad Parsa used to augur

³⁸⁸ Both are two of the most famous works of Ibn ‘Arabi.

³⁸⁹ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 252.

³⁹⁰ Jami in his *mathnawis* and *diwans* has pointed to the points made by Abu Sa’id Abu al-Khayr, Sana’i Ghaznavi, ‘Attar Nishaburi.

³⁹¹ Heravi, p. 253.

³⁹² The celebrated mystic of ninth century. His collected sayings were translated into Arabic by Junayd Baghdadi (830-910), another famous mystic.

³⁹³ He is known as Rumi in the West.

with the *Diwan-i Shams*.³⁹⁴ On the whole, Jami was influenced by Maulana Rumi, so it is not surprising that he imitated Rumi in numerous ghazals, using the same meter and rhyme that Rumi had applied in *Diwan-i Shams*.³⁹⁵ Jami's imitation of Maulana is not limited to the *Diwan*; he has composed *Mathnawi Salaman and Absal*, a mystic work, with the same meter of Maulana's *Mathnawi*.³⁹⁶

The Impact of Ibn Arabi's Teachings on Jami

It seems that Jami became familiar with the Ibn Arabi's teachings through the writings of Khwaja Muhammad Parsa, and later through the lectures of Parsa's successor, Khwaja Shams al-Din Kusu'i, and subsequently, through the writings of Sheikh Sadr al-Din Qunavi (1274).³⁹⁷ He believed that the writing of the latter was the best reference for understanding the Ibn 'Arabi's teaching.³⁹⁸ Safi reports that Jami did not grasp some of Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy until 1479 when he met Khwaja Ahrar in Tashkent, who clarified the ambiguity of the teachings.³⁹⁹ Consequently, Jami became submerged in Ibn 'Arabi's teachings and defended his idea that was known as *vujudi*, an adjective that opponents of Ibn 'Arabi used negatively for Jami. Supposedly, there were several parts of Ibn 'Arabi's teachings that were unclear to Jami and he sought any assistance to clear the ambiguities. In particular, he sought the help of a certain sheikh,

³⁹⁴ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 255.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 255-256.

³⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 257.

³⁹⁷ Sheikh Sadr al-Din Qunavi, lived at the time of Rumi and had many followers, one of them the celebrated Fakhr al-Din Iraqi, who also was an ardent follower of Ibn Arabi. Iraqi is buried next to the latter in Damascus. Rumi, apparently, was also in touch with Sheikh Qunavi.

³⁹⁸ Heravi has footnoted from a certain work, *Rasa'l-i Dihdar*, in which he quoted Jami who has said that he could not understand Ibn 'Arabi's thought until he read Qunavi's work. Also, Bakharzi *Maqamat*, p. 90-91, noted the same. Heravi, *Jami*, p. 264.

³⁹⁹ Kashifi, *Rashahat*, v. 1, p. 250. Also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 266.

Amir Sayyid Ahmad Bab al-Abvabi, known as Lala (d.1506) who was from Darband, Shirvan, in the western part of Iran. It was Lala's reputation of being an expert in understanding Ibn 'Arabi's thought, that prompted Jami to establish a connection with him. Even Lala reported struggling with interpreting Ibn 'Arabi's work. He was quoted as saying, "I was in pain and cried many nights while studying *Fusus*,⁴⁰⁰ because I could not understand some points, then Ibn 'Arabi would appear and solve the problems."⁴⁰¹

In conclusion, Jami was so overwhelmed and fascinated with Ibn Arabi's teachings that he composed forty seven quatrains explaining *Vahdat-i Vujud*- the unity of existence, the core ideology of Ibn 'Arabi and he applied some of Ibn 'Arabi's unique phrases in his *mathnawis*: *Silsilat al-Zahab*, *Tuhfat al-Ahrar*, and *Subhat al-Abrar*, as well as in his prose works such as: *Naqd al-Nusus*, *Sharh-i Fusus al-Hikam*, *Lavayih*, *Lavami'*, and *Asha'at al-Lama'a*. It is believed that Jami used Khurasani idioms and phrases to interpret Ibn Arabi's teachings.⁴⁰² It was due to Jami's extensive writings about Ibn 'Arabi's works that in sixteenth century, the Naqshbandis read Jami's works as a guideline for better understanding of the Sheikh's teaching. The Naqshbandis regarded Jami so highly that an anthology writer of early seventeenth century wrote:

"The people who can distinguish literary works regard Jami as a *qarina*-mate to Ibn 'Arabi, and Transoxiana's *'ulama* consider him in this science (Sufism) better than the mentioned sheikh."⁴⁰³

What is notable is that a big piece of Jami's writing is devoted to Ibn 'Arabi's works, a task that produced a great deal of respect for him among the Naqshbandis, as the

⁴⁰⁰ *Fusus* is a famous work of Ibn 'Arabi.

⁴⁰¹ In this regard, Heravi points to the Ibn Karbala'i's work *Rozat al-Janani*. Heravi, *Jami*, pp.270-272.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 275. Some scholars regard him as one of the best commentators of Ibn Arabi in Persian language.

⁴⁰³ Maulana Abd al-Nabi Fakh al-Zamani Qazvini, *Tazkira-yi Maykhana*, ed. Ahmad Gulchin-i Ma'ani, Tehran: Iqbal, 1375/1996, p. 103. Also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 279.

commentator on Ibn ‘Arabi. Yet, the order did not regard him as the master of the Naqshbandi teachings due to his insufficient writings about the order. Besides his writings were not a source of reference for understanding the Naqshbandi ideology;⁴⁰⁴ the reason being that as a scholar, Jami did not believe in fables and mythology that were promoted among the followers of the order. On the whole, he reproached the *sufiyya-yi bi ‘ilm*-Sufism without knowledge.⁴⁰⁵ One of the Jami's critics summarizes Jami's association with the order as:

Although Jami is not among the distinguished persona in the history of Sufis, he was one of the best research scholars of the field; the one who kept the mysticism of Khurasan and Transoxiana alive during a turmoil era. Jami acted as the bridge, connecting the pre-Mongol Sufism of the twelfth and thirteenth century to the fifteenth century.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁴ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 280.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 285. See note 379.

CHAPTER 7

JAMI'S POETICAL INFLUENCES

Jami lived in an era when the light of eight hundred years of Persian poetry was still luminous, though not as bright as it was between the eleventh and thirteenth century. The scholars of Jami's era were drowned in encyclopedic knowledge more than before. These scholars had studied a range of different fields such as: commentary on the Quran, *hadith*, religious history, philosophy, theology, jurisprudence, *fiqh*, mysticism, music, and literature. Jami, like his contemporaries, had followed the same path; the only difference being that he had also studied astronomy, math, and of course Persian and Arabic literature. In other words, most of the scholars of the era, as the old proverb says, were "jacks of all trades and masters of none." Nonetheless, Jami, according to general consent, was the master of almost all, especially different literary genres. He, similar to some of his predecessors such as: Sana'i, 'Attar, or Rumi, could blend love lyrics with mystical thought, but he was more a poet than a Sufi. This viewpoint about Jami is shared with another renowned Sufi/poet of his time, Qasim Anvar (1356-1433).⁴⁰⁷ Lari, Jami's disciple and author of *Taklima*, writes that his master "was always busy in poetry,

⁴⁰⁷ Heravi, *Jami*, p.131. Heravi cites, Qazi Muhammad Zahid's work, *Masmua't* p. 96. Qasim Anvar was a *Hurufi* sheikh, who had many followers in Herat. *Hurufiyya* was an unorthodox Muslim sect of Gnostic-cabalistic tendencies founded by Fazl Allah of Astarabad in Iran at the end of the fourteenth century. Qasim Anvar was sent into exile after an assassination attempt on the life of Shahrukh. He was suspected of collaborating with the assailant who also was a *Hurufi* follower.

thinking about poets and their work, both at the beginning of his life and also in his maturity.”⁴⁰⁸

Although Jami’s contemporaries acknowledged his mastery of poetry, Jami believed that literature and poetry was a veil on his integrity and virtue. Nevertheless, it was his talent in poetry and his literary production that made him famous in the fifteenth century. Jami produced works in verse and prose both in Arabic and Persian languages. In describing his talent in poetry, Khwandamir wrote, “he gave poetry both beauty and freshness, and his talent reached to the point that his forerunners and successors will not shine in this field.”⁴⁰⁹ Jami was so honored and respected by his contemporaries that Zahir al- Din Babur (1483-1530), the founder of the Mughal Empire in India, in his memoir, *The Baburnama* wrote “in esoteric and exoteric knowledge, there was no one like at that time.”⁴¹⁰ Babur also adds that “his fame is such that it is beyond need of description.”⁴¹¹ Sam Mirza, the enlightened Safavi prince, son of Shah Isma’l I, in his work *Tuhfa Sami*, wrote “by reason of the extreme elevation of his genius ...there is no need to describe his condition or set forth any account of him, since rays of his virtues have reached from East to the uttermost West, while the bountiful table of his excellencies is spread from shore to shore.”⁴¹² It is with this kind of outlook that authors

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 131

⁴⁰⁹ Khwandamir, *Habib al-Siyar*, v.4, p. 338

⁴¹⁰ *The Baburnama: Memories of Babur, Prince and Emperor*, tr. & ed. Wheeler M. Thackston, New York: The Modern Library, 2002, p. 214. Babur probably means that Jami besides his skill in poetry was such a competent theologian too.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., p. 214.

⁴¹² Sam Mirza Safavi, *Tuhfa Sami*, ed. Vahid Dastgirdi, Tehran: Kitabfrushi, Frughi, 1936, p. 85. The translation is from Edward Browne, *A Literary History of Iran*, v.3, University Press, Cambridge; 1928, p. 508.

of most biographical dictionaries and anthologies of the fifteenth and sixteenth century⁴¹³ confirmed Jami's position in literature.

In addition to the high status that he held among his countrymen, Jami was honored and respected at the Ottoman court too.⁴¹⁴ It was because of the anthologists' writings that in the following centuries, other authors also referred to Jami as "the last great classical poet of Persian language."⁴¹⁵ One might think differently, despite the western scholars such as Edward Browne, or some Iranian scholars, who also believe that "Jami was the last great Iranian poet...", or "Iran does not have a poet as great as him,"⁴¹⁶ Of course if one claims that Jami was the most productive poet of Persian language, it may not be too far from the truth because producing almost fifty works of prose and poetry is not an easy task. Yet referring to Jami as the last great poet was the opinion of the poets who are referred to as "*bazgasht-i adabi*-return to literature era" in the eighteenth century.⁴¹⁷ Contrary to the *bazgasht-i adabi* group, some contemporary scholars such as Parviz Khanlary do not have a positive opinion about Jami. Khanlary writes, "if the Jami's voluminous *diwan* did not exist, so be it, because the treasure of Persian literature will not feel the loss."⁴¹⁸ Another scholar states that Jami's poetry, "though closer to our time, is not as fresh as his predecessors. Reading Firdausi or

⁴¹³ Nava'i, *Majalis al-'Ushshaq* p.229, Dulatshah-i Samarqandi, *Tazkirat al-Shu'ara*, p. 362, Sam Mirza, *Tuhfa Sami*, p.86-87.

⁴¹⁴ E. J. W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, v.2, London: Luzac & Co., 1902, p.26. Gibb's reference is to the money (1000 florins, gold coins minted during Mehmet [Muhammad] II in 1478) which Mehmet sent annually for Jami. Bayazid II invited Jami to his court, but Jami declined the invitation, excusing himself that his mother is sick and he must stay in Herat.

⁴¹⁵ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 132

⁴¹⁶ Edward Browne, *A Literary History of Iran*, v.4, Cambridge: University Press, 1953, p.45. Also Zabihullah Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiat-i Iran*, v. 4, 10th ed. Tehran: Intisharat-i Firdus, 1373, p. 328. With all due respect to them, the statement might be an exaggerated one, besides the fact that it is disrespectful to poets such as Sa'ib Tabrizi (1601-1678), or Hazin (1691-1767).

⁴¹⁷ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 133. "The group was not quite aware on evolution of Persian poetry."

⁴¹⁸ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 134. Heravi cites: Parviz Natil Khanlary, *Haftad Sukhan*, v. 3, Tehran: n.p., p. 130.

Khayyam is more pleasant than Jami, though they lived four centuries earlier.”⁴¹⁹ This opinion is shared by many contemporary Iranian scholars, whose opinions are not as negative as Khanlari, yet, do not regard him as the last great poet of Persian literature.

However, Jami was a poet of his own era; the time that poets were more engaged in using different *san'at*, artistic methods, in order to make their works attractive, fresh, and new despite the same themes and subject matters. Hussein Wa'iz-i Kashifi in his work *Baday'i al-Afkar, fi Sanayi' al-'Ash'ar* reports two-hundred different *san'at* which were used by Jami's contemporaries.⁴²⁰ Jami, especially, was interested in imitating other poets' style and work, besides responding to them or composing works similar to theirs.⁴²¹ In Jami's *diwan* there are many *ghazals* that are either similar, or imitations of Kasa'i Marvazi(952-1057), Anvari (d.1187), Khaqani(d.1198), Mulavi(Rumi) (d.1273), Sa'di (d.1292), Amir Khusrau Dihlavi(d.1325), and Hafiz (d.1389) and in his *mathnawis*, he has followed Sana'i(d.1130), Nizami (d.1209), Rumi, and Amir Khusrau.⁴²²

This practice of Jami was not welcomed by some of his contemporaries. One of them wrote these verses about Jami's work:

ای باد صبا بگو به جامی
آن دزد سخنوران نامی
بردی اشعار کهنه و نو
از سعدی و انوری و خسرو

O morning breeze, say to Jami,
That thief of renowned poets' works,
You took ancient and new poems,

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., p. 134

⁴²⁰ Hussein Wa'iz-i Kashifi, *Lata'if al-Tava'if*, ed. Ahmad Gulchin Ma'ani, Tehran: Iqbal, 1376/1997, p. 277. Also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 135.

⁴²¹ Dulatshah Samarqandi, *Tazkirat al-Shu'ara*, p.364.

⁴²² Heravi, *Jami*, p. 136

From Sa'di and Anvari, and Khusrau.⁴²³

Nonetheless, this judgment of Jami is unwarranted. In his time, in literary gatherings, the works of previous masters were read and many of Jami's contemporaries imitated their predecessors' works, but none of them were as familiar with the prosody, the history of Persian literature, or had such profound knowledge of Persian and Arabic grammar as Jami did. So despite the imitation, Jami's production was as good as the original.

Although, Jami expressed his opinion on poetry plainly, believing that poetry should be "clear like a water stream, so one can see the pearls in it; not like muddy water that blurs the sight of the jewels in it,"⁴²⁴ he failed to follow his own advice; therefore his poetry has moments of ambiguity. Jami did not apply imagination as much as he emphasized on prosodic rules in his work.⁴²⁵

Jami's opinion of the works of his predecessors and contemporaries was reflected in his own poetry. In *Baharistan*,⁴²⁶ he writes that most of his predecessors specialized in one form of the poetry. For example, Firdausi or Nizami were masters in the form of *mathnawi*, 'Unsuri (d.1039) in *qasida*, or Hafiz in *ghazal*, but some poets like Rumi created master works in all forms of poetry.⁴²⁷ It seems that Jami implicitly claims that he, as Rumi, was a master in all forms of poetry. Yet, despite his claim, some believe that he lacked the creativity that some of his predecessors or successors had, or he mostly imitated and followed their style.⁴²⁸ In "Ruzi-yi Haftum", one of the chapters in

⁴²³ Ibid., p. 136. Heravi quotes the passage from Hidayat's work *Majma' al-Fusaha* v.3, p. 852.

⁴²⁴ Jami, *Mathnawi Haft Awrang: Silsilat al-Zahab*, p. 301.

⁴²⁵ Heravi, *Jami*, p.140.

⁴²⁶ As was noted the work, *Baharistan*, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1379/2000, is a mix of prose and poetry work, written in the style of Sa'di's *Gulistan*. The work will be discussed in detail in the section on his work, Chapter 8.

⁴²⁷ Jami, *Baharistan*, pp. 122-123,

⁴²⁸ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 143.

Baharistan, whose title is "Story of the birds of prosody and parrots of the *ghazal* writers of the land of sugar," Jami, briefly reviews, in a short anthology, works of some of his predecessors who he regarded as the masters of some form of poetry. This section of *Baharistan*, "Ruzi-yi Haftum", is another example of Jami's profound knowledge of works of his predecessors, in addition to his contemporaries. He begins with Rudaki (d.940) and ends with Mir 'Ali-shir Nava'i. While he admired the works of Firdausi, Nizami, and Zahir al- Din i Faryabi (d.1362),⁴²⁹ he had the highest praise for Nava'i and his works.⁴³⁰ The fact that Jami composed different genres of poetry is enough to warrant the claim that he was aware of all tricks of the craft, though he might not have created a master piece in each field, as his critics claim.

Jami did not limit his criticism of poets and their works to *Baharistan*. He also wrote quite a few essays about literature, especially poetry and the history of Persian poetry. In his response to the demands of his contemporaries, his work *Risala-yi qafiya*- an essay on rhyme and meter, presents points on rhyme, its history and importance in the Persian literature, which are very important for studying the evolution of poetry.⁴³¹ Thus, it is an important fact that his knowledge of literature and his prestige as the skilful poet entitled him to be the head of the literati sessions that were arranged in Herat.⁴³² His friend, Nava'i in his anthology *Majalis al-Nafai's*, referred to Jami as 'the head and leader' of the poets. The praise for Jami's work was not only reflected in Nava'i's work.

⁴²⁹ Jami, *Baharistan*, pp. 122-153.

⁴³⁰ It is not surprising, knowing the extent of their relationship and respect for each other.

⁴³¹ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 149.

⁴³² It must be noted that in the fifteenth century, Herat was the center for poets from all over the Timurid territory. Poets from the central and western part of Iran came to Herat hoping to receive patronage from one of the Timurid princes or emirs. Of course poets of Khurasan and Transoxiana were the regulars at gatherings. Nava'i in his *Majalis al-Nafai's* wrote the name of poets who came to his sessions, but Sam Mirza, the scholar Safavid prince, in his anthology *Tuhfa-i Sami* has named many poets whose names are not mentioned in Nava'i's work.

Other poets and scholars of his era had such an admiration for him that even a Shi'i poet, Amir Hajj Gunabadi, who wrote eulogy of the *ahl -i bait*, the family of the Prophet, wished to be included in one of Jami's gatherings.⁴³³ Jami, in his sessions, was very critical about other people's work. His evaluation was based on applying all the rules and regulations of prosody, so if a work lacked some of those rules, it was the target of his harsh criticism. He especially disapproved of the poets whose work lacked quality. Jami, in several instances in his work, has complained about them. He wrote in *Silsilat al-Zahab*:

In the past, poets had to study hard to gain the required knowledge for writing poetry but nowadays, some of these so called poets cannot distinguish *hir* from *bir*⁴³⁴. These are greedy people who are running like wandering dogs, for days and nights from one alley to another after a patron so they could present their nonsense as poetry for a few coins and a meal or two.⁴³⁵

Yet, the records point out that he was critical but fair and did not hesitate to appreciate a work that he thought was worthy of praise. In one of the gatherings, works of many poets were read. A poet opened Jami's *diwan* and read a *ghazal* that had *sifid*- white, as its rhyme. When he finished, Jami said: "many poets have written *ghazal* with *sifid* as its rhyme, but none is as pretty as Asifi's *ghazal*."⁴³⁶ Jami's statement represents his honesty and fairness in evaluating literary works.⁴³⁷

Jami was not only concerned about the production of dreadful poetry, but also had to confront the apprehensive 'ulama who had declared that poetry was *haram*-forbidden. Jami disapproved of those poets who had the knowledge and talent but due to lacking

⁴³³ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 152.

⁴³⁴ In Persian, these two expressions are used to describe people who lack knowledge in the field that they claim to be an expert in.

⁴³⁵ Jami, *Silsilat al-Zahab*, p. 125.

⁴³⁶ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 153

⁴³⁷ The statement means that Jami preferred Asifi's *ghazal* over his own.

dignity, praised unworthy people for a few coins. In describing them, he wrote in *Tuhfat al-Ahrrar* that these groups of poets were not aware of their own value or the jewel of “*dari*.”⁴³⁸ So it was because of them that, according to Jami, the value of poets and poetry declined in his era. Jami wrote:

گشته زین گونه خست و ابرام
شعر مذموم و شاعران بد نام
هر که مخذول و خاسرش خوانند
خوشر آید که شاعرش خوانند
لفظ شاعر اگر چه مختصرست
جامع صد هزار شین و شرست

It is because of their greed that
Poetry is despised and poets have a bad name,
It is better to call them, losers,
Or forsaken than a poet,
The word ‘poet’ though is short,
But it contains many blemishes and malice.⁴³⁹

It was because of this group of poets that ‘*ulama* attacked poets and blamed them for the decline of religious values. Jami points out that the ‘*ulama* believed that poetry is a more effective tool to change or manipulate people’s thought than prose.⁴⁴⁰ Jami argued that poetry was not *haram*- forbidden, pointing out that good poetry was used in *ghazavat*- holy wars, against unbelievers during the Prophet era. Or ‘Ali⁴⁴¹ used verses to excite the Muslims in confronting the unbelievers and pagans.⁴⁴² To justify his point, Jami wrote:

پایه شعربین که چو از نبی
نفی نعت پیمبری کردند
بهر تصحیح نسبت قرآن
تهمت او به شاعری کردند

Look at the value of poetry that,

⁴³⁸ *Dari* is another name for Persian language, especially the dialect that was and is spoken in greater Khurasan region.

⁴³⁹ Jami, *Silsilat al-Zahab*, also cited in Heravi, *Jami*, p. 158.

⁴⁴⁰ Bakharzi, *Maqamat i-Jami*. p. 234.

⁴⁴¹ The Prophet’s son-in-law, cousin, and the fourth caliph of Islam.

⁴⁴² Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 234.

When unbelievers wanted to reject the messenger of God,
To clear the relation of Quran,⁴⁴³
They slandered him as 'a poet'⁴⁴⁴

Nevertheless, it does not mean that Jami was against eulogy and panegyric poetry. While he criticized Zahir-i Faryabi's⁴⁴⁵ tone and exaggerated style in flattering his patrons, Jami praises Sana'i, Sa'di, or Nizami's style.⁴⁴⁶

On the whole, Jami was very knowledgeable about the political history of the Persian language.⁴⁴⁷ In *Silsilat al-Zahab*, he pointed out that if it were not because of the praising ode of Rudaki,⁴⁴⁸ the Samanids⁴⁴⁹ era would not shine in Persian history. Moreover, it was because of 'Unsuri's *qasida* that Sultan Mahmud and Mas'ud of Ghaznavid (962-1186), have been recorded in history. It should be added that it is because of the poets who composed panegyric poetry about their patrons that we have more reliable information about them, i.e. Sultan Mahmud and his relationship with his slave 'Ayaz.⁴⁵⁰ Despite Jami's familiarity with Persian literature, occasionally in his

⁴⁴³ The actual concept of the line is: to discredit the Holy book, they refer to it as poetry and the Prophet as its composer.

⁴⁴⁴ Jami, *Baharistan*, p. 90, also cited in Heravi, *Jami*, p. 159.

⁴⁴⁵ Tahir ibn Muhammad, known as Zahir al-Din Faryabi (d.1209), was a scholar in philosophy and astrology. He also studied Persian and Arabic literature and is known for his *ghazals*. Jami in *Baharistan* (p. 143) praises his poetry, referring to him as one of the well known people of the world, a poet who writes with simplicity and elegance, while his poetry is pleasant and lovely.

⁴⁴⁶ Sana'i Ghaznavi was a mystic poet who lived in the twelfth century. Information about the Nizami has been given before. Sa'di (ca.1200-1292) is regarded as one of the five *khudavandigars*, creators of Persian language, the other four are Firdausi, Nizami, Rumi, and Hafiz. Sa'di's fame is because of his love lyrics-*ghazals* and his prose-poetry work *Gulistan*. Wheeler M. Thackston, *A Millennium of Classical Persian Poetry*, p. 37.

⁴⁴⁷ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 138.

⁴⁴⁸ Thackston, *A Millennium of Classical Persian Poetry*, p 1. Abu Abdullah Ja'far Rudaki (d. 940) was attached to the Samanid court. He praised Nasr b. Ahmad (r. 864-892) at Bukhara. He was one of the first who could handle various themes and genres of New Persian poetry.

⁴⁴⁹ 'Abd al-'Azim-i Riza'i, *Tarikh-i Dah Hizar Sala-yi Iran*, v..2, Tehran: Intisharat-i Iqbal, 1373, p.268. The Samanids were a dynasty whose founder, Saman, was a Zoroastrian who converted to Islam. Saman, through his ancestors, was related to the Sasanids, the pre-Islamic dynasties of Iran.

⁴⁵⁰ In Persian literature, numerous poets have discussed the relationship of Sultan Mahmud and his slave, 'Ayaz. Some poets, i.e. 'Attar (d. 1220), a mystic poet, composed a few pieces about them. I must add that the Sufi poets have presented the relationship as a mystical one.

review, he exaggerates the works of those poets that he felt obliged to. For example, he did not know Turkish, but reading Nava'i's *Khamsa*⁴⁵¹, he refers to it as being better than Nizami or Amir Khusrau's works. Furthermore, he wrote that if Nava'i's work, *Khamsa* were in *dari*,⁴⁵² then there would be no opportunities left for other poets. Nava'i responded to this generosity in kind, by paying for the illumination and leather binding of Jami's works and sending them as a present to Tabriz and Istanbul, to the Qara-Quyunlyu and Ottoman courts.⁴⁵³ While he praised Nizami's *Khamsa*, referring to it as "*ganj-i guhar*, treasure of jewels" and regarded Amir Khusrau's *Khamsa*, as valuable as gold, "though gold is more valuable than silver, it does not have the value of pearl; yet it is still precious", he was rather modest about *Haft Awrang*. Jami admitted that he had imitated Nizami and Khusrau, but he valued his work as copper, stating "that he has made a treasure from copper coins, so my work has not even had half the value of their works."⁴⁵⁴

Critique of Jami's Verses

Despite his position and fame as one of the skilful poets of the era, his talent was not unanimously appreciated by his colleagues. Jami was criticized for two main reasons: For his connection to the court and his reproduction of other poet's works. One of the

⁴⁵¹ Jami expresses his opinion about the work in *Mathnawi Haft Awrang: Khiradnama Iskandari*. The poem is also included in *Maqamat-i Jami*, pp. 234-235. Bakharzi, the author, writes that Nava'i presented the work to Jami for his opinion, with the intention that if Jami approves the work then he would asked the scribes to copy it, otherwise, he would leave it the way it was, "forget that I have written it." Also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 161.

⁴⁵² See footnote # 428.

⁴⁵³ Khwandamir, *Habib al-Siyar*, v. 3, p.344. Also Heravi, *Jami*, p. 161.

⁴⁵⁴ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 160.

people who disapproved of Jami's link to the court was Dervish Dihaki Qazvini,⁴⁵⁵ who wrote that:

به زربفت سلاطین جامی از اشعار خود لافد
چو درویش ار به جولاهی فتد، بینم چه می بافد

Jami brags about his poetry which he has made with the ruler's gold,
If he has to weave like a dervish, I want to see what he will weave.⁴⁵⁶

Jami's practice of replicating other poet's works was also the target of harsh criticism by some of his contemporaries such as Dervish Rughangar-i Mashhadi-i Heravi. He believed that Jami went too far in imitating others. Mashhadi-i Heravi criticized him in a poem in which he writes:

ای باد صبا بگو به جامی
آن دزد سخنوران نامی
بردی اشعار کهنه و نو
از سعدی و انوری و خسرو
اکنون که سر حجاز داری
و آهنگ حجاز ساز داری
دیوان ظهیر فاریابی
در کعبه بدزد اگر بیابی

O the morning breeze tell Jami,
The thief of renowned poets' work,
You took new and old poems,
From Sa'di, Anvari, and Khusrau,⁴⁵⁷
Now that you're set for Hijaz,
And have started to play Hijaz⁴⁵⁸,
Zahir Faryabi's diwan,
Steal it from Ka'ba, if you find it there.

It seems that Dervish Mashhadi-i Heravi has subtly implied that Jami imitated Zahir –i Faryabi's⁴⁵⁹ style in *ghazal*. Yet, some critics believe that Jami was able to write better

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 168. Dervish Dihaki Qazvini was one of the Jami's contemporaries, but he was not affiliated to the court, and has no patron. He earned his living with making mud brick and weaving.

⁴⁵⁶ Dervish Dihaki's point is that Jami has been well supported by his patrons, but if he was as poor as a dervish, i.e. "me", and had to earn his living by weaving, then I have to evaluate his verse.

⁴⁵⁷ All three are well-known poets in Persian language. Sa'di lived in (1200-1292), Anvari was poet of the twelfth century (d. 1187), and Khusrau, known as Amir Khusrau-i Dihlavi, was known as "Parrot of India" lived (1253-1325).

⁴⁵⁸ Hijaz is one of the modes of music in Persian.

rhymed poetry than Hilali (d. 1529), one of his renowned contemporaries, while the latter could write more meaningful poetry.⁴⁶⁰ Criticizing Jami was not limited to Dervish Dihaki and Mashhadi-i Heravi. There were some other Khaniqahi sheikhs and literati who targeted Jami with their sharp reviews on his works. Jami was aware of their attacks, and occasionally responded to them. In the following piece, he protests against them, while praising his own work. The highlight of the poem is the last line in which Jami clarifies that if he does not boast about his poetry, it is because he believes that bragging about one's talent and quality is the sign of lacking it!

چو تیغ تهمت و تیر جفا رسد ز حسود
 بس است ترک خودی خود و نیستی سپرم
 به بحر شعر اگر فکر من شود غواص
 بهای یک گهر آید خراج بحر و برم
 ولی چه سود که در کام ذوق تیره دلان
 همیشه چاشنی تلخ می دهد ثمرم
 چو نیست لاف هنر جز دلیل بی هنری
 چرا دلیل اقامت کنم که بی هنرم

Since I am hit by slanders and receive blows from jealous ones,
 (My tools in this fight) are: leaving my inner self as my helmet, and annihilation as my shield,⁴⁶¹

Since I am a diver in the sea of poetry,
 The value of a pearl from this sea is enough tax for the seas and lands,
 In the garden of prose if I use my pen,
 Even a withered palm would bear fruit,
 No use, in the eyes of ignorant ones,
 My fruit always tastes bitter for them.
 Since boasting about one's talent represents lack of it,
 Why should I brag about mine? So I will be perceived that I lack it!⁴⁶²

Bakharzi points out to an instance in which Jami responded to a critic as follows:

Man-i bi biza'at (the one that has no commodities), I am not a sheikh that they are after my *murids*. Or I am not a scholar that they want to grab my disciples and

⁴⁵⁹ For further information on him see footnote 435.

⁴⁶⁰ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 166.

⁴⁶¹ Jami's point is that he has no tool except to forget his inner feeling about them and not confront them directly.

⁴⁶² Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, pp.127-128. Bakharzi does not write in which work of Jami the poem is found.

make me unemployed, and if they want to prevent me from writing poetry, since I am not in bound of its gain or its loss, let them do, it will not harm me.⁴⁶³

Jami also responded to people who criticized him for his rhyme, or meter. In his

Mathnawi-i Subhat al-Ahrar, he has written:

عیب جو بی هنر خود کردی
عیب نا دیده یکی صد کردی
گاه بر راست کشی خط گزاف
گاه بر وزن زنی طعن ز حاف
گاه بر قافیہ کان معلولست
گاه بر لفظ کہ نا مقبولست

Criticism has become your craft,
Exaggerating the non-existing fault,
Calling often a truth, as embellishment,
Or sometimes pick up on my meter calling it omission,
Or labeling my rhyme as being wrong,
Or categorizing my word as incorrect.⁴⁶⁴

Jami's poetry was criticized not only by some of his contemporaries and two
aforementioned dervishes, but some 'ulama also rejected his poetry and labeled him
kafir- non-believer, especially after the following *ghazal*:⁴⁶⁵

نه غزالی که سرایم به خیالش غزلی
یا ز نم از رخ خورشید مثالش مثلی
می خور و روی نکو بین که ملایک نکنند
ثبت در نامه اعمال تو به زین عملی

There is no beauty that I write a ghazal for her
Or I compare her shining face to the sun

Drink wine, look at the beauties because,

⁴⁶³ Ibid., p. 128

⁴⁶⁴ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 184.

⁴⁶⁵ Here Jami has responded to this *ghazal* of Hafiz.

سینه مالا مال درد است ای دریغا مرهمی
دل ز تنهایی به جان آمد خدا را مرهمی

*My heart is filled with pain; alas there is no remedy for it
It is at the point of death, O' God send a remedy.*

This *ghazal* is printed in Hushang Ibtihaj, *Hafiz Ba Sa'y-i Sayah*, Tehran: Intishart-i Hush va Ibtikar, 1373, p. 540.

Angels will not record a better action than this for you.⁴⁶⁶

If it were not because of the some dignified Sufis defending Jami,⁴⁶⁷ the ‘*ulama* would have reprimanded him.⁴⁶⁸

In addition to its content, Jami’s poetry was criticized for its simple language. While the simplicity of his poetry was labeled as colorless, he wrote that he would rather write simple poetry that has meaning and a message than colorful, complicated verses that lack any significance. In defense of the simplicity of his poetry he writes:

چو دیبایی ست از نقشِ تکلفِ ساده نظم من
چه غم کز سادگی خواند فلان بی نقش و بهمانش
خوش آید در سخن صنعت ز شاعر ، لیک نی چندان
که آرم در کمالِ معنیِ مقصودِ نقصانش

My poetry is like a simple silk material,
No sweat, if someone regards it without design and color,
Existence of artistic steps in poetry is pleasing,
Yet, not that much which diminishes the meaning.⁴⁶⁹

Even so, it is true that Jami’s poetry is simple in some of his works but not in all. For example, Heravi is right in pointing out that when Jami discusses mystic thoughts or Ibn Arabi’s teaching, his poetry is no longer simplified.⁴⁷⁰ As was pointed out, Jami was aware of the change and evolution of the language; nevertheless, his rule ‘simple prose’ did not apply to all prose that he had written. Heravi argues that *Nafahat al-Uns* was written for the *Naqshbandi’s muridān-i khaniqah*, the disciples of *Naqshbandi* dwellings,

⁴⁶⁶ Jami, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, p. 796, line 8496 & 8500.

⁴⁶⁷ Bakharzi, p. 122. Bakharzi writes that some of the ‘*ulama* of Herat regarded the *ghazal* as blasphemy and announced that Jami is a *kafir*-unbeliever. However, three respected faqihs (theologians) of the city: Sheikh Sa’d al-Din Ravasi, Maulana Kamal al-Din Sheikh Hussein Naqavi, and Maulana Jalal al-Din Ni’mat Allah Samarqandi defended Jami.

⁴⁶⁸ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 205.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

who either were not highly educated or as a rule, preferred a simple not verbose prose.⁴⁷¹ Therefore, Jami did not follow this trend in his works when his intended audiences were students or teachers of religious school. For example, Jami's prose in *Naqd al-Nusus*, and *Asha'at al-Lama'at* contains *saqil va sangin*, complex and elaborate vocabulary, and he especially attempted to imitate the Ansari's famous prose style *musaja'* or bird singing.⁴⁷² Although his work was criticized, he was highly appreciated probably because of his connection to the court, and the extensive support of Nava'i.⁴⁷³ Browne rightfully states, "he was held in the highest honor by his contemporaries, not only by his fellow-countrymen, but even by the Ottoman Sultan, who vainly endeavored to induce him to visit his court."⁴⁷⁴ It was because of his fame and reputation as a great poet that in literati sessions his poetry was read; young poets imitated his work or tried to respond to his *ghazals*.⁴⁷⁵

An Evaluation of Jami's Critics

Jami was much criticized for imitating his predecessors, i.e. Nizami and Amir Khusrau for composing *Mathnawi Haft Awrang*. Arguing in his defense, it should be noted that in order to preserve the pre-Islamic Persian stories, Persian poets embarked on translating them from Pahlavi, the pre-Islamic language of Iran, into new Persian and then composing them in poetry; and the best form for writing stories was the

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., p. 214.

⁴⁷² Ibid., pp. 214-215. *Musaja'* is a style in prose. Sa'di was a master in it and used it for writing *Gulistan*. The style is basically a rhymed prose.

⁴⁷³ Nava'i commissioned Jami's work for artistic illumination and binding. In addition, the famous calligrapher of the era, Sultan 'Ali Qai'ni, copied the work and a renowned painter of the era, Bihzad Heravi did the painting. Heravi, *Jami*, p. 167.

⁴⁷⁴ Edward Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v.3, p. 507.

⁴⁷⁵ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 167.

mathnawi.⁴⁷⁶ Rudaki is, supposedly, the first one who versified *Kalila va Dimna*, of which only a few scattered parts have remained. Firdausi wrote the *Shahnama*, and Nizami, who is renowned for writing stories, engaged in the same practice, while having one of his predecessors, Fakhr al-Din Gurgani⁴⁷⁷'s work *Vis va Ramin*, as a model for his works.⁴⁷⁸ Nizami used the same format and meter, *bahr-i hazaj-i musadas*. In addition, he added a rival named Shikar in his story in *Khusrau va Shirin*, similar to Gurgani's practice.⁴⁷⁹ Besides, the description of the nights, one of the prettiest descriptions in his work and representation of the power of imagination of the poet, is also similar to Gurgani. The latter applied astronomy symbols for beautification and ornamentation in his work, which signifies his deep knowledge of science, the field that Nizami was renowned for.⁴⁸⁰ Nizami's works, *Khusrau va Shirin* and *Laily va Majnun* are so similar to Gurgani that Dulatshah-i-Samarqandi in his work, *Tazkirat al-Shu'ara* writes, "Sheikh, in his youth wrote *Vis va Ramin* before *Khamsa*..."⁴⁸¹ So disregarding or criticizing Jami's works based on imitation is not a fair practice. However, Jami was aware that some of his works will not receive the recognition that Nizami's did. He acknowledges the superiority of Nizami's *Khamsa* in *Baharistan* as saying:

آن قدر لطایف و دقایق که در کتاب پنج گنج درج کرده است کس را میسر نیست بلکه مقذور نوع بشر نیست.

There are so many precise and tender points in the book of Five Treasures that it is not possible for a person or not capable for human being.⁴⁸²

⁴⁷⁶ Fakhr al-Din As'ad Gurgani, *Vis va Ramin*, ed. Muhammad Ja'far Mahjub, Tehran: Bungah-i Nashr-i Andisha, 1959, p. 7.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 30. Gurgani finished this work in (446/1054).

⁴⁷⁸ The works are *Khusrau va Shirin* and *Layli va Majnun*.

⁴⁷⁹ Gurgani created the rival Gul in his work, *Vis va Ramin*. Gurgani, *Vis va Ramin*, p. 92.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 30.

⁴⁸¹ Dulatshah, *Tazkira*, p. 99.

⁴⁸² Jami, *Baharistan*, 145.

Besides being criticized for imitating his predecessor's work, Jami was also blamed for lack of imagination in his poetry. He, on the whole, has emphasized the rhyme and meter of poetry more than imagination; yet, he states that *khiyal* or imagination is the essence of the existence of poetry, but he did not consider it the main foundation of it.⁴⁸³ While he defines poetry as: *kalam-i muzun-i muqaffi*, a symmetrical rhymed verse that must cause excitement and mesmerize the reader, he also states that poets need to apply their imagination. It is unfair to criticize his works for lack of imagination; reading *Mathnawi Yusuf va Zulaykha* will be sufficient to convince the reader that Jami's imaginative mind created *khiyal*- images beyond thoughts of an ordinary reader, especially when he defines beauty of Zulaykha.⁴⁸⁴

In conclusion, in evaluating Jami's work, on the whole, despite his fame, prestige, status, and influence, he was not satisfied with his status of being a poet laureate.⁴⁸⁵ He possibly attempted to become another Rumi but even at the end of his life, he knew he could not achieve his goal. From the literary point, Jami's *ghazals*, despite the volume was not a match with Rumi. Reading Jami's *ghazals*⁴⁸⁶ does not convey the ecstasy, excitement, astonishment that one feels after reading Rumi's *ghazals*. Rumi's intention of composing *ghazals* was to pour out his inner feelings. It erupted like volcano; he did not

⁴⁸³ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 149.

⁴⁸⁴ Jami, *Haft Awrang*, pp. 44-48. Jami's depiction of Zulaykha is so precise and complete that one could picture her in his/her mind. Jami has applied the utmost imagination to present her beauty to the point that as a friend said "it is kind of porno depiction".

⁴⁸⁵ I think he was not quite content being a Sufi either. He did not gain the status that Rumi reached as a Sufi, who created his own order without even having the intention of doing so.

⁴⁸⁶ Jami did not compose as many *ghazals* (1800) as Rumi (3500 *ghazals* and almost 2000 quatrains) and many of his *ghazals* are a repetition of the same theme, lamenting the separation of the beloved or humiliating himself by writing that he is as low as a dog. This kind of verses are called *sagina* in Persian literature for the beloved. The rest of the *ghazals*' subjects are repetition of what others have already said before. May be ten percent of Jami's *ghazals*, I think, are mystical ones which are eloquently composed and are really delightful and charming.

attempt to curtail it. He did not care about meter; he even expresses his disgust of the meter in one of his *ghazal*, writing:

رستم از این بیت و غزل، ای شه و سلطان ازل
مفتعلن مفتعلن مفتعلن کشت مرا

I got free from this line and ghazal, O the eternal King and Sultan,
This scanning, scanning, scanning killed me.

On the other hand, Jami's verse is bound by meter and rhyme. As it was noted, he points out in *Baharistan* that a good poetry is the one in which the rules of prosody, rhyme, and meter, have been followed. However, Jami's *Mathnawis*, in my opinion, are some of the best productions in Persian literature and it was mostly because of the *Mathnawis* that Jami's works were read in other parts of the Islamic world.⁴⁸⁷ In the following chapter the state of the poetry and Jami's work will be discussed. After all, Jami was the foremost poet of the Timurids in the fifteenth century.

⁴⁸⁷ Of course the generous support of Nava'i who paid for illumination, copying, and binding Jami's works, then sending them to nobles and dignitaries in other parts of the Islamic world also helped.

CHAPTER 8

JAMI AND PERSIAN LITERATURE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

The fifteenth century saw considerable variations in the social setting and function of poetry as far as its authors and audiences were concerned. Poets were not necessarily from the elite class; many were merchants and craftsmen who earned a living from their profession, and were not attached to the court or house of nobles. Yet, the Timurid dynasty was privileged to have some enlightened princes who wrote poetry.⁴⁸⁸ This chapter will cover the state of poetry, the style and quality of Timurid poetry, poets who were Jami's models, and Jami's work: *Diwan-i Jami* – his collection of *qasidas*, *ghazals*, *qit'a*..., and *Mathnawi Haft Awrang*, as well as Jami's prose works: *Nafahat al-Uns*, and *Baharistan*.

While the Timurid era was marked by anarchy, misery, and bloodshed, the 136 years of the Timurid dynasty produced many remarkable poets,⁴⁸⁹ "a galaxy of talents in which the great Hafiz is merely the brightest of many brilliant stars."⁴⁹⁰ The existence of various little courts, each eager to attract more scholars in order to boast their civilized

⁴⁸⁸ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*, California, Costa Mesa: Mazda Publications, 1998, p. 136.

⁴⁸⁹ Ehsan Yarshater, *Shi'r-i Farsi Dar 'Ahd-i Shahrukh (Nima-yi Avval-i Qarn-i Nohom) ya Aghaz-i Inhitat-i Dar Shi'r-i Farsi*, Tehran: Intisharat-i Danishgah-i Tehran, 1334, p. 60. Yarshater, though, agrees with Browne that Timurid princes' interest and persuasion was the main reason for the popularity of poetry. He also argues that at times of calamity, disaster, and depression, people were more inclined to express their thoughts, especially in poetry.

⁴⁹⁰ Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v. 3, Cambridge: At the University Press, 1951, p. 208.

court over rivals led to the proliferation of literary works in this era.⁴⁹¹ The Timurid poets had many choices in selecting their patrons. Mir Ali-shir Nava'i (b.1440) in his book *Majalis al-Nafa'is* wrote the biography of 132 poets who were living in Khurasan and Transoxiana. The phenomenon can be explained as the result of the Timurid princes who grew up in the Islamic Persianate tradition, which provided the cultural setting for this nomadic Turco-Mongol military class to attain a high level of superiority.⁴⁹² Thus, many Timurid princes were poets or liked poetry, arranging *Majalis* sessions in the court for reciting poetry. Still, many of these poets earned their living through their professions, such as carpentry, pottery, tent making, and military service. For example, Maulana Mashriqi, or Maulana Sa'di were potters, or Mir Arghavan was a tent maker.⁴⁹³

A great number of the Timurid princes and rulers, who either were poets or were great patrons of poets, should not be overlooked. Miranshah, Timur's son (d. around 1406), who was governor in Tabriz, often gathered scholars in his court. Ibn-Athir's historical text, *Kamil al-Tawarikh*, was translated from Arabic to Persian through Miranshah's patronage. Miranshah's son, Khalil Sultan (d. 1408), besides being a supporter of poets, wrote poetry in Turkish and Persian. Ulugh Beg (b.1393), who besides having knowledge of astronomy and math, was considered a *faqih* and could recite the Quran in seven different readings⁴⁹⁴, also wrote poetry. Baysunqur (d. 1433), who is regarded by scholars as the greatest supporter and patron of artists, was a

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., p. 208.

⁴⁹² Lisa Balabanlilar, "The Lords of the Auspicious Conjunction: Turco-Mongol Imperial Identity on the Subcontinent." Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 2007, p. 39.

⁴⁹³ Ehsan Yarshater, *Shi'r-i Farsi*, p. 58.

⁴⁹⁴ By readings, I mean different versions. For example, Hafiz could recite the Quran in fourteen different versions, because of the existence of multiple verses in different manuscripts.

calligrapher, painter, and poet.⁴⁹⁵ Dulatshah points out that Baysunqur composed poetry in Persian and Turkish.⁴⁹⁶ Ibrahim Sultan, Shahrukh's son, whom the latter appointed as the governor of Shiraz, gathered many scholars and sages in his court. Among them was Sharaf al-Din Yazdi, the great historian and author of *Zafarnama*. The Timurids witnessed a few more of scholar princes and nobles, but the one who has been recognized the most was the last of them, Sultan Hussein Bayqara, whose friend and seal holder, Amir Ali-shir Nava'i, a scholar, poet, and writer, kept him interested in learning. Hussein Bayqara was patron of many poets, artists, and intellectuals in his court.

The fact of the matter is that the fifteenth century saw considerable variations in the social setting and function of poetry as far as its authors and audiences were concerned. As it was noted earlier, the poets were not necessarily from the elite class; rather, they were among merchants and craftsmen; even within the court, poetry was less a privilege assigned to professional poets, while fluency in the poetic tradition was a required or rather expected achievement from any educated individual – so it was not only a sign of good breeding, but a precondition for contributing to the cultural activities of the court.⁴⁹⁷

In other words, acquiring education in order to write poetry was a norm among the elites and courtiers; so reading one's poetry was a pastime in their gatherings. Poetry, as Losenski rightfully states, was a crucial part of the Timurid "project of cultural

⁴⁹⁵ Yarshater, *Shi'r- Farsi...*, p. 66.

⁴⁹⁶ Dulatshah, *Tazkirart al-Shu'ara*, p. 398.

⁴⁹⁷ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*, pp. 139-140.

mastery and assimilation.”⁴⁹⁸ Furthermore, it played an essential role in the Timurid project for assimilation with Persian culture and tradition.

It should be noted that the literary sessions were not just arranged or sponsored by the royal court or revolved around the Sultan; rather, they thrived in different areas where the public would gather, such as *maykhanas* (salon for drinking), under the patronage of tradesmen or professionals. Poets did not reside just in the cities that were the center of governments such as Herat or Tabriz, but lived in provincial areas such as Shiraz, whose governor was Purnak Khan, who was assigned to the position by the Qara-Quyunlu court.⁴⁹⁹

In addition, poetry was “the medium of social recognition and discourse.”⁵⁰⁰ Soviet scholars believe that the transformation of poetry to more social phenomena was the result of an increase in the social economic power of the "urban classes and their dissatisfaction with their feudal ruler.”⁵⁰¹ Numerous scholars have also referred to this unfathomable change in the way that poetry was practiced socially, but there is no general consent as to how it shaped the expansion of poetry.⁵⁰²

State of Poetry during the Timurid Era

Prior to the Mongol invasion, there were poets who composed poetry in Arabic, but after the Mongol destruction of the Abbasid dynasty, the religious tie was cut and the literary and cultural attachment was not as strong as before. Consequently, the Arabic

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 139.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 141.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 142.

⁵⁰¹ Jan Rypka, *Persian Literature*, p. 282.

⁵⁰² Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*, p. 142.

language lost its position in Persian literature, though poets still studied Arabic literature and poetry. Nevertheless, some scholars such as Jami (1414-1492) or Maulana Sa'd-i al-Din Taftazani wrote some treatise in Arabic.⁵⁰³

Turkish poetry and prose did not become popular until the Timurid era. Although quite a few of the writers and poets of the time were Turks, they did not attempt to produce any works in Turkish. However at the end of the Timurid era because of Turkish scholars such as Mir Ali-shir Nava'i, who not only wrote prose and poetry in Turkish, but was also a great sponsor and patron of Turkish scholars, some works were produced in Turkish.⁵⁰⁴ Mir Ali-shir wrote *Khamsa-yi Nava'i*, which was a similar work to *Khamsa-yi Nizami*. After him, many other Timurid princes such as Zahir al-Din Babur wrote poetry in Turkish. However, Turkish poets, according to Yarshater, only changed words from Persian to Turkish; in other words, they basically thought in Persian and expressed it in Turkish.⁵⁰⁵

The Decline of the Quality of Poetry of the Timurid Era

While at the dawn of the Timurid Dynasty one encounters great poets such as Hafiz (d. 1388), Salman-i Savuji (d. 1376), Amir Khusrau (d. 1324), 'Ubaid-i Zakani (d.

⁵⁰³ Yarshater, *Shi'r- Farsi*, p. 96.

⁵⁰⁴ By Turkish, I mean Chaghatai (old Uzbek) language, which is similar to Ottoman Turkish in grammar and syntax.

⁵⁰⁵ Yarshater, *Shi'r- Farsi*, p. 94. Yarshater quotes Pavet de Courteille, famous French translator, who in one of his treaties wrote his opinion about the poetry of Mir Haidar-i Majzub, a Turkish poet of the Timurid era as follows:

بی تردید میتوانم بگویم که شعر میر حیدر برای من در درجه دوم اهمیت قرار دارد، چه اساس آن از حیث معانی و تمایلات عرفانی و تشبیهات و اساساً سبک کاملاً فارسی است. میر حیدر بفارسی فکر کرده و بترکی نوشته است.

“Without doubt, I can tell that Mir Haydar's poetry is classified as second class, because its base from the point of meaning and mystic inclination, basically its style, is completely Persian. Mir Haydar thought in Persian but wrote in Turkish.”

1370), and 'Imad-i Faqih- i Kirmani (d. 1371),⁵⁰⁶ modern scholars have no positive opinion of Timurid poetry. Shafi'i Kadkani refers to the Timurid-Turkmen era as one "barren of climaxes," tainted by hollow rhetoric and slavish imitation.⁵⁰⁷ Rypka, with an even harsher point of view, states: "poetry degenerates into the decadent cult of an affected artificiality."⁵⁰⁸ On the whole, the era is regarded as an era of *inhibit* or decline of poetry, as the quality of poetry further deteriorated.⁵⁰⁹ As Yarshater rightfully states, Timurid poetry lacks new ideas and innovation.⁵¹⁰ A scholar of the era, Dulatshah-i Samarqandi (d. c.1502) in the introduction of his book *Tazkirat al-Shu'ara*, has explained the downfall, as existence of numerous poets whose work did not meet the required standard of proper poetry; consequently the decline continued.⁵¹¹ He writes:

هر جا که گوش کنی زمزمه شاعری است و هر جا نظر کنی لطیفی و ظریفی و ناظریست... و گفته اند
هر چیز بسیار شود خوار شود.

Wherever, you listen, there is a whisper (reciting) of a poet and everywhere you look there is a witty, tender soul, and spectator . . . and it is said that whatever is abundant, [its value] becomes less.⁵¹²

Thus, it seems Persian poetry as Muhammad Taqi Bahar⁵¹³ has expressed it,⁵¹⁴

"شعر فارسی یکباره گویی با خواجه حافظ علیه الرحمه بیهشت رفت و باز نگشت و در فردوس برین با دری
گویان بهشتی جای خوش کرد."

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 110. Two other renowned poets, according to Yarshater "mediocre poets" of the era, were Shah Ni'matullh-i Vali (d.1431) and Qasim-i Anvar (1356-1433), but both are more well-known as being *faqih* (mystic) than poet.

⁵⁰⁷ George Morrison, Julian Bal, & Shafi'i Kadkani, *History of Persian Literature From the Beginning of the Islamic Period to the Present Day*, Netherlands: Brill, 1981, pp. 136-42.

⁵⁰⁸ Rypka, *Persian Literature*, p. 281.

⁵⁰⁹ According to Yarshater, the decline started after Hafiz and continued until the fall during the Timurid era.

⁵¹⁰ Yarshater, *Shi'r- Farsi*, pp. 101-103.

⁵¹¹ Ibid., p. 58., Dulatshah-i, Samarqandi, *Tazkirat al-Shu'ara*, Tehran: Intisharat-i. Khavar, 1338, p. 10.

⁵¹² Dulatshah-i- i Samarqandi, *Tazkirart al-Shu'ara*, Tehran: Intisharat- i Padida, 1336, p. 9.

⁵¹³ Farah Shadchehr, "Bahar, A Poet & Political Activist: A Case Study of Muhammad Taqi Bahar, theses, Ohio State University, 2000. Muhammad Taqi Bahar (1885-1951), is known as Malik al-Shu'ara, the poet laureate of the late Qajar era. He is regarded as the last great poet of Persian literature, who composed *qasidas* in Khurasani style in which early poets of Persian literature wrote poetry.

⁵¹⁴ Muhammad Taqi Bahar, *Sabk Shinasi*, v.3, Tehran: Intisharat-i Amir Kabir, 1375, p.184.

Persian poetry suddenly went to heaven with Hafiz and did not return, and with Persian speakers lived comfortably there.

Characteristics of Timurid Poetry

After the fourteenth century, a complicated, artificial, and more ornamental style was created that did not go beyond empty words, thus preparing the ground for Indian Style (*sabk-i Hindi*), whose seed was planted first in Herat, Turkistan, and Khurasan, then from Isfahan it traveled to India.⁵¹⁵ While studying *diwans* (collections of poetry) of previous great poets or modeling their works was a norm for those embarking on poetry, Timurid poets mostly overdid the practice. They extensively imitated Firdausi (d. 1025), Anvari (d. 1189), Khaqani-i Shirvani (d. 1198), Nizami of Ganja (d. 1202), Mulavi-yi Balkhi (d. 1273), Sa'di- Shirazi (d. 1291), Amir Khusrau-yi Dihlavi (d. 1324), Salman-i Savuji (d. 1376), Hafiz-i Shirazi (d. 1388), and Sheikh Kamal Khujandi (d. 1400).⁵¹⁶ Timurid poets, though, mostly imitated previous masters. Except in the case of Jami,⁵¹⁷ the quality of the works that they produced is regarded as mostly unimpressive.⁵¹⁸ For example, Hafiz imitated quite a number of his predecessors such as Kamal al-Din Isfahani, Sa'di, and Khwaju-yi Kirmani (1281-1352),⁵¹⁹ and yet, Hafiz's lyrics are almost regarded by critics as superior to those of his predecessors.⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., p. 185. Bahar believes that during the Timurids, historiography, miniature painting, architecture, and illuminating improved.

⁵¹⁶ Yarshater, *Shi'r- Farsi*, pp. 78-82.

⁵¹⁷ Kadkani, with all due respect, has generalized too much. I think the fifteenth century nurtured a few good poets, among whom Jami was the best.

⁵¹⁸ George Morrison, Julian Bal, & Shafi'i Kadkani, *History of Persian Literature From the Beginning of the Islamic Period to the Present Day*, Netherlands: Brill, 1981, pp. 136-42. Shafi'i Kadkani states that even the best poets of the 15th-17th centuries were inferior to the great masters of the classical period.

⁵¹⁹ Baha' al-Din Khurramshahi, *Hafiznama, Sharh-i Alfaz, A'lam, Mafahim-i Kelidi va Abyat-i Doshvar-Hafiz*, v. 1, Tehran: Shirkat-i Intisharat-i Elmi va Farhangi va Intisharat-i Surush, 1366, pp. 40-90. Khurramshahi in his superb work names many more poets whom Hafiz imitated or responded to, such as Sana'i (d. 535/1130), Anvari (d. 585/1187), Khaqani (d. 595/1198), Zahir Faryabi (d. 598/1201), Nizami (d.

It seems that the Timurids' goal was to assimilate Persianate high culture through "transmission of the tradition, which in turn required the creation of a canon of recognized masters and consolidation and codification of not only their predecessors' works but also their style, techniques and topoi."⁵²¹ So during the Timurid era, as was the norm earlier, imitation was an essential factor in enhancing poets' education and developing their poetic skills. For example Jami, who appreciated classical works, modeled his works on masters that he admired;⁵²² or he thought that his audience preferred his modeling them. In addition, Jami's choice of previous models was his attempt to introduce past works in a mystical context,⁵²³ or re-write an old story compatible with the earliest version.⁵²⁴ Yet, imitation did not necessarily mean that poets who applied it intended "to enforce continuity" with the past tradition. It might have meant a tool for change, or a new interpretation of previous work on the part of the poet.⁵²⁵

Besides replicating previous works, Timurid-Turkmen poetry is notorious for its excessive rhetoric and artificiality,⁵²⁶ which was not very common before this era.⁵²⁷

Shafi'i Kadkani considers Timurid poetry to be "a versified gloss upon the poetic images

614/1209), 'Attar (d.618/), Kamal al-Din Isma'il Isfahani (d.635/ 1237), 'Iraqi (d. 688/1289), Sa'di (d. 69/1292), Nizari Quhistani (d.720/1237), Awhadi-i Maragha'i (d. 738/1337), Khwaju-yi Kirmani (d.753/1352), Nasir-i Bukhara'i (d. 773/1371), Salman-i Savuji (d. 778/1376), and Kamal-i Khujandi (d. 803/1400).

⁵²⁰ Ibid., p. 103.

⁵²¹ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*, California, Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1998, p. 153.

⁵²² Ibid., p. 136.

⁵²³ Jami, *Mathnawi Salaman va Absal*. While the narrative was originally written in Greek, it has been presented in Islamic literature in different eras. A thorough account of the story will be offered in the section on Jami's works.

⁵²⁴ Jami, *Mathnawi Layli va Majnun*. This narrative is more similar to its original, Arabic version.

⁵²⁵ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*, p. 137.

⁵²⁶ E. J.W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, v.2, London: Luzak Co., 1902, p13.

⁵²⁷ Zabihullah Safa, "Persian Literature in the Timurid and Turkmen Periods (782-907,1380-1501)", in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, "The Timurid and Safavid Periods", ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart, v.6, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 917.

and meaning of the classical writers."⁵²⁸ Prior to the Mongol invasion, poets had to follow restricted rules and regulations in order to create poetry, whereas in the Timurid era the common people as well as the courtiers engaged in creative writing without following the standard rules of their predecessors. So many of them had either no interest in classical models and thoroughly disregarded them, or at best some more educated ones rarely followed them.⁵²⁹

The Popular Poetry of the Era

In this era, among the new class of both urban poets and courtiers, the genre of choice in composing poetry was the lyric, especially the *ghazal*. While the *qasida* was the genre of choice for the court poets and *mathnawi* was too lengthy for social gatherings,⁵³⁰ *ghazal* was the favorite of the era because it provided more options for expressing emotions and philosophical or religious thought. In addition, it was comprehensible for all; in other words, it could meet the needs of the different classes of society.⁵³¹ Furthermore, poets could communicate the trilling rhythm and inner romantic feeling of love and beauty of nature in a *ghazal*. Therefore, a *ghazal* could meet the needs of the different classes of society, and was comprehensible for all, therefore being the choice of most poets.⁵³² Jami also regarded *ghazal* as the best kind of poetry, so he spent most of

⁵²⁸ Muhammad Riza Shafi'i Kadkani, "Persian Literature (Belles-Letters) from the Time of Jami to the Persian Day," in *Handbuch der Orientalistik* v.4, pt2, fasc.2, *History of Persian Literature from the beginning of the Islamic Period to the Present Day*, ed. George Morrison, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981, p. 142.

⁵²⁹ Safa, "Persian Literature in the Timurid and Turkmen Periods (782-907, 1380-1501)", 917.

⁵³⁰ Kadkani, *Persian Literature (Belles-Letters) from the Time of Jami to the Persian Day*", p. 142.

⁵³¹ A'alakhan Afsahzad, *A Critical Study of Jami's Biography and Writings*, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1999 p. 313-314.

⁵³² A'alakhan Afsahzad, *A Critical Study of Jami's Biography and Writings*, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1999, pp.313-14

his life, at least fifty years, writing lyric poetry, which he compiled in three sections of a *diwan*.⁵³³

Besides *ghazals*, the kind of poetry that epitomizes Timurid poetry more than any other style was the *mu'amma* or riddle. As Subtelny rightfully states, the Timurid poets were engaged exceedingly in "technical forms to the detriment of content."⁵³⁴ The fad of the riddle among Timurid poets rests on the patronage of Ali-shir Nava'i. It has been reported that if one wanted to enter into the literary circle of Nava'i, the ticket for admission was a riddle. The fever for the riddle was so high that Jami wrote four treatises on *mu'amma*. The striking point about the riddle is not its lack of content, but its surplus of it, because besides its apparent face meaning, each riddle has an encoded meaning, as well. So a riddle gets encoded twice, once according to the conventions of the poetic tradition and a second time according to "the rules of the genre."⁵³⁵

Still, the Timurid era has been credited with nurturing the greatest poet of the fifteenth century, Abd al-Rahman Jami, who has been target of critics who condemn him for excessively imitating his predecessors.⁵³⁶ Jami no doubt imitated the great poets of the past, and his embarking on imitation is rather comprehensive; yet, he "tried to save the literary tradition from crumbling down and being wiped out when state after state was coming up the ladder of history and falling down deep into the abyss of nothingness."⁵³⁷ On the whole, the Timurid-Turkmen embarking on poetry facilitated the required

⁵³³ Contents of Jami's *diwan* will be covered in the chapter on his work.

⁵³⁴ Maria Subtelny, "A Taste for the Intricate: the Persian Poetry of the Late Timurid Period.", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morganlandischen Gesellschaft* (1986): 75.

⁵³⁵ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani* 157-158.

⁵³⁶ Kausar, *Life and work*, p. 107. Kausar believes that Jami's attempt in imitating his predecessors was "revivalism," or more as "preservation of the tradition." Also sighted in Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*, p. 154.

⁵³⁷ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*, p. 154.

conditions for poets to innovate a new style that became popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁵³⁸ Jami lived in the era which is regarded as the dawn of a new style, the one that was later regarded as *Sabk-i Hindi*, or Indian Style. Though some traces of the style are found in Jami's lyrics, he cannot be regarded as a follower of the style.⁵³⁹

Jami's Poetry

Jami's *diwan* or collection of poetry, includes *qasidas*, *ghazals*, *ruba'is*, *tarji'-bands*, *tarkib-bands*, and *qit'as*.⁵⁴⁰ In his *diwans*, Jami has written eleven forms of poetry; they are as following:⁵⁴¹ *Ghazal* (1,804), *qasida* (53), *ruba'i* (274), *qit'a* (137), *tarji'-band* (4), *tarkib-band* (6), *mathnawi* (8), *murabb'a* (2), *mu'amma* (29), *bahr-i taviil*(1), and *fard* (1). The *diwans* contain 16,629 lines of poetry. *Ghazal* covers the maximum number of lines (13,017) in it. The next one, from the point of the number of lines, is *qasida* (1,825), followed by *ruba'i* (548), *qit'a* (354), *tarji'-band* (332), *tarkib-band* (322), *mathnawai* (147), *murabba'* (38), *mu'amma* (38), *bahr i-taviil* (7), and *fard* (1). It is not surprising that Jami has tried his skill in different genres of poetry. His intention was to prove that “a work lives not by its form, as was commonly thought at the time, but by the profundity of its content. Jami demonstrated that not a single one of the classic forms had died out definitively, but that it was possible to revive them if the poet were capable of lending them a deep and significant meaning. Instead of bringing super fastidious forms into play,

⁵³⁸ Ibid., p. 154.

⁵³⁹ *Sabk-i Hindi*. Its characteristic and some of Jami's verses that reflect the characteristic of the style will be covered in Appendix A.

⁵⁴⁰ These forms will be discussed later.

⁵⁴¹ A definition for each form of poetry will follow. The number in () refers to the number of each genre, i.e. *ghazal*, *qasida*...etc.

Jami's *qasidas* speak of the urgency of acting justly, and further insist that those in power have not the right to indulge in the joys of life, while the masses are obliged to beg and suffer violence."⁵⁴²

In addition, since Jami appeared after what literary scholars consider the "zenith of Persian Poetry," he no doubt had little new to offer, following some superb works of previous masters. He felt a sense of urgency to keep the light shining, and in order to rejuvenate the field, he embarked on reintroducing some of the previous works in new forms. Or, as he states, he "put old stories to new tunes," thus opening himself up to being accused of plagiarizing⁵⁴³ or indulging in too much imitation.

Yet, it was the shortage of new themes and ideas that urged poets after Jami to innovate new forms and styles. Their inspiration for innovation paved the way for the advent of *sabk-i nou* or new style, which has been referred to as Indian Style in Persian literature.⁵⁴⁴ Jami, who had studied thoroughly the works of masters such as Firdausi, Khaqani, Sana'i, Sa'di, Anvari, and Hafiz, composed works that were a blend of his own individual style,⁵⁴⁵ with great "fluency and brilliance, a diction [that] permeated above all else by the language and ideas of mysticism."⁵⁴⁶ In the following sections, the contents of Jami's *diwan* will be discussed.

⁵⁴² Rypka, p. 287. Rypka sites his quote from Bertel's *Navoyi* (DIIb), p. 158.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

⁵⁴⁴ See Appendix A.

⁵⁴⁵ His individual style has been referred to as the preceding steps for Indian Style. The aspects of Jami's work in this style will be discussed later.

⁵⁴⁶ Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature*, p. 433.

Diwan-i Jami

Jami's *diwan* consists of three sections. Afsahzad remarks that by the time Jami had compiled the whole collection he was in his old age, and that the title that he assigned to each section is not necessarily related to his age. It should be noted that it was in 1491, one year before his death, that Jami gave a title to each section in response to Nava'i's request. Nava'i in his work *Khamsat al-Mutahayyirin* describes the episode as follows:

During the same year that I returned from pilgrimage to [the tomb of] Imam 'Ali b. Musa al-Reza,⁵⁴⁷ 'greeting and praise be upon him', before attending to other works, I went to pay my respects to that person [Jami].⁵⁴⁸ The latter had just finished arranging his third *diwan*. He bestowed a copy to me, which he had written.⁵⁴⁹ I told him that I had not heard of any poets, except for Amir Khusrau, having multiple *diwans*. However, those who had finished several *diwans* had given a proper name to them. [I told him] it would have been appropriate if [he] assigned a suitable name for each *diwan*. That person [Jami] accepted the idea. After two days I went to pay my respects to him. He took a piece of paper out of his pocket and gave it to me. He had made an index for [his] *diwans* and this work has appeared.⁵⁵⁰

Jami completed his first *diwan* in 1465. He added a preface to it and offered the work to Sultan Abu Sa'id. Jami gathered, according to his own account, "some scattered poetry which is close to ten-thousand *bait*s or couplets that I wasted my time on and . . . I regretted it."⁵⁵¹ The second *diwan* consists of the poetry that he composed in 1469-1479, and he completed his third *diwan* in 1490. Jami fulfilled Nava'i's request and named these three *diwans* as follows: *Fatihah al-Shabab, The Beginning of Life, Wasitat al-'Iqd, The Middle of the Knot*, and *Khatimat al-Hayat, The End of Life*. Jami, in the preface of his *diwans*, wrote the following about how he named the work:

⁵⁴⁷ In the Shi'i school of thought, 'Ali b. Musa al-Reza is regarded as the eighth of twelve Imams. He is buried in Mashhad, the capital of Khurasan, in the northeastern province of Iran.

⁵⁴⁸ Nava'i, out of respect throughout this work, refers to Jami as *Aan shakhs*, that person, or *Aan hazrat*, that honorable one.

⁵⁴⁹ Nava'i means that it was Jami's own writing not a copy of a certain scribe.

⁵⁵⁰ Ali-shir Nava'i, *Khamsat al-Mutahayyirin*, Dushanbe: Tahiti Rohm Horsham, n.d, p.68.

⁵⁵¹ Jami, *Wasit al-'Iqd*, Tehran: Mirath- Maktub, 1378, p. 31-32. Jami points to the year (884/ 1479)

Now that three years are left before the year 900 of Hijra (1491) arrives, Ali-shir requested from this faqir⁵⁵² [poor man] that I put my three diwans of qasida and ghazals in one volume, like three seeds of pistachio in one shell. He also begged me to give a proper name to each diwan . . . so according to the time that I wrote each diwan, I named the first diwan *Fatihah al-Shabab*, the second one *Wasitat al-'Iqd*, and the third diwan *Khatimat al-Hayat*.⁵⁵³

The first *diwan*, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, is the most voluminous one and quality wise is preferable to the other two *diwans*; in it, the poetry is more colorful in terms of theme and subject matter. It covers subjects such as philosophy, life, friendship, humanistic issues, and morality. In the other two *diwans* Jami's subject matter is narrow. Besides, in them he covers only mystical themes.⁵⁵⁴

In the following few lines, Jami states his purpose for composing his *diwans* and sums up their contents:

هست دیوان شعر من اکثر
 غزل عاشقان شیدایی
 یا فنون نصایح است و حکم
 منبعث از شعور و دانایی
 ذکر دونان نیایی اندر وی
 کان بود نقد عمر فرسای
 مدح شاهان در او به استدعاست
 نه ز خوش خاطری و خودرایی
 امتحان را اگر ز سر تا پاش
 بر روی صد ره و فرود آیی
 زان مدایح به خاطرت نرسد
 معنی حرص و آز پیمایی
 هیچ جا نبود آن مدایح را
 در عقب، قطعاً تقاضایی

My poetry is mostly
 Love lyrics of insane lovers.
 Or it is advice and wise sayings
 This is emitted (diffused) from feeling and wisdom.
 You'll not find any references to low ones,
 Because, that would be wasting life.

⁵⁵² The expression is used to express humility and modesty.

⁵⁵³ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 326-7.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

Eulogy for the kings is upon their request,
 Not because of my own wishes or sweet thoughts about them.
 If you examine the work, from the beginning to the end,
 Going through it a hundred times and come back.
 From those praises it won't come to your mind,
 They are out of greed or cupidity.
 In no where, from those praises,
 I demanded anything after composing them.⁵⁵⁵

Jami's *diwan* consists of more *ghazals* (1,804 of them with 13,015 couplets) than other genres because in the fifteenth century poetry *ghazal* was more popular. The contents of these *ghazals* are love lyrics that express Sufi mysticism. They also include praise or advice for the rulers or satire about people who are after worldly gains, and scorn for people who pretend to be pious. Jami points out that in his work, there is no praise or tribute for low, base peoples, and if there are a few for the rulers, they are in response to requests, not for flattery and pleasantries. Jami notes that if one reads his words carefully, one will not think that his praise is out of his need or due to greed.⁵⁵⁶ In another poem he wrote:

نه دیوان شعر است این بلکه جامی
 کشیده است خوانی به رسم کریمان
 ز الوان معنی در او هر چه خواهی
 بیابی مگر مدح و دمّ لئیمان

This is not a diwan-i poetry, but Jami
 puts a spread, as it is the custom of generous ones.
 From the colorful meaning, whatever,
 You want, you'll find, except praise for low people.⁵⁵⁷

Although more than ninety percent of the themes in Jami's *ghazals* are either love or mysticism, Jami also inserted a few lines of advice on morality, manners, or social

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 327.

⁵⁵⁶ The actual poem is found in: *Diwan-i Jami*, edit., by Afsahzad, *Khatimat al-Hayat*, Tehran; Mirath-i Maktub, 1378, p. 633, couplets 2579-2585.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid., *Fatihah al-Shabab*, p.39.

behavior in them. At the time of Jami, it was not customary for poets to discuss social, political, or moral issues in *ghazals*. However, despite the norm, Jami was able at least in ten percent of his *ghazals* to discuss these topics.⁵⁵⁸ It seems that he composed these *ghazals* at moments in his life when he was confronted by some social or political issues, or witnessed some atrocities or oppression imposed on the population.

In his *diwan*, Jami definitely had an eye on Amir Khusrau and Hafiz. In *Fatihah al-Shabab*, the first one hundred *ghazals*, Jami responded fifteen times to Amir Khusrau and ten times to Hafiz, five of which alone are his reply to the first *ghazal* of Hafiz.⁵⁵⁹ Even in the way he divided his *diwan* and named them, Jami followed Amir Khusrau's path, except the latter's *diwan* had five sections and Jami's has three sections.⁵⁶⁰

In the following section poets after whom Jami modeled his poetry will be discussed.

Jami's Models

Jami paid homage to the works, especially *ghazals*, of previous masters by responding to them or practicing *istiqlal* or imitation. Regardless of whom he imitated, however, his language in the *ghazal* seems simpler and more fluent than that of his models. According to Beach, in imitating his predecessors a poet "assumes an active positive and mutually illuminating relationship with his work and that of his predecessors

⁵⁵⁸ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 450.

⁵⁵⁹ Shams a-Din Muhammad Hafez, *Diwan-i Hafiz*, ed. Muhammad Qazvin, Qasim Ghani, Tehran: Sazman-i Chap va Intishart, 1382, p. 1. The reference is to the *ghazal* with this opening:

الا يا ايها الساقى ادركاسا و ناولها
كه عشق انسان نمود اول ولى افتاد مشكلها

⁵⁶⁰ Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani* p. 172

that he regards worth imitating."⁵⁶¹ Jami had especially had Sa'di, Amir Khusrau, and Hafiz in mind as models, with a particularly keen interest and respect for Sa'di. He refers to Sa'di reverentially in *Nafahat*, *Haft Awrang*, and in his *diwans*. In fact, he often took half hemistich from Sa'di in his *ghazals* to prove his point. Although he did not directly imitate Sa'di, traces of Sa'di's melodious rhyme and simple lyrics, fluency of style in expressing emotional love, and despair about separation from the beloved can be felt in Jami's *ghazals*. Besides, in some *ghazals* Jami applied the same meter, rhyme, *radif*⁵⁶², and number of lines. Yet, it seems he responded directly only to one *ghazal* by Sa'di, as follows.

مقیم کوی تو را فسحت حرم تنگ است
ز کعبه تا سر کویت هزار فرسنگ است

The space is narrow and small for the resident of your alley,
The distance from the Ka'ba⁵⁶³ to your alley is six thousand kilometers.

While Sa'di wrote:

دلی که عاشق و صابر بود، مگر سنگ است
ز عشق تا به صبوری هزار فرسنگ است

Unless the heart that was patiently in love was made of stone,
The distance from love to being patient is six thousand kilometers.⁵⁶⁴

Jami also frequently imitated Amir Khusrau in his *ghazals*. Occasionally, out of humility he regarded his *ghazals* inferior to those of Amir Khusrau, as he expressed in this poem:

به نکته های حسن جامی این کمالت بس

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., p. 251. Losensky has sighted the quote from the work of Christopher Beach, *ABC of Influence: Ezra Pound and the Remaking of the American Tradition*, Berkley: University of California Press, 1992, p. 58.

⁵⁶² *Radif* is the word that is repeated after rhyme.

⁵⁶³ The House of God, which was made by Abraham in Mecca.

⁵⁶⁴ Afsahzad, *The Critical Study*, p. 379-381.

که ساز نظم تو را جز نوای خسرو نیست

Jami, for the point of beauty, it is enough for your integrity,
That the musical sound of your poetry is the same as Khusrau's.⁵⁶⁵

However, Jami often mentioned that he did not need to imitate or to be a follower of Amir Khusrau. He referred to himself as king of the land of poetry. Nevertheless, by his own admission it seems he had an eye on Amir Khusrau's *ghazals*. He wrote that he learned how to express his pain and agony of love from Khusrau:

جامی نیم ، که خسرو و قتم بملک عشق
منشور خسروی ، غزل عاشقانه ام

I am not Jami, that I am the king in the land of love,
My royal mandate is my love lyrics. (6221-221)

Of course, the use of the word Khusrau in the poem is *iham* or ambiguous, because the word in Persian means king, and also is a male name, which must refer to Amir Khusrau.

Jami also has written:

جامی از خسرو همی گیرد طریق سوز و درد
طور او نبود خیالات کمال انگیختن

Jami also takes from Khusrau the way to express pain and agony of love,
The creation of perfect imagination was not Jami's way. (7311)

In this poem Jami admitted that he values the genius and innovative thought of the parrot of India, an expression he uses to refer to Amir Khusrau. Yet, there is some dispute as to the number of Khusrau's *ghazals* to which Jami responded. One Jami scholar⁵⁶⁶ remarks that he definitely can refer to twenty-three *ghazals* of Jami that somehow are related to

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 316. The poem is in the first *diwan*, line 3,207.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 387. Afsahzad has given the reference for the statement from the work of Fakhri Herati, *Radif al-Ash'ar*.

Khusrau's *ghazals*, while Afsahzad states that Jami responded to thirty-six of Khusrau's *ghazals*.⁵⁶⁷

On the whole, Jami followed Khusrau's path in different ways throughout his poetic life.⁵⁶⁸ He may have used the same rhyme, or written a hemistich of Khusrau's, yet, his innovation and choice of words made his *ghazals* colorful and heart-warming. His practice of *nazir-sazi* or writing similar to another poem was common practice at the time he lived.⁵⁶⁹

Jami had his eye on Hafiz more so than Amir Khusrau, and learned the trick of the craft from Hafiz. He endorsed Hafiz's philosophy, his humanistic phrases, and his wisdom. In *Nafahat*, *Subhat al-Abrar*, *Baharistan*, and his *qasida*, *Rashat Bal*, Jami pointed out that he greatly values Hafiz's thought and philosophy. He welcomed Hafiz's *ghazals* and wrote numerous *ghazals* similar to his verses. In *Nafahat* he wrote:

Hafiz is *lisan al-ghayb, wa tarjuman al-asrar* the tongue of the invisible, and the translator of secrets]. Hafiz has clarified many secrets of the unknown with the help of metaphors and allegories. Although it is not clear whether he has put his hand in any of the [writings of] Sufis, his writings correspond to those of the Sufis to the degree that no other poet's work does. One of the dear ones of Khwajagan . . . has said that no *diwan* is better than that of Hafiz, as if the man were a Sufi.⁵⁷⁰

In *Baharistan*, Jami wrote:

While most of [Hafiz's] *ghazals* are excellent and marvelous, some of them are extraordinary, and beyond imagination, to the point of *i'jaz*⁵⁷¹ [miracles of poetry]. His *ghazals* are as fluent as Zahir Faryabi's *qasidas* are, compared to others. His taste is very close to that of Nizari Quhistani, but the latter's poems, contrary to Hafiz's, are often *ghathth wa samin* [weak or plump], while Hafiz's

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 387-8.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 397.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 394.

⁵⁷⁰ Jami, *Nafahat al Uns*, Tehran: Intisharat-i 'Elmi, 1375, p. 614.

⁵⁷¹ This is the adjective that in Islamic teaching has been assigned to the language of the Holy Quran.

ghazals are free of formality and insincerity; that's the reason Hafiz has been referred to as *lisan al-ghayb* [tongue of the unknown].⁵⁷²

Jami was so enthusiastic about some of Hafiz's *ghazals* that he wrote more than one response to them; he composed five *javab* or responses (three *ghazals* in his second *diwan*, and two in his third) to the first, the opening *ghazal*, in Hafiz's *diwan*. Although Jami's responses are nice and deeply touch the reader's heart, they cannot be regarded as being competitive with Hafiz's poetry. However, this lack of competition should not be regarded as a defect on the part of Jami's poetry. No one as far as this author is aware has been able to imitate Hafiz perfectly. At least Jami did not think this way. If he wrote five responses to the opening *ghazal* of Hafiz, this does not mean that he did not like Hafiz's other poems; he probably liked that *ghazal* more than he did the others.⁵⁷³ In addition to writing a response, Jami occasionally used half hemistich of Hafiz, yet mentioned Hafiz's name in other sections. The witness to this claim is in a signature line of one of the responses that Jami wrote to Hafiz. The opening line of Hafiz's *ghazal* is:

شاه شمشاد قدان خسرو شیرین دهنان
که به مژگان شکندقلب همه صف شکنان

*The one that is the king of the box-tree [reference to his height], the prince of sweet mouths,
The one that breaks the heart of all those in line.*⁵⁷⁴

Jami's signature line:

جامی این نظم حسن گر بفرستد سوی فارس
حافظش نام نهد خسرو شیرین دهنان

⁵⁷² Jami, *Baharistan va Rasa'il-i Jami*, edit. A'alakhan Afsahzad, Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1379, p. 148.

⁵⁷³ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, pp. 404-407.

⁵⁷⁴ Shams a-Din Muhammad Hafiz, *Diwan-i Hafiz*, ed. by Ghani and Ghazvini, Tehran: Intisharat-i Jayhun, 1383, p. 390.

If Jami sends this beautiful verse to Fars [the birth and burial place of Hafiz], Hafiz will call him 'the prince of sweet mouths.'

Jami's *ghazal* consists of nine lines, the same as Hafiz's, and has the same rhyme and meter. The *ghazal* is one of the prettiest ones in Jami's *diwan*. However, in Hafiz's *ghazal* so much philosophical and mystical wisdom and guidance are hidden, that one could write an essay about each line, while Jami's *ghazal* lacks these layers of meaning.

In fact Jami responded to this *ghazal* more than once. I traced the following *ghazal* with this opening in his *diwan* that its meter, rhyme, and even theme is similar to Hafiz's *ghazal* quoted above. Jami wrote:

ای شه تنگ قبایان مه زرین کمران
سرور کج کلهان خسرو شیرین پسران

O you, the king of the people with the tight robes, moon of the golden belts,
The head of tilted hats, king of sweet boys.⁵⁷⁵

Although in composing his *ghazals* Jami had, more than any other poets, Hafiz as a model in mind and responded to him, his responses are mostly traceable because of the meter and rhyme that they share with Hafiz's poetry; otherwise, Jami's *ghazals* are *bikr* new and unique, conveying sweet messages.⁵⁷⁶ Yet, as Afsahzad rightfully states, in spite of Jami's fluency and musical tone, "do not compete with Hafiz."⁵⁷⁷ Jami believed that a response poem must either be better than the model or at least be equal to it; otherwise, it was better not to be written.⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁵ Jami, *Fatihah- al-Shabab*, p. 652.

⁵⁷⁶ A'alakhan Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 408.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 408

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.409. Afsahzad has quoted 'Abd al-Nabi Sattaruf's work, *Afkar-i Adabi va Estatik 'Abd al-Rahman Jami*, Dushanbe: Nashryat-i 'Irfan, 1975, p. 84.

Another poet to whose *ghazals* Jami responded was Kamal Khujandi (d. 1401).⁵⁷⁹

In *Baharistan* Jami wrote the following about Kamal:

He is in a position in poetry that it is difficult to imagine his superiority in delicacy of speech and fineness of meaning; yet excessive exaggeration has distanced his poems from softness and fluency and is emptied from the spice of love.⁵⁸⁰

Thus, while Jami appreciated Kamal's genius, he also subtly criticized his shortcomings.

Jami responded to those *ghazals* of Kamal in which he sensed exaggeration.⁵⁸¹

Another difference between Jami's *ghazals* and those of Kamal is that in general, the subject of Jami's *ghazals* is not just love, or separation from the beloved, or lamentation about the beloved's cruelty. More often, Jami used the medium of the *ghazal* to preach or give directions. In such a *ghazal* he cried out about injustice, complained about the tyrannical world, immoralities that take place in it, and the difficulty of life in a wicked world. He condemned greed and malice and people's benightedness. Moreover, he complained that the values of knowledge and science have declined. In some of his *ghazals* he warned people, especially the elite, the nobles, and courtiers, that they should not be attached to their position and should not brag about their lineage, or not be so inclined to accumulating wealth; rather, they should avoid lust, harassment of subjects, and have empathy for their pain and agony.⁵⁸² In addition to aforementioned topics in *ghazal*, Jami attempts to clarify Ibn 'Arabi's *vahdat-i vujud*, unity of existence, in his *ghazals*.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 409. Afsahzad refers to the work of Fakhri Herati *Radayef al-Asha'ar*, in which he has recorded that Jami valued Kamal's genius tremendously.

⁵⁸⁰ Jami, *Baharistan*, p. 148-149.

⁵⁸¹ *Baharistan*, p. 148.

⁵⁸² Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 450.

In general, the theme of Jami's ghazal is love. He defines love, *'ishq*, or *hubb* as a genuine love of God. In Jami's *ghazals*, God is both love and the lover and *insan* or the human being is the beloved. Yet, in some instances God is the beloved and the lover is a human being.⁵⁸³ On the whole Jami is a poet who has been able to express his inner feelings on love very clearly. His point of view on love is similar to that of Hafiz. He regards love as the elixir of existence; the main ingredient for an individual disposition, the link to his/her existence, or the source of happiness and sorrow. In other words, Jami regards love as dignity for human beings, and one without love as one who has no nobility.

شرف آدمی از عشق بود ، هرکه نشد
عاشق ، او را نبود بر دگران هیچ شرف

The dignity of human beings is love;
Whoever has not become a lover has no dignity over others.

However, Jami has also admitted that the road to love is dangerous and highway robbers have laid many traps; one cannot cross this road unless one has God's blessing.

راهبست پر از خطر ره عشق
انجا همه رهنان بی باک
بی بدرقه عنایت تو
نتوان شد از آن ره خطر ناک

The road of love is full of danger,
There are many fearless highway robbers on the way
Without Your blessing,
One can not pass that dangerous road.

Jami believes, as many of his predecessors and Sufis have expressed, wisdom and intellect to be in opposition to love. He writes:

⁵⁸³ Susan al-Rasul, *The Gnosticism of Jami in His Corpus*, Tehran: Sazman- Chap va Intisharat- Vizarat Farhang va Irshad- Islami, 1383, p. 126.

خرد، زنگ است بر آینه عشق
بده می ساقیا وین زنگ بزداى

Wisdom is the rust on the mirror of love,
Saqi [the one who serves wine in the *maykhana* (tavern)], hand me the wine and
wipe out this rust.

On the whole, Jami's best works are his *diwans* and *mathnawi* about love, while not separating human love from mystical love. He admits that his human love is more than his mystical love, and has written that worldly love is a bridge for mystical love.⁵⁸⁴ Yet, he distinguishes love and lust. In *Baharistan*, he writes:

Whoever clings to the attraction of love and is a companion to the beauty of love while choosing chastity and abstinence on the path, when he/she dies, he/she will be regarded a martyr.⁵⁸⁵

Jami has also pointed out that a life without poetry and love is similar to food without salt. He wrote in *Wasitat al-'Iqd*:

جامى از عشق گوى كه بى شور عشق ، شعر
در كام اهل ذوق طعاميست بى نمك

Jami, talk about love that without the commotion of love,
Poetry in the eyes of tasteful people is like a un-salty dish.

Jami's *Qasidas*

Although the apparent theme of Jami's *ghazals* is *'ishq*, either divine or world, he occasionally inserts some praises or advice in some of them. The theme of Jami's *qasida* is either praise of God, the Prophet and his household, or is descriptive of a building, while inserting some praise or advices for the builder. For example, in one of his *qasidas*, in the first *diwan*, he admires a certain building that probably was built during the reign of Sultan Hussein. In this *qasida*, while Jami praises sultan Hussein in a few lines, he

⁵⁸⁴ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 429-431.

⁵⁸⁵ Jami, *Baharistan*, p. 78.

assigns almost thirty lines in describing the beauty and magnificence of the building, the rest of the poem, thirteen lines, he advises the sultan. He writes:

Get rid of the worldly wishes and buy the everlasting assets. It is useless to erect buildings in this world, if you do not build any dwelling in the next world.⁵⁸⁶

In another *qasida*, he again praises the beauty of a certain building in over forty lines and toward the end of this long poem, he writes:

In this short talk, I better finish this *nama* [letter]. It is the time for praying. Everybody knows that buildings will be destroyed someday. Your job [referring to Sultan Hussein] is not to make magnificent buildings, but to try to build hearts, which will last forever.⁵⁸⁷

Or in another *qasida* of forty-six couplets, Jami very delicately admires another building, but in the middle of the poem he addresses Sultan Hussein, saying:

O the king, I want to tell a few points benevolently. Listen to it. Do not try to repair or build any more edifices. Painting on walls is what children do.⁵⁸⁸

In the few following *qasidas* in his *diwan*, which are related to Sultan Hussein,⁵⁸⁹ Jami advises the Sultan to implement justice and be fair and just to his subjects. Thus, though these *qasidas* are regarded as panegyric lyrics composed for Sultan Hussein, Jami intentionally gives instruction to the Sultan to rule justly in his domain. One point that must be stated is that Jami's *qasidas* are not easy to read, compared to his *ghazals*. They contain Arabic phrases or unfamiliar expressions that he has not used in his *ghazals*.

The other themes of most of Jami's *qasidas* are: *tuhid*, the belief in the unity of God, *na't va munajat*, praise of God or the Prophet, or fervent prayer, advice, biography,

⁵⁸⁶ Jami, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, pp. 113-118.

⁵⁸⁷ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, pp 97-101.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-106.

⁵⁸⁹ Jami has mentioned him by name, or referred to him as *Shah-i Abu al-Ghazi* (the king who is father of the fighter of religion), the name that has been attributed to Sultan Hussein.

complaints, response to his predecessors, description of gardens and buildings, and praise and eulogy of elites and nobles. Jami's praises and eulogies are not numerous; besides, as it was noted, in them he mostly gives advice. A few of them, such as *Lujat al-Asrar*, *Jala'o al-Ruh*, *Rashaht al-Bal basharh-i ahwal*, *Shaybiyya*, are about himself, writing his own biography or describing his own mystical experiences.

Other Genres in Jami's Diwan

Jami's *ruba'iyat*⁵⁹⁰ are mostly about mystical love, describe his own condition, or complain about injustices in the era, and occasionally advices. Yet, his definition of *vahdat-i vujud* can be best comprehended in his quatrains. There are some quatrains whose themes are philosophical that one has read in Khayyam's collection, though more subtle.

One of the genres found in Jami's *diwans* is *qit'a*.⁵⁹¹ In his *qit'a*, Jami subtly has recorded life or historical events. Another genre he uses is *tarji'-band*,⁵⁹² which he has composed with exceptional mastery and skill, explaining mystical love and Sufism elegantly and eloquently. In *tarkib-band*,⁵⁹³ Jami has elegized his mentor Sa'd al-Din Kashghari, his own brother's death, his son, and Khwaja Ahrar. In some of his *tarkib-band* he describes some new and elegant building of Herat. In Jami's *diwan* there also are

⁵⁹⁰ Quatrain is a form of poetry that has two lines which consist of four parts. The rhyme is in the form of (a a) in the first line and (b a) in the second line. The point of the poem is made in the fourth one.

⁵⁹¹ Another form of Persian poetry that could be two lines or more, and not necessarily the two parts of each line (*bait*) have the same rhyme, but the rhyme is the same at the second part of each line.

⁵⁹² *Tarji'-band* consists of three or more sections. Each section has the format of a *ghazal*, but with a different rhyme, and it is not usually lone; and lastly, each section is connected to the next by the same line of poetry that has a different rhyme than the sections of the *tarji'-band*. Its format is "a a, b a, c a, ... x x, a a, b a, c a, x x. . ."

⁵⁹³ It is similar to *tarji'-band*, except that the line that connects the section is different.

a few short *mathnawis*⁵⁹⁴ in which he either praises Abu Sa'id, or responds to the Ottoman ruler, Sultan Muhammad or the Qara-Quyunlu ruler, Jahanshah. There are also a few *mathnawis* that describe and admire some Timurid buildings. Jami's *murabba*⁵⁹⁵ describes either the beauty of the beloved or the poet's state of mind and his mystical love, or it praises God and the Prophet. The only *bahr i- tavi* is seven lines.⁵⁹⁶ Jami was probably the pioneer in this form of poetry. Jami's *mu'ammās* (riddles) are either quatrains, or *dubaiti*, two lines,⁵⁹⁷ or are *fards*. There is only one *fard* in Jami's *diwan* which is unique in terms of its content. It says:

هر کس کزین جهان دلگیر بجست
از ننگ وزیر و منت میر برست

If one ran away from this anguished world,
He would be immune from the vizier's disgrace
and does not need favor from the emir.

This one-line *fard*⁵⁹⁸ clearly summarizes Jami's philosophy of the life. As he has pointed out in the poem, Jami believed that one truly would have free spirit in life if one freed oneself from the slavery and bondage of the elites and the court.

⁵⁹⁴ *Mathnawi* is a form whose rhyme is "a a, b b, c c. . ." in each line. Usually, the subject matter changes in each *mathnawi*. In the case of long the *mathnawis* of *Haft Awrang*, the theme is mostly a love story which makes a mystical point in allegorical form or a philosophical point in the case of his work *Khiradnama Iskandari*.

⁵⁹⁵ A form of poetry that has four lines.

⁵⁹⁶ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 532. This genre of Jami's poetry is unique. According to Afsahzad, Jami was a pioneer; yet, labeling the form *bare-i tavi* is Afsahzad's opinion. He defines it as each line consisting of eight *Para* (segments); it has twenty-four short *hija* (syllables), and twenty-four long *hija*. In Jami's *bahr-tavi*, the rhyme is "a a, a a, a a, a b," then "c c, c c, c c." I could not find further information on this form, but I have read the longer one, too. This form reminds the reader of rap lyrics.

⁵⁹⁷ *Dubaiti* has the rhyme similar to a quatrain, but has a different meter.

⁵⁹⁸ As it was noted, it has only one line.

Mathnawi Haft Awrang

Jami's celebrated work, *Mathnawi*⁵⁹⁹ *Haft Awrang*, refers to the constellation of the Great Bear.⁶⁰⁰ As the title indicates, it is a collection of seven works, each work discussed under a different title in a separate section. In this work Jami has attempted to create an equal, if not better, work compared to the famous work, *Khamsa*, which Nizami composed three centuries earlier. Yet, only two sections of *Haft Awrang* (*Layli va Majnun* and *Khirdnama-i Iskandari*) are found in *Khamsa*. The first book of *Haft Awrang* is *Silsilat al-Zahab* (The Chain of Gold) composed in 1485. The next is *Salaman va Absal*, another didactical love story, which Jami imitated from the structural type similar to the one presented by 'Attar.⁶⁰¹ The mystical allegory work, *Yusuf va Zulaykha*, is substituted for the secular pre-Islamic love story of *Khusrau va Shirin* written by Nizami. Jami left out Nizami's *Haft Paykar*, another pre-Islamic story about a Persian king, Bahram-i Gur;⁶⁰² he instead added a second didactical poem, *Tuhfat al-Ahrrar*, *The Gift of the Nobles*. His other work, *Subhat al-Abrar*, *The Rosary of the Pious* is also regarded another imitation of Nizami's work, *Makhzan al-Asrar*.⁶⁰³ It is because of *Haft*

⁵⁹⁹ *Mathnawi* is a form of poetry that is used for long narratives such as *Shahnama*, or it could be used for religious or moral teaching. Throughout a *mathnawi*, there is a uniform meter, while each couplet has a different rhyme; the two parts of a couplet have the same rhyme.

⁶⁰⁰ This work, which is considered Jami's most important poem, was composed in the late years of his life; so Jami was mature when he wrote it. In it, he reflects on his mystical thoughts, his association with the Naqshbandi Sufis, and his *Vahdat-i Vujud* ideology.

⁶⁰¹ J.T.P. de Brijn, "Chains of Gold: Jami's Defense of Poetry," *Journal of Turkish Studies*, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 2002, v.26/1, p. 84. Brijn notes that the work has the same meter that 'Attar used in *Mantiq al-Tayr* and *Musibat-Nama*, in addition to a frame story with an added tale in it.

⁶⁰² The fifteenth king of the Sasanid dynasty died in 438 AD, known for living a life of pleasure, while being a chivalrous and just king. He defeated all of his enemies. When he died, Persia was at the height of its power.

⁶⁰³ Brijn, "Chains of Gold", p. 84.

Awrang that Jami gained recognition, and was said to have had a "commanding influence over Ottoman literature."⁶⁰⁴

Mathnawi Silsilat al- Zahab

The first section⁶⁰⁵ of *Haft Awrang* is *Silsilat al- Zahab*, consists of three *daftar*s or parts; it has the same meter as *Hadiqat al-Haqiqa* of Sana'i (d. 1130), or *Haft Paykar* of Nizami (1141-1209), or *Jam-i Jam* of Awhadi Maraghi'i (circa 1270-1337).⁶⁰⁶ Jami is said to have completed the first *daftar*, containing 3,730 couplets with a *vazn* (meter) of *bahr-i khafif-i musaddas* in 1469. It seems he offered this work to Sultan Hussein Bayqara.⁶⁰⁷

Silsilat al- Zahab has two distinguishing sections. The first, which contains 3,449 couplets, consists of scattered subjects including *kalam* (scholastic theology), social issues, and mysticism, expressed either directly or subtly through interesting stories or anecdotes. The second sub-section, which he titled "*I'tiqad-nama*", Confession of the Faith,⁶⁰⁸ consists of 240 couplets, yet it is the important part of the *Daftar Avval*, because in it Jami expressed the tenets of Sunnite Islam in fulfillment of the request made by Khwaja Ahrar.⁶⁰⁹ In this work, despite his mysticism, Jami presented his orthodox Sunni

⁶⁰⁴ Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, v.2, p. 8.

⁶⁰⁵ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 173-177. Heravi argues that the order of *Haft Awrang* in reality was not the way it is seen in the collection. He states that Jami intended to write *Khamsa*, as Nizami and Amir Khusrau had written it. But later, after Nava'i also wrote a *Khamsa*, he added two more *mathnawis* to the collection; the two added ones were *Silsilat al-Zahab*, and *Salaman va Absal*. Gibb also states that the last two works were added to the main *mathnawi*, which consisted of five books, similar to Nizami's work. Gibb, *Ottoman Poetry*, v.2, p.10.

⁶⁰⁶ Afsahzad, c, p. 208. The meter of *Silsilat al-Zahab* is *bahr-i khafif-i musaddas*.

⁶⁰⁷ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study of Jami's Biography and Writing*, p. 208-209.

⁶⁰⁸ Afsahzad states that Jami worked on *Daftar Avval* between 1468 and 1472. However, he must have finished it by 1469, since he offered it to Sultan Hussein Bayqara in that year.

⁶⁰⁹ J.T.P. de Brijn, p. 86.

belief.⁶¹⁰ The work's sectional subtitles include "Necessary Existence", "Unity of God", "the Attributes of God, *viz.* Life, Knowledge, Will, Power, Hearing, Seeing, Speech", "Divine Actions", "Existence of the Angels", "Belief in all the Prophets", "Finality of Muhammad's Mission", "The Prophet's Law", "His Night-Ascent to Heaven", "His Miracles", "God's Scriptures", "Eternal Pre-existence of God's Word",⁶¹¹ "Superiority of the People of Muhammad over all other Peoples", "Unlawfulness of regarding any of the people of *Qibla*⁶¹² as Infidels", "The Angels of the Tomb, *Munkir* and *Nakir*", "The two Blasts of the Trumpet", "The Distribution of the Books Kept by the recording Angels", "The Balance", "The Bridge of Sirat", "The Fifty Stations of 'Arasat, indicating that the infidels shall remain in Hell-fire for ever, while sinners shall escape from there by interception of the virtuous and pious", and finally, "Paradise and its Degrees."⁶¹³ It was because of this work that Jami was accused of having anti-Shi'i beliefs, and put on defense in Baghdad where he spent a few days after his return from pilgrimage in 1472.⁶¹⁴ The key part of this section is a poem in which Jami first praised the family and companions of the Prophet, then openly and clearly named the Prophet's successors as *Siddiq*, truthful, the adjective attributed to Abu-Bakr, the first Caliph; *Faruq*,⁶¹⁵ surname

⁶¹⁰ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v.3, p. 521.

⁶¹¹ Browne, p. 521. Browne states that this belief was passionately argued by Mu'tazalites, yet after Ma'mun, the sixth 'Abbasid Caliph, who had Mu'tazali inclinations, the above statement became the orthodox dogma of Islam.

⁶¹² People who turn toward Mecca to pray; in other words, Muslims.

⁶¹³ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v.3, pp.521-522.

⁶¹⁴ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 208.

⁶¹⁵ In Arabic, the word means one who distinguishes truth from falsehood. Steingass says it is a "surname of 'Umar, as discriminating between truth and falsehood at an early stage of Islam, or as making orthodoxy distinct from, i.e. triumphant over, infidelity." Francis J. Steingass, *Persian- English Dictionary*, New Delhi, Munshiran Manoharlal Publisher Pvt Ltd, 1996, p. 903.

for 'Umar, *Zain al- Nurayn*,⁶¹⁶ surname for 'Uthman, and *Asad Allah*, the adjective that was given to Ali.⁶¹⁷ Thus, I think the existence of this poem,⁶¹⁸ which is the core of the dispute between Sunnis and Shi'is, would be enough reason to accept that Jami was a follower of Sunni faith, in spite of some false accounts that suggest he was a Shi'i and that he pretended to be a Sunni only out of fear of persecution. However, he expressed a great deal of respect and admiration for the family of the Prophet, including the twelve Imams.⁶¹⁹

Jami's second *daftar* of *Silsilat al-Zahab* consists of more organized treatises.

This section is mainly about mystical love. Jami begins this *daftar* by saying:

بشنو ای گوش بر فسانه عشق
از صریر قلم ترانه عشق
قلم اینک چونی به لحن صریر
قصه عشق می کند تقریر

O' ears hear the story of "love",
From the grinding of the pen the song of "love"
Now the pen gnashes like the nay-reed that chants,
It reports the story of "love".⁶²⁰

In this *daftar* which consists of 1,595 couplets,⁶²¹ Jami defines real and metaphorical love through stories and anecdotes about Sufis.⁶²² He states that he finished this work in

⁶¹⁶ 'Uthman married two of four daughters of the Prophet, of course not at the same time. These daughters whose mother was Khadija, the first woman who believed in the Prophet and converted to Islam, are referred to as the *nur*, light of the Prophet, so *Zul Nurayin*, means the one who has two lights.

⁶¹⁷ *Asad Allah* in Arabic means God's lion, because he was brave, strong, and fearless, and many victories of the early Islamic era were achieved at war by his bravery. Jami has stated that 'Ali was the last of the Caliphs.

⁶¹⁸ Jami, *Haft Awrang*, p. 242.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 205-7. This poem is about the status and importance of Imam, 'Ali b. Hussein, known as Zayn al-'Abidin, the fourth Imam of the Shi'is.

⁶²⁰ Jami, *Silsilat al-Zahab*, p. 249.

⁶²¹ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 209. However, the *Haft Awrang*, the second *daftar* of *Silsilat al-Zahab* which has been edited by Afsahzad, has 1596 couplets.

⁶²² Browne, v.3, p. 522.

1485.⁶²³ According to Heravi, there is no trace of Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy in this *daftar*; rather, this is a literary-mystical work in the *Khurasani* style.⁶²⁴ Jami makes his point about true and false love through stories that are mostly original.

The third *daftar* is less voluminous compared to the previous two *daftar*s. Jami wanted to make a specific point in composing this work. The work is similar to the previous *Nasihāt al-Mulūks* or Mirror of Princes.⁶²⁵ It consists of anecdotes about kings and a few about physicians. On the whole, this work contains many stories about how a just king must rule his dominion. Some stories can be found in other works,⁶²⁶ such as the story about the Sassanid (224-640) King Anushirvan (r. 531-579).⁶²⁷ Jami offered this work to the Ottoman Sultan, Bayazid, but since the third *daftar* was composed during the late Timurid era, it is possible that Jami meant for it to be a reminder to Sultan Hussein how he should reign justly. Jami especially emphasizes that kings should have astrologers and good physicians around so they can have healthy minds and can make sound decisions, and astrologers can inform them of the right time for making crucial decisions. In this section, Jami specifically advises the Islamic court that it should have Muslim physicians at the court, not Christians or Jews.⁶²⁸ He writes:

که دریغا که دانش اندوزان
شمع علم شریعت افروزان
علم طب را که کار ایشان بود
به نصارا گذاشتند و یهود

⁶²³ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 209. Jami in two couplets has written the date *madda-i tarikh*, which is 890 of *Hijra*, that is equivalent of the year 1485.

⁶²⁴ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 172. Literary scholars of Persian poetry have divided Persian poetry into three distinct styles, excluding the modern free verse or *shi'r-i nou*. These three styles are *Khurasani* (the oldest one), Iraqi, and Indian style.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 172, in works such as *Chahar Maqala* of Nizami-i 'Aruzi.

⁶²⁷ Anushirvan (531-579), the just, rightly or probably according to his court historian, is renowned for being a just king among numerous kings who ruled over Iran.

⁶²⁸ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 173.

It is a shame that scholars,
Those who illuminated the science of religion,
The science of medicine, which was their craft,
They left it for Christians and Jews.⁶²⁹

The first *Mathnawi* ends with the title *Khatima-i Kitab*, The End of the Book, though Jami probably planned to write a few more. *Khatima-i Kitab* contains many remarkable anecdotes which can also be found in previous works.⁶³⁰ Yet, I do not perceive that the work "lacks artistic unity of conception", as Browne has suggested.⁶³¹ One wonders whether it wouldn't have been more appropriate if Jami had left the following poem for the last *mathnawi*, especially since he writes:

جامی از شعر و شاعری باز آی
با خموشی ز شعر دمساز آی

Jami, return from (leave out) poetry and being a poet,
Get used to being silent from poetry.⁶³²

These lines suggest that for some reason, Jami was dissatisfied with being a poet.

Mathnawi Salaman va Absal

The second section in *Mathnawi Haft Awrang* is *Salaman va Absal*. Jami finished the work in 1480⁶³³ and offered it to the Aq-Quyunlu ruler Sultan Ya'ghub

⁶²⁹ Jami, *Haft Awrang*, p. 368. In this piece Jami is quoting Imam Shafa'i.

⁶³⁰ Browne, v.3, p. 522. According to Browne, two works are from the fourth discourse of *Chahar Maqala*, whose author was Nizami-i 'Aruzi of Samarqand.

⁶³¹ Ibid., p. 523.

⁶³² Ibid, p. 378.

⁶³³ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 211, also Hikmat, *Jami*, p. 190. Heravi, p. 177. Heravi argues that Jami must have composed the work when he was much older in 1480, Jami was 68. Heravi refers to a poem in this section: *Haft Awrang*, p. 398, in which Jami complains that he cannot see well, and has to wear *shisha-yi farangi* (glasses), his hand shakes, and he has pain in his feet. In another poem (p. 399) he states that he has grown old and no longer has anything to say, and it is appropriate to be silent. He also rationalizes that if he praises the king, probably Ya'ghub, in reality he means God.

(1479-1491). This work consists of 1,130 couplets, in *Bahr-i ramal-i musaddas*.⁶³⁴ It is said to be based on a Greek story that Avicenna dealt with earlier as well, though Zarrin Kub⁶³⁵ believes that Jami's source was an Arabic translation of the work by Hunayn b. Ishaq.⁶³⁶ *Mathnawi Salaman va Absal* gained recognition in the West thanks to the translation of Edward Fitzgerald into English.⁶³⁷ The work⁶³⁸ is about a Greek king who did not want to marry but wanted to have an heir, so he consulted a wise man, who was also his vizier. Jami writes that the latter, "without lust, took a sperm from the king's loins and put it somewhere [not uterus] and after nine months, 'miraculously' a flawless boy, Salaman, was created."⁶³⁹ Jami does not provide any further information about the birth of the child. The abbreviated story is as follows:

After the birth of the boy, the court hired a wet-nurse, Absal, for the infant boy.

However, the wet-nurse fell in love with the latter when he became a young man, and she was able to seduce him. Their loving relationship continued for a while, until the king

⁶³⁴ Heravi, p. 176, same meter as Rumi's *Mathnawi*.

⁶³⁵ Hussein Zarrin Kub, the distinguished contemporary historian/literary critic, who died a few years ago in Iran.

⁶³⁶ 'Abd al-Hussein Zarrin Kub, *Karivan-i Hilla*, Tehran: 'Ilmi Pub., 1374, p. 294.

⁶³⁷ Browne, v.3, p. 523. Browne states that the work is a "rather free and somewhat abridged translation. Jami's rendering in blank verse is generally graceful and sometimes eloquent; but the employment of the meter of *Hiawatha* for the illustrative anecdotes (which, as is generally the case in poems of this kind, frequently interrupt the continuity of the text) is a less happy experiment."

⁶³⁸ Iraj Dehghan, "Jami's *Salaman and Absal*", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, vol.30, 2 (Apr., 1971), pp. 118-126. In this thorough research, Dehghan points out that Jami's source probably is the one that Khwaja Nasir al-Din Tusi found in Arabic, translated from the Greek by Hunayn b. Ishaq (al-'Ibadi), though no original Greek version of the story has been discovered so far. Dehghan agrees with Arberry that the story probably is not Hellenistic at all, and may have been a Christian "monastic moral, or even conceivably a Manichean" one. Some sources have pointed out that Jami may have taken it from Avicenna, who referred to the story in his work *al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat*. Dehghan has written a loose translation of the passage as follows:

"When thou hearest the story of Salaman and Absal, know that Salaman is a symbol typifying thyself, while Absal is a figure typifying thy degree of attainment in mystical gnosi. Then resolve the problem if thou canst."

However, it seems that Jami's account of the story is based on a story that Tusi found in the work of Al-'Ibad.

⁶³⁹ Jami, *Haft Awrang*, pp. 411-412.

found out. The father's advice was not effective to separate the two. The wise man also could not convince Salaman to give up his lust. Finally, the condition became unbearable for the lovers, so they left the city for faraway islands where they lived happily for a short time. After a while, Salaman regretted his behavior and returned to his father, who was sad and disappointed with him. Observing the unpleasant situation, Salaman escaped to a desert with Absal. While there, he made a huge fire and walked through it holding Absal's hand. He came out of the fire unharmed, while poor Absal burned to ashes. Although, Salaman suffered for a while, he finally came to his senses, through the treatment of the wise man, who saved him from earthy love and introduced him to *Zuhra*, heavenly love.

Jami finishes the story by making the following point: Absal is bodily lust, Salaman is prudent love, *Zuhra*⁶⁴⁰ is perfect heavenly quality, which when achieved tranquilizes the soul. Jami chose this topic in his great production because it was not dealt with before in Persian literature.⁶⁴¹ However, Jami inserted some other stories in the narrative that sometimes seem unrelated; but he probably thought it necessary to better understand allegories and metaphors. One of the stories, for example, is the story of the King Solomon, and his wife Belqays, Queen of Sheba. Jami writes a short version of it,⁶⁴² while Nizami covers a more complete version in *Mathnawi Haft Paykar*.⁶⁴³ Jami's purpose in inserting the story was to assert his point that women are unfaithful and

⁶⁴⁰ Zuhra-Venus, represented as beauty in Persian literature.

⁶⁴¹ A.J. Arberry, Fitzgerald's *Salaman and Absal*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956, p. 41.

⁶⁴² Jami, as was noted above, writes this story to prove his point that women are dangerous and full of guiles and tricks, so one must stay away from them. Inserting the story in *Salaman va Absal* is making the point that it was Absal's fault in this saga, not Salaman's. Jami's opinion of women was covered in the section "Jami, political court...". The poem is another example of negative feelings that Jami expresses about women. The poem is: زن چه باشد ناقصی در عقل و دین هیچ ناقص نیست در عالم چنین

⁶⁴³ Nizami Ganjavi, *Kuliyat-i Nizami, Mathnawi-i Haft Paykar*, ed. Vahid Dastgirdi, Tehran: Intisharat-Nigah, 1376, pp. 718-720

cunning, while Nizami's point was women's sweetness and transparency. It is probably because of his insertion of similar stories as the aforementioned that Jami was accused of stealing materials from others. Yet, these stories, having a religious connotation, did exist in the Islamic tradition; hence, most likely whoever was trained in the tradition was aware of it and could have applied it to different settings.

Mathnawi Tuhfat al-Ahrar

Jami's third *Mathnawi-i Haft Awrang* is entitled *Tuhfat al-Ahrar, Gift of the Free*. This work's meter is in *sari'-i mutavi-yi makshuf*. In a prose introduction to the work, Jami has pointed out that he has composed it in "*silk-i javahir-i shahvar-i Makhzan al-Asrar of Hakim-i Grami* Sheikh Nizami in the kingly jewel way of dear philosopher Sheikh Nizami or *janb-i jam-i zarnigar-i Matla' al-Anvar ... Amir Khusrau Dihlavi namash barand-* or it will be remembered as part of the golden cup of the *Dayspring of Light* of Amir Khusrau Dihlavi."⁶⁴⁴ The work contains twenty *maqala* or articles. In each article, Jami explains different religious discourses, i.e., *namaz*, prayer, *zakat*, alms, and *hajj*, pilgrimage to Mecca⁶⁴⁵, from a mystical perspective or ethical stance. Each *maqala* consists of two parts. In the first, a lesson is inserted and in the second, the point is clarified through some appropriate narrative or parable. Some scholars regard the work as "dull and monotonous, and ... not a favorable specimen of Jami's work;"⁶⁴⁶ though the statement may be only about some parts of the work, there are stories and anecdotes that Jami has inserted in between that break up the dullness in some of the long mystical

⁶⁴⁴ Jami, *Haft Awrang*, p. 466.

⁶⁴⁵ Heravi, *Jami*, pp. 177-178.

⁶⁴⁶ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v.3, p. 527.

poems. It should be added that the work requires considerable knowledge in Islamic teaching and mystical thought to properly appreciate it.

Mathnawi Subhat al- Abrar

The fourth *Mathnawi-i Haft Awrang* is *Subhat al- Abrar, The Rosary of the Pious*. It is in *bahr-i ramal-i musaddas-i makhbun-i maqsur* meter, and has 2,885 couplets. It is a didactic work, which contains mystical, ethical, and theological themes. While Browne criticizes it as “lacking coherence” or being less “attractive” compared to *Tuhfat al-Ahrar*,⁶⁴⁷ it has been regarded as actually being more logical and concise than *Silsilat al-Zahab*, or *Tuhfat al-Ahrar*.⁶⁴⁸ Furthermore, the work is regarded as one of the best works on religious, mystical, and theological subjects by Persian scholars.⁶⁴⁹ It covers more practical aspects of religion and deals “less with purely abstract or speculative matters.”⁶⁵⁰ *Subhat al- Abrar* has forty 'aqd, covenants. The first thirty-five covenants are about religious or mystical subjects, and the last five are about a king's justice, philanthropy of government officials, ... and advice to Jami's only son, Zia' al-Din Yusuf, who was five years of age at the time. Since the latter was born in 882/ 1477, this work must have been finished in 1482. This *mathnawi* has also been complemented by anecdotes and stories, which make it more readable and interesting.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 528.

⁶⁴⁸ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 178.

⁶⁴⁹ Rypka, *History of Persian Literature*, p. 287.

⁶⁵⁰ Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, v.2, p. 9.

Mathnawi Yusuf va Zulaykha

The next *Mathnawi-i Haft Awrang* is *Yusuf va Zulaykha* (Joseph and Zulaykha, Potiphar's wife).⁶⁵¹ This work is based on *sura Yusuf*⁶⁵² in the Quran. The work is in *bahr-i hazaj-i musaddis-i mahzuf* meter, and has 4,000 couplets. Jami composed this work in 888/1483, at the age of seventy-one. This is a love story, which is not only the most affectionate work in the *Haft Awrang*, but also one of the most heart-rending works in Persian literature. In itself, it would be enough to indicate Jami's wit, wisdom, depth, and compassion – in short, the genius of the author.⁶⁵³ The work is a romantic story which weaves "allegorical and philosophical insights regarding the nature of love and beauty, which in clarity and profundity have nowhere been surpassed."⁶⁵⁴

Though many versions of this story have been composed by Persian or Turkish poets, including the one attributed to Firdausi,⁶⁵⁵ the author of *Shahnama*, none is as beautiful as Jami's version.⁶⁵⁶ The work is widely read; "it is the best of all epic poems of this name."⁶⁵⁷ Gibb states that Jami presented the story as "radiant in all splendors of the noontide of Persian rhetoric, and sublimated by the all-pervading presence of sweet and lofty mysticism."⁶⁵⁸ Jami composed this work when he was at the height of his maturity

⁶⁵¹ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v.3, p. 531.

⁶⁵² Al-Quran al Karim, ed. Muhi al-Din Mehdi Ilahi Qumshai', Tehran: Nashri-i Razia, 1378, pp. 315-333.

⁶⁵³ David Pendlebury, *Yusuf and Zulaykha : An Allegorical Romance by Hakim Nuruddin Abdurrahman Jami*, ed. Abridge, tr. David Pendlebury, London: The Octagon Press, 1980. p.vii.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid., p. vii.

⁶⁵⁵ In the most accepted *Shahnama*, known as the Moscow edition, there is no reference to this story. Probably the story was inserted in some of the older versions of *Shahnama*, as were a few other stories, by some unknown authors. Usually, these stories, after critical studies by scholars have been omitted from the book, because their strength and structure do not match with the great Hakim.

⁶⁵⁶ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v.3, p. 532.

⁶⁵⁷ Rypka, *History of Persian Literature*, p. 287.

⁶⁵⁸ Gibb, p. 9. He adds that Jami's focus on this work, "as in no other single work, represents the distinctive tendencies, aims, and methods of the poet's school; and so this Joseph and Zulekha of Jami came to be regarded throughout the Second Period of Ottoman poetry as being beyond all other works the standard alike of literary taste and style and of the altitude of the poet-mind."

and skill in poetry. He consciously applied a whole range of discourses "from the most florid peerless sapling from the garden of splendor."⁶⁵⁹

Jami's use of erotic couplets in *Yusuf va Zulaykha* is his tool for allegorizing spiritual and mystical points. The work represents Jami's mastery of "constructive ambiguity," a practice that is not meant to confuse the reader but to facilitate the condition for the mind to entertain different options.⁶⁶⁰ It seems that Jami enjoyed his production, too. Lari reports that when his master was composing the work, he would often become so excited that he would get up and do the *sama'* or meditative dance, sometimes several times per day, though he suffered from pain in his legs.⁶⁶¹ I believe the work, besides being Jami's masterpiece, is the best presentation of love in Persian literature. The way that Jami expresses love, deep feelings, sacrifice, agony, and Zulaykha's suffering brings tears to one's eyes and causes heartache. In addition, it is a masterful presentation of mystical or divine love. This work alone would be enough for Jami to be recognized as a talented and skillful poet of Persian literature.

In this *mathnawi*, Jami offers a mystical aspect of the story. Yusuf's beauty⁶⁶² is the reflection of the God's beauty and love of Zulaykha for him is the symbol of the Divine love, in other word, "Sufi's desire and burning for union with the Divine."⁶⁶³ In this narrative, Jami points to the exceptional beauty of Yusuf, whom women of Egypt loose their mind when he enters to the chamber. While they all desired him and were not

⁶⁵⁹ Pendelbury, *Yusuf and Zulaykha* ,p. 163.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 179.

⁶⁶¹ Lari, *Taklama*, p. 7.

⁶⁶² In Persian literature, Yusuf is the representative of ultimate beauty of human beings.

⁶⁶³ Gayane Karen Merguerian and Afsaneh Najmabadi , "Zulaykha and Yusuf: Whose 'Best Story'?", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 29 (1997), 497-498.

in rightful state of mind, the women cut their hands.⁶⁶⁴ Yet, Jami carefully presents Zulaykha as the true lover of Yusuf, presenting the earthy love as a pre-requisite for the Divine love.⁶⁶⁵

As was noted, Jami's account of the story is different from the "Sura Yusuf"; for example Jami leaves out the meeting between Yusuf and his brothers, who came to him for help during the drought or his reunion with his father, Ya'ghub (Jacob). Jami finishes this *mathnawi* with the death of Zulaykha, which occurred a few days after Yusuf died. Yet, the major difference between Jami's account with other versions is that Zulaykha is the protagonist of the story. For example, the *mathnawi* begins with her dream of Yusuf; or she insists that her reluctant husband to buy Yusuf, whom the merchant offered for sale in the slave market, and she is the one, who pays the large sum for Yusuf from her own "jewelry box."⁶⁶⁶ It is toward the end of the story when Zulaykha is old and poor that Yusuf become "the master player." Furthermore, Jami does not hesitate to convey Yusuf's feeling for Zulaykha,⁶⁶⁷ implying that Yusuf refusal was probably because he did not want to jeopardize his prophetic mission, the position that was predicted for him by his father after Yusuf revealed his dream to him, in which he was prostrated by eleven stars, the Moon and Sun.⁶⁶⁸

The combination of the love theme with mystical imagination that Jami applies in this work makes it outstanding. In this work Jami has not imitated anyone. Furthermore, Jami's description of beauty and splendor of Zulaykha has been done so eloquently that

⁶⁶⁴ Jami, *Mathnawi Yusuf va Zulaykha*, p. 146-147.

⁶⁶⁵ Merguerian and Najmabadi, *Zulaykha...*, p. 498.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p.499.

⁶⁶⁷ Jami, *Mathnawi Yusuf va Zulaykh*, p. 136.

⁶⁶⁸ *Quran-i Karim*, tr. Ilahi Qumsha'i, "Sura Yusuf", *Aya-verse* 4, p. 315.

the reader could imagine her beauty. His depiction of Zulaykha's beauty is so detailed, yet the simile that he has applied so original, that it could be used as a model for studying beauty.⁶⁶⁹ Jami, like a skillful painter, has portrayed the beauty of Zulaykha so well and in such detail that one will not doubt that he is a talented artist/poet. While Pendlebury refers to Jami's rendering of the work as the one that "comes closest to perfection,"⁶⁷⁰ another scholar, who has translated the work into English, refers to it as "unquestionably the most famous and considered the finest poem in the Persian language."⁶⁷¹ If Jami had not produced any other work, *Mathnawi Yusuf va Zulaykha*, would have been sufficient for him to earn a high status among the great Persian poets.

Mathnawi Layli va Majnun

Layli va Majnun is the sixth *mathnawi* of *Haft Awrang*. This *mathnawi* is 3,840 couplets in *bahr-i hazaj-i musaddas-i maqbus-i mahzuz* meter. Jami finished this work in 889/1484. He has noted his reason for composing this *mathnawi* as follows:

شد طوطی طبع من شکر خا
از قصه یوسف و زلیخا
در عالم ازان فتاد شوری
در خاطر عاشقان سروری
سر چشمه لطف بود لیکن
ازان تشنگیم نگشت ساکن

The parrot of my temperament became sweet as sugar,
From the story of Yusuf and Zolaykha,
From it a promotion fell in the world,
In the mind of lovers an exhilaration,
It was the source of grace, but
It did not quench my thirst.⁶⁷²

⁶⁶⁹ Heravi, *Jami*, p.190.

⁶⁷⁰ Pendlebury, *Yusuf and Zulaykha* ...,p. 174.

⁶⁷¹ Nathan Haskell Dole and Belle M. Walker, *Flowers from Persian Poets*, V.2, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1901, p. 390.

⁶⁷² Jami, *Haft Awrang*, v.2, p. 235.

Jami continues that he had an augury on the next story. The name of Majnun came to him, so he decided to compose Majnun's love story.⁶⁷³

چو قرعه زدم به فال میمون
افتاد به شرح حال مجنون

Since I did an augury with a good intension,
It fell in reporting Majnun's story.

In the rest of this poem, Jami has pointed out that Nizami and Amir Khusrau composed this work brilliantly, but he has set out to follow in their footsteps; and if he cannot reach them, he would be satisfied with the dust of their camels' walk on his face.⁶⁷⁴ This *mathnawi*, as one of Jami's ardent critics puts it, is "*pukhta va shai'rana*, mature and poetic,"⁶⁷⁵ which Jami composed within four months. Creation of such a quality work in a short time demonstrates Jami's maturity and mastery in poetry, which he acquired in old age. There is some variation of Jami's work from that of Nizami and previous works on the subject: While Nizami⁶⁷⁶ gathered scattered and different versions of the story, Jami added to some parts, and summarized parts that he thought unnecessary, or dramatized the story, created conflicts within it, and on the whole created a work that was more pleasant for the audience of his era.⁶⁷⁷ Jami's version is based more on Arabic literature. In addition, the story is presented more in the form of allegory and is

⁶⁷³ Ibid., p. 246, line 226.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 236 lines 229-2236.

⁶⁷⁵ Heravi, p. 181.

⁶⁷⁶ Muhammad Ja'far Mahjub, "*Layli va Majnun -i Nizami va Majnun va Layli Amir Khusrau Dihlavi*," *Sukhan*, V.7, 1342, pp.620-637. In this interesting article Mahjub draws attention to the sources of Nizami, how he was forced to compose the story. He adds that the setting of the story is narrow and barren. Besides there is no "*bazm va razm* [party along with drinking session and fighting]," neither gardens nor kings, what can one make of a dried desert with sands and stones and wild animals! Mahjub also points out that there is no absolute evidence that the episode has actually taken place. Mahjub continues that it was Nizami's great skill and extraordinary imagery that such a unique production was made.

⁶⁷⁷ *Afsahzad, A Critical Study*, p. 612.

different "considerably from the simpler narrative" of Nizami.⁶⁷⁸ For example, in Jami's version, Majnun is the one who dies first, while in Nizami's, Layli's death precedes Majnun's.

In Jami's version of *Layli va Majnun*, the subject of love, pain caused by separation from the beloved, the lover's lamentation and suffering are expressed with such skill that it touches the reader's heart. Yet, Nizami's version is more skillful as far as detail is concerned – i.e., Nizami's descriptions of nature, sunrise, or the setting of the sun are beyond the imagination of ordinary readers. Nizami's account of shining stars at night and their locations reflect his vast knowledge of astronomy. Besides, Nizami's tone and language are more sophisticated and challenging, while Jami's is less complicated and is more comprehensible for a more broad audience. Thus, if the reader has read Nizami's *Layli va Majnun* and examines Jami's version after that, s/he would enjoy it and would admire the creativity and innovation of the composer.

Mathnawi Khiradnama Iskandari

The last work of *Haft Awrang* is *Khiradnama Iskandari*, *The Book of Wisdom of Alexander*. It is in *Bahr-i mutiqarib-i muthmman* meter and consists of 2,315 couplets. Jami finished this work in 890/1485.⁶⁷⁹ On composing it, he had eyes on Nizami's *Iskandarnama* and Amir Khusrau's *Ayina-yi Iskandari*. Although prior to the fifteenth century several poets embarked on producing similar works, there are variations among them. For example, Firdausi's version is a narration of Alexander's conquests and victories. Nizami presents Alexander as the divinely just ruler, while Amir Khusrau

⁶⁷⁸ Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, p. 9.

⁶⁷⁹ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 214.

presents him as a king who enjoyed elegant and magnificent social gatherings and *bazm* or drinking.

Jami portrays Alexander as one who fights for justice and equality on earth, a liberator of the poor and underrepresented peoples, "a true, ideal ruler."⁶⁸⁰ In addition, Jami's version is a real *Khirdnama*, a story of wisdom. It consists mostly of a dialogue between Alexander and the Greek philosophers, or discourses of the latter on the death of Alexander. One hears Sa'di's voice in this work.⁶⁸¹ Yet, Jami has been criticized because he often poorly imitated Nizami in his verses,⁶⁸² especially when he inserts a few couplets in the form of *Saqinama* or Story of the cup bearer, in his version, exactly as Nizami did. I think presenting a collection of these couplets would make a great work of *Saqinama*, which is unique in its form, content, and is different from previous works such as Nizami's and the one by Hafiz, because the message it delivers is different. Jami's version of Alexander has its own touch with its distinctive content; therefore, it is worthwhile reading it.

In sum, *Haft Awrang*, besides its literary value, is an important source for the social and political history of the era. In it, Jami very subtly draws attention to the injustices of the time. Through anecdotes and stories he offers accounts of previous just kings and rulers, emphasizing their just reign, which provided peace and prosperity for their subjects.⁶⁸³ Also through his examples and models Jami condemns the *ulama* and the Sufis. Of course he has not left out his own colleagues, the poets, and has written

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 215.

⁶⁸¹ Zarrin Kub, *Karivan-i Hella*, " 'Arif-i Jam ", p. 293.

⁶⁸² Heravi, *Jami*, p. 183.

⁶⁸³ Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, pp. 141-142. Jami in *Mathnawi-i Silsilat al-Zahab* has sharply criticized courtiers and their cronies, Sufis, and scholars. His criticism was so sharp that he was warned that he should expect a reaction from those whom he condemned. He responded that he did not address any specific person, he had made only general remarks, and whoever was wise would recognize his own role in it.

passages on their greed and on the poor quality of their works. It is true that Jami had the writings of Nizami and Amir Khusrau in mind as models, but the language he uses is simpler and more accessible to the general public than the language the other two poets have used. Because of this uncomplicated language that is "free of artificiality," Jami's work can be read with pleasure, though it lacks the "*mitanat* the poetic imagination and eloquence" of Nizami.⁶⁸⁴

Nizami and Khusrau's audiences/patrons were courtiers and elites, while Jami wrote more for the general public. As a Sufi and a poet, Jami wanted his mystical and ethical thoughts to reach a wider audience. In addition, his poetry, from the point of using the rules and regulations of crafts, is superior, while it lacks Nizami's exclusiveness,⁶⁸⁵ a quality that Jami has pointed to as: "quality and points that Nizami has put in *panj gang*, *Five Treasures*, ...no human soul is able to produce."⁶⁸⁶ I personally believe Jami's work is a refined work that is more straightforward and accessible than Nizami's *Khamasa*.⁶⁸⁷ It does not require extensive knowledge of the mathematical sciences and astronomy that is required to understand Nizami's work. Its only flaw is its occasional repetition of some religious topics that may bore readers; yet, the work's outstanding literary quality would easily compensate for some of its shortcomings.

⁶⁸⁴ Edward Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, V.3, New Delhi: Goodword Books Pvt. Ltd., 2002, p. 540. Browne writes that he could not do justice in comparing Jami's *Haft Awrang* and Nizami's *Khamasa*, so he asked his Persian scholar friend, Mirza Bihruz, to give his opinion of the two works. So the evaluation belongs to Bihruz.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 540.

⁶⁸⁶ Jami, *Baharistan*, p.145.

⁶⁸⁷ Nizami had extensive knowledge of the sciences, especially mathematics and astronomy, in addition to knowledge of Persian pre-Islamic history; so his writing is inclusive of vast information that he knew. Yet, Nizami belonged to the region of Iran where the dominant language was Turkish. Therefore, so in his first work, *Mathnawi-i Makhzan al-Asrar*, *Treasure of Secrets*, his language is not as clear as in his last work, *Iskandar-nama*, which according to Mahjub "is his best work, but less read because Iranians are not fond of Iskandar (Alexander the Great)." Nizami, *Haft Paykar*, read by Muhammad Mahjub, Tehran: np, n.d.

Jami's Prose

While a Sufi poet, Jami also wrote a variety of prose works. A brief account of them will be covered in Appendix B; in this section two of Jami's renowned prose works will be discussed. *Nafahat al-Uns min Hazarat al-Quds, Breaths of Familiarity from the Nobles' Sanctuary*, is a continuation of Ansari-yi Heravi's⁶⁸⁸ translation of Muhammad Hussein Salami Nishaburi's (d. 1044) Arabic work, *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*. At the beginning of the text, Jami explains that the original work was written by "the sheikh, Sufi, and imam of the world, 'Arif Abu 'Abd al-Rahman Muhammad b. al-Hussein al-Salami al-Nishaburi." He adds that Khwaja 'Abd Allah Ansari translated it from the Arabic and added names and sayings of more Sufi saints. However, Jami continues, Ansari's work is in old Heravi dialect⁶⁸⁹ and it is difficult to understand, so he (Jami) decided to write in simpler language.⁶⁹⁰ Jami also points out that he had been thinking about this work but did not write it until in 881/1471, "friend of dervishes, and believer of them... Amir Nizam al-Din Ali-shir" asked him to embark on writing the work.⁶⁹¹ He produced this work sixty years after his encounter with Khwaja Muhammad Parsa, adding some of his sayings to it as a token of his appreciation to the memory of the latter.⁶⁹²

This work, *Nafahat al-Uns* includes biographies of six hundred-fourteen male Sufi saints and thirty-three female Sufi saints. This is a very valuable work for the history of Sufism, Sufi teachings, and philosophy. Jami explains the meaning of some Sufi

⁶⁸⁸ Ansari died in 1089.

⁶⁸⁹ By the Heravi dialect, Jami meant the Persian dialect of Ansari, people of Herat communicated.

⁶⁹⁰ Jami's model for this work was another biography of the Sufi saints, *Tazkirat al-Ulia'* written by 'Attar-i Nishaburi. Jami summarized 'Attar's notes on saints. On p. 300 is an account about Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abulkhayr (357/967-440/1048), the famous Sufi/poet of the 10th century. 'Attar's work lists only ninety-seven famous Sufi saints.

⁶⁹¹ Maulana 'Abd al-Rahman Jami, *Nafahat al-Uns min Hazarat al-Quds*, ed. Mehdi Tuhidi-pour, Tehran: Intisharat-i 'Ilmi, 1375, p. 3.

⁶⁹² Arberry, *Persian Literature*, p. 426.

expressions, such as *'arif* or a learned one, a seeker. In spite of its literary value and importance as a source on Sufism, Jami has been harshly criticized for the work by some Shi'i scholars because of his omission of Shi'i saints. Yet, besides its value for the biography of Sufis, *Nafahat* is an important source for the classical history of Persian and Tajik literature because of anecdotes and samples of prose and verses that have been inserted in it.⁶⁹³ In addition, Jami has included the biographies of some Persian poets whom some scholars regard as Sufis, such as Nizami, Khaqani, Amir Khusrau Dihlavi, Sa'di, and Hafiz. Jami also covers the Khwajagan of the Naqshbandi, the Sufi Order that he led in Herat.

The next renowned work of Jami is *Baharistan, The Spring Garden*, which is in prose with inserted verses. The work is an imitation of Sa'di's *Gulistan, Rose Garden*.⁶⁹⁴ Jami completed the *Baharistan* in 892/1487. At the beginning of the work, he points out that his purpose in writing this work was that his beloved son, Ziya' al-Din Yusuf, who was ten years of age at the time, Jami writes:

He was studying the basic rules of literature and Arabic scholastic theology. Since it is difficult for adolescents to learn unfamiliar expression and difficulty of the text might frighten or discourage them, I [Jami] occasionally read passages from the book *Gulistan* for my son, so he would benefit from the blessing of the great master Muslih al-Din Sa'di-yi Shirazi, the blessing of God the exalted one on him. While reading passages from the book for him, it came to my mind that I should write a few passages in a way that *Gulistan* was written.⁶⁹⁵

Jami notes that the book has eight *ruza*, gardens or chapters and that “each chapter is different from the other, in which there are diverse flowers with distinctive scents, but the

⁶⁹³ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 187.

⁶⁹⁴ Sa'di (ca 1200-ca, 1292), is the greatest poet of Shiraz after Hafiz. He finished his celebrated work *Gulistan* in 1258.

⁶⁹⁵ Jami, *Baharistan*, p. 20

autumn breeze will not wither them.”⁶⁹⁶ The subjects that have been covered in order in each chapter of *Baharistan* are as follows.

The first chapter contains stories about Sufis and saints, the second is on the sayings of *hakims*, wise men and philosophers, the third is stories on kings' justice and manners, the fourth is on generosity, the fifth is on love, the sixth is on jokes and wittiness, the seventh provides a definition of poetry, poets, and evaluation of their works, and the last is about animals. As Jami has pointed out his reason for putting together the work, *Baharistan* has simpler prose than *Gulistan* and has fewer Arabic phrases. This work is one of the best prose works of Jami, as well as one of the best prose works of the fifteenth century, because it is not ornamental and does not have a verbose, flowery style. In this study, only two of Jami's prose – *Baharistan* and *Nafahat* – and two of his works of poetry – *diwans* and *mathnawis* – have been discussed. Keeping in mind that Jami was so prolific; one could say he was probably the most productive poet/writer of Persian literature.⁶⁹⁷

Final Comment on Jami's Verse

Jami's production as the poet laureate of the Timurid court is remarkable. Two of his poetry works, his three-part *diwan* and *Mathnawi Haft Awrang*, have already been discussed. Although as a whole his *Mathnawis* have been labeled as imitations of Nizami and Amir Khusrau, I must emphasize that two of his *mathnawis*, *Salaman va Absal* and *Yusuf va Zulaykha*, are his own creation and are made not only skillfully, but also brilliantly.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 22.

⁶⁹⁷ As it was mentioned, the rest of Jami's literary works is covered in Appendix B.

However, Jami's poetic reputation depends on the quality of his *ghazals*; for, as Yarshater rightfully states, "the *ghazal* is Persian lyric poetry's *par excellence*."⁶⁹⁸ Jami's *ghazals* are not *the best* of his works. Not all of them reflect ecstatic passion and musicality; they often lack the rich, exceptional language of Rumi or Hafiz. Studying Jami's *diwan* critically, there are numerous extremely charming and wonderful *ghazals*, plus numerous quatrains and *qit'as* that are composed very skillfully.⁶⁹⁹ Yet, it would not be fair to compare Jami's *ghazals* with the greatest, such as those of Hafiz or Sa'di. The latter's *ghazals* are regarded as perfect from a technical point, and with regard to fluency and ease of diction.⁷⁰⁰ Furthermore, no one has been able to express the insanity of love with such deep and intense emotion as beautifully and elegantly as Sa'di has done. Hafiz's *ghazals* are however, considered superior to his. Hafiz is considered the "prince of Persian, and perhaps of all, lyrics poets," and his *ghazals* hold a special status in the estimation of his compatriots as well as of foreigners.⁷⁰¹ So Jami's *ghazals* should be compared to and evaluated by the *ghazals* of his contemporaries and those of the masters who came before.

Jami's virtues in verse are "relative lucidity and simplicity as compared with the pomposity and perverseness of the 9th/15th century. Yet Jami too knows when to open all the registers of an extravagant style. As a brilliant epigone he knows how to bring the

⁶⁹⁸ Yarshater, *Persian Literature*, p. 15. Yarshater states that poetry by itself is the art *par excellence* of Persia and her salient cultural achievement.

⁶⁹⁹ I could choose at least 160 *ghazals* that, in my opinion, are so charming and meaningful that one needs to stop and reflect on the deep meaning that they convey to the reader.

⁷⁰⁰ Arberry, *Persian Literature*, p. 208.

⁷⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 357. Arberry is actually quoting Mas'ud Farzad, one of the authorities on Hafiz, who believes that Hafiz's poetry is one of the Seven Wonders of World literatures. He adds that the "miracle of continuity in Hafiz's *ghazals* is unique."

available material elegantly into harmony with the demands of the period."⁷⁰² It is true that Jami modeled his predecessors' works, "though without equaling them on their own grounds."⁷⁰³ However, as Jami puts it himself, he attempted to "put old stories to new tunes." In addition, he tried to remind his audience of previous great works that he had studied, learned from, and used as models. As a conscientious scholar, he was well aware of the deterioration or *inhibit* of poetry in his era, so he wanted to enlighten his audiences.

This study is just a beginning in the field of Jami studies. To date, Jami has not received the attention that he deserves, for numerous reasons. The first important reason is the advent of the Safavids, the fervent Shi'i Dynasty whose ideology Jami challenged as he was an ardent Sunni Sufi poet who did not hesitate to express his displeasure with the bigotry and narrow mindedness of some Shi'is at the time. Second, Jami's corpus, especially his poetry, has not been studied on its own merits. It has been mostly compared to the works of his predecessors, thus often being regarded inferior to them, though I believe his *mathnawis* are among the best works of Persian literatures and he composed numerous *ghazals* that are charming.⁷⁰⁴ Jami's point in engaging in so-called imitation had to do with his witnessing the decline of poetry and wanting to re-introduce works that people had heard or read before. However, a few of his colleagues were using these older works as models, and most did not pay attention to the rules of the delicate craft of poetry. So to judge the greatest poet of the fifteenth century justly and fairly, we need to study all of his literary productions, his prose and poetry, a task that was not possible to accomplish within the scope of this study.

⁷⁰² Rypka, *History of Persian Literature*, p. 287.

⁷⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

⁷⁰⁴ I think there are numerous *ghazals* in Jami's *diwan* that compete with some of Hafiz or Sa'di's *ghazals*.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

JAMI'S LEGACY: POET, SUFI, PHILANTROPIC SCHOLAR

In Central Asia, Persia, and India, Abd al-Rahman Jami was recognized as a major poet of Persian literature and also as a leading Sufi master of the Naqshbandi Order after Khwaja Ahrar during the late fifteenth century. However, Jami's writings indicate that he may not have been pleased with his worldly achievement as a poet, even though his work was so highly acclaimed. It is also unclear whether Jami was contented with Sufis or being one. Although Jami enjoyed fame and prestige during his lifetime, scholars and critics have vilely overlooked his contribution to Persian literature as well as his substantial role as a Sufi master in the Naqshbandi Order. This chapter offers some final thoughts on Jami as a poet and as a Sufi.

Jami as a Poet

Jami was well aware of his aptitude in composing poetry, the superiority of his verses over his contemporaries, and his ability to appeal to his Sufi audience through his poetry. For one, he was not modest in any way about reminding his audience of his talent in writing poetry. He chose the form of his poems carefully, and challenged himself to

put feeling into his *ghazals* which could perfect the expression of his sentiments.⁷⁰⁵ While great poets of Persian literature focused on only one genre of poetry, i.e., Firdausi in epic poetry, Nizami in storytelling, Unsuri in *qasidas*, Sa'di in love lyrics, and Hafiz in *ghazals*, Jami was versatile,⁷⁰⁶ writing in all poetic forms, especially *ghazal* and *mathnawi*, competing in this regard only with Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi.

Jami followed in the tradition of the great poets of the past, appropriating their form and content. This was unlike the general practice of his contemporaries, who engaged in innovation and *a'nab* or embarking on a difficult task, when they were faced with a shortage of *mazmun*.⁷⁰⁷ However in borrowing from his predecessors, Jami was criticized for copying and imitating the work of masters such as Nizami Ganjavi or Amir Khusrau Dihlavi.⁷⁰⁸ In his own defense, he explained that he intended to "renew" the old poems by simplifying them and by removing the lavish ornamentation style, consciously attempting to revitalize them.

In one of his poems Jami writes: *My charming verse has made a cage out of the world for me, and I am the sweet-talking parrot inside.*⁷⁰⁹ Jami boasts about the quality of his verse: *It is because of the beauty of Jami's verse that even the way the pen moves on the paper has become musical.*⁷¹⁰ He also praises the mystical aspect of his poems: *When*

⁷⁰⁵ Jami, *Wasitat al-'Iqd*, p. 377, line 3986.

⁷⁰⁶ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 142. Jami in *Baharistan* writes that only *Mutafannin* or master poets are able to make different genres of poetry.

⁷⁰⁷ Ehsan Yarshater, *Shi'r-i Farsi Dar 'Ahd-i Shahrukh*, pp.131-132. For example Katib-i Turshizi (d. 1424) wrote a *qasida* in which he uses the word *hujra* or room and *shutur* or camel in each line of the *qasida*. Or Lutf Allah Nishaburi (d.1413) wrote a *qasida* in which he uses the four elements of nature: water, earth, fire, and wind in each line.

⁷⁰⁸ Jami, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, p. 331, line 3370. Jami was quite aware of his critics. In this poem he writes: *My sayings are well calculated and in harmony, if the jealous one reproach me is because of his unsound nature.*

⁷⁰⁹ Jami, *Wasitat al-'Iqd*, p. 91, line 758.

⁷¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 222, line 2263.

*my poetry was read in khaniqah, Sufis screamed out with pleasure and excitement.*⁷¹¹ In another verse Jami addresses Sufis: *Stop listening to the sound of the nay*⁷¹² *in vain. If you desire ecstasy and rapture, listen [instead] to my painful lamentation.*⁷¹³ In places, Jami compares his poetry to Sa'di's and writes: *Jami: From these new verses Khurasan has become full of sugar; it seems a sweet verse from Sa'di has arrived from Shiraz.*⁷¹⁴ In spite of his confidence in his literary talent, Jami was beset by the criticism of his contemporaries. He laments: *Tell the jealous one: 'Rip yourself apart with your sting of envy.'*⁷¹⁵

Jami criticized the literary state of his era, condemning the quality of his contemporary poets: *Look at the joyful and delightful gatherings of the shah, where crows have become poets and owls, experts in rhyme.*⁷¹⁶ Jami was also critical of his contemporaries' conduct, accusing them of trading their dignity for monetary rewards. The reality of the time was that poets' only means of income was patronage from the courts or nobles, since they could not print their works or receive royalties for them. So, like most of his contemporaries whom he criticized, Jami received financial compensation for his works. Still, for the most part, he did not depend on writing panegyrics.⁷¹⁷ Even in the few panegyric *qasidas* or *ghazals* in his *diwan*, he only wrote one or two lines praising the rulers, usually Sultan Hussein Bayqara, while in the rest of

⁷¹¹ Ibid., p. 231, line 2235.

⁷¹² The *Nay* has been the Sufis' traditional musical instrument until today. Its value and status in Sufi music increased after the famous opening line of Rumi's *Mathnawi: Listen to the nay which is lamenting the separation [from God]*.

⁷¹³ Jami, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, p. 702, line 7408.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid., p. 351, line 692.

⁷¹⁵ Jami, *Wasitat al-Iqd*, p. 173, line 1693.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid., p. 346, #3536.

⁷¹⁷ Jami, after he returned from Samarqand, was a teacher at one of the *madrasas* in Herat. So he had some kind of stipend, though it may not have been sufficient. However, according to Lari, he was contented because he lived a simple life, free of worldly goods.

the poems he offered them advice. As he writes: *My diwan is mostly lovers' lamentation.* Or it is advice and wisdom-words; the panegyrics found there have been requested by kings, and I did not expect any reward or anything from them as compensation.⁷¹⁸

Unlike most of his contemporaries, Jami was not attached to the court or to the house of any noble; nor did he request funding from anyone. Safi, one of Jami's disciples, states in *Rashahat* that Jami never reached out to anyone to receive monetary rewards. He quotes Jami:

We never belittled ourselves in youth as was customary practice of seekers of knowledge... walking behind the masters ... never, as was routine, had any interest in serving the *arbab-i dars*, master of lessons.

Safi validates his points with this poem, which describes his master's attitude. He says:

چون بعهد جوانی از بر تو
بدر کس نرفتم از در تو
همه را بر درم فرستادی
من نمیخواستم تو میدادی

Since my youth, I have been close to you.
I did not go to anyone's door,
You sent everything to my door, instead;
I did not ask for it, but it came from you.⁷¹⁹

Even as Jami did not seek patronage, the quality of Jami's work was such that, it earned him generous monetary rewards. In fact, his collections were professionally bound and copied by some of the best calligraphers of Herat, thanks to generous funding provided by his close friend and patron, Ali-shir Nava'i.⁷²⁰

⁷¹⁸ Jami, *Khatimat al-Hayat*, p. 663, #10.

⁷¹⁹ Safi, *Rashahat*, v. 1, p. The actual poem is from Nizami but Safi states that it also describes his master's situation.

⁷²⁰ Normally, Jami would offer his works to the rulers in communication with him, or Nava'i would send them to dignitaries; in return, the people who received Jami's poetry or prose would send him rewards. Among his patrons were rulers like the Ottoman Sultan Bayazid, the Qara-Qyunlu leader Jahan Shah, the Aq-Qyunlu leaders Uzun Hasan and his son Ya'ghub, or local nobles. He would spend the money that he

Occasionally, despite successfully undertaking bold and perhaps immodest literacy works, Jami became disillusioned with his audience's response and questioned himself. As he writes:

Jami, I do not know what your purpose of writing poetry is; in this era the value of this commodity is low.⁷²¹

In a slightly different mood, he questioned whether or not the critical reception of his verse mattered. In another poem he writes:

Jami's purpose was not to become famous when he wrote such deeply meaningful poems; he wrote a few points on the pages of his time for the benefit of his friends, leaving remembrances for them.⁷²²

Finally, Jami admits that he wrote poems regardless of whether friends or critics read them:

[My writing is] a means for expressing my love and pains; otherwise, the subject of my diwan is not love, but a memory of what I have done.⁷²³

Articulating one's thought or belief in the guise of verses was a tool for expressing inner thoughts throughout the Islamic Persian literature. Studying Persian literature reveals numerous examples of poets' subtle communication with their audiences. Perhaps this was Jami's intention when he wrote poetry. Especially in his *ghazals*, Jami expressed his belief in the Divine Love of God. In fact, in the tradition of Sufi poetry, his *ghazals* can be interpreted on two levels. Jami's poems describe both mystical love for the Divine and human love, while his quatrains mostly reverberate with a philosophic message, emphasizing *vahdat-i vujud*, unity of existence.

received on charitable deeds, such as building a *khaniqah*, a school, or a mosque and continuing to provide for these institutions through *waqfs*.

⁷²¹ Jami, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, p. 199, #1947.

⁷²² Ibid., p. 338, #3446-7.

⁷²³ Jami, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, p. 295, #2969.

Jami occasionally appears to regret his life as a poet. In *Khatimat al-Hayat*, his third *diwan*, he expresses his disappointment by writing:

Jami, you have passed the stage of perfection in poetry; it is time to go into isolation. You grew old blackening the paper. I am afraid you may lose your mind in this trade. The foundation of your work is qasida and ghazal, for how long you will write lies on *karam al-katibin*⁷²⁴, the most generous of writers, that is, God.⁷²⁵

And, finally, in one of his moments of doubt he writes this quatrain:

Half of my life passed in vain; the other half passed in shame and confusion. One moment was worth the whole world, but look how it has passed in pretensions.⁷²⁶

Jami's life as a poet was marred by his own self doubt, and so in old age he preferred solitude. Lari reports that his master preferred isolation; often, in order to avoid companions, he engaged himself in reading or writing poetry, while dissatisfied with that task, as well. However, as much as he boasted about his poetry, it seems not to have fulfilled him, either because he felt it was beneath him or he did not like what he wrote; or possibly, in his opinion, writing poetry was not a dignified profession.

Jami and the Naqshbandis

Despite the fact that Jami was acquainted with the Naqshbandis from childhood,⁷²⁷ he joined the order in his forties when he was already a well-known poet in Timurid territories. It is not clear why he did not join the order earlier. He may have been discontented with the literary circle of Herat or not quite pleased with being a poet or

⁷²⁴ *Karam al-katibin* is one of the ninety-nine names of God in Islam.

⁷²⁵ Jami, *Khatimat al-Hayat*, p. 661, #2.

⁷²⁶ Jami, *Wasitat al-Iqd*, p. 411, # 29.

⁷²⁷ See Chapter 6.

with what he wrote.⁷²⁸ He commented that he had spent forty years being blind, referring to the time prior to his association with the Naqshbandi Order. It seems that the strict adherence, apparently, of the Naqshbandis to the *Sunna* or tradition of the Prophet and *Shari'a* or Islamic law resonated with his theological upbringing.

While it has been documented that members of the Naqshbandi Order ardently believed in the core of Ibn Arabi's thought,⁷²⁹ *vahdat-i vujud*, it is not clear when Jami became a fervent believer of Arabi's teaching. Nevertheless, he must have been quite familiar with the idea to have written forty-seven quatrains about *vahdat-i vujud*. In addition to discussing this concept in his quatrains, Jami clarifies Ibn Arabi's thought in his *mathnawis*, *Silsilat al-Zahab*, *Tuhfat al-Ahrar*, and *Subhat al-Ahrar*. He also wrote several prose works such as *Naqd al-Nusus*, *Lavama'*, and *Asha't al-Lami'at* on the subject.⁷³⁰ Jami's writings on Ibn Arabi's thought and teaching, especially his prose, served as a guideline for the Naqshbandi Order to the point that Maulana Abd al-Nabi Fakhr al-Zamani-i Qazvini,⁷³¹ the author of *Tazkira-i Maykhana*, referred to Jami as “*qarina* [the mirror image] of Sheikh Muhi al-Din b. Arabi.”⁷³² Qazvini notes that some of the ‘*ulama* of Transoxiana regarded Jami as having greater importance than did Ibn

⁷²⁸ Critics believe that Jami's works, which he is famed for such as *Haft Awrang*, *Baharistan*, and *Nafahat* were written after he joined the Naqshbandi Order.

⁷²⁹ Safi, *Rashahat*, p. 243. Safi writes that Jami had many encounters with Khwaja Burhan al-Din Abu Nasr Parsa, son of Khwaja Parsa. In one of the sessions the talk was about Sheikh Muhi al-Din b. Arabi. Khwaja Abu Nasr quoted his father who had said " *Fusus*, referring to the famous work of Ibn Arabi, *Naqd al-Fusus*, is the soul and *Futuhat* [*Futahat al-Macci*], another work of his, is the heart, and whoever learns the *Fusus* well, his dedication to the Prophet will become strong."

⁷³⁰ Heravi, Jami, p. 227.

⁷³¹ Mulla Abd al-Nabi Fakhr al-Zamani-i Qazvini finished his famous work in 1618. His work has a high literary value because, besides being an anthology, it is a biographical work on poets who composed *Saqinama*, which is in the form of mathnawi. The content of the *Saqinama* is a poet's request for wine from the *Saqi* or the cup-bearer so his mood changes of his request from the *moghanni* or musician to play a song that changes his state.

⁷³² Mulla Abd al-Nabi Fakhr al-Zamani-i Qazvini, *Tazkira-i Maykhana*, ed. Ahmad Gulchin-Ma'ani, Tehran: Iqbal Pub., 1375, six edition, p. 103. Also Heravi, Jami, p. 279.

Arabi.⁷³³ Therefore, after the fifteenth century in Transoxiana, the Naqshbandis used Jami's writing to better understand Ibn Arabi's thought. Yet, Jami's intention in writing commentaries on Ibn Arabi's works was more in order to clarify the latter's teaching and not to explain the Naqshbandi doctrine. The order mostly read Abd al-Razzaq Kashani's works on the Naqshbandi doctrine rather than reading Jami.⁷³⁴ Nonetheless, Jami wrote about some of the specific practices of the Naqshbandis such as *zikhri khifya* (silent chant) in his works, or wrote about some of the important personalities such as Khwaja Parsa or Ahrar.⁷³⁵

While Jami was the Naqshbandi master in Herat, he avoided giving lectures about mysticism, though he had sufficient knowledge and understanding of Sufi thought and practice and was quite capable of teaching. His *Al-Durrat al-Fakhira*, discussing theology, is one of the best resources on the subject of knowing God from a philosophical point of view. Lari reported that although Jami had the approval of *makhdam*, the master, Khwaja Ahrar, and that of the *ghayb ma'zun*, one authorized by the Invisible, that is, God; he preferred not to instruct anyone about the mysteries of the Divine. He adds: "But if suddenly a real seeker would appear, the master guided him in secret."⁷³⁶ Jami's reluctance was probably due to his observation that there was a discrepancy between the *guftar va kirdar*, the sayings and doings, of some Sufis. He was especially displeased with some of their hypocritical practices, so he preferred not to be identified with them.⁷³⁷ Further, Jami's refusal to guide anyone on the Sufi path was his discontent with the

⁷³³ Ibid., p. 103.

⁷³⁴ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 280.

⁷³⁵ Jami, *Nafahat*, pp. 378-406. Jami writes biographies of the *Khawajagan* in *Nafahat*; the last sheikh who is covered is Khwaja Ahrar.

⁷³⁶ Lari, *Taklama*, p.31.

⁷³⁷ He criticizes them in numerous poems, yet he does not name any particular order.

practices of some Sufis whom he considered “pretentious.” His inclination toward the *Malamatiyya*⁷³⁸ Order was probably a result of his antipathy toward the pious charade of most religious people and Sufis. As it was noted before he wrote:

از درون شو آشنا و از برون بیگانه وش
این چنین زیبا روش کم می بود اندر جهان

Be familiar internally while a stranger externally,
Acting so beautiful in this way is rare in the world.⁷³⁹

Naturally, Jami disapproved of some of the *avam zadigi* or fooling the common people that went on in some Sufi orders, as well. He also condemned *Sufi-yi bi 'ilm* or Sufi practice without knowledge.⁷⁴⁰ He pointed out that *kashf*, discovery⁷⁴¹ without knowledge is impossible.⁷⁴² Jami especially expressed these sentiments in his *Silsilat al-Zahab*, writing:

Their *sama' is* more of a secular dance than a Sufi meditation. Their khaniqah, furnished and decorated with expensive carpets and ornaments bought with devotees' donations, too luxurious.⁷⁴³

Although Jami does not name any particular order when he expresses disapproval of Sufis in general, it appears that he was not happy by some practices of the Naqshbandi Sufis in particular, with whom he dealt the most. Like Hafiz, he was so frustrated with

⁷³⁸ This order has been discussed before.

⁷³⁹ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 284. Malamatiyya believe that a real believer is an inward follower of the path, not an outward pretender. So a *malamati* did not appear to be a pious believer in the eyes of other people. That is the reason Jami admires the inwardly pious people and states that there are not so many people in the world that follow this practice.

⁷⁴⁰ Heravi, *Jami*, p. 280. Bakharzi, *Maqamat*, p. 227. Bakharzi has written that a young student, who was an acquaintance of Jami, dropped his education and left the city accompanying some of the Naqshbandi Sufis for Samarqand. Jami reproached him that his decision was not wise. He always condemned Sufis without knowledge, whom he believed would not discover the truth, because discovery happens through precise and concrete study of the writings of the great ones.

⁷⁴¹ One of the important steps of the Sufi path.

⁷⁴² Heravi, *Jami*, p. 280.

⁷⁴³ Jami, *Haft Awrang: Silsilat al-Zahab*, pp. 189-191.

the hypocrisy, insincerity, and pretence of various Sufi groups, that he articulated his frustration through subtle language of poetry. He writes:

Thank God that I am neither a sheikh nor a follower, neither seek knowledge, nor teaching and tutoring. I am free from the bondage of the world, either impure or bright; I shall sit in a corner of a shack, lone and solitary.⁷⁴⁴

He conveys his feelings of discontent with Sufis often in his *diwan*, expressing his objection to the hypocritical behavior of some in at least thirty-one occasions, in addition to seventy times that he harshly scorns *sheikhs*. In a *ghazal* in *Wasitat al-'Iqd*, he writes:

There is no Sufi who has perceived secrets so I can sit in the corner of the khaniqah and exchange insights with him. There is no learned one, who has such knowledge of prose and poetry that I can discuss my work with him.⁷⁴⁵

In another line he writes:

I did not receive the secret of love from the sheikh of khaniqah,
so I better attend the service of *pir-i mughan*, the Magus, the head of fire worshipers.⁷⁴⁶

Jami mocks the hypocrisy of Sufis and writes:

Oh Sufi, you'd better spend your gold-gilded clothes to
buy your wine; it is improper for a Sufi to appear in worldly attire.⁷⁴⁷

Jami's annoyance toward Sufis, *sheikhs*, *zahids* or religious people, *wa'izin* or preachers, and *faqih*s or jurists, which he expresses in his poetry are numerous in his *diwans*. For instance, he harshly attacks *zahids* ninety-two times.

On the whole, it seems that Jami was not an outgoing person, or perhaps he became introverted in the latter part of his life. In one of his quatrains he writes:

⁷⁴⁴ Jami, *Fatihah*, p. 855, line 34.

⁷⁴⁵ Jami, *Wasitat*, p. 288, line 3001-2.

⁷⁴⁶ Jami, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, p. 638, line 6730. It is a reference to the head of Zoroastrian religion. Hafiz uses *pir-i mughan* numerous times in his *ghazals*. Jami used the expression whenever he sought an answer for his problems or questions.

⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 665, line 7013. Jami in another line also advises Sufis to mortgage everything in the khaniqah and to "buy wine." For Sufis, "wine" implies removing obstacles to receiving the truth. Jami also requests when a cupbearer drinks wine, he wipe out the others' faults, meaning he would see no fault in people.

Jami for a while joined *khalq-i 'alam*, the people of the world, but he did not gain anything from coexisting with them. So he freed himself from their animosity and friendship and sat in a corner by himself.⁷⁴⁸

He further writes:

I am so intolerant of people that in order not to see them,
I do not want to sleep so I would not see them in my dreams, either.

He adds:

“I do not wish to be in the Sun either, so I will not see even my own shadow.”⁷⁴⁹

Nevertheless, this man who preferred solitude to company enjoyed the respect of *khas va 'amm*—both the elite and the common people—even though the primary sources do not report whether the latter were aware of his poetry. Jami earned the people’s respect because of his philanthropic work on their behalf, by writing letters to the judges, and elites.⁷⁵⁰ In addition, his outstanding poetry⁷⁵¹ and his lofty position in the Naqshbandi Order granted Jami respect and recognition among the nobles and elites.

Jami in Obscurity

This great personage of the fifteenth century has not received the recognition that he deserves to date, especially for his literary works, for two reasons: his Sunni beliefs,⁷⁵² and the influence of *Sabk-i Hindi* poetry.⁷⁵³ Jami was accused of having anti-

⁷⁴⁸ Jami, *Wasitat*, p. 415, line 52.

⁷⁴⁹ Jami, *Fatihah*, p. 842, line 20.

⁷⁵⁰ These letters must have had positive results for those who requested Jami's help; otherwise, Jami would not have written over four-hundred of them.

⁷⁵¹ Writings of his contemporaries, such as Prince Sam Mirza, son of Shah Ismai'l, Dulatshah Samarqandi, Zahir al-Din Babur, are the convincing proof for this claim.

⁷⁵² Jami, *Shavahid al-Nubuvat*, ed. Siyyid Hasan Amin, Tehran: Intisharat-i Vahid, 1379, pp. 29-30.

⁷⁵³ The sixteenth and seventeenth century was the peak of this style in the regions where Persian literature was popular, especially in Iran, India, and Central Asia.

Shi'i sentiments. According to the *ghulat* or extremist Shi'is,⁷⁵⁴ he rejected the claim of some Shi'is that Ali, the first Imam of the Shi'is,⁷⁵⁵ was buried in a place⁷⁵⁶ near Balkh.⁷⁵⁷ In addition, Jami asserted that Abu Talib, Ali's father, was an unbeliever because he did not convert to Islam until his death, despite his unconditional support of the Prophet against his enemies.⁷⁵⁸ Finally, some accused him, that his omission of Shi'i Sufis in his work *Nafahat al-Uns*, another example of the animosity of the Safavid Shi'is against him, also indicated his opposition to Shi'is.⁷⁵⁹

So for two centuries following his death, Jami was forgotten. It was not until the eighteenth century that Jami was finally appreciated,⁷⁶⁰ when poets of the time abandoned the feverish admiration of Indian-style poetry. Even though the poets of the Qajar Dynasty (1794-1925) had high regard for Jami's work, he was not studied critically

⁷⁵⁴ *Ghulat* were extremist Shi'is who later supported Isma'il, the founder of the Safavid Dynasty in Iran (1501-1524). The latter extended his domain into southern part of Transoxiana after defeating Shaybani Khan, the Uzbek leader who overthrew the Timurids and conquered Herat in 1507. Isma'il imposed Shi'i ideology on inhabitants of his domain.

⁷⁵⁵ These *ghulat* convinced Sultan Hussein to transfer Ali's grave to Herat. Jami intervened and convinced the Sultan that there was no need for it.

⁷⁵⁶ The place is known today as Mazar-i Sharif, which is in present-day Afghanistan.

⁷⁵⁷ Jami, *Shavahid al-Nubuvat*, p. 31. Jami wrote a passionate *ghazal* after visiting the grave of Ali in Najaf, when he was en-route for Hajj.

⁷⁵⁸ Jami, *Shavahid al-Nubuvat*, p. 32. Jami wrote a piece in *Silsilat al-Zahab* in which he writes " though Abu Talib was the Prophet's uncle and Ali's father, this relation did not have any benefit for him and his place is in hell like Abu Lahab, an uncle of the Prophet, who inflicted so much pain and agony on the Prophet.

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 34-35. Amin in the extended preface that he wrote for *Shavahid al-Nubuvat* states that those so-called Shi'i Sufis, whom Jami is accused of not mentioning in his work, were religious scholars who were known for their piety and virtue and were not Sufis. It was Mulla Baqir Majlisi, the prominent Shi'i scholar of the late Safavid time, who in his work *Javab al-Masa'il al-Thalath*, regarded them as Sufis and accused Jami of having animosity against the Shi'i Sufis. However, Amin (Ibid., pp. 51-52) who relies on William Chittick who has written a preface for Jami's mystic work, *Lavayih*, states that three famous Safavid scholars Mulla Sadra, Mulla Hadi Sabzivari, and Fayzi- Kashani, have used Jami's argument about the names and attribution of God, [in case of Mulla Sadra in his work *Asfar*, Fayz's work, *Kalamat-i Maknuna*, and *Asrar al-Hikam* of Sabzivari], but have not credited Jami as their reference. Their practice is another example of the animosity of the Safavid Shi'is against Jami.

⁷⁶⁰ During the eighteenth century there was a new movement in Persian literature, which is referred to as *durah -i bazgasht-* the era of return to the pre-Safavid style of poetry. The peak of the movement occurred during the Qajar Dynasty. The poets of the Qajar dynasty were almost all attached to the court. It was due to their critics that composing in the Indian style poetry vanished in Iran, while it continued in Central Asia and India.

even then, which trend has continued to the present-day Iran. Also, while some critical studies of Jami's works have been written in Tajikistan and Afghanistan, no extensive studies have been conducted in the West. Jami himself believed that even if he could not be a great poet or “real” mystic, he would be remembered in history. As he wrote:

I have nothing of the treasures of knowledge in my hand, nor do
I know my way down the path of mystics; I am happy that from the
blessing of my pen, my name will remain in the history.⁷⁶¹

Final Thoughts about Jami

Jami's life, as he named his three *diwans*, followed three stages. During the first stage, *Fatihah al-Shabab*, in his youth, he was a competent theologian, believing faithfully in the *Sunna* and *Hadith*, teaching at religious schools, and writing poetry. During the second stage, *Wasitat al-'Iqd*, his middle age, he joined the Naqshbandis, the order that also adhered greatly to the *Sunna* and *Hadith*, further intensifying his faith. In addition, the Naqshbandi policy of maintaining close contact with the royal court agreed with Jami, who as the poet laureate of the Timurids, was already close to the court and nobles.⁷⁶² Jami also agreed with the policy of the Naqshbandi leader, Khwaja Ahrar, of implementing charitable deeds through the court's influence and power, since he often engaged in philanthropic deeds, himself.⁷⁶³ It seems that in the third stage of his life, *Khatimat al-Hayat*, the end of his life, Jami was unhappy because, despite his wish, he felt he had not become the selfless Sufi, who is expected to have unconditional love for

⁷⁶¹ Jami, *Wasitat al-'Iqd*, p. 417, # 4427-8.

⁷⁶² By close, I do not mean that he was attached to the court.

⁷⁶³ Refer to Jami's letters to nobles, courtiers.

all, regardless of their beliefs, inclinations, and associations. It appears as though the love that he often versified in his poetry may not have penetrated completely into his heart.

So in *Khatimat al-Hayat*, Jami seems to try to come to terms with the realization that the unconditional love that a genuine Sufi indiscriminately offers to all did not become part of his nature. One could argue in Jami's defense that if he did not behave as he did, he could not have been close to the court or be Khwaja Ahrar's representative in Herat, which is a valid argument. So he seems to have preferred to act as a philanthropist practitioner, helping the needy, rather than engaging in deeds that may have offended the Naqshbandi Order,⁷⁶⁴ or angered the Timurid court.⁷⁶⁵

Finally, it would be fair to conclude that Jami was a great Persian poet. His *Mathnawi Haft Awrang* is one of the best works in Persian literature; yet his *ghazals* are not quite a match with Rumi's, because reading some of Jami's *ghazal* does not convey the ecstasy, excitement, astonishment that one feels after reading Rumi's *ghazal*. . Rumi's intention in composing *ghazals* was pouring out his inner feeling. It erupted like volcano; he did not attempt to curtail it. He did not care about meter. He expresses his disgust, as was noted of the meter in one of his line when he says:"

رستم از این بیت و غزل، ای شه و سلطان ازل
مفتعلن مفتعلن مفتعلن کشت مرا

I got free from this line and *ghazal*, O the eternal King and Sultan,
This scanning, scanning, scanning killed me.

On the other hand Jami is bond by meter and rhyme. As it was noted he points out in *Baharistan* that a good poem is the one in which the rule of prosody, rhyme and meter,

⁷⁶⁴ E.g., not mentioning Shi'i Sufis or orders in *Nafahat*.

⁷⁶⁵ E.g., not mentioning the Nurbakhshi order, because the leader, Nurbakhsh revolted against the Timurids

has been followed. Jami also wrote numerous works of prose and poetry⁷⁶⁶ that deserve to be topics of new research; possibly some contemporary scholars will provide more enlightening information about this Sufi poet. His complex personality demands further research and scrutiny: this study is only an opening to his rich and turbulent life and to the achievement of this last great classical poet of Persian literature.

⁷⁶⁶ Most sources point to fifty-four identified works.

APPENDIX A

SABK-I HINDI OR INDIAN STYLE

Jami lived in the fifteenth century; the era which theoretically was the beginning of a new style of poetry, which later was named as *Sabk-i Hindi* or Indian Style.⁷⁶⁷ Some scholars believe that Jami has used certain characteristics of the style in his poetry.⁷⁶⁸ This section is assigned to the origin and the characteristics of *Sabk-i Hindi* before offering some examples in Jami's *ghazals*.

Sabk-i Hindi is the last development of style in classical Persian poetry before the introduction of free verse in the twentieth century. The label was mostly applied to verse prior to *bazgasht –i adabi*, return to classical literature, of the nineteenth century. The Indian Style with its own characteristics and qualities is distinguished from the other two. *Sabki-i Hindi* was a term mostly applied by poets of the Safavid era. The debate about its inferiority or differences with the other two styles has continued almost since Qajar⁷⁶⁹ times, or the era that poets returned to the old style.⁷⁷⁰ The question is why it is referred

⁷⁶⁷ In this section both terms will be used interchangeably.

⁷⁶⁸ Hussein Khaliqirad in the article "Payaha-yi Sabk-i Hindi dar Ghazaliat-i Jami", *Rahnama-yi Kitab*, vol.16, (1352/1973), pp.21-33.

⁷⁶⁹ The Qajar (1781-1925) was one of the eight Turkish clans that established the Safavids, but at the end of the dynasty, the leader of Qajar clan revolted, though was defeated by Nadir Quli, the founder of the Afsharid dynasty. Later his grandson, Agha Muhammad Khan established the dynasty, which lasted hundred forty-four years, until was overthrown by the Pahlavi dynasty.

⁷⁷⁰ The poets in the late eighteenth century began composing in the styles prior to the Safavid era, so this period is referred to as *Bazgasht-i Adabi*, or return to the previous literary era.

to as: *Sabk-i Hindi-or Indian Style*? In the following section the style, its characteristics, differences with the previous styles, advantages, and its shortcomings will be defined.

Definition of *Sabki- Hindi*

The style was not referred to as Indian from the beginning, nor did the poets who composed in the style labeled it as Indian. The Safavid poets embarked on a new way to convey their thoughts. They assumed poetry in former styles had been exhausted of inspiring ideas, so they gradually changed their method and composed poetry in *sabk-i nou*, or “new style”. The adjective *Hindi* or Indian, replaced the *nou* (new) in a later period. This adjective, Indian, was used because of the numerous Safavid poets who migrated to India, and mostly became part of the Mughal Court, a Turco-Mongol dynasty founded by Zahir al-Din Babur ⁷⁷¹(1483-1530) in India. The official language at Babur’s court was Persian, and Babur’s grand-son Akbar (r.1556-1605), was a great patron of poets, so poets who had mostly composed in this new style and went to India, continued to write poetry in *sabk-i nou*. The Indian Style was a term that was applied to *sabk- nou* in a later period. Some recent Persian critics, according to Yarshater, have referred to this style, as Safavi or Isfahani School, on the ground that it was largely cultivated in Isfahan when the seat of the Safavid Dynasty (1502-1736) was transferred to Isfahan. In this section the Indian style and Safavi style will be used interchangeably.⁷⁷²It must be added that from geographical point this style was used from Turkey to Central Asia and the Indian Subcontinent. However, because of several centuries of patronage of the Mughal

⁷⁷¹ Babur was son of Umar Sheikh b. Abu Sa’id b. Sultan Muhammad b. Miranshah b. Timur. Lentz & Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, pp. 70-71.

⁷⁷² Ehsan, Yarshater, *Persian Literature*, Columbia Lectures on Iranian Studies, #3, USA: Bibliotheca Persica, The Persian Heritage Foundation, 1988, p. 252.

court that welcomed and supported numerous Persian poets so generously, it would be “the least compliment one could pay a country” to call the style “Indian”.⁷⁷³

Although it is generally believed that the style became the norm for poetry during the Safavids (1501-1722), the Persian scholar, Ali Dashti argues that its beginnings, went back to Khaqani’s (d. 1199) time, because the latter was the one who started to write in a new style. Dashti points out that some *ghazals* of Hafiz (d. 1390), who appreciated and praised Khaqani’s poetry, are also composed in this form. However, its starting point was really during the Timurid era. While Paul Losenski states that Baba Fighani-Shirazi is mostly credited for this style⁷⁷⁴, Dashti draws attention to Jami (d.1496) as the one that wrote in this style too. Then again, the era that has been officially assigned to this style is the early sixteenth century up to the beginning of eighteenth century, close to the fall of the Safavid Dynasty (1504-1727). Yarshater points to another fifty years after the fall of the Safavids up to the Zand Dynasty (1750-1779) in Iran and end of the Mughals in India (1754) and the death of Mahmud I (d. 1754) in the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁷⁵ Nevertheless, poets in Central Asia and Afghanistan have continued to compose poetry in this style even when it fell out of grace in Iran.⁷⁷⁶

India, the Center of Patronage

The question that comes to mind is, why India? The answer is that the Muslim courts of India provided generous support for Persian literature. From the earliest time

⁷⁷³ Ibid., p. 252.

⁷⁷⁴ Paul Losenski, *Welcoming Fighani*, California: Mazda Pub.,1998, p. 6.

⁷⁷⁵ Yarshater, *Persian Literature*, p. 249.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 250. The twentieth century Pakistani poet, the renowned poet of Lahore, Iqbaql, also wrote in this style. It should be noted that “the amount of Persian literature produced during these two and half centuries is immense. No comparable amount of literature in other periods.” Poetry takes the greater share of literature; while the main volume of it being lyric poetry, with the *ghazal* as its astonishing form.

Mas'ud-i Sa'd (d.1121), Amir Khusrau of Delhi (d. 1325), and Hasan of Delhi (d.1327) were attached to Muslim courts of India. The Safavid era was contemporary with "the establishment and expansion of the Great Mughal Empire", as Yarshater rightfully states, "the most cultivated Indian kingdom in the Islamic times."⁷⁷⁷ The founder of the dynasty, Babur was a Timurid prince, who grew up in a Persian cultural setting. His descendants enlarged their empire, and "their courts became brilliant centers of Persian art and culture, and more importantly Persian poetry. Some of the Timurid princes wrote poetry themselves, and exercised critical judgment on the poets of their courts."⁷⁷⁸ The *tazkiras* of poets written during the Mughal era have numerous accounts of the generosity and kindness that the Mughal court bestowed on poets. The sources have recorded a few occasions that the patron rewarded a certain poet with as much gold as the weight of the poet. Thus, one should not be surprised that so many longed for a position in the Mughal court, or many others migrated there, as Yarshater points out "India became Mecca of poets and artists."⁷⁷⁹

The Controversy and Critics over the Style

Scholars have offered different reasons for the creation of this style. Khaliqirad states that the social conditions, emotional state and taste of poets who lived in India, and distant from the homeland are a few reasons for creation of the style.⁷⁸⁰ This statement would make sense if one would only accept the argument that the style was first practiced in India. The style and its quality have been a subject of controversy, especially, after the

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 251.

⁷⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 251.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 251.

⁷⁸⁰ Khaliqirad, "*Payaha-yi Sabk-i Hindi dar ghazaliyat-i Jami*", p. 22.

eighteenth century or the era of *bazgasht-i adabi*. The views expressed by critics in different eras and different orientations are utterly opposed.⁷⁸¹ For one, the critics during the Safavid era wrote nothing but the praise for contemporary poets. Sam Mirza, the brother of Shah Tahmasb, who compiled the biographies of his contemporary poets in his work, *Tuhfa-i Sami*,⁷⁸² regarded the quality of their works to be superior to the poets of the past. He considers their works as equal to Khusrau of Delhi, Sa'di, or Anvari. He goes as far as stating that the quality of Indian Style poetry is even superior to Firdausi and Sana'i.⁷⁸³ Sam Mirza, pushes the boundary of exaggeration, which is the typical view of most writers of his time, claiming these poets were "chosen by God and recipients of endless divine light." However, Hazin- Lahiji (1691-1767), a bright poet, had a different view of his contemporary poets. He mourns the decline of the poetry in his time and refers to the abundant number of incompetent poets. He criticizes the writers of the *tazkiras*, whose faults are lack of knowledge, distorted facts, and a lack of critical ability. He writes: "The substance is wrong, the meaning is wrong, and the style is wrong; all is wrong."⁷⁸⁴ Hazin believes that the art of poetry compared to other artistic expressions such as: Painting, calligraphy, book illuminating, and architecture, deteriorated during the Safavids.

Another critic of this style is Lutf Ali Beg Azar (1711-81), the writer of *Tazkira-i Atashkada (Fire-Temple)*. Azar expresses his distastefulness for Safavid poetry by critiquing Sa'ib, the distinguished poet of the era. He refers to Sa'ib, as the instigator of

⁷⁸¹ Ibid., p. 252.

⁷⁸² Sam Mirza finished the work in 1550. Sam Mirza in this work, besides biographies of contemporary poets has included some from the Timurids too.

⁷⁸³ Yarshater, *Persian Literature*. p. 252.

⁷⁸⁴ Muhammad Ali b. Abu Talib Hazin Lahiji, *Tadhkira-yi Hazin*, 1st ed. Tehran: Mirath-i Maktub, 1375, P. 15.

this style, who not only did not apply the imagery of the past poets but relinquished the eloquent style used by his predecessors by his distasteful innovation.⁷⁸⁵

The harshest critic of the Safavid poets and Indian style is Reza Quli Khan Hidayat (1800-1872) the distinguish poet, anthologist, historian, and biographer of the Qajar era, who has written one of the best anthologies, *Majma' al-Fusaha, The Meeting Place of the Eloquent*, about the Persian poets. Hidayat believes that the actual decline started after the Seljuqs. He refers to the period between the Turkmen's rule and Safavids as the mediocre era. He only honors Hafiz's *ghazals* in this period. He believes that the poets were not following any binding rules for lyrics, "the poets, following their sick natures and distorted tastes, began to write confused, vain, and nonsensical poems. They infused their poetry with insipid meanings instead of inspired truths, ugly contents...instead of fine rhetorical devices and attractive innovations."⁷⁸⁶

M.T. Bahar, the twentieth century poet, who is regarded as the last great writer of *qasida* in the Khurasani style has a similar attitude toward the Indian style. He states that "the meadow carpet of poetry became trampled by the insipid metaphors and vapid illustrations of Sa'ib and Vahid (Muhammad Tahir (d. 1708), a contemporary and friend of Sa'ib)." Bahar believes that the poems were crowded with ideas, but were unattractive, "they were wanting in eloquence."⁷⁸⁷ Bahar continues his critics saying: "the style has some novel ideas, but has many failings such as odd imagery and many unattractive ideas."

⁷⁸⁵ Yarshater, *Persian Literature*, p. 254.

⁷⁸⁶ Reza Quli Khan Hidayat, *Majma' al-Fusaha*, ed. M. Musaffa, vol.1, Tehran: 1957, pp.9-10.

⁷⁸⁷ Yarshater, *Persian Literature*, p. 256. Yarshater cites the *Diwan-i Muhammad Taqi Bahar*, v.2, Tehran: n.p. 1957, p. 228.

Despite the unfavorable opinions of the aforementioned authors, a contemporary lyricist and literary Persian scholar, Amiri Firuzkuhi, who wrote introduction to Sa'ib's diwan, believes that judgmental opinion of Azar about Sa'ib is not only biased and glosses over the fact, but his ignorance and hostile judgment has left half the country's literature "under masses... of ignorance and negligence."⁷⁸⁸ Furthermore, foreign scholars also have different opinions about the Indian style. Nu'man Shibli (d.1914) in his work *Shi'r al-'ajam*, praises the Indian Style poetry. He states that Persian poetry declined in eighteenth century. In his work, Shibili devotes the third volume to seven major poets of the Safavid era. He considers these poets outstanding and praises "their ingenuity in expressing and illustrating delicate lyrical thought."⁷⁸⁹ E.J. Gibb, author of *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, believes that works of the poets such as Jami, Sa'ib, 'Urfi, provided the highest literary models for the Ottoman poets. In spite of positive remarks about the style from some western scholars, Browne and Rypka remark that Persian poetry entered a sharp decline in seventeenth century in Iran and India, while in reality the starting point was fifteenth century, nevertheless they are in agreement with Shibli about Sa'ib's poetry, and find it superior to the works of eighteenth century poets.⁷⁹⁰ While I appreciate the innovation, new expression, and simple language of some of the poets who composed in this style, i.e. Sa'ib, I prefer the Iraqi and Khurasani styles, because I am more familiar with allegories and topoi that are applied in them.

⁷⁸⁸ Muhammad Ali b. Mirza Sa'ib-i Tabrizi, *Diwan-i Sa'ib-i Tabrizi*, 2nd edition, ed. Amiri Firuzkuhi, Tehran: Intisharat-i Zavvar, 1957, p.2.

⁷⁸⁹ Yarshater, *Persian Literature*, p. 257.

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.258.

General Characteristics of the Style:

From the stylistic point, there are novel subject matters, new ideas, but ill-chosen expressions and verbal combination in this poetry. In this style of poetry one should have in mind that the poet's mission, besides expressing an emotion or thought, is to create an idea in the genre of usually *ghazal* in an impressive way. Then, the reader would enjoy the lyric when not only there is an “aesthetic element”, but also the reader understands it and admires the ingenious point of the poet. So it seems the main objective of the poet who wrote in the Indian Style was to convey his thought or feeling in a creative manner.⁷⁹¹ In order to achieve this goal, poets used a large set of rhetorical devices such as “*tanasub or mura’at-i nazir*, harmony of images or congruence of poetic ideas, *tazadd*, antithesis, *mubalagha*, hyperbole, *iham*, double entendre, amphibology, *talmih*, allusion, *irsal-i mathal*, illustrative reasoning or argument by illustration or analogy, *husn-i ta’lil*, poetic explanation, *kinaya*, symbolic statement, and *jinas*, harmony or play on the resemblance of words.”⁷⁹² Applying these rhetorical devices made the comprehension of the poetry a laborious task for non-contemporary audiences, while their own listeners probably did not have difficulty. These rhetorical devices, according to Yarshater, are found in the poetry of Firdausi, Sa’di, and Hafiz too, but the mastery of these poets in the language, creates works that are not only less complicated, but pleasant, harmonious, musical, and heart enlightening.⁷⁹³

There are many *ghazals* in this style which are remarkable from point of wittiness of expression and skillful orchestration of ideas, although they lack the internal music or

⁷⁹¹ Ibid., p. 269.

⁷⁹² Ibid., p. 269.

⁷⁹³ Ibid., p. 269.

purity of expression that is found in classical work. The Indian style poets knit various strands of thought, which have different levels of meaning. As a scholar simply explained it for this author, “the Indian Style poetry has a knot, one would not perceive the actual meaning of the poem until the knot⁷⁹⁴ is undone, then one is able to appreciate its meaning, beauty, and wittiness.”⁷⁹⁵ It is this quality of the Indian Style, which was at its climax during the Safavid era that distinguishes it from the earlier period poetry. However, this promotion, according to Yarshater, was not achieved without a price; “the quality and directness of thought and expression” was compromised for it. The poetry sank under masses of artifice, and metaphors. Thus in this sense the Safavid poetry represents a decline, because it eventually was caught in a web of complex rhetorical devices.⁷⁹⁶

The Specific Characters

The style, occasionally in some of the works, because of its specification that will be explained, is easier to comprehend. Edward Browne admits that he is in unison with his “acquaintance” that *sabk-i Hindi* poetry is easier to understand and more popular with non-speakers of Persian language. Browne writes that foreigners “find the more subtle poetry admired in Persia beyond their powers of comprehension.” He adds that he finds Sa’ib’s poetry “especially attractive, both on account of his simplicity of style and his skill in the figures entitled *husn-i ta’lil* or 'poetical etiology,' and *irsalu'l mathal* or

⁷⁹⁴ But I think it is not easy for average readers to open “the knot”.

⁷⁹⁵ The quote is from the “*zinda yad*”, Asghar Rufaqa, a dear friend and poet who was one of the admirers of Indian style and specifically Sa’ib. God blesses his soul.

⁷⁹⁶ Yarshater, *Persian Literature*, p. 273.

'proverbial commission.' and simple from point of poetry's *san'at*-craft."⁷⁹⁷ Although I agree with Browne in case of Sa'ib, I do not find poetry of the late Safavid poets easy to understand, i.e. Bidil-i Dihlavi (1664-1721)⁷⁹⁸.

The poetry in this style is also easier to translate. According to Shams Langarudi⁷⁹⁹, a good poem is the one that if translates into another language it will remain a poem. He adds that a good poem is the one that if it is stripped from its clothes (language) and forms it still remains a poem.⁸⁰⁰ Langarudi believes these qualities are found in Indian Style poetry. He defines a poem as a *khiyal*, thought or intention, which is the main point of any poem, put into words and syntax. The relation of words to syntax is as needle and thread, which are required to sew the fabric of thought together. In Indian poetry the principal element is thought, not word or syntax that is used. In Indian Style poetry it is a powerful *khiyal* that distinguishes it from earlier poetry, not the wordings, or its correlation to each other.⁸⁰¹ This is the exact reason that some literary people do not value Indian poetry, because it does not sound pleasing when it is read. To this author, it seems it has a *sikti* or pause in it. It lacks the internal music that is found in earlier poetry, especially in the poetry of Hafiz and Rumi.

The subject matter of Indian Style poetry is different from the previous style.

While in the earlier styles, *Sabk-i Khurasani*, or Iraqi, mythology, historical references,

⁷⁹⁷ Edward Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol.4, p. 164, Cambridge Press, London;1953.

⁷⁹⁸ 'Abd al-Qadir Bidil-i Dihlavi was a Sufi poet, who was a follower of the Naqshbandi. He taught Ibn 'Arabi's thought in India.

⁷⁹⁹ He is the editor of the *diwan of Kalim-i Kashani* (1582-1651) who, though born in Hamidan, is referred to Kashani. According to Langarudi, only in the *Tazkira-yi Atashkada*, is stated that he was born in Kashan, while other creditable *tazkiras*: *Maykhana*, *Nasrabadi*, and... have written that he was born in Hamidan, a western city in Iran. Langarudi states that he probably spent a good part of his life in Kashan. Yet, he spent most of his life in India. He joined the court of Shah Jahan in 1628 and became the emperor's poet-laureate until his death in 1651.

⁸⁰⁰ Muhammad Shams-i Langarudi, *Girdbad-i Shur-i Jonun*, Tehran: Nashr-i Chishma 1367, p.74.

⁸⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

and *hadith* have been used as a clarifying tools for the poet's point, the Indian Style poet relies on the *malmus*, touchable objects to express a thought⁸⁰², but one finds the latter being cross referenced to something that might make it more complicated and non-comprehensible, that's the main criticism of *Sabk-i Hindi* poetry, which makes it difficult for those who are not familiar with the usage of the expressions.

Besides, the excessive usage of allegory and hyperbole by some poets in the late Safavid era, have made their poetry *saqil*, indigestible, or simply hard to understand. As Rypka rightfully states "in substance and form the verses are true labyrinths, riddles that often make the impression of being soluble only with the aid of geomancy and astrolabe."⁸⁰³ In this style, "*irsal-i mathal*, the application of simile or allegoric figures of speech, witty sayings and paradoxes" are abundant. The poet sets a thesis in one *misra'*, hemistich, and in another by means of paradigm he clarifies, better to say, attempts to clarify his point(s) through example and illustration. In addition, "Deduction and induction are constantly involved. An intensified complicated 'harmony of images', *mura'at-i nazir* is in full flower, the 'imaginative argument', *husn-i ta'lil* is frequently encountered. The poets have no qualms about enriching their vocabulary with non-literary and even vulgar expression."⁸⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the Indian Style poetry contains thought, imagination that is related to the events of the every day life,⁸⁰⁵ the features, which were known to the people who lived at the time. In other words, it is the reflection

⁸⁰² Ibid., p. 82.

⁸⁰³ Jan Rypka, *History of Persian Literature up to the Beginning of the 20th Century*, n.p. : Dordrecht D. Reidel, 1968, p. 295.

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 296.

⁸⁰⁵ Langarudi, *Diwan-i Kalim*, p.83.

of the reality, but the form and words that are used to express the thought are not easily understood.⁸⁰⁶

Furthermore, in *sabk-i Hindi*, things that are unusual, not earthy, *athiri*⁸⁰⁷ become usual, so its depictions become imaginable.⁸⁰⁸ Langarudi disagrees with both Rypka and Minorisky, who believe that since the Safavids got rid of *Khaniqahs*, then the era lacks any great poet who could express the mystical and Gnostic thought. While the latter statement might be to some extent true, the era did have great poets such as Sa'ib whose poetry contains numerous mystical expressions. Langarudi believes that Safavid poetry is actual reality, though he does not refer to it as naturalist, it is *brungara*, about exterior or outside materials. Objects, plants, animals, and events usually arose the imaginary of the Indian Style poet, who, then, wrote them down in a way that could best describe the image; a way that was definitely different from their predecessors.⁸⁰⁹ Another western scholar, Ettinghausen echoes Langarudi: "Safavid poetry has paid attention to outside, space, nature; in reality it is symptomatic of Persian revolutionary reaction to the outside world. They suddenly broke the ancient mould-form and created something new, which might seem rough and unpleasant but it is the reality of the world."⁸¹⁰

In this style, because natural events and objects have inspired the poet, the language that he uses is the street language or everyday vocabulary, as Persians put it "*lughat-i kucha bazaar*" language, which is more comprehensible for common people while it might be considered non-poetical from the classical poetry standard. Having in

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 83.

⁸⁰⁷ *Athiri*, being related to fire or ski.

⁸⁰⁸ Langarudi, *Diwan-i Kalim*, p. 84.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 83.

⁸¹⁰ Richard Ettinghausen. "Stylistic Tendencies at the time of Shah 'Abbas", in *Iranian Studies*, V.II(1974),: Studies on Isfahan Part II. P. 610, also in Roger Savory, *Iran Under the Safavids*, p. 135, Cambridge University Press, Great Britain, 1980, p. 135.

mind that most Safavid poets lost court audiences; their addressees were common people who were regulars of coffee shops.⁸¹¹

In sum, the Indian style poetry has the following characteristics:

First, carelessness in choice of words; it seems poets did not choose elaborate and elegant words. For example Sa'ib Tabrizi (1601-1677) who is the most famous of them all, has used *tah-i paa*, for the sole of the foot; while he could have used *kaf-i paa*, which would not have changed the meter and would have been prettier, especially that *tah* in Persian is usually refers to bottom of a trench or well.

Second, *barik khiyali*, or subtle imagination, which mostly exists in this style, is often absurd, unrealistic, and exaggerated. For example, the *sabk-i Hindi* poets use an exaggerated complicated language when praising their patrons, while the language is rather clear when they complain about the tough life that they have in India, its climate, or disloyalty of peoples. Lack of hope, lamentation of *faqr* (being poor), *ghurbat*-loneliness, alienation in the inhospitable land among strange and unfriendly people, and complaint about the life and situation are common themes in this style.⁸¹² This trend is even found in the poetry of Sa'ib, who had a prestigious and comfortable life in India, and in Iran, and when he returned to Isfahan, his fame was spread through Iran, India, and Turkey. Since the focus of this study is Jami in the next section some examples of the style that are found in Jami's *ghazals* will be discussed.

⁸¹¹ Langarudi, *Diwan-i Kalim*, p. 113.

⁸¹² *Ibid.*, p. 121.

***Sabk-i Hindi* in Jami's poetry**

Some characteristics of the style did exist in the work of poets, who lived before the sixteenth century. Though in previous works there are complicated philosophical and mystic points that require advanced education for comprehension, in *sabk-i Hindi*, the difficulty is not because of the material in the poetry but the poet usage of ingenious ideas and penetrating genius.⁸¹³ The following line of Jami is the evidence of this claim:

کشم بدیده بسی منت از نسیم صبا
که کحل دیده ز خاک رخت کشید مرا

I bear much obligation from the morning breeze,
Which brought the dust,⁸¹⁴ from your alley and decorated my eyes.⁸¹⁵

In this style there are rare innovations and new subject matters, a trend that is found in Jami's poetry, such as the following:

دی بخاک پاش با صد ذوق می سودم مژه
گفت جامی، گرد شد آهسته زن جاروب را

Last night I was willingly rubbing her feet step with my eyelashes,
She said "Jami, it became dust,⁸¹⁶ sweep it slowly.⁸¹⁷

As was said of this style, the existence of allegories and metaphors are plentiful. In addition these two *san'at*, or rhetorical arts are colorful, which is one of the specifications of the poets of this style. For example in the following poem Jami has applied a metaphor creatively:

⁸¹³ Khaliqirad, "Payahay-i Sabk-i Hindi dar Ghazaliyat-i Jami", p. 23.

⁸¹⁴ The dust is kohl- "antimony reduced to a fine powder, used for the eyes". Steingass, *Persian English Dictionary*, p. 1017. Kohl was used as the make up for eyes, a usual practice among traditional Middle East women.

⁸¹⁵ Khaliqirad, "Payahay-i Sabk-i Hindi dar Ghazaliyat-i Jami", p. 23.

⁸¹⁶ The poet probably means the beloved feet became dust because of the force from the lover's eyelashes.

⁸¹⁷ Khaliqirad, p. 24.

همی فتاد ز بار غم تو خانه دل
اگر نه تیر تو بودی در آن خرابه ستون

The weight of your sorrow destroyed the heart's abode,
Otherwise your spear was the pillar of the ruined place.

In this poem the space of heart has been considered as a dwelling, which under the heavy burden of beloved separation or sorrow has fallen apart. However, in the second hemistich, Jami uses the word *tir*, which in Persian has the meaning of spear and also pillar that is used in the construction of building, as a metaphor; meaning the beloved cruelty or unfavorable attitude, works both as a spear into his heart and it is also the pillar of his heart, which is been ruined under the burden of sorrow.⁸¹⁸ The usage of *tir*, which has two meanings as a metaphor, is extremely clever.

In this style the usage of everyday vocabulary is very common and that facilitates the comprehension of the poem; yet, occasionally makes it difficult. For example in the following line Jami has used the word *gila*, which is a noun and a verb three times.⁸¹⁹

ما را گله از خوی تو اینست که هر چند
کردیم گله گوش نکردی گله ما

Our grumble from your manner is that no matter how many times,
I complained you did not pay attention-did not listen to my complaint.

Another *sana't* that is used in this style is *ijaz*, or acronym and epitome, which help the poet in expressing long passages in one or two lines. This *san'at* calls for inquiry on the part of the readers. An example of this *san'at* is in the following line form Jami.⁸²⁰

مردمان ز آب دو چشمم جز به کشتی نگذرنند
شاهد این حال بس دجله یکی جیحون یکی

⁸¹⁸ Ibid., p. 25.

⁸¹⁹ Ibid., p. 26.

⁸²⁰ Ibid., p. 27.

Peoples can only pass over my tears by ships,
Tigress and Oxus River are the witness to this condition.

The other *san'at* that used by poets is *mura'at-i nazir* or harmony of images⁸²¹ and *tazad*, antitheses⁸²², which is seen in the following line from Jami:

تاب نیاورد تنت ورنه پی لباس تو
رشته جان بیدلان بود کنند تار هم

Your body could not bear, otherwise the text of your clothe is,
The wrap and woof of your dress is made from the soul thread of the lovers who have lost their heart to you.

In this line clothes, text of fabric, wrap, and woof are used as *mura'at-i nazir*.

خمیر مایه هر نیک و بد تویی جامی
خلاصی از همه می بایدت ز خود بگریز

Jami, you are the khamir-source of goodness and badness,
You want to be saved from people, you must escape from yourself.

In this line goodness and badness are uses as *tazad*.

The other *san'at* is *irsal-i mathal*, illustrative reasoning or argument by illustration or analogy. In this practice the poet expresses a theme or subject in one hemistich and in the next states an argument or may be a word as an example to clarify his point. The following examples, one from Sa'ib and the other from Jami would clear the point.

ریشه نخل کهنسال از جوان افزونتر است
بیشتر دلبستگی باشد بدنیا پیر را

An old palm tree has more root than a young one,
An old man has more attachment to the world.

Sa'ib's point is that old people have more attachment to the world than young.

⁸²¹ Ibid., p. 28, *mura'at-i nazir* means that the poet uses words that an harmony exists in their meaning.

⁸²² Ibid., p. 28, *tazad* means that the poet uses words that have opposite meaning , i.e. dark which is opposite of bright.

In the following line Jami writes that the beloved is aware of the lover's affection and longing, though she might not show it. He writes:

دل من پر ز مهر یار و او فارغ نبودست آن
که می گویند راهی هست دلها را سوی دلها

My heart is filled with her love and she is aware of it,
It proves the old saying that "there is a path between the hearts."⁸²³

Another attribute of this style is *barik bini* or *barik andishi*, subtle thought or poetic imagination, which if it did not exist in *sabk-i Hindi* poetry, then the poem is hardly regarded to be in the Indian Style. Yet, it is because of this *san'at*, *barik bini*, the *sabk i Hindi* poem occasionally becomes difficult to comprehend. An example of this *san'at* is in the following poem of Jami:

شراره سینه مجنون ز آتش لیلی
کباب ساخت همه اهوان صحرا را

The flame, which is from Layli's fire, coming from the Majnun's chest (heart),
It barbecued all the Sahara's gazelles.

In this line *barik andishi* is in the idea that the love of Layli has caused such a fire in Majnun's heart that the heat of its flame is so overwhelming that all desert's gazelles have been burned.

Mubaligha or exaggeration is another feature of the style; though this trait is not unique to *sabk-i Hindi* poetry, and is found in the other two styles, especially in Firdausi's *Shahnama*, in this style it is accompanied with imagination and pleasant feeling, which this line of Jami presents well.⁸²⁴

بیچاره عاشق تو که با درد انتظار
شد در رهت غبار و هنوزش هوای تست

⁸²³ Ibid., p. 29.

⁸²⁴ Ibid., p. 31

Poor, your lover, who as the result of waiting for you,
Became a dust in the path of your love, yet, he wants you.

In this poem the word *hava* has dual meaning in Persian. It means weather, air and also desire-affection. Thus becoming dust means ultimate humiliation, while waiting for love and affection from the beloved. In other word, the lover has become dust in the air.

Expressing '*ajz and sagina*, weakness and humiliation, is the last trait of this style, while this feature is found in mystic poetry, it is more common in *sabk-i Hindi* poetry. Jami has used so often that Khaliqirad states the word *sag*, dog⁸²⁵ is found in every three or four *ghazals* of Jami.⁸²⁶

مگو جامی سگ این آستان نیست
مکن زین دایره بیرونم ای دوست

Don't say that Jami is not the dog of this court,
Do not throw me out from this circle.

The final word is that the style used by Jami and poets such as Mir Ali-shir Nava'i, 'Urfi of Shiraz (d.1590), Fayzi of India (d1595), and Sa'ib of Isfahan (d.1669-70) were the main "foreign influence" on developing the Turkish poetry.⁸²⁷ And as was mentioned, though the style was not welcomed and much criticized in the eighteenth century poetic circles, it continued to present time in Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan.

⁸²⁵ Sag, dog is an animal that is regarded *najis*, not clean-pure in Islamic teaching, so comparing oneself to a dog, is the ultimate humiliation.

⁸²⁶ Kahliqirad, p. 33. This author has collected them too, hopefully will be a future work soon, though Mujtaba Minavi also has an article on it in *Rahnama-yi kitab*.

⁸²⁷ Elias John Wilkinson Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. iii, pp.247-248.

APPENDIX B

OTHER WORKS OF JAMI

Jami is one of the most prolific poets of Persian literature. He wrote numerous other prose works, besides *Nafahat al-Uns* and *Baharistan* that were already discussed. This section will be a brief description of some of the important works of Jami:

Ashi'at al- Lama'at, Rays of the Flashes is the work that Jami wrote in 886/1481. This work is a commentary on Sheikh Fakhr al-Din Iraqi (1207-1289)'s work *Lama'at*.

Shawahidu 'n Nubuwwat, Evidence of the Prophet, is written in a simple language and it is an outstanding work on the belief of Muslims about the Prophet.⁸²⁸ In the preface of the work he defines the meaning of *Nabi*, Prophet and *Rasul*, apostle. In the first chapter, he has covered the time preceding the birth of the Holy Prophet. The second chapter covers the birth of the Prophet to the beginning of his mission. The third chapter is about the beginning of the Prophet's mission to his Flight to Heaven. The fourth chapter covers his Flight to the time that the Prophet passed away. The fifth chapter material is not connected to any specific period of the Prophet's life and it relates to the era after his passing. The sixth chapter is about the companions of the Prophet and his *Ahl-i Bait*. The seventh chapter sets forth the life of the followers of the *Ahl-i Bait* down to the first Sufi and generations of them. The *khatima* –conclusion of the work is about punishment of the Prophet's enemy.

⁸²⁸ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v. 3, p. 513.

Jami wrote three mystical works: *Lavami'*, *Gleams*, a commentary on the famous work of Ibn Arabi *Fusus al Hikam*. Jami finished this work in 896/1491. He has written another work almost about the same topic that is called *Naqd al-Nusus*, which is a commentary on *Naqsh al-Fusus* of Ibn 'Arabi's disciple Sheikh Sadr al-Din Qunavi. *Naqd al-Nusus* is one of his early works Jami finished it in 863/1458.⁸²⁹

Some of the minor works of Jami are: a commentary on the Quran, i.e. *sura al-Fatiha; Arba'in*, which is a commentary on forty *hadiths* of the Prophet. Another work is *Risala-i Tahliliyya*, a theological piece on Divine Unity. The next work, *Manasik-i Hajj*, the rules on pilgrimage to Mecca, is a guideline for the trip. The next work is a monograph on some famous Sufis such as Rumi, Khwaja Parsa, and 'Abd Allah Ansari. Jami has written another work on Sufi's religion and their paths, i.e. *Tariq-i Sufiyan and Tahqiq-i Mazhab- Sufiyan*. The other treatises are: a commentary on the work of 'Umar b. al-Farid's work, called: *Risala Khamriyya*, and *Nay-nama*, a work on the opening piece/poem of *Mathnawi-yi Ma'navi*, the celebrated work of Maulana Rumi. He wrote a *risala*, essay on rhyme, and a work on prosody, in addition to a grammar work, which is on 'Arabic syntax and is known as *Fawa'id-i Ziya'iyya fi Sharh-i al-Kafiyya* and is based on the well-known 'Arabic work of Ibn al-Hajib. Jami wrote *Fawa'id-i Ziya'iyya fi Sharh-i al-Kafiyya* for his son, Zia' al-Din.⁸³⁰ He wrote three works on riddles that the important one has been already discussed.⁸³¹

⁸²⁹ Ibid, p. 514.

⁸³⁰ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, v. 3, p. 514.

⁸³¹ *Hiliat al- Holal*, the work that he gave to Abul Qasim Babur (r.1449-1457). Afsahzad points out that Jami has written three treatises on riddles that are known as *Risala Kabir*, *Big Treatise* and *Risala Mutivasit*, *Medium Treatise*, and *Risala Saghir*, *Short Treatise*.

Besides aforementioned works Jami has written a work on morphology of 'Arabic language, which is written in Persian prose and poetry. He has written an essay on music.⁸³² Nava'i has pointed out that other people, "great musician such as Maulana Bana'i,⁸³³ and Khwaja Shahab al-Din Abdollah Murvarid also have written essays on music but theirs are difficult to understand,... since that person⁸³⁴ has special favor and regard for me wrote this essay on music, which there is no essay in the subject more useful and applicable than this one."⁸³⁵

There are more works that have been credited to Jami, yet, even without referring to them, the aforementioned list is a good representation of this Sufi/poet dedication to his belief, culture, and literary tradition.⁸³⁶

⁸³² Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p. 169. Afsahzad remarks that the beginning of the work, Jami has written that he was interested in music in young age and learned it. He wanted to write a treaty on it, but because of other matters that kept him busy he had not a chance to write about it.

⁸³³ A contemporary of Jami, he was also well-known poet at the late Timurid era.

⁸³⁴ Nava'i in his writing refers to Jami as *aan kas*- that person.

⁸³⁵ Afsahzad, *A Critical Study*, p.170.

⁸³⁶ Lari has recorded a long list of his master's works in *Taklama*.

APPENDIX C

JAMI'S LETTERS

The collection of Jami's letters presents the social and humanitarian contribution of Jami to the society, of which he was an important part. The significance of the letters is that it sheds light on the political and social situation of the late Timurid period. It also provides valuable information on the Timurid financial and taxation system. Since the time of the Timurids, as could be extrapolated from historical works, was an era of oppression, censorship, and restriction on expression and movement, Jami's letters provide important information about the era, particularly that of Timurid historians, who were few in number and mostly commissioned by the court. These historians could not maintain an objective and impartial view on events; therefore, Jami's letters offer a perspective on the social state of affairs.

The collection is a valuable source of history because it reveals information on the tax system during the Timurids. It represents different taxes or *andaz* as Jami refers to it, or *kharaj* (poll tax), and *maliat* (income tax) which were collected during the era. There were two forms of *andaz* in the collection: *zakat* had a standard rate and was the religious form of collecting taxes, while *maal*, which Jami has used in four letters, was a tax on land. The *maal*, according to the *shari'a* should have been collected in a non-monetary

form, but it was practiced otherwise and collected usually in coins. Through his letters, Jami requests that *maal* be collected in the form of harvest products. He explains: “because of the drought or plague certain farmers are not able to pay it in currency”, letter (#71).⁸³⁷ While, Jami in none of his letters requests that the *maal* (the obligatory tax on land) not be collected from a certain farmer, or a farmer be excused from payment, he occasionally requests a non-payment of *maal* on *waqf* lands, which usually belonged to some Sufi orders or some religious establishments; even though *awqaf* paid taxes on lands.⁸³⁸ For example, when Jami set out for Hajj in 1472, he was excused from paying any form of *andaz* by a special *farman*-order from Sultan Hussein. Jami accepted the Sultan’s favor but paid the *shari’a* tax (*ushr*- one tenth) on his assets.⁸³⁹

Beside the usual *andaz*, Jami’s letters reveal that during the Timurids, almost thirty different *andaz* were also collected. Studying different forms of *andaz* is a valuable source for social history of the era, because it provides knowledge about unusual taxes that were collected during the Timurids. Moreover, it is valuable from a terminology point of view, because several different terms were used to describe the taxes even though some of these *andaz* were only onetime collection. For example ‘*avarizat* was a form of *andaz* that was collected from the inhabitants during wartime.⁸⁴⁰ *Barat* was a form of tax collected from the people who were employed by the government.⁸⁴¹ *Vazayif* (plural of *vazifa*), which is mentioned in Jami’s letters, refers as tax on *ma’ash* – means

⁸³⁷ - ‘Isam al-Din Urunbaev, Asrar Rahmanof, *Namaha va Monsha’-t-i Jami*, Markaz-i Nashr-i Maktub, Tehran; 1377, p.126.

⁸³⁸ *Awqaf* lands occasionally were given a break in tax payments by direct order of Sultan Hussein in the late Timurids. Ibid., p. 79.

⁸³⁹ -Ibid., p.80

⁸⁴⁰ -Ibid., p.80

⁸⁴¹ -Ibid., p.80

of living or *nafaqa* – the necessary expenses for living.⁸⁴² *Dudi*, which was collected in the form of currency, was a form of tax that was collected in preparation for a military campaign.⁸⁴³ *Zakat* was a religious tax that people paid on trades, livestock, profession, and property. *Zakat* was calculated as one fortieth of the income generated from property or any asset.⁸⁴⁴ *Ikhraja*t was another form of tax that was collected from elites.⁸⁴⁵ *Madadi* was another form of taxes that was collected when the government needed money.⁸⁴⁶ *Pishkish* was a tax that was collected to pay the salary of *sadr* or the person who was in charge of the income of *waqf* properties.⁸⁴⁷ *Sarana* was a tax that was collected on each inhabitant that was living in the city.⁸⁴⁸ Collection of the *sarana* started from the time of Hulagu Khan (r.1253-1265), the founder of Ilkhanids (1253-1353) and continued during the Timurids. *Tujih* was another form of *andaz* on land.⁸⁴⁹

Besides the social aspect of the letters, the collection is also interesting from a literary stand. Jami's letters offer a unique prose style, particularly, those written to Nava'i, are inclusive in meaning; they are polite yet concise and clear. Jami follows the same patterns in his correspondences with other dignitaries. His style, contrary to the prose mode of the fifteenth century, does not use a flowery and verbose language, and a final distinctive feature of the collection is its concluding greetings. Jami closes his letters

⁸⁴² -Ibid., p.81. *vazayif*, an Arabic term, at the beginning of the Arabs occupation of Iran meant, tribute.

⁸⁴³ - Ibid., p. 82

⁸⁴⁴ -Ibid., p.82-3

⁸⁴⁵ - Ibid., p.83

⁸⁴⁶ - Ibid., p.83-4

⁸⁴⁷ - Ibid., p. 87

⁸⁴⁸ - Ibid., p. 87-8

⁸⁴⁹ - Ibid., p. 89

with the most eloquent praying phrases, which is a mixture of Persian and Arabic terms that illustrate his profound knowledge of Arabic.⁸⁵⁰

The Contents of Jami's Letters

In the collection that includes four hundred- thirty-four letters, in addition to Jami's correspondence with the Timurids, there are letters that he wrote or received from the Ottomans, the Qara-Quyunlu, and the Aq-Quyunlus Sultans. Among the letters, there are three hundred- thirty seven that he wrote to 'Ali-shir Nava'i, the influential Timurid emir and Jami's close friend.⁸⁵¹ Seventy seven of the letters are listed among his essays, and the last eighteen of them have been compiled from other sources. These letters are divided into different categories: letters relating to private or family matters, and those letters relating to social, political, and cultural issues. However, there are letters among the first group that indirectly refer to social and political, and historical events.⁸⁵²

Other important characteristic of Jami's letters is that they reveal valuable information about him and elite personalities such as Nava'i, Sultan Hussein, and scholars such as 'Ali Qushchi.⁸⁵³ In his political letters, he advises his powerful friend

⁸⁵⁰ - The collection should be studied for prose style of the fifteenth century.

⁸⁵¹ Nava'i is the actual compiler of almost all of them.

⁸⁵² - Ibid, p.19.

⁸⁵³ - Jami's letter provides information about some elites or personalities that might not be found in other sources. One of these people is Maulana 'Ali Qushchi (b. 1402), who besides being an astronomist was associate and close friend of Ulugh Bag, son and successor of Shahrukh. The former was defeated in a war against his son 'Abd al-Latif over the control of the Empire. Then, while he [Ulugh Bag] was en-route to Mecca, he was killed by order of his son, 'Abd al-Latif. (Nov.1449). In this letter (#199) and two more (#250) and (#334) that Jami wrote to Nava'i, Jami asks him to issue a permission for Qushchi and his companions so they could pass safely through the Timurids territory to the Ottoman's. 'Ali Qushchi after Ulugh Bag death lost his position and prestige, but because of his reputation he was eventually invited to Istanbul by the Ottoman Sultan. Qushchi finally received the permission and despite Jami, who advised him

Nava'i to remain at his post so through his authority, the living condition of the population would improve.⁸⁵⁴ In other letters, he appeals to the Sultan not to engage in the confrontation with his family members or nephews over territories; rather, he advises him to deal with the conflict through negotiation. In a few other letters, Jami requests from Sultan Hussein that he exempt novice scholars, who were land owners, from paying taxes (letters# 71 and 121). Additionally, he informs Sultan Hussein that his tax collectors have been harsh to land owners and farmers thereby making their lives difficult, and he warns that their discontent might create trouble or unrest for the state.⁸⁵⁵ In letter # 28, he informs Sultan Hussein about the excessive pressure on people of Herat, reminding him of his previous correspondence about the issue; nevertheless, Jami reiterates this point because the discontent has spread to the other parts of the country. Among Jami's correspondences with the court, there are letters in which Sultan Hussein seeks Jami's advice in regard to some complicated political issues. However, in order to acquire first hand information about important historical events, a more detailed analysis of Jami's letters will follow.

The Subject Matter of the Collection

The topic of the first group of letters which were written mostly to Nava'i are mostly pleasantries exchanges which shows concern for each other's health, while quite a few are literary correspondences, in which Jami sends his new *ghazals* or a piece of poetry to Nava'i for his commentary or approval and praise. For example, during 1477-

not to take the trip because long distance was not proper for his condition (he was old and frail), Qushchi went to Istanbul via Tabriz in (1470). He died there in (1474). Also Ibid, p. 20

⁸⁵⁴ - Ibid, p. 20

⁸⁵⁵ - Ibid, p. 21

1479 which is the period that Jami wrote *Nafahat al-Uns Min Hazarat al-Quds*, (the work that Jami compiled in response to Nava'i's request), Jami sent each section that he finished along with a letter to Nava'i. In one of his letters, Jami apologizes that there has been a delay in sending a part of the book that Nava'i expected to receive earlier. In addition to the above letters, there are a series of letters that Jami wrote to Nava'i, while he traveled through Hejaz and Iraq; the purpose for the latter letters was to inform Nava'i about his health and the events during the trip. Besides, personal letters to Nava'i in the first group of letters, there are almost eighty letters in which Jami requests monetary assistance from Nava'i⁸⁵⁶ for the disadvantaged people of Herat.

The content of the second group of letters is usually related to social and political issues. These series of letters contain different range of subjects that concern all levels of population, for example, decrease in tax rates, return of confiscated estates, and permission to leave the city. The addresses of these letters are Nava'i, Sultan Hussein, or other government officials. Among the second group of letters, there are a few addressed to the rulers of other realms such as the Ottomans, Sultan Muhammad II, Sultan Bayazid II, the Qara –Qyunlu's Sultan, Jahanshah, and Sultan Yaqub of Aq-Qyunlu, who were Jami's contemporaries. On the whole, the content of 61.3% of Jami's letters are related to political and social issues ranging from lowering taxes, petitioning on behalf of people for justice, and reducing prison term for a certain person; to requesting Sultan Hussein to avoid engaging in war and encouraging him to solve the conflict through dialogue and negotiation.

The content of the third group of letters, which encompass 19.5%, are his private

⁸⁵⁶ Jami, either requests monetary aid from Nava'i or wants him to obtain it from the court.

letters that he wrote to his acquaintances, Sultan Hussein and mostly to ‘Ali-shir Nava’i. The last group that comprises 19% of his collection is letters that he wrote to request financial assistance for disadvantage people, either for everyday expenses, or for educational purpose. Not surprisingly, none of his letters requests any favor on behalf of himself or his immediate family members. In order to have a better understanding, a few of these letters which have political implications will be discussed.

Letters with Political Content

Despite the fact that Jami was witness to the court’s extravagant spending on celebration,⁸⁵⁷ or spending money on new buildings, gardens, he had to request financial aid for *tullab*, relief on taxes for farmers, and a trifle salary for some needy dervishes from *awqaf*. Jami writes four letters (# 17, 86,113,273)⁸⁵⁸ on behalf of a certain Maulana Jalal al-Din Mahmud. In these letters that he wrote on four different occasions, he requests favors from Nava’i for him. In two of them, Jami asks for financial aid for Jalal al-Din Mahmud from *awqaf*, whose *mutiwalli*’s- person in charge of the charity foundation, probably was Nava’i. Jami explains that without the financial aid, Jalal al-Din would not be able to continue his education. In another letter, Jami asks Nava’i’s assistance in obtaining permission for Jalal al-Din to travel to Samarqand to visit his family. The historical significance of this letter and a few other letters similar to it, which Jami wrote on behalf of other people, is that during the late fifteenth century traveling was tightly controlled, presenting the late Timurid era as a police state; apparently, the

⁸⁵⁷ -Habib al-Siyar, Vol.4, p. 206. Khwandamir reports that on the wedding celebration between a certain Timurid prince, Haydar Muhammad Mirza and Sultan Mas’ud’s sister there was two-three months of celebration.

⁸⁵⁸ -Ibid., pp. 105,131-132,140,189

government had so much control over the people's mobility that they needed permission to leave the city.

Jami's awareness of events that occurred in the Timurid domain is signified by the letter (#19),⁸⁵⁹ in which Jami expresses his happiness that confrontation between Sultan Hussein and Sultan Mahmud, the governor of Hisar and Khusrau Shah, the governor of Kunduz has been resolved peacefully.⁸⁶⁰ Nava'i reports this episode in his collection that he had to accompany the Sultan in the expedition. He also points out that during this mission; he was constantly in touch with Jami. Apparently, this episode was politically significant, because Nava'i writes in *Khamsat al-Mutahayyirin* that Jami eagerly wanted the confrontation to be avoided, "so *aan hazrat* [Jami] wrote 'do whatever you can to prevent the confrontation.'⁸⁶¹

Acting as a social savior of the society, Jami in a letter (#28),⁸⁶² which is addressed to Nava'i, writes that injustice and oppression have become a common phenomenon not only in Herat, but in other part of the domain too so "you do your best punishing the culprits." In a similar topic, Jami informs Nava'i in the letter (#114)⁸⁶³ that the inhabitants of Jam⁸⁶⁴ are in a great deal of financial strain so they cannot provide for the encampment of the military there. He expresses hope that the Sultan will treat the inhabitants of Jam favorably as he did the year before.

In order to pursue his philanthropic agenda, Jami needed Nava'i to remain in the

⁸⁵⁹-Ibid. p. 106

⁸⁶⁰-Habib al-Siyar, v.4, pp.191-193

⁸⁶¹ - 'Ali-shir Nava'i, *Khamsat al-Mutahayyirin*, "Maqala Duvvum", p. 46, Dushanbe: n.p., n.d., p.46.

⁸⁶² - Urunbaev, pp. 110-111

⁸⁶³ -Ibid., p. 140

⁸⁶⁴ Jam is the city in the north eastern part of Khurasan. The city is the place that the celebrated Sufi, Sheikh Ahmad Jam is buried. It is the place that Jami was born in one of its district, Kharjard. And that was the reason, as Jami wrote, that he chose *Jami* as his penname.

court, so in the letter (#35),⁸⁶⁵ Jami reminds Nava'i to be patient and bear for a while so that the powerless and the oppressed could benefit from his influence. Apparently, Nava'i, at the time, was frustrated and hurt from the way that he was treated at the court and wanted to leave his post. Jami's argument is that the eternal benefit for Nava'i would be much greater than pain and hardship that he has to endure in the position. There are two letters in the collection in which Khwaja Ahrar also asks Nava'i not to cut off his relationship with the court. In one of the letters, Khwaja Ahrar directly asks Nava'i to continue his work in the court. In another letter, Ahrar requests Jami to use his influence to persuade his friend, Nava'i, to remain in his position.⁸⁶⁶

Jami's involvement in the political affairs of the state is represented in a letter (#34)⁸⁶⁷ that Jami wrote to Nava'i, in which he requests the freedom of Saif al-Din Muzaffar, who was Sultan Hussein's vizier at the beginning of his reign, from the prison. Saif al-Din was accused of stealing from the public treasury. Jami reminds Nava'i that the former was a hard working person. In spite of Jami's plea, Saif al-Din was finally killed in prison in Jan. 1486.⁸⁶⁸ Involvement in the affairs of the state is also represented in the letter (#41)⁸⁶⁹, whose addressee is Nava'i. Jami asks him to use his power to reduce the heavy taxes on farmers. Apparently, the letter was sent during a military campaign, in which the army, in order to provide provision for the campaign, harassed farmers excessively. Acknowledging that provisions are necessary for the army, Jami writes that it must not impose too much strain on farmers.

⁸⁶⁵ - Ibid. p. 114

⁸⁶⁶ -Ibid. ,p.37

⁸⁶⁷ -Ibid., p. 114

⁸⁶⁸ - Ghiyas al-Din ibn Human al-Din, Khwandamir, *Habib al-Siyar*, Vol. 4, Tehran: Intisharat Khayyam , n.d., p. 329.

⁸⁶⁹ -Ibid., p.116-117

Another example of Jami's involvement with state affairs is the letter (#82)⁸⁷⁰ that he wrote to Sultan Hussein. In this letter, he recommends that Majd al-Din Muhammad be hired as an inspector of taxes in the government. Jami points out that the latter was very effective in the upheaval of the city which happened in 1470 while the Sultan was away from the city. The cause of disturbance was excessive taxes-*andaz* imposed by tax collectors. Though Urunbayef reminds us that Nava'i took care of the problem, Jami points to the important role that Majd al-Din played in the event. The latter became the general inspector of the government from 1472-1478 while he also acted as the viceroy of the Sultan. However, he was out of favor for nine years, then was reinstated as the vizier in 1487 when Nava'i became governor of Astarabad. Majd al-Din was fired again in 1490, being accused of theft of public treasury.

Despite Jami's prestige and position at the court, he could not always influence the Sultan or enforce his points; evidence for this claim is the case of Khwaja Majd al-Din, who as was noted, fell out of favor despite his years of service as the capable vizier. He managed the financial affairs of the state and his plan for land reforms was one of the reasons that forced Nava'i to convert his assets to *waqf*. Khwaja Majd al-Din was fired and out of fear, went into hiding. While out of sight, he asked Jami to plead for his safety with Sultan Hussein. Jami went to Sultan Hussein on his behalf. Although Sultan Hussein promised that Khwaja Majd al-Din would not be harassed, the Sultan could not resist the slander and accusation made against Majd al-Din by his rivals, Khwaja Nizam al-Mulk and some courtiers.⁸⁷¹ Greedy Sultan Hussein and his entourage were not satisfied despite

⁸⁷⁰ -Urunbaev, p.130

⁸⁷¹ - V.V. Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*, Vol. III, Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1962, p.53.

the fact that Khwaja Majd al-Din returned most of his wealth. Majd al-Din's enemy acquired the Sultan's permission for torture and imposed more harassment on him. The unfortunate man finally left Herat while concealing his identity as a religious traveler with the pilgrimage caravan for Hajj. However, he died en-route to Mecca in Tabuk, Kerman in Dhu'l Qa'da 899 / August 1494.⁸⁷²

A further example of Jami's involvement in social affairs is his intervention in the case of Siyyid Burhan al-Din Khwavandshah's son, whose assets were confiscated by the government. This case is reflected in letter (#53)⁸⁷³, in which Jami appealed to Nava'i, requesting him to use his power and influence so that the confiscated assets of Siyyid Khwavandshah's son⁸⁷⁴ would be returned.⁸⁷⁵ In the letter, Jami explains that Siyyid Burhan al-Din had permission to bring his son and his family along with their belongings to Herat, but his son's assets were confiscated.

Leaving the capital required permission from the court, so in the letter (#106)⁸⁷⁶, which is addressed to Nava'i again, Jami requests exit permission for one of Khwaja Ahrar's sons. Apparently at the time, the relationship between the Timurids in Herat and the Timurids in Transoxiana had deteriorated and Khwaja Ahrar was afraid that his son might be kept hostage in Herat.⁸⁷⁷ Since Khwaja Ahrar earlier request for exit permission was not granted, he appealed to Jami to intervene. In fact, exit permission was required for each inhabitant of the city. Jami, in spite of his influence and prestige at the Timurid

⁸⁷² - *Habib al-Siyar*, pp 195-198

⁸⁷³ -Ibid.,p.120-121

⁸⁷⁴ Siyyid Khwavandshah and his family were originally from Balkh, but moved to Herat.

⁸⁷⁵ Siyyid Burhan al-Din was known as Khwavandshah, the father of Muhammad Ibn Khwavandshah, the famous historian of the fifteenth century, known as Mirkhwand.

⁸⁷⁶ Urunbaev & Rahmanof, p. 137

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 44

court, was not treated differently either. In the letter (#240)⁸⁷⁸ he requests permission to leave the town, explaining that he wanted to visit Khwaja Kalan, Khwaja Sa'd al-Din Kashghary's son.⁸⁷⁹ In order to highlight the urgency of his trip, he further explains that he needs to go before the weather turns cold.

Jami's collection presents significant historical points such as the extent of the government control over the population and how it seriously was enforced. In the letter (#221)⁸⁸⁰ Jami writes: "the carrier of the letter [no name in the letter], who has been away from the city longer than what he was permitted, should not be disciplined because he had a logical excuses for his delay in returning to the city. In a different letter (#197)⁸⁸¹ which is addressed to Nava'i, Jami explains to him that a certain Maulana Nizam al-Din statistically is considered among the inhabitant of Herat, while he is originally from the province of Karokhim and he has been living there for many years, so his name should be removed from population of Herat.

Jami and Judicial Affairs

The People of Herat requested Jami's assistance in judicial matters regularly and Jami did not hesitate to respond to their requests. In the letter (#84),⁸⁸² he requested Nava'i to shorten the prison term of a certain Siyyid Nasrullah Kasikanis. According to the famous historian, Khwandamir, the latter was a supporter of Mirza Yadigar

⁸⁷⁸ -Ibid., p.178-179

⁸⁷⁹ Khwaja Kalan, later became Jami's father-in-law.

⁸⁸⁰ - Ibid., p.173

⁸⁸¹ -Urunbaev & Rahmanof, p. 199

⁸⁸² -Ibid.,p.131

Muhammad,⁸⁸³ who revolted against Sultan Hussein but was defeated in August 1470.⁸⁸⁴ Nasrullah apologized for his involvement and was forgiven.⁸⁸⁵ However, after a while he joined Mirza Yadigar once more and was arrested and imprisoned in (Aug. 1470), after Yadigar was killed in the battle.⁸⁸⁶ This letter is an example of Jami's willingness to assist whoever sought his help. In a different letter (#244)⁸⁸⁷ Jami requests a certain Maulana Kamal al-Din to be released from prison, because of a misunderstanding that caused his imprisonment. Jami further explains that Kamal al-Din regrets his foolish statement that he had made in the court.

One more example of Jami's intervention in judicial affairs was the letter that he wrote to Nava'i about Khwaja Muzaffar and Khwaja Shams al-Din. This letter (#112)⁸⁸⁸ subtly reveals the injustice and oppression that became a norm in the Timurid domain after Shahrukh death. Khwaja Shams al-Din along with the vizier, Khwaja Mui'z al Din, collected excessive taxes from people of Khurasan and Transoxiana at the time that Sultan Abu Sa'id was in power. The excessive tax was collected while the latter was campaigning in Astarabad against Sultan Hussein. When Abu Sa'id returned to Herat, he

⁸⁸³ - *Tarikh-i Iran, Dura-yi Taymuriyan*, Pazhuhish az Danishgah-i Cambridge, tr. Yaghub Azhand, Tehran: Jam-i Jam, 1379, pp.125-130. Yadigar Muhammad was great-great-grand-son of Shahrukh, Yadigar Muhammad b. Sultan Muhammad b. Baysunqur b. Shahrukh. He joined Uzun Hasan Aq-Quyunlu and fought along with his army in the war against Sultan Abu Sa'id. After the latter was defeated in Feb 1469, he was given to Yadigar Muhammad. The latter tortured him and then killed him in retaliation for death of Guhar Shad, his great-grand-mother who was killed by direct order of Abu Sa'id. Uzun Hasan chose Yadigar Muhammad as the legitimate successor of Abu Sa'id. In order to control Khurasan, Uzun Hasan sent Yadigar Muhammad to Khurasan for confrontation with Sultan Hussein. Yadigar Muhammad was able to conquer Herat with assistance of Uzun Hasan's sons, Khalil and Zaynal in July 1470. But his victory did not last long and Sultan Hussein recaptured his capital after six weeks and Yadigar Muhammad got killed in the battle.

⁸⁸⁴ -Ibid p. 130

⁸⁸⁵ - Habib al-Siyar, Vol.5.p.143

⁸⁸⁶ -Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi, *Matla' al-Sa'dayn*. Vol.2 section 3 Lahore: n.p., pp. 1425-1427.

⁸⁸⁷ -Ibid., p. 180

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid., p.139-140

executed his vizier, Khwaja Mui'z al- Din⁸⁸⁹, and imprisoned the other two. It appears that during the reign of Sultan Hussein, the two were tax collectors yet again, so Jami recommends that Nava'i watch their behavior very closely to avoid any further hardship on the population.⁸⁹⁰

An additional example is the letter (#224)⁸⁹¹, in which Jami demands Nava'i's interference to solve a marriage claim. Jami writes, "a certain father married his daughter to someone; while the marriage was not consummated. However, another person claims that he had married the girl before. The claimant had provided witnesses for his claim too." Being anguished about the situation, the father requested Jami's wisdom to solve the problem.

As was noted, Jami, through his influence and prestige, acted as the protector of underrepresented and oppressed people. In the letter (#132)⁸⁹² Jami recommends that Nava'i keep an eye on Khwaja Shahab al-Din so that he would not be harassed or bothered, because of his brother's deeds. Khwaja Shahab al-Din was the brother of Maulana 'Ali Sani'i, who was a vizier of Sultan Hussein. The former was imprisoned on the charge of theft from public treasury and bribery, found guilty, received a six-year imprisonment sentence, in addition to the confiscation of his assets and he was finally executed.⁸⁹³ 'Ali Sani'i, according to Nava'i, was a talented poet but a greedy person. It seems that Jami wrote the letter while Sani'i was still in prison (1480-1486). Jami explains to Nava'i that Sani'i's brother, Khwaja Shahab did not participate in his

⁸⁸⁹ Abu Sa'id executed the vizier by boiling him in a pot.

⁸⁹⁰ - Ibid., *Habibb al-Siyar*, Vol. 4, p.82

⁸⁹¹ -Ibid., p.174

⁸⁹² - Urunbaev and Rahmanof, P. 146

⁸⁹³ - *Habibb al-Siyar*, Vol. 4,p. 330

brother's activities and in fact, had become a disciple of a certain Maulana Shams al-Din Muhammad Tabadikani.

Jami's Involvement in the Life of the Masses

A significant aspect of Jami's letters is the social history that could be extracted through them. For example, in letter (#217)⁸⁹⁴ Jami writes a letter to the court requesting that a certain Muhammad Barak, who used to be a servant at the court, be reinstated again; the latter left the court without permission. Jami writes a letter to his immediate supervisor requesting that he not be punished for his act. In this letter Jami informs Nava'i that the servant has paid his fine and is willing to be reinstated in his previous position.

Yet, in another letter (#82)⁸⁹⁵, which shows Jami's awareness of his society and people's conduct, Jami warns Nava'i about a certain Qanbar 'Ali, who had acted as a broker-*dallal* in bazaar and was engaged in evil and malicious behavior. Jami had been aware of his slander upon others. In the letter, Jami suggests that Qanbar should be arrested and punished for his dishonest and malevolent behavior.

Although, the historical documents inform us that *awqaf* estates paid taxes, occasionally, there were exemptions, which only the ruler or the governor could authorize. In the letter (#111), Jami requests that the exemption that was previously issued for a *Khaniqah-i Abulghayth* and that was terminated, be re-issued. Jami sent the letter with the *Mutivalli* (person in charge of the foundation), sheikh Abukhayr, whom Jami praises as an honest and righteous person.

⁸⁹⁴-Ibid., p.171-172

⁸⁹⁵-Ibid., p. 130-131

Jami did not hesitate to express his discontent of elites and emirs either. In the letter (#93),⁸⁹⁶ he writes that the influential Amir Muzaffar⁸⁹⁷ has reprimanded a certain Miraki, whom Jami explains, “has a reputation of being an honest man and many people from Quhistan, where he lives, have come to him [Jami] and have verified his good deeds and intentions.” Thus Jami requests Nava’i to be watchful for Amir Muzaffar so that he would not impose any injustice and oppression on Mirak. In the collection, there is another letter (#279)⁸⁹⁸ which has similar subject. In this letter addressed to Sultan Hussein, at the time that Amir Mughul became governor of Balkh,⁸⁹⁹ Jami explains that when the city was under Sultan Mahmud and Sultan Ahmad, they borrowed a large sum of money from a certain merchant, but refused to repay him. Jami requests the Sultan to return the money to the merchant, who had suffered a great deal from this transaction.

To sum up, the letters reviewed were those that had a political tone or those that requested justice for a needy or oppressed person. While 40% of Jami’s collection was private or philanthropic, his private letters are also important from a historical point. For example, his private letters to Nava’i represent the unique and deep relationship that existed between them. The intimate and affable expression that they addressed each other with, indicates the profound friendship between them besides the great respect that they had for each other’s literary knowledge. Nava’i admired the scholarly knowledge of Jami

⁸⁹⁶ -Ibid., p.133

⁸⁹⁷ Amir Muzaffar’s position was so important in the court that he could even override ‘Ali-shir’s signature when the latter was in charge of royal accounts.

⁸⁹⁸ - Ibid., p.191

⁸⁹⁹ - Ibid., p.51, Jami wrote the letter at the beginning of the emir governorship at Balkh at the time that Amir Mughul became governor of Balkh after conquering the city from the Timurids in Transoxiana. The emir was very influential at the Sultan Hussein’s era. He later became governor of Astarabad after ‘Ali-shir Nava’i left the post in 1490. However, Amir Muzaffar revolted against the sultan fled to Azerbaijan. Sultan Yaghub’s son, Sultan Baysunqur received him elegantly, but later executed him (1491) because of his treason.

in many fields including literature and theology, while Jami praises Nava'i's literary ability. Their correspondences are either an exchange of their literary production and work for critical review or casual correspondence between two friends while they were away from each other.⁹⁰⁰

However, the private letters that would raise the interest of historians are the letters that he wrote to the heads of states such as the Ottoman Sultans or Aq-Quyunlys. Reviewing a few of them justify the importance of Jami's position and prestige among the other heads of states. For example, the letter (#412),⁹⁰¹ is a response to the Qara-Quyunlu's Sultan Jahanshah (1437-1467).⁹⁰² Jahanshah wrote poetry and his penname was *Haqiqi*. In the letter which has twenty-nine line verses in the *mathnawi* form, Jami acknowledges that he has received Jahanshah's work, which was in the *mathnawi* and *ghazals* genres. . He praises Jahanshah's talent in poetry and compares his talent with 'Attar (1118-1229) and Rumi's poetry⁹⁰³ and in a verse, Jami admits that no amount of praise would be adequate for his talent.⁹⁰⁴

Another fascinating letter to the head of states is the one that he addressed to Sultan Bayazid II, the Ottoman Sultan (1481-1512). In this letter (# 424)⁹⁰⁵ Jami praises the Sultan for his kindness to him and thanks him in five line verses for the bag of gold that the Sultan had sent him. Jami expresses that though he is a pious man, he is fearful

⁹⁰⁰ For example, one of the interesting letters that Jami wrote to Nava'i is the letter (#317), in which Jami informs Nava'i about his daily chores. He writes that he was sweeping his room when a messenger was setting out to see him [Nava'i], so he [Jami] decided to write a few lines to his friends. As Urunbaev justly points out, Jami informed his friend on each of his trifle activities. *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁹⁰¹ - *Ibid.*, p. 271-272.

⁹⁰² -*Tarikh-i Iran*, p. 124. Jahan Shah was defeated in the war with the Aq-Quyunlu leader, Uzun Hasan(1467).

⁹⁰³ Jami's praise, of course, for Jahan Shah's poetry is exaggerated, but probably it was because of the king's patronage that Jami received from him.

⁹⁰⁴ -Urunbaev, p. 63

⁹⁰⁵ - *Ibid.*, p. 282-283

that the gold coins will corrupt him.

Among Jami's letters, there is a thirty-one verse letter (#413)⁹⁰⁶ to Sultan Muhammad II (1451-1481). In this letter that is written in the form of *mathnawi*, Jami refers to the Sultan as *shah-i mujahid-i ghazi*- the king who fights for the religion. In the verse he writes, "there is almost no ruler at the throne that has the Sultan's knowledge and integrity. Adding, the Sultan is the king, who has acquired different knowledge: philosophy, logic...and math." Jami ends his letter with three lines of Arabic poetry and writes, "I send this letter as a gift to the one who understands it." Sultan Muhammad II wrote two letters to Jami; one of them inviting him to his court. He even sent an emissary to Syria where Jami stayed for a short period when he returned from Hajj. Jami, being aware that the Sultan's envoys were after him, left the region quickly.⁹⁰⁷

One other important person that Jami wrote letters to was Mahmud b. Sheikh Muhammad Gilani, known as Khwaja Jahan or Malk al-Tujjar, who was an important member of the Indian government at the time. The correspondence between the two was between years (1475-1480).⁹⁰⁸ It seems that the latter sent a grand gift to Jami, who in response sent a copy of his *Nafahat al-Uns* to him. Jami's letters to Khwaja Jahan are the

⁹⁰⁶-Ibid., pp. 272-274

⁹⁰⁷ - 'Ali ibn Hussein Wai'z-i Kashifi, *Rashahat 'Ain al-Hayat*, Vol. p. 265 I, Intisharat-i Bonyad, Tehran;2536. When Jami was returning from Hijaz, he stopped for forty-five days in Sham-Damascus. While there, he heard that Ottoman sultan has sent envoys with gold coins (five- thousand ashrafi) and other gifts inviting Jami to Constantinople, promising he would give hundred thousands more on Jami's arrival to his court. Jami had already left Damascus for Aleppo. From there hearing that the envoys were in Damascus he left Aleppo for Tabriz so he would not meet them. He was able to travel the unsafe road, because of war between Ottomans and Turkmen, from Aleppo to Tabriz with the help of Muhammad Beg, the governor of Azerbaijan. While there he was received by some of the elites of the Uzun Hasan 's court, the latter paid great favors and respect to Jami and asked him to remain in Tabriz, but the Jami brought the excuse of his mother sickness and after while left Azerbaijan for Herat. Sultan Hussein hearing that he was returning sent his people with gifts to welcome his return to his domain. (263)

⁹⁰⁸ - Urunbaev, pp.58-59.

longest letters that he wrote. Two of them (#386 and 387)⁹⁰⁹ are almost four pages of prose and poetry to him. It seems that Jami had a great deal of respect for the Khwaja Jahan.⁹¹⁰

Although this section offers a few examples of Jami's letters to dignitaries and elites, it reiterates the importance of the collection from a socio-historical point of view. Nonetheless, a more thorough critical study of the collection is required to gain a better understanding of the political and social history of the Timurids in the late fifteenth century.

⁹⁰⁹ -Ibid., pp.241-250.

⁹¹⁰ Or probably for the hefty patronage that he received from him.

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