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The Anatomy of a Regicide Attempt: Shāhrukh, the Ḥurūfī, and the Timurid Intellectuals in 830/1426–27

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Abstract

This article provides a contextual analysis of the assassination attempt on the Timurid ruler Shāhrukh's life on 21 February 1427 in Herat. According to the contemporary Timurid chroniclers, Aḥmad-i Lur, a Ḥurūfī by profession, tried to kill Shāhrukh. Having survived the attack with light injuries, Shāhrukh reacted harshly and executed many of those who were accused of conspiring against him. During the interrogations, many other intellectuals who professed as a method of inquiry the 'ilm-i ḥurūf (the science of letters) were also accused of participating in the conspiracy. In this article, I treat the assassination attempt as a moment of crisis in Timurid politics, study it in relation to the transformation of the intellectual landscape towards the mid-fifteenth century, and provide an in-depth textual and contextual analysis of the historiographical sources as well as the writings of those intellectuals who left a first-hand testimony of the subsequent interrogations. After a close scrutiny of the available evidence, I demonstrate that the interrogations of those intellectuals who practiced the science of letters predated the assassination attempt, and I argue that the assassination attempt was just an episode, albeit an important one, in Shāhrukh's attempts to control and regulate the emerging public sphere in Iran and Central Asia.

I. Introduction

One of the most turbulent moments in Timurid intellectual history was the period that culminated in the regicide attempt on Shāhrukh's life in Herat in 830/1427 by a Ḥurūfī activist named Aḥmad-i Lur. The attempt was unsuccessful and Shāhrukh (d. 850/1447) survived the attack with minor injuries, but its political and intellectual reverberations were to be felt far and wide. The investigation following the regicide attempt resulted in extensive interrogations and the purge of prominent intellectuals by Shāhrukh's administration throughout the Timurid Empire. Although the event in general is relatively well known and widely quoted in studies devoted to the history of the Ḥurūfīyya in the fifteenth century, the overall impact of the incident beyond Ḥurūfī circles and the response of those intellectuals who were also affected by the purges have not been studied in a comprehensive

*I am truly indebted to John E. Woods, Judith Pfeiffer, Maria E. Subtelny, and Mayte Green-Mercado for commenting on earlier drafts of this article. I am also grateful to the anonymous reviewers of the article for their constructive feedback.

manner.¹ Given the potential ideological implications of a regicide, albeit a failed one, as well as its timing, as it happened at a moment when Shāhrukh felt the political threat coming from messianic and millenarian movements, a contextual analysis of the regicide attempt promises to be a fruitful exercise towards a better understanding of the place of intellectuals in Timurid politics during the first half of the fifteenth century.

We know about the incident mainly through the accounts of the Timurid chronicles. However, a comprehensive analysis of the causes and consequences of the regicide attempt must take into consideration in a holistic way the Timurid chronicles as well as the reaction of other intellectual figures and organisations, such as the nascent Sufi communities and clandestine or informal intellectual networks in the Timurid Empire and beyond.² The first section of this article thus focuses on how the Timurid chronicles present the incident. In this section, while analysing the chroniclers' view on the incident, I will also attempt to clarify various historiographical and textual issues as long as they shed light upon the issues related to the regicide attempt. In the second section, I will discuss the views of those individual intellectuals who were directly affected by the incident and expressed their reactions in short treatises.

There appears to be a consensus among modern scholars that the regicide attempt was a momentous event in Shāhrukh's reign. However, there is still disagreement about how and why Shāhrukh reacted to the incident in the way he did. Fuad Köprülü and Roger Savory argued that Shāhrukh grew wary of the growing influence of Sufi shaykhs and the regicide attempt was just a 'convenient excuse' to get rid of them in Herat. According to Ya'qūb Āzhand, the regicide attempt was a revenge attack for the killing of Fazlallāh Astarābādī, the eponymous founder of the Ḥurūfiyya movement, at the hands of Mīrānshāh b. Timur in 796/1394. Fatih Usluer suggested that the regicide attempt was a reaction to Shāhrukh's repressive rule. According to Beatrice Manz, Shāhrukh was under pressure coming from millenarian Sufis and he simply overreacted to a relatively minor incident, and

¹E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* (Cambridge, 1920–24), Vol. 3, pp. 365–366, 475; Fuad Köprülü, *Islam in Anatolia after the Turkish Invasion (Prolegomena)*. Trans. Garry Leiser (Salt Lake City, 1993 [1922]), p. 43; Şādiq Kiyā, *Vāzhanāma-yi Gurgānī* (Tehran, 1330 H.sh./1951–52), pp. 11–13; Roger Savory, "A 15th Century Şafavid Propagandist in Harāt", in *American Oriental Society, Middle West Branch, Semi-Centennial Volume: a Collection of Original Essays*, ed. Denis Sinor (Bloomington, 1969), p. 192; Abdūlbaki Gölpınarlı, *Hurūfîlik Metinleri Kataloğu* (Ankara, 1973), pp. 2, 26–27, 50; Ya'qūb Āzhand, *Ḥurūfiyya dar tāriḫ* (Tehran, 1369 H.sh./1990–91), p. 70; Rawshan Khiyāvī, *Ḥurūfiyya. Tārīḫ, 'aqā'id va ārā'* (Tehran, 1379 H.sh./2000–01), pp. 233–234; Shahzad Bashir, *Fazlallah Astarabadi and the Hurufis* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 101–105; Fatih Usluer, *Hurufilik. İlk Elden Kaynaklarla Doğuşundan İtibaren* (Istanbul, 2009), p. 21; Hamid Algar, "Horufism", *Elr* Vol. 12, pp. 483–490. See also İsmail Aka, *Mirza Şahruh ve Zamani (1405–1447)* (Ankara, 1994), pp. 138–140; Beatrice Manz, *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 42; Musa Şamil Yüksel, *Timurlulara Din-Devlet İlişkisi* (Ankara, 2009), p. 118.

²The Sufi networks in fifteenth-century Iran and Central Asia have been relatively well studied, but research into the clandestine informal networks is still in its infancy. Although terribly outdated, the standard reference work on the Sufi networks remains W. Spencer Trimingham, *Sufi Orders in Islam* (New York, 1971). Heeding Shahzad Bashir's warning, I use the term 'network' as a substitute for the term *tarīqa* in order to avoid the latter term's associations with the Sufi orders of the early modern modern and modern periods. See Shahzad Bashir, *Sufi Bodies. Religion and Society in Medieval Islam* (New York, 2011), pp. 11–13. As for the clandestine or informal networks, pioneering research has been done by İhsan Fazlıoğlu and Cornell H. Fleischer. See Fazlıoğlu, "İlk dönem Osmanlı ilim ve kültür hayatında İhvānu's-safa ve Abdurrahmān Bistāmī", *Divan* 1 (1996) 2, pp. 229–240; Cornell H. Fleischer, "Seer to the Sultan: Haydar-i Remmal and Sultan Süleyman", in *Cultural Horizons. A Festschrift in Honor of Talat S. Halman*, ed. Jayne L. Warner (Syracuse, 2001), pp. 290–304. See also the illuminating articles in the following volume: Miriam Cooke and Bruce B. Lawrence (eds.), *Muslim Networks from Hajj to Hip Hop* (Chapel Hill, 2005).

tried to alleviate the intensity of his reaction by granting tax relief and distributing alms to his subjects afterwards.³

A reconstruction of the event poses major chronological and historiographical problems. To a contemporary bystander, the events surrounding the assassination attempt would appear to have unfolded in the following manner. On 23 Rabī' II 830/21 February 1427, after the Friday prayer, someone attempted to assassinate Shāhrukh as he was about to leave the Friday Mosque in Herat. Shāhrukh survived the attack and recovered from his injuries in a short period of time, but the attacker was killed immediately. The investigation after the incident revealed that the assailant had a room in a caravanserai in the city, and that Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt, a famous calligrapher in Herat, used to frequent the assailant there. Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt was soon arrested and interrogated for his alleged involvement in the regicide attempt. He first rejected any association with the assailant, but later identified him as Aḥmad-i Lur, who was a purported follower of Faẓlallāh Astarābādī, the founder of the Ḥurūfī movement in Timurid Iran. 'Azud, a grandson of Faẓlallāh, was arrested, charged with masterminding the conspiracy, and executed. The arrests and interrogations were extended to other intellectuals, such as Qāsim-i Anvār, who were suspected of harboring Ḥurūfī sympathies.

The regicide attempt highlights a moment of crisis in the Timurid Empire during the middle period of Shāhrukh's reign, and like any other crisis in history, it exposes ideological fault lines and political and intellectual rivalries that are otherwise blurred by the intentional suppression or lack of evidence available to historical scrutiny.⁴ The crisis of 830/1426–27 had tangible political dimensions, such as Ulugh Beg's humiliating defeat by Baraq Oghlan of the Gök Orda, but the real actors in the crisis were people closer to home, intellectuals of various colours, who were forced to defend their ideas in a series of inquisition-like interrogations. Beyond the personal dramas involved, this moment of crisis unfolding around the regicide attempt also puts the spotlight on the political dynamics of radical intellectual activism in the fifteenth century, and marks one of those rare moments in which political authority and intellectual prestige clashed under the full gaze of the public eye in the Timurid Empire. What makes the regicide attempt an attractive case to study is the fact that the controversy surrounding the event is well documented by those who held diametrically opposed views on the incident. We have sources, mainly chronicles, which can safely be considered as representative of the view of Shāhrukh and his administration, and several short treatises, mainly polemical in nature, which either support the 'official' view, or refute the accusations. Read in the context of the assassination attempt, these sources reveal how diverse, vibrant, and interconnected the Timurid intellectual life was, and how anxious Shāhrukh and his administration were because of the increasing power and authority of the intellectual networks. They also draw a vivid picture of the fear and anxiety that the individual intellectual figures felt in this period.

I will argue in this article that the regicide attempt was only the tipping point in a wider conflict between Shāhrukh and the Timurid intellectuals. The conflict climaxed towards the end of the 820s/1420s, and not only the Ḥurūfīs, but other intellectuals, freethinkers, millenarian Sufis, and those who adopted the science of letters as a methodological principle were also affected by Shāhrukh's policies. Therefore, through exile, interrogations, and

³See note 1 above for references.

⁴Manz, *Power*, p. 40; Aka, *Mirza Šahrūh*, pp. 115–125.

executions, Shāhrukh appears to have exploited the incident to curb the growing influence of intellectual networks and impose his control over the newly emerging public sphere, which had been expanding in and beyond the Timurid Empire since the collapse of Mongol rule in Western Asia.

II. The Regicide Attempt and the Timurid Historians

There are five Timurid chronicles which include original information on the assassination attempt:

Zubdat al-tavārīkh-i Bāysunghurī by Ḥāfiz-i Ābrū (wr. 830/1426–1427)

The first version ending on 16 Muḥarram 830/17 November 1426

The second version ending on 17 Rabīʿ II 830/15 February 1427

The third version ending after 23 Rabīʿ II 830/21 February 1427

The fourth version ending after 23 Rabīʿ II 830/21 February 1427. This version includes the *Tatimma*.

Tatimma-yi Zubdat al-tavārīkh-i Bāysunghurī (wr. 830?/1426–1427?)

Mujmal-i Faṣīḥī by Faṣīḥ-i Khvāfī (wr. 845/1441–1442)

Tārīkh-i kabīr by Jaʿfarī (wr. ca. 851–855/1447–1452)

Maṭlaʿ-i Saʿdayn va majmaʿ-i bahrayn by ʿAbd al-Razzāq Samarqandī (wr. 875/1470–71).

The *Zubdat al-tavārīkh-i Bāysunghurī* is the fourth and last part of Ḥāfiz-i Ābrū's universal history *Majmaʿ al-tavārīkh*. It includes the history of the Timurid dynasty from the birth of Timur in 736/1335 down to the assassination attempt in 830/1427. Ḥāfiz-i Ābrū (d. 833/1430) separately dedicated this part of his chronicle to Mīrzā Bāysunghur b. Shāhrukh; hence the title of the work.⁵ The importance of Ḥāfiz-i Ābrū's account on the assassination attempt has not been appropriately appreciated mainly due to the absence of a proper edition until recently. It is one of the most important sources on this issue for the following two reasons. Firstly, as a historian who spent much of his time in Herat in Shāhrukh's service, Ḥāfiz-i Ābrū was present in Herat, and possibly an eyewitness to the assassination attempt and the subsequent persecutions. Secondly, the assassination attempt is the last event narrated in the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*, and the codicological complexity of its final part may be related to the crisis surrounding the assassination attempt.⁶

The *Tatimma-yi Zubdat al-tavārīkh* is a supplement to the year 830/1426–27 in the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*. Its full title is *Zikr-i tatimma-yi vaqāyiʿ ki sana-yi salāsin va samānmiʿa ḥādīs shud*, and it has come down to us in a single incomplete copy at the end of the Bodleian manuscript of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*.⁷ Neither the authorship nor the composition date of the *Tatimma* is recorded in the text. Since the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* includes similar continuations for the

⁵Born in Herat or in Khvāf and educated in Hamadān, Ḥāfiz-i Ābrū had entered the service of Shāhrukh after the death of Timur in 807/1405 and subsequently emerged as the most prolific and prominent of all the Shāhrukhid historians. John E. Woods, “The Rise of Tīmūrid Historiography”, *JNES* 46(1987): 97. See also Maria E. Subtelny and Charles Melville, “Ḥāfez-e Ābrū”, *Elr* Vol. 11, pp. 507–509.

⁶*HAB*, Vol. 4, pp. 907–923.

⁷*HTZT*, ff. 440b–446b. The manuscript is incomplete at the end (a note on ff. 1a and 445b says that a leaf dropped from the manuscript) and written by the same hand as the main text of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* itself. Hermann Ethé and V. V. Bartol'd had also mentioned the existence of this supplement, although Ethé did not realize that the manuscript was a copy of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*. See Ed. Sachau and Hermann Ethé, *Catalogue of the Persian, Turkish, Hindūstānī, and Pushtū Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1889), col. 90; V. V. Bartol'd, “O nekotorykh vostochnykh rukopisiakh v Konstantinopole i Kaire (Otchet o komandirovke)”, in *Sochineniia*, Vol. 8

years after 825/1421–22, with the exception of 829/1425–26, it is possible to suggest that the *Tatimma* was composed by Ḥāfīz-i Abrū himself.⁸ However, the fact that Ḥāfīz-i Abrū was addressed in the second person in the text lends support to the argument that the *Tatimma* was composed by someone other than Ḥāfīz-i Abrū.⁹ Furthermore, Mīrẓā Bāysunghur (d. 837/1434) is referred to as alive, a point that indicates that the *terminus ante quem* for the composition date is 837/1434.¹⁰ The reference to the assassination attempt in the text is sketchy, and the bulk of the text is devoted to the conflict between Ulugh Beg and Baraq Oghlan, but it still helps us to solve various textual problems related with the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*.¹¹

After the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* and the *Tatimma*, the next Timurid historians who discussed the assassination attempt, albeit very briefly, were Faṣīḥ-i Khvāfī (d. 849/1445) and Ja'farī. Faṣīḥ-i Khvāfī was also a member of Shāhrukh's administration. In his *Mujmal-i Faṣīḥī*, which is a biographical and historiographical compendium from Adam to the year 845/1441–42, he reiterates in a short paragraph what the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* says, but also adds an important detail regarding the expulsion of Qāsim-i Anvār from Herat on the orders of Shāhrukh, a detail that is not mentioned by Ḥāfīz-i Abrū.¹² Ja'farī was a Ḥusaynī *sayyid* from Yazd, and did not really belong to the establishment of Herat in the Timurid Empire. He wrote the *Tārīkh-i kabīr* sometime between 851/1447–48 and 855/1451–52. It is probable that he wrote his work for Sulṭān–Muḥammad b. Bāysunghur. His account on the assassination attempt in the *Tārīkh-i kabīr* is short and includes few details. Yet it is also the only historiographical account on the assassination attempt written from outside the intellectual circles of Herat.¹³

Samarqandī's account in the *Maṭla'-'i Sa'dayn* is rather late as a source for our purposes. Although he wrote it during the reign of Sulṭān–Abū Sa'īd b. Sulṭān–Muḥammad (d. 873/1469; r. 855–873/1451–1469), he and his father were thoroughly engaged in the Shāhrukhid administration.¹⁴ Hence, it would not be entirely wrong to suggest that his chronicle *Maṭla'-'i Sa'dayn* reflects the Shāhrukhid pretensions. Indeed, the first part of the *Maṭla'-'i Sa'dayn* is little more than a retelling of Ḥāfīz-i Abrū's *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* until the year 830/1426–27.¹⁵ However, as I will discuss in more detail below, the section on the assassination attempt on Shāhrukh diverges from the account found in the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* on several important points.¹⁶ Although it represents a later version of the story,

(1973), pp. 244–245. The editors of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* were not aware of the presence of the *Tatimma*, hence its absence from the present edition.

⁸The following years include a *tatimma* in the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*: 825, 826, 827, 828, 830 (only in the Bodleian manuscript). See *HAB*, Vol. 4, pp. 864–865; 872–873; 876–879; 894–895. Why Ḥāfīz-i Abrū wrote supplements to these years is a question which needs to be addressed separately.

⁹*HTZT*, f. 44ob.

¹⁰*HTZT*, f. 446a.

¹¹Bartol'd made ample use of this manuscript in his account on the disastrous campaign of Ulugh Beg and Muḥammad Jūkī against Baraq Oghlan, see V. V. Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*. Vol. II. *Ulugh-Beg*, trans. V. and T. Minorsky (Leiden, 1958), pp. 101–103.

¹²*KMF*, p. 1114. Browne translated the relevant section of the *Mujmal-i Faṣīḥī* from a rather late manuscript in 1915. See Browne, “The *Mujmal* or ‘Compendium’ of History and Biography of Faṣīḥī of Khwāf”, *Le Muséon* 3rd series 1 (1915), pp. 77–78. This nineteenth-century manuscript, now kept at the Cambridge University Library, dates the assassination attempt to 829/1425–26 instead of 830/1426–27.

¹³*JTK*, f. 310a. See also *PL*³, pp. 507–508.

¹⁴C. P. Haase, “‘Abd-al-Razzāq Samarqandī”, *Elr* Vol. 1, pp. 158–160.

¹⁵Felix Tauer, “Timurlular Devrinde Tariḥçilik”, *Belleten* 29 (1965), pp. 61–62.

¹⁶*SMS*, Vol. 2/1, pp. 381–385.

Samarqandī's version of the narrative later acquired a near canonical status in subsequent Persianate historiography.¹⁷

Of these five accounts, Ḥāfiz-i Abrū and 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī need to be discussed separately due to their comprehensive coverage of the incident, the textual complexities that they pose to us, and the differences in their take on the assassination attempt. I will also refer to the *Tatimma-yi Zubdat al-tavārīkh*, *Mujmal-i Faṣīḥī*, and the *Tārīkh-i kabīr* as they contribute to the discussion.

The Codicology of the Zubdat al-Tavārīkh

Before we go into the details of how Ḥāfiz-i Abrū and Samarqandī present the assassination attempt, we need to address a textual and codicological problem that may have a bearing on the crisis of 830/1426–27. Ḥāfiz-i Abrū completed his universal chronicle *Majma' al-tavārīkh* in successive stages, and its oldest copy is dated to 829/1425–26. However, this copy does not include the fourth part, called *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*. The year 830/1426–27 itself is particularly puzzling as there exist at least four different versions of it in different manuscripts of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*.¹⁸

The *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* ends with the year of 830/1426–27, but it is difficult to suggest that Ḥāfiz-i Abrū brought his work to a proper completion. It lacks a true colophon, and the existing colophon, which gives the date 830/1426–27, appears to have been taken from Muḥammad Ṭūsī's (d. 830/1427) *Majma' al-tahānī*, a treatise on the assassination attempt, which will be discussed in more detail in the second part of this article.¹⁹ This similarity led Āzhand to argue that the *Majma' al-tahānī* was one of the sources of Ḥāfiz-i Abrū for his *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*.²⁰

'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī was very well acquainted with the oeuvre of Ḥāfiz-i Abrū, so much so that the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* constituted the basis of his *Maṭla'-i Sa'dayn* until the year 830/1426–27. However, in the section on the assassination attempt on Shāhrukh, we face a rather difficult textual and contextual conundrum. After mentioning Muḥammad Jūkī's departure from Herat on 17 Rabī' II 830/15 February 1427 to support Ulugh Beg in his fight against Baraq Oghlan of the Gök Orda over the possession of Khvārazm, Samarqandī abruptly announced that Ḥāfiz-i Abrū's *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* had reached the end at this point.²¹

¹⁷MRS, Vol. 6, pp. 691–693; Mu'īn al-Dīn Zamchī Isfizārī (d. 915/1510), *Rawzāt al-jannāt fī awṣāf-i madīnat-i Harāt*, ed. Muḥammad Kāzīm Imām (Tehran, 1338–39 H.sh./1959–1961), Vol. 2, pp. 84–86; KHS, Vol. 3, pp. 615–617.

¹⁸The structure of Ḥāfiz-i Abrū's oeuvre is notoriously complicated, and there is no exhaustive study on the early manuscripts of the *Majma' al-tavārīkh* or the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*. For a general overview, see Felix Tauer, *Cinq opuscules de Ḥāfiz-i Abrū* (Prague, 1959), p. xii; *PL²*, Vol. 1, pp. 346–347; Woods, "The Rise of Tīmūrid Historiography", pp. 96–99.

¹⁹The colophon in question reads: "Az gumrahān-i dīn chu bud īn qīṣṣa rā zuhūr * Tārīkh-i īn qāziyya shud az rūzgār-i zīll". In this colophon the word "zīll" gives the date. Muḥammad Ṭūsī, *Majma' al-tahānī va maḥzar al-amānī*, ed. Najīb Māyil Haravī in *Majmū'a-yi rasā'il-fārsī*, Vol. 3, p. 43 (hereafter *MTMA*). The unique manuscript of the *Majma' al-tahānī* is in Tehran at the Kitābkhāna-yi Millī-yi Malik. Ms. 477/3, ff. 1b–41b. The *Majma' al-tahānī* was partially edited by Ṣādiq Kiyā. See Ṣādiq Kiyā, "Āgāhīhā-yi tāza az Hurūfiyyān", pp. 43–49. For a description of the manuscript, see Īraj Afshār and Muḥammad Taqī Dānispazhūh, *Fihrist-i Nuskhahā-yi Khaṭṭī-yi Kitābkhāna-yi Millī-yi Malik vābasta ba Āstān-i Quds* (Tehran, 1363 H.sh./1984), pp. 33–34 (No. 49).

²⁰Āzhand, *Hurūfiyya*, pp. 71–72.

²¹SMS, Vol. II/1, p. 377 = "Dar īn maqām Zubdat al-tavārīkh al-Bāysunghurī ikhtitām yāft". For further details on Ulugh Beg and Muḥammad Jūkī's unsuccessful campaign to Sighnaq, see Barthold, *Ulugh-Beg*, pp. 101–102.

In other words, the version of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* that Samarqandī used did not include the account on the assassination attempt. Instead, Samarqandī completed the chapter with his version of the events, which I will discuss below.²² This was either because Ḥāfiz-i Abrū had actually stopped working on the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* around 15 February 1427, or Samarqandī had access to an incomplete copy. Alternatively, Samarqandī may have had access to all three versions of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*, but found them too confusing or their collation too time consuming, and therefore created his own version. All three possibilities are indeed plausible. The oldest surviving manuscript of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* ends with the death of Soyurghatmish b. Shāhrukh on 16 Muḥarram 830/17 November 1426, almost three months before the assassination attempt. However, the fact that we have at least two copies of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* which also include the assassination attempt complicates the matter even further.²³ What is puzzling is that despite Samarqandī's familiarity with the work of Ḥāfiz-i Abrū and his prominent position in the Herat court, he seems to have been unaware of the full version of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*. Based on the surviving evidence, four different versions of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* appear to have been circulating in the second half of the fifteenth century:

- 1) Two manuscripts in the *Kitābkhāna-yi Malik* in Tehran, Mss. 4166 and 4163, represent the first version, the former being, purportedly, the oldest manuscript of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*. They end at the beginning of the section on the conflict between Ulugh Beg and Baraq Oghlan, and do not include the account of the assassination attempt.²⁴
- 2) The second version concludes with Muḥammad Jūkī's arrival in Samarqand on 17 Rabī' II 830/15 February 1427, but excludes the assassination attempt. We have no manuscript representation for this version, but its existence can be inferred on the basis of Samarqandī's statement mentioned above.
- 3) The third version includes the assassination attempt. This version is represented by the Istanbul manuscript, which is the oldest manuscript of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* that includes the account of the assassination attempt.²⁵ It was prepared for the personal library of Shāhrukh, and includes the marginalia taken from the corresponding passages of the *Maṭla'-'i Sa'dayn*.
- 4) The fourth version includes both the assassination attempt and the *Tatimma*. Assuming that the entire text was penned by Ḥāfiz-i Abrū with no editorial intervention by a

²² *HAB*, Vol. 4, pp. 907–923. V. V. Bartol'd had noticed this problem in 1908, but I am not aware that he ever tried to solve it. See V. V. Bartol'd, "O nekotorykh vostochnykh rukopisiakh", pp. 244–245.

²³ Only two manuscripts of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* include the assassination attempt: Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Ms. Fatih 4321/1 and Oxford Bodleian Library Ms. Elliot 422.

²⁴ The manuscript *Kitābkhāna-yi Malik* Ms. 4166 was copied for the library of Shāhruh and includes Shāhrukh's handwriting in the margin. *PL*, p. 506; Mahdī Bayānī, "Yak nushkha-yi nafis az Majma' al-tavārīkh-i Ḥāfiz-i Abrū", *Yādgār* 4 (1326/1948), 9–10: 172; see also Khānabābā Bayānī's introduction to Ḥāfiz-i Abrū, *Zayl-i Jami' al-tavārīkh-i Rashīdī* (Tehran, 1350 H.sh./1971–72), pp. 46–50. The other copy in the same library, Ms. 4163, was copied in 1273/1856–57 from Ms. 4166. See also İraj Afshār and Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh, *Fihrist-i nuskhahā-yi khattī-yi Kitābkhāna-yi Millī-yi Malik vābasta ba Āstān-i Quds* (Tehran, 1352 H.sh./1973), Vol. 4, p. 730. In the edited version, these two manuscripts end in *HAB*, Vol. 4, p. 906.

²⁵ Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Ms. Fatih 4321/1, ff. 600a–605a. See also Felix Tauer, "Les manuscrits persans historiques des bibliothèques de Stamboul I", *Archiv Orientalní* 3 (1931), pp. 100–101.

later hand, this version represents the most complete copy of the *Zubdat al-tavārikh*. The Bodleian manuscript is the sole surviving example of this version.²⁶

After presenting these four different versions, we can now ask the question more directly. Is the existence of these four different versions a result of inconsistent copying, or does it reflect the successive composition stages by the author, Ḥāfız-i Abrū, in a turbulent year when Shāhrukh's authority in Herat came under enormous strain due to the death of Soyurghatmish bt. Shāhrukh, Ulugh Beg and Muḥammad Jūkī's defeat at the hands of Baraq Oghlan of the Gök-Orda, and finally the assassination attempt on Shāhrukh in a single year? Based on the extant manuscript corpus of the *Zubdat al-tavārikh*, it is also possible to suggest that Ḥāfız-i Abrū did not finish his work and left behind several drafts for the year 830/1426–27, all of which later entered circulation. Given the immense complexity of Ḥāfız-i Abrū's *oeuvre*, it is difficult to give an unreserved positive answer to this question. Ḥāfız-i Abrū confronts us with a unique challenge of intertextuality by collating and revising his own works under different names and in different genres such as history and geography. Since this seemingly textual problem is related with the year 830/1426–27, it is worth having a closer look at the further details of how Ḥāfız-i Abrū ended his chronicle.

The Date of the Regicide Attempt

All our sources agree that the assassination attempt occurred in Herat on a Friday, but they disagree on the exact date of the incident. Ḥāfız-i Abrū gives the date 23 Rabī' I 830/22 January 1427 (which was actually a Wednesday) while Samarqandī dates it to 23 Rabī' II 830/21 February 1427 (which was a Friday). Ḥāfız-i Abrū's dating is rather problematic in terms of the chronology presented in the *Zubdat al-tavārikh*. It mentions the departure of Muḥammad Jūkī from Herat in support of his brother Ulugh Beg against Baraq Oghlan on 17 Rabī' II 830/15 February 1427 as the last event before the assassination attempt. Furthermore, Ḥāfız-i Abrū himself asserts that the assassination attempt occurred on a Friday, a point which also weakens the reliability of his dating. Therefore, Samarqandī's date seems to be more accurate. The manuscripts of the *Mujmal-i Faṣīḥī* are not consistent on the date of the incident, but the latest edition of the text which relies on a manuscript copied in 857, just twelve years after its composition, gives the date 23 Rabī' II. Therefore, the date 23 Rabī' II 830/21 February 1427 seems to be the more accurate for the assassination attempt despite the fact that our most important source, Ḥāfız-i Abrū, who was probably an eyewitness to the incident, does not agree with it.²⁷

²⁶Oxford Bodleian Library Ms. Elliot 422, ff. 430a–440a. See also *HAB*, Vol. 1, pp. xxvii–xxviii. For the manuscript corpus of the *Majma' al-tavārikh* and the *Zubdat al-tavārikh*, see *PL³*, pp. 504–507.

²⁷*HAB*, Vol. 4, p. 911; *HTZT*, f. 440b; *KMF*, Vol. 3, p. 1114; *SMS*, Vol. II/1, p. 381. The Cambridge manuscript of the *Mujmal-i Faṣīḥī*, which was copied on 17 September 1856, gives the date as 23 Rabī' II 829, but this manuscript is a very late copy and it appears as though a later copyist collated it with the *Maṭla'-i Sa'dayn*. Therefore, I omitted the discrepancy in this manuscript on the year of the incident from my discussion here. See Browne, "The *Mujmal*", p. 77. According to Ja'farī's *Tārīkh-i kabīr*, the incident happened in 830 on a Friday. It does not specify the month and day of the incident. See *JTK*, f. 310a. One radical departure from the conventional dating of the incident to 830 comes from Ḥusayn Ālyārī, who gives 23 Rajab 829/31 May 1426, a day which falls on a Friday. Unfortunately, Ālyārī does not provide any reference for this information. See Ḥusayn Ālyārī, "Nāma'ī az pisar-i Faḫlallāh Ḥurūfī", *Nashriyya-yi Dānishkada-yi Adabiyāt va 'Ulūm-i Insānī* 19 (1346 H.sh./1967), p. 175.

Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū and ‘Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī on the Regicide Attempt

According to Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū’s detailed and lively account, Shāhrukh went to the Friday Mosque of Herat (*Jāmi’-i Dār al-Saltāna*) for the Friday prayer. His powerful wife, Gawharshād Begūm (d. 861/1457), whom Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū refers to as the queen mother (*mahd-i ‘ulyā*), tried to detain this procession from going to the mosque through the Portico of Herat (*Īvān-i dār al-khilāfa*).²⁸ Since it was rainy, and the roads were slippery, she was worried that “an agony would be inflicted upon Shāhrukh”, a remark which most probably reflects Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū’s reaction to the incident *ex post facto*. Shāhrukh responded that there was no escaping divine will and dismissed her worries. After performing the Friday prayer, he set out to return to his palace. However, in total disregard of the normal practices of kingship, he had not banned the public from attending the royal procession. As the crowd was leaving the mosque, someone approached Shāhrukh and tried to stab him with a knife, but because of Shāhrukh’s firm piety, the chronicler tells us, he was not injured seriously. A page was able to catch the collar of the perpetrator and take him down while a eunuch (*khāja-sarā*) seized the knife and stabbed him. The perpetrator was eventually beheaded by the arriving guards (*yasa’ul*). “As the fear of apocalypse filled the air”, according to Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, Shāhrukh left the mosque in a litter.²⁹

Samarqandī’s account does not convey the sense of disorderliness that is so clearly reflected in Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū’s narrative. According to Samarqandī, a man clad in felt named Aḥmad-i Lur, a disciple of Faẓlallāh Astarābādī, approached Shāhrukh with a piece of paper in his hands in the guise of someone seeking justice from the king. Shāhrukh asked his aides to allow him to approach. Suddenly Aḥmad-i Lur drew his knife and plunged it into Shāhrukh’s belly. However, he was not seriously wounded, and Aḥmad-i Lur was killed by the members of Shāhrukh’s inner circle (*ichkiyān*), among whom was ‘Alī-Sultān b. Mengü Qa’uchin. In the meantime, as the military band struck up the processional music, the crowd noticed the attempt and ran to the roof (*bām*) of the mosque. Amīr ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alīka Kōkeltash and Amīr Jalāl al-Dīn Fīrūzshāh had mounted their horses, but Shāhrukh asked for Amīr Jalāl al-Dīn Fīrūzshāh and expressed his wish to sit in a litter. However the *amīr* said that doing so would cause unrest among the people. Therefore, Shāhrukh mounted his horse, left the mosque in the company of the military band, and proceeded to Bāgh-i Zāghān, where his wounds were treated by the doctors.³⁰

So far the most noteworthy alteration in Samarqandī’s narrative is the exclusion of Gawharshād Begūm and the emphasis on the agency of the *amīrs* around Shāhrukh. In Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū’s narrative, only a page and a eunuch are able to subdue the perpetrator, but according to Samarqandī it was Shāhrukh’s inner circle (*ichkiyān*). Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū keeps the identity of the perpetrator anonymous, while Samarqandī reveals both his name and communal affiliation right at the beginning of the narrative.

²⁸ *Dār al-khilāfa* was one of the titles of Herat in the Timurid period, and the *Īvān-i dār al-khilāfa* was probably the *Tāq-i manšūra*, i.e. the *ivān*-hall on the *qibla*-side of the *Masjid-i Jāmi’* in the “Musalla” building complex. See Ömer Diler, *Şehir Lakapları – Titles and Epithets of Islamic Towns* (Istanbul, 2001), p. 138; Terry Allen, *A Catalogue of Toponyms and Monuments of Timurid Herat* (Cambridge, MA, 1981), p. 106; Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, *The Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan* (Princeton, 1988), Vol. 1, pp. 302–305.

²⁹ *HAB*, Vol. 4, pp. 911–915.

³⁰ *SMS*, Vol. II/1, pp. 381–382.

The differences between the accounts of Ḥāfīz-i Abrū and Samarqandī on the events following the assassination attempt are no less revealing. According to Ḥāfīz-i Abrū, Shāhrukh initiated the investigation of the incident immediately, but nobody initially recognised the assailant. Three days later a person who owned a caravanserai in Herat arrived and said that someone resembling the attacker had a room in his caravanserai, but he had not shown up since Friday. Further investigation revealed that the famous calligrapher Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt frequented the attacker in his room. Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt was soon brought in and interrogated. First he rejected any connection with the assassination attempt, but after he was tortured, he revealed that the name of the attacker was Aḥmad-i Lur.³¹ The investigation soon produced the name 'Azūd as the real perpetrator. 'Azūd, the son of Mawlānā Majd al-Dīn Astarābādī, was a follower of Mawlānā Faẓlallāh Astarābādī, the founder of the Ḥurūfiyya order.³² Hence, the association between the assassination attempt and the Ḥurūfīs, whom Ḥāfīz-i Abrū calls “the fighters for blasphemy and heretics in nature (*mukāfaha-yi kufr va zandaqa-yi majbūl*)”, was established. Those who were accused of having Ḥurūfī sympathies were apprehended and interrogated. Curiously, Ḥāfīz-i Abrū does not name any of these individuals. We are told that they first denied any connection with the assassination attempt, but under torture they admitted knowledge of the conspiracy to kill Shāhrukh, including the role of Aḥmad-i Lur. At the end, they were all executed. Ḥāfīz-i Abrū underlines the overwhelming backing that the city folk gave to these executions and Shāhrukh's generosity towards them for their support. Shāhrukh must have understood the threat that he was facing, as extensive donations to the needy from the treasury, pardoning of tax arrears, and release of prisoners followed the executions.³³

Samarqandī's narrative is less sophisticated than that of Ḥāfīz-i Abrū, which often reads like a real detective novel. Regretting that they had killed Aḥmad-i Lur, Mīrzā Bāysunghur and other *amīrs* searched his body, and, among other things, found a key in his pocket. The ensuing investigation revealed that the key opened a door in an inn (*tīmcha*) in Herat. The residents of the inn were questioned, and they said that the attacker had indeed occupied a room there, and that he had had many visitors, among whom was the calligrapher Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt-i Baghdādī. Samarqandī's account of Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt is drastically different from Ḥāfīz-i Abrū's and includes relatively detailed information on Ma'rūf's background that strongly emphasised his intimate relationships first with Iskandar b. 'Umar-Shaykh in Iṣfahān and then Mīrzā Bāysunghur in Herat. After the assassination attempt, Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt and those youth who were close to him were apprehended, but he was spared and imprisoned in the Ikhtiyār al-Dīn fort in Herat after some officials were bribed. For Samarqandī, the Ḥurūfī associations of the assassination attempt are self-evident, and he simply states that

³¹Ḥāfīz-i Abrū names another figure as Aḥmad-i Lur, who was one of the *amīrs* of Sulṭān Aḥmad Jalayir in the battle against Qara Yūsuf Qaraqoyunlu on 28 Rabī' II 813/30 August 1410. See *HAB*, Vol. 3, p. 401. The manuscripts of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* are not consistent in reading this name. The editor of the text, Javādī, suggests the reading Aḥmad-i Lur. In the Fatih manuscript the name is Aḥmad-i Lur, and the Oxford manuscript records it as Aḥmad-i BR (Pīr?). See Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Ms. Fatih 4321/1, f. 468b, and Oxford Bodleian Library Ms. Elliot 422, f. 148a. This figure is probably the *atabek* Aḥmad, the ruler of the Lur-i Buzurg, who died during a popular uprising soon after 811/1408–1409. See *NMT*, pp. 49–52; *YZN*, Vol. 1, pp. 708, 721.

³²For Mawlānā Majd al-Dīn Astarābādī and the possible role of Ḥurūfīs in the assassination attempt see the third part of this article.

³³*HAB*, Vol. 4, pp. 915–920. The *Tatimma* also says that that Shāhrukh was generous towards the poor and needy after the assassination attempt. See *HTZT*, f. 441a.

Khvāja ‘Azud al-Dīn, the grandson of Fażlallāh Astarābādī, and the others who collaborated with Aḥmad-i Lur, were executed.³⁴

Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū remains silent on the purge of the intellectuals following the assassination attempt despite the fact that the *Majma’ al-tahānī*, a text which is very closely related to the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*, is very vocal on this issue. Faṣīḥ-i Khvāfi and Samarqandī mention the name of the famous poet Sayyid Qāsim-i Anvār (d. 837/1433–1434), who left for Samarqand after the assassination attempt, and both agree that his expulsion from Herat happened by the order of Mīrzā Bāysunghur, but they are less clear about what the exact nature of the problem between the poet and the prince was. Samarqandī states without further elucidation that Mīrzā Bāysunghur was ill-disposed towards Qāsim-i Anvār. Mīrkhvānd and Khvādamīr later elaborated upon Samarqandī’s narrative and argued that Qāsim-i Anvār was expelled from Herat because Mīrzā Bāysunghur found out that Aḥmad-i Lur had visited him.³⁵

Beyond the textual differences presented above, Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū and Samarqandī also used different filters in interpreting the event. Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū appears to have been more interested in the event itself and its immediate perception by the public. His account is more fatalistic and better reflects Shāhrukh’s political predicament.³⁶ Shāhrukh was saved by an ordinary page, and the subsequent investigation was in shambles. The investigators were able to establish an alleged link between the incident and the Ḥurūfīs only after they received a tip from an ordinary person and torturing those whom they suspected of having been involved in the conspiracy. Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū avoids mentioning any other prominent Timurid figure involved in the incident. Samarqandī brings to the fore the powerful *amīrs* who rescued Shāhrukh from the melee that broke out after the assassination attempt, and emphasizes their role in the subsequent investigations. Here especially Mīrzā Bāysunghur appears to be a crucial figure.

It is indeed a real puzzle, for if Mīrzā Bāysunghur had any role in saving Shāhrukh or in the subsequent investigation, why would Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū—who usually accords Bāysunghur the highest accolades in the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*—exclude him from his account? If he did not play any role in these events, why would Samarqandī include him in his narrative? Samarqandī also blames him for causing the departure of Qāsim-i Anvār, for whom he appears to have had high regard, from Herat to Samarqand. It is tempting to think that Samarqandī’s narrative is just court gossip with a tinge of anti-Bāysunghurid prejudice, or that he chose to ignore Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū’s full account of the story in order to spare Shāhrukh from embarrassment. But this is to remain speculation until we resolve the question of the sources of the *Maṭla’-i Sa’dāyn* for the period following 830/1426–1427.

Ja’farī’s account surprisingly lacks any factual details on the assassination attempt itself. He simply says that as Shāhrukh was leaving the mosque after the Friday prayer, the followers of Fażlallāh Astarābādī (*Faẓlallāhiyān*) attempted to stab Shāhrukh, but the assailant was captured and killed immediately by the guards (*mulāzimān*). As for the aftermath of the incident, however, Ja’farī drastically shifted the emphasis from the investigations and interrogations to a public uprising and lynching in Herat. According to Ja’farī, there was no investigation after the incident. Instead, a great civil strife (*fitna-yi ‘aẓīm*) broke out after the assassination

³⁴ SMS, pp. 382–384. See also MRS, Vol. 6, pp. 692–693 and KHS, pp. 616–617.

³⁵ KMF, Vol. 3, p. 1114; SMS, Vol. II/1, p. 384; MRS, Vol. 6, pp. 693–694; KHS, p. 617.

³⁶ HAB, Vol. 4, p. 910.

attempt. Many people armed themselves and started to look for the Ḥurūfīs (*ān jamā'at*), and they killed whoever they were able to identify. They also killed 'Azud, a maternal grandson of Faẓlallāh, and six other Ḥurūfīs along with many others who were mistaken for Ḥurūfīs. Following this civil strife, Shāhrukh exempted his subjects from one-sixth of all taxes.³⁷ Ja'farī was a *sayyid* from Yazd, and his distaste for what happened in 830/1426–27 is obvious. He does not criticise or glorify what the Ḥurūfīs did, but he also does not hesitate to label the following vigilante justice civil strife (*fitna*).

Before turning our attention to the reactions of intellectual circles to the assassination attempt, a recapitulation of the historiographical corpus on the matter is in order. Given the familiarity of Samarqandī with the work of Ḥāfīz-i Abrū, and the fact that both authors were residents in Herat and belonged to the same courtly and administrative circles, it is surprising that Samarqandī did not have access to the full account of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* on the assassination attempt. However, I am inclined to adopt a less conspiratorial solution to this puzzle, as we have no reliable evidence to suggest that Samarqandī intentionally censored the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*. Above I suggested the possibility that this was due to the fact that Ḥāfīz-i Abrū could not complete and compile his work due to the political turmoil of the year 830/1426–27, and his hesitation about how to go about doing so made him leave it unfinished. It is quite possible that Samarqandī had an incomplete copy of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* in his hands, and was unaware of the existence of other versions. If this was the case, Samarqandī had access to either an early draft or an incomplete copy of the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* and incorporated it into his own work. Since the *Maṭla'-'i Sa'dayn* surpassed the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* in popularity, these different drafts of Ḥāfīz-i Abrū's work were never properly collated until modern times. Nevertheless, it is curious that such confusion should have had occurred in the year 830/1426–27, when Shāhrukh's administration was undergoing a deep crisis. Although concise and sketchy, Ja'farī's rather gloomy account reminds us that not everybody was happy with what happened in 830/1426–27, and I will now turn my attention to the voice of those who were affected by the assassination attempt in order to assess its full impact.

III. The Regicide Attempt and the Timurid Intellectuals

So far I have only relied on the Timurid chronicles, and, with the possible exception of Ja'farī, they all present us with the official Shāhrukhid perspective. The picture they paint is rather straightforward. A heretical sect tried to kill the king, and the king punished the perpetrators. But the story is rather more complex than this. The Timurid chronicles, especially Faṣīḥ-i Khvāfī and Samarqandī, do not deny the fact that numerous intellectuals were affected by the purges ensuing the assassination attempt, but they reveal very little that would contribute to our understanding of the issue in any significant way. Other than 'Azud, only the names of Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt and Qāsim-i Anvār are mentioned in the contemporary sources. We know very little about the life of Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt, and certainly nothing about his view of the assassination attempt. All we know is that he was imprisoned after the incident.³⁸

³⁷ *JTK*, f. 310a.

³⁸ *HAB*, Vol. 4, p. 915; *SMS*, Vol. 2/1, pp. 383–384. Samarqandī provides us with a very brief summary of his activities at the courts of Sulṭān Aḥmad-i Jalayir in Baghdad, Iskandar b. 'Umar-Shaykh in Isfahan, and Shāhrukh

A later source, Gāzurgāhī (d. 909/1503–04) in his *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, adds that two *sayyids* from Herat were also implicated after the assassination attempt. Amīr Makhtūm Nīshābūrī (d. 833/1429) was first punished through the pouring of hot oil on his head, and then exiled to Hurmuz. His father Amīr Sayyid Bahā' al-Dīn, a Ḥusaynī *sayyid* from Medina, was sent to a border town (?*Dār al-Marz*).³⁹ Unfortunately, I could not verify Gāzurgāhī's account in earlier Timurid sources.

We are better informed about Qāsim-i Anvār's (d. 837/1433) life thanks to his widespread reputation as a poet and the attention he received from several biographical dictionaries, but these biographical notices add nothing substantial to what we already know from the chronicles.⁴⁰ Qāsim-i Anvār was a notable poet with a *dīvān*, and he also penned several short treatises, but unfortunately none of them can securely be dated to 830/1426–27 or afterwards. Therefore, it would be rather speculative at this point to read them in the context of the assassination attempt.⁴¹

We do not know how Qāsim-i Anvār became actually involved in the incident. According to Khvāfī, he was expelled from Herat on the orders of Shāhrukh.⁴² Samarqandī refers to enmity between him and Mīrzā Bāysunghur, but he doesn't specify the origin of this enmity. A much later source, 'Abd al-Razzāq Kirmānī's hagiography of Shāh Nī'matullāh Kirmānī, says that supposedly he had foretold the civil strife a few days before the incident, and that a copy of the *Dīvān* of Qāsim-i Anvār was found in the vault of the perpetrator, who is not named in the text. He was interrogated by Amīr 'Alīka and Amīr Fīrūzshāh, two prominent *amīrs* of Shāhrukh's administration, and asked if the rumors were true and he had had premonition of the incident. Qāsim-i Anvār defended himself by saying that sometimes future events spark in the minds of the dervishes, and if he had foreseen the incident, this must have been because of him being a dervish, not because he was one of the perpetrators. Written after 911/1506, Kirmānī's account is of little value for our purposes and its main purpose is to point at Qāsim-i Anvār's prophetic abilities, such as prognostication.⁴³ Roger Savory suggested that Qāsim-i Anvār was in charge of Safavid propaganda in Herat, but could

in Herat. However, these stories appear to be aimed at demonstrating how freeminded he was and how he did not follow his patrons' instructions. A collection of poetry is attributed to him by Mahdī Bayānī in his *Ahvāl va āthār-i khushmīwīsān* (quoted in *HAB*, Vol. 4, p. 976), but it appears to have been composed between 784 and 788, long before the assassination attempt.

³⁹Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Gāzurgāhī, (d. 909/1503–04). *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, ed. Ghulamrīzā Ṭabāṭabā'ī-Majd (Tehran, 1375 H.sh./1996–97), pp. 215, 217, 226.

⁴⁰Jāmī, *Nafahāt al-uns*, pp. 590–93; Dawlatshāh Samarqandī (d. 900/1494–95), *Tazkirat al-shu'arā*, pp. 346–352; 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī, (d. 906/1501), *Mecālisü'n-nefāyis*, Vol. 1, pp. 6–7; Navā'ī, *Nesāyimiü'l-mahabbe min şemāyimiü'l-fütüuve*, pp. 418–19; Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, pp. 222–227. In fact, only Jāmī and Gāzurgāhī mention the assassination attempt and Qāsim-i Anvār's subsequent departure to Samarqand. Jāmī's account (p. 593) appears to be a variation of the story found in the *Maṭla'-'i Sa'dayn*. After the assassination attempt, the investigators found out that the assassin, who is not named by Jāmī, had a house in Qāsim-i Anvār's almshouse (*langar-i khidmat*). Jāmī stresses the point that the house in the almshouse was locked (*muqaffal*).

⁴¹Two *ghazals* by Qāsim-i Anvār were recorded by Samarqandī in the *Maṭla'-'i Sa'dayn*, and by Dawlatshāh Samarqandī in the *Tazkirat al-shu'arā* as his reaction to the incident, but they are too vague to be located in any particular context. See SMS, Vol. 2/1, pp. 384–385; Dawlatshāh Samarqandī, *Tazkirat al-shu'arā*, p. 347. Qāsim-i Anvār, *Kulliyāt-i Qāsim-i Anvār*, ed. Sa'īd Nafīsī (Tehran, 1337 H.sh./1958–59), pp. 14–15, 236–237.

⁴²The manuscript corpus of the *Mujmal-i Faṣṣḥī* is not consistent on this point. The earliest manuscript, Ms. Or. 1710 at the Library of Sofia, says that it was Shāhrukh who had enmity vis-à-vis Qāsim-i Anvār, but the manuscript at the Kitābkhāna-yi Millī-yi Tabriz holds Mīrzā Bāysunghur responsible for Qāsim-i Anvār's expulsion from Herat. See *KMF*, Vol. 1, pp. lxxvii, 1114.

⁴³SMS, Vol. 2/1, p. 384; 'Abd al-Razzāq Kirmānī (fl. 911/1506), "Tazkira dar Manāqib-i Shāh Nī'matullāh Valī", in *Matériaux pour la Biographie de Shah Nī'matullah Walī Kermani*, ed. Jean Aubin (Tehran, 1983), p. 67.

not have been involved in the assassination attempt as this would have been counterproductive for his activities as an agent of the Ardabil shrine in Khorasan. Savory prefers to connect his expulsion from Herat to the Timurid attempts to curb growing Safavid influence in the region. According to him, Qāsim-i Anvār was expelled simply because he had become disturbingly popular and influential in the city.⁴⁴

There is no doubt that Qāsim-i Anvār belonged to the network of the Ardabīl shrine, a point which can aptly be demonstrated by references to Ṣadr al-Dīn b. Ṣafī al-Dīn Ishāq (d. 794/1391) in his works.⁴⁵ However, we do not know much about his relationship with Khvāja ‘Alī (d. 832/1429), who took over the leadership of the Safavid network and the Ardabīl shrine after the death of Ṣadr al-Dīn, and Ibrāhīm b. Khvāja ‘Alī (d. 851/1447). None of these figures are mentioned in Qāsim-i Anvār’s works, and we have no firm evidence to suggest that he maintained a close contact with the shrine in Ardabīl after the death of Ṣadr al-Dīn.⁴⁶ It seems that Qāsim-i Anvār was not a mere Safavid propagandist, but rather an intellectual by himself with immense popular and political appeal whose network reached far beyond Safavid circles.

In his *Jām-i jahān-numā-yi Shāhī*, Muḥammad Ṭabasī (fl. 828–42/1424–39), one of the followers of Shāh Ni‘matallāh Valī, provides the following political taxonomy:

At this time in the month of Rajab, the year of 828 (= 19 May – 17 June 1425), after the *Ghaws*, there is no one of the status of Amīr Sayyid Ni‘matallāh; among the deputies of the kingdom of heavens (*khulafā-yi malakūt*) there is no one of the status of Amīr Sayyid Qāsim, and among the caliphs of the world (*khulafā-yi mulk*), there is no one of the status of Amīr Shāhrukh.⁴⁷

Ṭabasī’s work is one of the most striking formulations of dual kingship written in late medieval Islamic history. The conciliatory tone of the text is noteworthy, as it does emphasize the legitimacy of Shāhrukh’s authority. In the paragraph translated above, the *Ghaws* refers to either one of the twelve *imāms* or Jesus according to Ṭabasī.⁴⁸ What interests us most here is the elevation of Qāsim-i Anvār to a level that rivals the spiritual authority of Shāh Ni‘matallāh Valī and the political authority of Shāhrukh some twenty months before the assassination attempt. This constituted no small challenge to Shāhrukh’s authority, and came from an angle not mentioned in the chronicles. The real danger that Qāsim-i Anvār posed for Shāhrukh—whether he was an agent of the Ardabīl shrine or not—was not simply his popularity, but the fact that he epitomized a new constitutional framework through the

⁴⁴Savory, “A 15th Century Ṣafavid Propagandist in Harāt”, pp. 192–193. It should be emphasised that the earliest source that refers to Qāsim-i Anvār’s popularity in Herat as the source of friction with Shāhrukh’s administration is Samarqandī’s *Tāzkiirat al-shu‘arā* which was written in 892/1486. Jāmī in the *Nafahāt al-uns* (wr. 883 /1478–79) does not refer to his appeal to the general public in Herat, but as Savory argued convincingly, Jāmī’s account of Qāsim-i Anvār is utterly unreliable, as he is more interested in distancing him from his alleged Safavid connections.

⁴⁵Qāsim-i Anvār, *Kulliyāt-i Qāsim-i Anvār*, pp. 193, 340.

⁴⁶Ḥabīballāh ‘Abbāsī, “Ḥurūfiyya va Qāsim-i Anvār”, *Majalla-yi Dānishkada-yi Adabiyāt* (Winter 1378 H.sh./2000), p. 103.

⁴⁷Darvīsh Muḥammad Ṭabasī, (fl. 828–42/1424–39), “Jām-i jahān-numā-yi shāhī”, in *Athār-i Darvīsh Muḥammad Ṭabasī*, eds. İraj Afshār and Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh (Tehran, 1351 H.sh./1972), p. 336. The *Jām-i jahān-numā-yi shāhī* was written on Zū al-Ḥijja 839/23 Juna 1436.

⁴⁸*Ibid.* p. 337. For further discussion on Ṭabasī and his political ideas, see Binbaş, “Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī”, (PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 2009), pp. 346–350.

merger of religious and political authority in the Timurid Empire. Therefore, he was forced to go to exile to Samarqand and then to Kharjird, where he died in 837/1433.⁴⁹

A closer examination of contemporary literature reveals that there were other figures who felt the political pressure. For example, Navā'ī reports that Mawlānā Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Khvārazmī (d. 839/1435–36), the famous poet and *Maṣnavī* commentator, was accused of blasphemy (*taḳfīr*) for a *ghazal* that he wrote. He was called to Herat from Khvārazm, and interrogated. Since he was a very learned man, he was able to respond to all accusations. In the end he was not found guilty for any crime, and returned to his hometown. Unfortunately, we do not know exactly when this incident occurred and how Khvārazmī responded to the accusations.⁵⁰ However, we can connect his interrogation to the context of the assassination attempt through indirect evidence found in his own works. Khvārazmī's commentary on Rūmī's *Maṣnavī* demonstrates a clear pro-'Alid tendency, and includes a short section on the potency of the science of letters in explaining the question of unity. According to Khvārazmī, there was group of intellectuals who considered the entire universe a book or leaves with text on it, and who believed that they had access to the secrets of letters that revealed the principles of Unity (*tawḥīd*).⁵¹ Khvārazmī provides a concise description of the science of letters, and ultimately connects it to the views of Ibn 'Arabī and Fakhr al-Dīn 'Irāqī (d. 688/1289). Khvārazmī's tone is unapologetic, but he doesn't present an overly committed stance either. Nevertheless, I believe it wouldn't be too far-fetched to suggest that Khvārazmī's troubles were caused by his views on the science of letters and the pro-'Alid tone of his work. The reason why we cannot go into further discussion on this matter is the difficulty to date and contextualize his work. He started the commentary on the second book of the *Maṣnavī* in 833/1430, three years after the assassination attempt, but we do not know when exactly he started composing his work. In all probability he never finished the entire project, as the extant portions of the text include the commentary on the first three books of the *Maṣnavī* only. Devin DeWeese surmised that his death in 839/1435–36 probably prevented him from completing his work. Khvārazmī dedicated his commentary to Ibrāhīm Sulṭān b. Shāh-Malik, the governor of Khvārazm. In his dedication he refers to Shāh-Malik as deceased, so he must have started working on his commentary after 829/1426, the year in which Shāh-Malik died, but for the time being we cannot be sure if it was before or after the assassination attempt. The *Jawāhir al-asrār* and indeed the entire oeuvre of Khvārazmī requires further study in this regard.⁵²

⁴⁹Gāzurgāhī in his *Majālis al-'ushshāq* claims that Shāhrukh sent his apologies to him with Mīrzā Jūkī and Amīr Firūzshāh in 833/1429–30, but I could not verify this information in earlier sources. See Gāzurgāhī, *Majālis al-'ushshāq*, p. 327.

⁵⁰Navā'ī, *Mecālisü'n-nefāyis*, Vol. 1, p. 10; *KHS*, Vol. 4, p. 9.

⁵¹Khvārazmī, *Jawāhir al-asrār va zavāhir al-anwār*, ed. Muḥammad Jawād Sharī'at (Isfahan, 1981), pp. 172–73.

⁵²Khvārazmī, *Jawāhir al-asrār*, p. 25. For the governors of Khvārazm Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān and his father Shāh Malik, see Shiro Ando, *Timuridische Emire nach dem Mu'izz al-ansāb* (Berlin, 1992), p. 166–67. Curiously, Khvārazmī did not discuss the science of letters in his *Kunūz al-ḥaqā'iq*, which is his earlier commentary on the *Maṣnavī*. See *Kunūz al-ḥaqā'iq fi rumūz al-ḍaqā'iq*, London British Library Ms. Or. 12984. Devin DeWeese also demonstrated that Khvārazmī revised his work on politics entitled *Naṣīhatnāma-yi Shāhī* around the year 830/1426–27, and rewrote it under the title *Yanbu' al-asrār fi naṣāyikh al-abrār*. Although both recensions are by and large identical, Khvārazmī omitted various historical references, most notably the names of his patron Amīr Shāh Malik Bilkut (d. 829/1426) and his son Ibrāhīm Sulṭān. See Devin DeWeese, "The 'Kashf al-Huda of Kamal al-Din Husayn Khorezmi: A Fifteenth-Century Sufi Commentary on the 'Qasidat al-Burdah' in Khorezmian Turkic (Text Edition, Translation, and Historical Introduction)", (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1985), pp. 224–227. The reason why Khvārazmī

Khvārazmī was not the only intellectual accused of blasphemy, and fortunately some of these intellectuals responded to the political pressure in writing, leaving behind an alternative record of the crisis in 830/1426–27. The following authors and their works appear to be the most prominent one of these writings:

Naf̄ṣat al-maṣdūr-i avval and *Risāla-yi i'tiqādāt* by Ṣā'in al-Dīn Turka (wr. 8 Rajab 829/16 May 1426)

Majma' al-tahānī va maḥzar al-amānī by Muḥammad Tūsi (wr. 830/1426–27)

Manhaj al-rashād by Zayn al-Dīn Khvāfi (wr. 831/1427–28)

A letter by Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad to Ḥasan on the Ḥurūfi involvement in the incident (wr. 16 Jumādā 836/8 January 1433).

Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad's letter and the Ḥurūfīs

All the chronicles we discussed above agree that 'Azud, one of the followers of Faẓlallāh Astarābādī, was executed for masterminding the whole conspiracy. Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū tells us that he was the son of Majd al-Dīn Astarābādī without specifying his relationship to Faẓlallāh Astarābādī. According to Faṣīḥ-i Khvāfi, his name was Khvāja 'Azud, and he was a maternal grandson (*dukhtarzāda*) of Faẓlallāh Astarābādī. He also adds that Khvāja 'Azud was not only executed, but that his body was also burned. Samarqandī simply changes his name to Khvāja 'Azud al-Dīn and repeats Faṣīḥ-i Khvāfi's account.⁵³ The Ḥurūfi sources confirm that Majd al-Dīn was one of the four vicegerents of Faẓlallāh and that he had access to Faẓlallāh's inner secrets (*maḥram-i asrār*), but we cannot be sure if this intimacy also entailed a family connection.⁵⁴ In other words, from Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū to Faṣīḥ-i Khvāfi, he was transformed from being the son of one of the vicegerents of Faẓlallāh to a family member of Faẓlallāh, and Majd al-Dīn Astarābādī's name disappeared. Samarqandī presents the whole issue as the heinous act of a troublesome family.

A glimpse of the reaction of the Ḥurūfīs to the assassination attempt can be found in a letter written in Persian by Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad to Mawlānā Ḥasan. The events narrated in the letter took place during the period between 832/1429, soon after Shāhrukh left Herat for his second Qaraqoyunlu campaign on 5 Rajab 832/10 April 1429, and the date when the letter was composed, on 16 Jumādā I 836/8 January 1433. The importance of this letter for our purposes derives from the fact that both the sender and the recipient were vicegerents of Faẓlallāh Astarābādī, and the contents of the letter can be construed as a reaction of some Ḥurūfīs to the attempt on Shāhrukh's life.⁵⁵

decided to revise his earlier work has not been properly explained. The obvious reason is the death of Shāh Malik, but a closer comparison of the two recensions — or a better edition that takes into consideration the surviving manuscripts of the *Naṣīḥatnāma-yi Shāhī* — would help us to contextualise this work.

⁵³ *HAB*, Vol. 4, p. 916; *SMS*, Vol. 2/1, p. 384; *KMF*, Vol. 3, p. 1114.

⁵⁴ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, p. 368; Gölpınarlı, *Hurūfīlik*, p. 15. The names of the daughters of Faẓlallāh were as follows: Fāṭima Khātūn, Bībī Khātūn, Umm al-Kitāb, Fāṭiḥat al-Kitāb, and Kalimatallāh al-'ulyā. According to Āzhand, the mother of Majd al-Dīn was a fifth unnamed daughter of Faẓlallāh. Kalimatallāh al-'ulyā was involved in another incident together with a certain Mawlānā Yūsuf, and was executed by Jahānshāh Qara Qayunlu in 845/1441–42. See Āzhand, *Ḥurūfiyya*, pp. 37–38, 96–99; Bashir, *Faẓlallah Astarabadi*, pp. 105–106.

⁵⁵ The full name of the author is Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī al-Astarābādī, who is also the author of the *Istivānāma*, which is one of the most important sources on the life of Faẓlallāh. The letter was written in Bā'anqaba, which, I believe, is a mistake for Ba'qūba, a small city northeast of Baghdad. It was first edited by Abdūlbaki Gölpınarlı, "Faẓlallāh-i Ḥurūfi'nin oğluna [sic] ait bir mektup", *Şarkiyat Mecmuası*

The letter gives a fairly detailed account of how the author and Amīr Nūrallāh, the son of Faẓlallāh, were treated after the attack.⁵⁶ Its contents are marred by chronological inconsistencies, and certainly reflect the author's biases on many accounts, but it still includes valuable information on the aftermath of the assassination attempt.

After the assassination attempt, Faẓlallāh Astarābādī's son Amīr Nūrallāh and the author of the letter Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad were arrested in Māzandarān and brought to the army camp at Juvayn and Baḥrābād.⁵⁷ This must have been soon after 27 Rajab 832/2 May 1429 when Shāhrukh arrived at Baḥrābād. They were interrogated in front of the *amīrs* of the *dīvān*, including Amīr 'Alī, Amīr Fīrūzshāh, Shaykh Luqmān, Khvāja Pīr Aḥmad, and others.⁵⁸ Some of these figures are quite famous in Timurid history, and the high profile of the interrogators obviously reflects the importance of the accused. During the interrogation, Amīr Nūrallāh was first accused of sending someone to assassinate Shāhrukh. He rejected the accusations and said that at the time of the assassination attempt he had left Tabriz, and had been on his way to Bitlis and Kurdistan for ten days. Amīr Fīrūzshāh immediately produced a letter as evidence written to the Royal Council (*Dīvān-i Mīrzā*) by Sayyid Shahrīstānī. In the letter, Sayyid Shahrīstānī claimed to have visited Amīr Nūrallāh in Tabriz and had heard that he had sent someone to Herat to kill Shāhrukh. Khvāja Sayyidī Muḥammad, the letter claims, had also witnessed the conversation. Amīr Nūrallāh responded that Shāhrukh and his army were going to Tabriz anyway to fight against the Qaraqoyunlu and they could easily give a visit to Sayyidī Muḥammad and inquire about the veracity of Sayyid Shahrīstānī's accusations themselves. Amīr Fīrūzshāh refused to involve Khvāja Sayyidī Muḥammad into the discussion.⁵⁹ According to him, the important point was that Amīr Nūrallāh had sent someone to kill Shāhrukh. Amīr Fīrūzshāh continued his accusations by suggesting that Amīr Nūrallāh joined Iskandar b. Qara Yūsuf (d. 841/1438) and gathered thirty thousand men to fight against Shāhrukh around Dāmghān and Simnān. Upon Amīrẓāda Iskandar's request he raised the flag of rebellion in Tabriz, and killed seventy people, ripped open the wombs of women, and killed children on the road between Tabriz and Sulṭāniyya.⁶⁰ Khvāja Pīr

1 (1956), pp. 37–57 (hereafter *MGM*). As the title of his article suggests, Gölpinarlı first attributed the letter to a son of Faẓlallāh, but in 1973 he corrected his earlier view. See Gölpinarlı, *Hurüflük Metinleri Kataloğu*, pp. 50, 56. The letter was re-edited, without reference to Gölpinarlı's earlier edition, by Ḥusayn Ālyāri, "Nāma'ī az pisar-i Faẓlallāh Ḥurūfi", pp. 175–197. Gölpinarlı promised to prepare an annotated translation of the letter into Turkish at the beginning of his article, but to the best of my knowledge, the promised translation never materialised. Zumurud Kuli-Zade provided a brief summary of the contents of the letter in her 1970 monograph on the Ḥurūfiyya. Kuli-Zade treated the letter as a treatise, and attributed to it the title "Shāmil-Nāma", but she did not explain where she found this title in the text. See Z. Kuli-Zade, *Khurufizm i ego predstaviteli v Azerbaydzhanе* (Baku, 1970), pp. 87, 210–213.

⁵⁶Gölpinarlı refers to another manuscript, according to which Amīr Nūrallāh was the son of Makhdūm-zāda, a daughter of Faẓlallāh. Reconstructing the family relationships of Faẓlallāh is a task beyond the scope of this article. See Gölpinarlı, *Hurüflük*, p. 9.

⁵⁷*SMS*, Vol. 2/1, p. 390. The letter says that they were brought to Gūyān and Baḥrābād. Gūyān is a colloquial form of Juvayn in Khorasan. See *HAB*, p. 105.

⁵⁸Amīr Fīrūzshāh is Jalāl al-Dīn Fīrūzshāh b. Arghunshāh (d. 848/1444–45), who was one of the most powerful *amīrs* in Shāhrukh's administration. Shaykh Luqmān is Shaykh Luqmān b. Pīr Luqmān Barlas (d. 841/1437) and Khvāja Pīr Aḥmad is Khvāja Ghiyās al-Dīn Pīr Aḥmad Khvāfi (d. 857/1453). For further discussion on Shāhrukh's *dīvān*, see Manz, *Power*, pp. 79–110.

⁵⁹The identities of Sayyid Shahrīstānī and Kvāja Sayyidī Muḥammad are unknown to me.

⁶⁰This is a reference to Shāhrukh's first Azerbaijān campaign between 11 Sha'bān 823/21 August 1420 and 19 Shavvāl 824/17 October 1421. Shāhrukh had arrived at Dāmghān on 11 Shavvāl 823/19 October 1420. See *HAB*, Vol. 4, p. 719. Whether they are true or not, these rumours were not recorded by the Timurid historians.

Aḥmad alleged that some tax irregularities were discovered in the books of Amīr Nūrallāh. The defiant Amīr Nūrallāh rejected the first allegation, but conceded that he was not in a position to respond to the question of his tax records, but he promised to check his records when he returned to Tabrīz.⁶¹ The interrogators also reminded him of the accusation about his beliefs (*dīn va maḏhab*), but they did not pursue this point any further. Amīr Nūrallāh was imprisoned in the castle of Sarakhs and Ghiyās al-Dīn was sent to the Hinduvān Castle in Balkh.⁶²

After a year and seven months, Shāhrukh's army returned from the Qaraqoyunlu campaign, and when they arrived at the famous Sufi complex in Jām, Amīr Nūrallāh and Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad were brought back to the camp for further interrogations.⁶³ However, this time the interrogation was not about the assassination attempt, but it was about the fundamentals of the science of letters and the Ḥurūfī creed. Reflecting the change in emphasis, the interrogation was conducted not by the members of Shāhrukh's *divān*, but by Mawlānāzādā-yi Abharī, Mawlānā Nūrallāh, Mawlānā Faṣīḥ, and other scholars, whom Ghiyās al-Dīn collectively calls "the accursed scholars of the *madrasa* and the devils of Gog and Magog". The scholars, especially Mawlānā Nūrallāh, tried in vain to pin down Amīr Nūrallāh's blasphemy (*takfīr*) by referring to his ideas on the science of letters. But his criticisms did not achieve anything other than attracting Shāhrukh's outrage over their inability to charge Amīr Nūrallāh with unbelief.⁶⁴ Upon the failure of the religious scholars to achieve any form of indictment, two *amīrs* from Azerbaijan, Khvāja Ghiyās al-Dīn, the son of Khvāja Nūr al-Dīn, who was a vizier of Iskandar b. Qara Yūsuf, and Busayḥāq, the son of Shaykh 'Alī who was the grandson of Khvāja Zayn al-Dīn Ghazvīnī, leveled the same accusation that Amīr Fīrūzshāh had attempted before. They claimed that Amīr Nūrallāh, whom they called a *sayyid*, had said during a conversation with Mīrzā Iskandar that all the "Chaghataids" are infidels and he would send someone to kill Shāhrukh. Amīr Nūrallāh brought Sulṭān-Qazan Mīrzā as his witness to prove that all these allegations were false. Sulṭān-Qazan confirmed that the allegations were inaccurate.⁶⁵ The next interrogation appears to have been a big spectacle in the newly completed Gawharshād Madrasa in Herat.⁶⁶ Thousands of

To the best of my knowledge this is the only reference to a joint Qaraqoyunlu-Ḥurūfī attack against Shāhrukh. For Shāhrukh's first Azerbaijan campaign, see Aka, *Mirza Şahruh*, pp. 115–125; Manz, *Power*, pp. 34–35. For the Qaraqoyunlu perspective, see Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*, pp. 116–123.

⁶¹MGM, pp. 37–40.

⁶²MGM, pp. 39–41. Shāhrukh's wife Gawharshād appears to be present during the interrogation, as Ghiyās al-Dīn uses of the terms *mal'ūn* and *mal'ūna* (m. and f. "accursed").

⁶³Shāhrukh left Sulṭāniyya on 2 Shavvāl 833/24 June 1430 and arrived at Herat on 8 Muḥarram 834/26 September 1430. See SMS, Vol. 2/1, pp. 414–415.

⁶⁴MGM, pp. 41–43. The scholars who attended the debate are Mawlānā 'Imād al-Dīn 'Abd al-'Azīz Abharī (843/1439), Mawlānā 'Ziyā' al-Dīn Nūrallāh Khvārazmī (d. 838/1435), and Mawlānā Faṣīḥ al-Dīn Muḥammad Khvāfī (d. 837/1434). See KHS, Vol. 4, pp. 11, 13, 15.

⁶⁵MGM, pp. 41–44. It is difficult to identify the names in this interrogation. Busayḥāq must be a colloquial form for Abū Ishāq. Khvāja Zayn al-Dīn Ghazvīnī is probably the *amīr* who was part of Abā Bakr b. Mīrānshāh's retinue, and who was later appointed to the *Divān-i Tabrīz* when Sulṭān-Aḥmad Jalayir captured Tabrīz on 26 Muḥarram 809/13 July 1406. Sulṭān-Qazan Mīrzā was the nephew of Qara Yūsuf Qaraqoyunlu, and participated in the battle against Sulṭān-Aḥmad Jalayir on 28 Rabī' II 813/30 August 1410. See HAB, Vol. 3, pp. 165, 168, 401; KMF, Vol. 3, pp. 1033, 1080.

⁶⁶The Gawharshād Madrasa was part of a large building complex and the entire construction was completed in 841/1437. Here Ghiyās al-Dīn is probably referring to the year 836, which is the date given by Samarqandī as the completion date of the *madrasa*. The first Friday prayer was performed there on 8 Şafar 836/4 October 1432.

people gathered in addition to the Timurid administrative and intellectual dignitaries.⁶⁷ The questioning included such subjects as what kind of religion they adhered to, what Ḥurūfism was, whether they believed that wine was permissible in Islam, and whether Amīr Nūrallāh's lineage as a *sayyid* was reliable. At the end of the interrogation, they also failed to reach a definite judgment. Still Mawlānā Nūrallāh argued that they should be executed for claiming that wine was permissible in Islam, but Mawlānāzāda Abharī said that nothing was proven during the interrogation, and even if it was, Amīr Nūrallāh could not be executed because of his *sayyid* status. Curiously, Amīr Fīrūzshāh agreed with the latter opinion, and refused to order any execution.⁶⁸

The interrogations later continued, this time around in the presence of Ulugh Beg, who happened to be in Herat at that time.⁶⁹ Having seen the inability of the political and religious establishment of Herat to formulate a convincing case against two Ḥurūfīs, Ulugh Beg offered to take them to Samarqand so that the scholars and Sufi shaykhs of his own city could also get a chance to convict them of some sort of crime. In Samarqand, they were first put into a short and swift interrogation and questioned about the Ḥurūfī terminology, and then sent to the house of Amīr Bāyazīd Parvānachī.⁷⁰ At this point, Ghiyās al-Dīn speculates that the real incentive of Ulugh Beg in bringing them to Samarqand was not to punish them, but it was to learn the science of letters from them. Indeed, unlike the dull polemical nature of the debates in Herat, intellectually the interrogations in Ulugh Beg's court were more poignant and sophisticated. To start with, Ulugh Beg questioned the importance of the 32 letters in the Persian alphabet, and suggested that there were actually 33 letters, the extra letter being a *vāv* with three dots on the top, which was used by the Chinese. Amīr Nūrallāh responded to this proposition by giving the example of *lām-alif* (لآ) in the Arabic alphabet. If *lām-alif* is a separate letter instead of being a combination of the letters *lām* and *alif*, then the idea that the Persian alphabet consists of 33 letters would not be contrary to his own beliefs. Similarly, the question of the famous astronomer Qāzī-zāda-yi Rūmī (d. ca. 835/1431–32) about the meaning of the *mahdī*, the Muslim Messiah, or Ulugh Beg's question on the importance of the planets and stars according to Fażlallāh are both much more sophisticated than the problem of the legality of wine, and more pertinent in a political environment in which millenarian ideas posed a real challenge to the established political authorities in the central Islamic lands.⁷¹ Ulugh Beg's question on the *Vijūdīs* (the followers of Ibn 'Arabī), sheds light on the intellectual tensions among the Timurid intellectuals. Asked about who

See SMS, Vol. 2/1, pp. 424–425. See also Golombek and Wilber, *The Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan*, Vol. 1, p. 303.

⁶⁷ Among those who were present during the interrogation were Amīr 'Alīka, Amīr Fīrūzshāh and his brothers Khvāndshāh and Maḥmūd Shāh, Muḥammad Darvīsh, Mawlānā Luṭfallāh Ṣadr, Qāzī-zāda-yi Abharī, Mawlānā Nūrallāh, and Mawlānā Faṣīḥ.

⁶⁸ MGM, pp. 43–48.

⁶⁹ Ulugh Beg's presence in Herat for interrogations causes some chronological problems. Ulugh Beg was in Herat three times: i) 9 Rabī' I 825/3 March 1422 when he stayed for about two months; ii) 15–28 Zū al-Ḥijja 828/28 October–10 November 1425; iii) 19 Ramazān – 20 Shawvāl 837/29 April – 30 May 1434. See HAB, Vol. 4, pp. 810–812, 893–895; SMS, Vol. 2/1, pp. 443–445. Therefore, there must be another visit of Ulugh Beg to Herat sometime after Shāhrukh returned to the capital from his second Qaraqoyunlu campaign.

⁷⁰ Jalāl al-Dīn Bāyazīd Parvānachī. See HAB, Vol. 3, p. 518; HMA, f. 137b. See also Barthold, *Ulugh-Beg*, p. 152.

⁷¹ Qāḍī-zāda-yi Rūmī was a famous astronomer and mathematician from Bursa. He later went to Samarqand and played a crucial role in Ulugh Beg's observatory. See Jamil Ragep, "Qāḍī-zāde Rūmī", *EP* Suppl. Vol. 7–8,

the *Vijūdīs* were, Amīr Nūrallāh stated that they were people like Sayyid Qāsim-i Anvār and Shāh Ni‘matallāh Valī (d. 834/1431). Ulugh Beg asserted that Qāsim-i Anvār swore in front of him that he was not a *Vijūdī*. Amīr Nūrallāh responded that there were lots of differences between his views and the views of Qāsim-i Anvār.⁷²

Eventually, the frustrated Ulugh Beg gave up the idea of charging Amīr Nūrallāh and Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad with any kind of crime and decided to send them back to Herat. Shāhrukh, however, insisted that they should be executed for religious reasons, if not for anything else. Ulugh Beg categorically refused to obey his father’s order. According to Ghiyās al-Dīn, Shāhrukh was so enraged with his son’s behaviour that he even thought that Ulugh Beg himself had converted to Ḥurūfism. Nevertheless Ulugh Beg sent Amīr Nūrallāh and Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad back to Herat, where they were imprisoned. Shāhrukh later entrusted them to Amīr Ghunnāshīrīn, the *darughā* of Kirmān. From mid-Muḥarram, they remained in Kirmān for almost six months. On 8th Jumādā II, they managed to escape with the help of another dervish called Darvīsh Najm al-Dīn. First they went to Hurmuz, where they met with other Ḥurūfīs, including Darvīsh Maḥmūd Rūmī, Mawlānā Ibrāhīm, and Darvīsh Shaykh. From Hurmuz, they headed for Shīrāz, and eight months later, in Rabī’ II (836/1433), they arrived in Baghdad, where they met with Shāh Muḥammad Qaraqoyunlu (d. 836/1433). Shāh Muḥammad welcomed them in Baghdad with great compassion. His radical religious views, especially his attempts to reconcile Islam with Jesus-loving ideas, are relatively well documented by the contemporary sources. It is even reported that he delegated the real authority to a “Christian” called ‘Abd al-Masīḥ, who had died just a few months before Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad and Amīr Nūrallāh arrived in Baghdad. He went so far as to dismiss his army and relieve all tax burdens for seven years. Curiously, Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad and Amīr Nūrallāh felt very uncomfortable with his religious views, especially with his ideas on the prophets. Without his permission they left Baghdad and went to Baqubah (spelled incorrectly *Bā‘anqaba* in the text), where Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad wrote the letter on 16 Jumādā I 836/8 January 1433.⁷³

Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad’s letter has its own problems. Other than the theological arguments, which we can compare with other Ḥurūfī works, we have very few external sources to check the veracity of many of the incidents and interrogations mentioned in the letter. However, the chronology of the events and the identities of the figures from the Timurid establishment are remarkably accurate. It is therefore safe to suggest that the letter reflects how a prominent Ḥurūfī would like us to see the incident. Yet, we should not read this letter to find answers to such questions as whether Aḥmad-i Lur was really a Ḥurūfī or whether he was sent by the leaders of the Ḥurūfī community. Even if he was a Ḥurūfī and a hit man for another prominent Ḥurūfī, we should not expect Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad to accept any form of responsibility in the letter. What we can do is read the letter to

p. 502. For the concept of the *mahdī* and late medieval Muslim messianic movements, see Shahzad Bashir, *Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions. The Nūrbakshīya between Medieval and Modern Islam* (Columbia, 2003), pp. 31–41.

⁷²MGM, pp. 49–53.

⁷³MGM, pp. 53–56. Shāh Muḥammad was the eldest son of Qara Yūsuf Qaraqoyunlu (d. 823/1420). He had captured Bagdad in 814/1411, and had been ruling there semi-independently from his father and his brothers Iskandar (d. 841/1438) and Jahānshāh (d. 872/1467), who independently claimed the Qaraqoyunlu throne after the death of Qara Yūsuf. See Faruk Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*, pp. 88–89. For Shāh Muḥammad’s religious and political views, see Vladimir Minorsky, “Jihān-Shāh Qara Qoyunlu and his Poetry”, *BSOAS* 16 (1954), p. 274.

map out the complex matrix of political and intellectual relationships in the 820s/1420s and 830s/1430s.

The letter was obviously intended to explain Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad's travails together with Amīr Nūrallāh after the assassination attempt. He is obviously incensed at the behaviour of some followers of Faẓlallāh Astarābādī. Feeling abandoned, he accuses them in a rather spiteful tone of hypocrisy and not recognising the *imām-i zamān* and other descendents of Faẓlallāh (*makhdūm va makhdūmzāda*). He says that some of them were worried about money, status, salary, their wives and children, or their lives, and some of them even tried to defend themselves by writing letters. He especially mentions two names: Sayyid Sharīf and Khvāja Sulaymān. Sayyid Sharīf is most probably Mīr Sayyid Sharīf, who authored several Ḥurūfī treatises, and Khvāja Sulaymān is probably one of the vicegerents of Faẓlallāh mentioned by Mīr Sayyid Sharīf in his the *Bayān al-Wāqī'*.⁷⁴ Therefore, Ghiyās al-Dīn's letter also carries a polemical tone against a rival or competing Ḥurūfī branch. As Shahzad Bashir discussed previously, a split in the Ḥurūfī community occurred some time after the death of Faẓlallāh. The first group believed that the death of Faẓlallāh had already completed the first prophetic cycle, and they were now all living in paradise. However, the second group believed that he had just initiated the first prophetic cycle, and would return in the near future to complete his work. 'Alī al-A'lā (d. 1419), a prominent disciple of Faẓlallāh, even calculated that the return of Faẓlallāh would happen in 830/1426–1427. According to him, Faẓlallāh's messianic return would entail three phases. He would descend to this world in Khorasan; acquire the party of the righteous in Mecca; and conquer the city of Constantinople.⁷⁵ Bashir expresses his doubt about the popularity of this view among the Ḥurūfīs. However, it is truly tempting to suggest that some Ḥurūfīs took the matter into their own hands and tried to set off the imminent return of the Messiah, i.e. Faẓlallāh Astarābādī, and the eschatological apocalypse, by killing Shāhrukh. This point certainly requires further investigation on the history and theology of the Ḥurūfīs.⁷⁶ However, as I argued at the beginning of this article, the political and intellectual reverberations of the assassination attempt went beyond the Ḥurūfī networks, and I would like to turn my attention to other intellectuals who were also engulfed by its strong tides.

Ṣā'in al-Dīn Turka (d. 835/1431)

Ṣā'in al-Dīn Turka was from a prominent family in Isfahan, whose members included figures like Ṣadr al-Dīn Turka, the author of the *Qawā'id al-tamhīd*, and Afzal al-Dīn Turka, who translated Shahrīstānī's famous *al-Milal wa al-nihal*. Besides being one of the leading Timurid intellectual, Turka was also member of an informal network called *Ikhwān al-ṣafa*, which stretched from Iṣfahān to Cairo, and from Samarqand to Edirne, and included such prominent figures as Shaykh Ḥusayn Akhlāṭī, Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, Shaykh Badr al-Dīn

⁷⁴Gölpınarlı, *Hurūfīlik*, p. 14.

⁷⁵Bashir, *Fazlallah Astarabadi*, pp. 90–97.

⁷⁶For example, Mīr Sayyid Iṣḥāq, one of the vicegerents of Faẓlallāh, wrote the *Mahrammāma* between 828/1425 and 832/1428, and it would be interesting to know if the assassination attempt played any role in the composition and plan of the work. Gölpınarlı, *Hurūfīlik*, pp. 83–85. Like many other issues related to the Ḥurūfīs, this also requires further investigation and research.

Simavnavī, and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Biṣṭāmī.⁷⁷ Yazdī is a household name for the students of Timurid history, as his *Zafarnāma* is one of the most important sources for the biography of Timur. Shaykh Badr al-Dīn was a prominent Ottoman jurist, who was involved in a famous rebellion in 1416 that shocked the Ottoman ruling elite which was still trying to recover from the devastating defeat of 804/1402 by Timur at Ankara. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Biṣṭāmī (d. 858/1454) represented arguably the most sophisticated historian of the early Ottoman period, who, in a series of works, applied the science of letters in historiography. Sayyid Ḥusayn Akhlāṭī (799/1397) was the prophetic figure who brought all these separate intellectuals together, and he was the source of the specific understanding of the science of letters, which all the members of the *Ikhvān al-ṣafā* employed. As discussed by Cornell Fleischer recently, these intellectuals believed in a novel form of piety, which had its roots in Neo-Platonic philosophy, the mystical-prophetic philosophy of Ibn ‘Arabī, late antique Hermeticism, and a deep respect for ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and his descendants. The science of letters was the pot in which they melted all these different intellectual traditions. Through the science of letters, they tried to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the cosmos, and a precise knowledge of past and future events.

Although Turka’s interrogations in Herat are often associated with Aḥmad-i Lur’s attempt to assassinate Shāhrukh,⁷⁸ under the light of simple chronological evidence, it is impossible to establish a causal relationship between his interrogations and the assassination attempt. Turka went to Herat twice to defend himself, first in 825/1422, and again sometime before 8 Rajab 829/16 May 1426, more than seven months before the assassination attempt.⁷⁹ We have no detailed record of Turka’s interrogations, but we have several treatises that he wrote in order to refute the accusations. The defensive tone he adopts in these treatises demonstrates that he was under immense pressure coming from Shāhrukh’s administration as well as from those intellectuals who opposed his views on the science of letters. Furthermore, Turka was engaged in intense pamphleteering around the time of the assassination attempt. A year before the assassination attempt, Turka had already composed at least twelve short treatises on the science of letters and other related issues in a period of about ten months. A preliminary list of the treatises that Turka composed before and soon after the assassination attempt would include the following titles:

- al-Arba‘īniyya* (13 Jumādā II 828/2 May 1425)
- al-Bā‘īyya* (14 Ramaḥān 828/30 July 1425)
- Risāla-yi nuqṭa* (16 Ramaḥān 828/1 August 1425)
- Risāla-yi inzālīyya* (17 Ramaḥān 828/2 August 1425)
- Asrār al-salāt* (Yazd, 26 Ramaḥān 828/11 August 1425)
- Risāla dar ma‘na-yi qābiliyyat* (Shavvāl 828/August–September 1425)
- Aṭwār-i ṣalāsa* (Shavvāl 828/August–September 1425)

⁷⁷ *TNMD*, p. 210. The *Ikhvān al-ṣafā* network was first discussed by İhsan Fazhoğlu in a short article published in 1996, and was further explored by Cornell H. Fleischer and Evrim Binbaş. See Fazhoğlu, “İlk dönem Osmanlı ilim ve kültür hayatında İhvānu’s-safā ve Abdurrahmān Bistāmī”, pp. 22–40; Fleischer, “Seer to the Sultan”, p. 292; Binbaş, “Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī”, pp. 99–106. For the life and works of Turka, see Matthew Melvin-Koushki, “The Quest for a Universal Science: The Occult Philosophy of Şā’in al-Dīn Turka İṣfahānī (1369–1432)”, (PhD diss. Yale University, 2012), esp. pp. 58–68.

⁷⁸ See for example, Manz, *Power*, p. 241.

⁷⁹ *TNMA*, p. 171–72; Melvin-Koushki, “The Quest”, pp. 52–53.

- Risāla-yi anjām* (17 Zū al-Qa'da 828/30 September 1425)
Al-Manzila 'alā al-Ḥaḍrat al-Khatamiyya (3 Zū al-Ḥijja 828/16 October 1425)
Risāla-yi shaqq-i qamar va sā'at (18 Rabī' I 829/28 January 1426)
Risāla-yi i'tiqādāt (Herat, 19 Jumādā I 829/29 March 1426)
Nafsat al-maṣdūr-i avval (Herat, 8 Rajab 829/16 May 1426)
Tuhfat al-'Alā'iyya (Jumādā 831/February–March 1428)
Madārij-i aḥām al-afwāj fi tafsīr-i āyat-i samāniyya azwāj (6 Zū al-qa'da 831/17 August 1428)
Mabda' va ma'ād (Ṣafar 832/November–December 1428)⁸⁰

Turka's almost frantic pamphleteering just before the assassination attempt would suggest that he was in desperate need to explain himself to both the Timurid authorities and those other intellectuals in his own circle who were also under pressure. Among the above titles, especially two, the *Risāla-yi i'tiqādāt* and the *Nafsat al-maṣdūr-i avval*, are particularly relevant for our purposes, as they were written after Turka was called to Herat to defend himself against the accusation of being preoccupied with "Sufism" (*taṣavvuf*).⁸¹ On the same subject, he wrote a third treatise entitled the *Nafsat al-maṣdūr-i duvvum* for Mīrzā Bāysungur. The published version of this treatise is dated to 17 Ramaẓān 838/16 April 1435, but so far I have not been able to determine its exact composition date. It was definitely written after the assassination attempt, as Turka occasionally alludes to this event, but it cannot have been so long after the assassination attempt, as Turka died in 835/1431–32 and Mīrzā Bāysungur died in 837/1434.⁸² A fourth treatise to which I will be referring is the *Risāla-yi shaqq-i qamar va sā'at*, which was written a few months before the *Risāla-yi i'tiqādāt*, and reveals invaluable information regarding the taxonomies that Turka was applying in his defense. Below, I will try to reconstruct the outlines of the debate as much as possible without delving too deeply into the doctrinal issues.⁸³

Unfortunately, Turka provides few details regarding the interrogations. We do not know who was present, and we do not know how the interrogations were conducted. None of the intimate details that Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad provides are present in Turka's treatises. This is mainly because whereas Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad's letter was a personal, if not private, account of the incident, Turka's treatises were addressed to the reading public of the fifteenth century. Turka wrote these treatises to explain his ideas, not to explain a specific situation, hence the lack of references to how he was treated or what specific questions he had to

⁸⁰This list includes only Turka's minor treatises. He composed other more voluminous works in this period, too. He completed *Bazm u Razm* on 24 Rabī' II 829/5 March 1426, *Tamhūd al-qawā'id* in 830/1426–27, and *Sharḥ-i Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* on 3 Rabī' I 831/22 December 1427. However, I chose to exclude them from my analysis here because larger works would require a longer planning and execution, and it would be difficult to contextualise them in a specific context, which is the assassination attempt in our case. For the list of Turka's complete works, see Sayyid 'Alī Mūsavī Bihbahānī, "Aḥvāl va Āthār-i Ṣā'in al-Dīn Turka-yi Iṣfahānī", in *Collected Papers on Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism*, eds. M. Mohaghegh and H. Landolt (Tehran, 1971), pp. 136–145, and Akram Jūdī Ni'matī's introduction to her edition of Turka's *Sharḥ-i Naẓm al-Durr* (Tehran, 1384 H.sh./2005–2006), pp. lxxxviii–c; Matthew Melvin-Koushki, "The Quest", pp. 78–158.

⁸¹TNMA, pp. 169–170.

⁸²TNMA, pp. 169, 194; TNMD, pp. 201, 217. It was probably composed sometime in 835. A paragraph in the *Nafsat al-maṣdūr-i duvvum* refers to an incident that happened five years earlier. The incident that he refers to is most probably the assassination attempt. See TNMD, p. 199.

⁸³For an analysis of the theological and doctrinal aspects of the *Nafsat al-maṣdūr-i avval* and *Nafsat al-maṣdūr-i duvvum*, see Leonard Lewisohn, "Sufism and Theology in the Confessions of Ṣā'in al-Dīn Turka Iṣfahānī", in *Sufism and Theology*, ed. Ayman Shihadeh (Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 63–82; Melvin-Koushki, "The Quest", pp. 58–62, 423–39.

answer in Herat. He says that he went to Khorasan from Yazd twice to defend himself in front of some religious dignitaries, and in the second instance, which was held in the Bagh-i Mukhtār, he submitted two petitions to Shāhrukh.⁸⁴

Turka tells us that he was accused of rejecting the Sunnī-Jamā'ī creed and adhering to Sufism. He was also accused of practicing various sciences which were inherited from the prophets and saints and could not be understood by ordinary people.⁸⁵ Therefore, he composed the *I'tiqādāt* to demonstrate his proper Sunnī-Jamā'ī credentials. He starts with the fundamentals of Islamic theology by asserting God's unity: "First of all, God is one in the truest sense of the oneness", he says at the beginning of his defence, and continues, "unlike what the philosophers say, he does not need any other cause in creating the universe".⁸⁶ Turka categorically rejects any accusation connecting him to the Mu'tazila, Shī'a, or *Falāsifa*. He says that he and his followers are firm believers in the Sunnī-Jamā'ī creed, but he also states that they are not imitators.⁸⁷ Turka's tone is sober but unapologetic in the *Risāla-yi i'tiqādāt*. He stresses the fact that he and people like him are staunch followers of the prophetic message, but they are simply closer to the truth due to their devotion to the Prophetic path. Towards the end of the treatise, he extends his praise to Shāhrukh—without actually naming him—and states, rather condescendingly, that since the rulers have also the inspiration (*arbāb al-duwal mulhamūn*), he should be able to understand him better than those slanderers (*bad-gūyān*).⁸⁸ Curiously, none of this self confidence and slight touch of patronisation are to be found in the following treatises.

The next treatise was also written in Herat, and projects a much more direct, even angry tone as its title would also suggest: *Naf̄sat al-maṣḍūr-i avval*, or the "First Tubercular Spit".⁸⁹ It also includes detailed information regarding Turka's biography. He puts strong emphasis on his education in law, Qur'ānic commentary, and Prophetic traditions, and stresses his service as a judge.⁹⁰ In the intervening weeks, he obviously became much more intimately aware of Shāhrukh's religious policies. By publicly repudiating *yasa* and *yarghu*, the Chinggisid legal and political framework, and presenting himself as the champion of Sunnī Islam, Shāhrukh had been trying to expand the legitimisation basis of his centralising policies, and Turka was apparently supportive of these policies. He conspicuously praises Shāhrukh's policies of strengthening and renewing Sunnī Islām, and defends his activities and scholarship. He says that the Turco-Mongol *Dīvān-i Yārgū*, which had polluted the realm of Islam since the time of "previous pādishāhs", i.e. the Mongols, was abolished, and today nobody had the courage to make this kind of juridical inquiry, except in disguise.⁹¹ Obviously, he was astonished that

⁸⁴ *TMNA*, pp. 171–72.

⁸⁵ *TRI*, p. 223.

⁸⁶ *TRI*, pp. 225–226 = "*Avvalā dar ānki Khudā-yi ta'ālā yağāna ast ba yağānagī-yi haqīqī . . .*".

⁸⁷ *TRI*, pp. 227–229. See also Lewisohn, "Sufism", p. 66.

⁸⁸ *TRI*, pp. 227–229, 255.

⁸⁹ Based on this evidence we would suggest that he went to Herat sometime in April or early May 1426, but we need more direct evidence to push the argument further.

⁹⁰ *TNMA*, p. 171.

⁹¹ *TNMA*, p. 171. Turka here is referring to the debates on the Mongol *yasa* and Muslim *sharī'a* in the 15th century. For an overview of these discussions, see Togan, "Uluğ Bey zamanında yasa ve şeriat tartışmaları", *Tarih Çevresi* (1994), 10, pp. 9–16; For Shāhrukh's religious policies, see Maria Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition. Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran* (Leiden, 2007), pp. 24–32.

Shāhrukh, whom he presents almost a champion of Sunnī Islam, would take the accusations seriously.

According to Turka, not only his father and his brother, both of whom were unequalled in their time, pursued the same knowledge that he did, but such prominent figures as Khvāja Muḥammad Pārsā, Khvāja ‘Abd Allāh Anṣārī, Khvāja Muḥammad Ḥakīm ‘Alī Tirmidhī, and Shaykh Sa‘d al-Dīn Hāmūya would also agree with him in the issues of religion and law.⁹² Those who accused him of being a Sufi had no idea what real Sufism was. What they understood by Sufism was just chanting elevated words in ecstasy and dancing like animals, and uttering the sentence “everything is God” without actually understanding what it meant. Not only this, they also abused the words of such great scholars as Shaykh Aḥmad-i Jām (d. 536/1141–42), Mawlānā-yi Rūm (d. 672/1273), and Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Irāqī (d. 688/1289).⁹³ Turka believed that true Islam was in fact practised not in Iran and Central Asia, but in the Ottoman lands. “Look at the land of Rūm (*mamlakat-i Rūm*)”, he said, adding:

The power of Islam is so strong in the land of Rūm that they go to Damascus and Egypt to study, and they reproach them, and they say that the rules of law are stronger in our land, such as that there is no *tamghā*. But, the people of Rūm such as Molla Shams al-Dīn Fanārī (d. 1431), who is the Chief Judge there, all studied these sciences and read those books, which they revile here.⁹⁴

In the treatises written before the assassination attempt, Turka presented the issue as a clash between those who imitated the prophetic way and those who pursued the prophetic message creatively. However, in the *Naf̄sat al-maṣḍūr-i duvvum*, which was definitely written after the assassination attempt, the issue suddenly became personal. Turka stated that after the incident, he was immediately imprisoned and tortured, and sent to exile to Kurdistan and Azerbaijān. When Shāhrukh launched his second Qaraqoyunlu campaign in 832, he was living in Tabriz at the corner of a mosque. Turka met with Shāhrukh at Šā’in Qal‘ā sometime between 2 Ramaẓān 833/25 May 1430 and 30 Z̄ū al-Qa‘da 833/20 August 1430, and sought forgiveness. He went to Herat for nine months, where he waited in vain for a meeting with Shāhrukh.⁹⁵ He was probably still waiting when he died there in 835/1431–32.

In his efforts to acquire a hearing from Shāhrukh, Turka had certainly some practical motives, too. In the *Naf̄sat al-maṣḍūr-i duvvum*, he demanded the easing of the *shar‘ī* taxes (*takālīf-i shar‘ī*) levied upon dervishes like him. These were probably the taxes that had been imposed upon them after the assassination attempt.⁹⁶ However, in general, he carefully drew a picture according to which he and dervishes like him were suffering because of the enmity of the rival intellectuals.⁹⁷

For Turka, his religious views were not different from any other Sufī-scholar, as he was a Shāfi‘ī-Sunnī intellectual with a deep knowledge on Islamic law. However, the source of

⁹² TNMA, pp. 170, 172.

⁹³ TNMA, p. 176.

⁹⁴ TNMA, p. 173.

⁹⁵ TNMD, pp. 205–207, SMS, Vol. 2/1, p. 409. One of Turka’s closest companions, Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī, was also present during this campaign as part of Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān b. Shāhrukh’s retinue, and it is quite probable that Yazdī and Turka met in Azerbaijān. Since Yazdī was also trying to keep a low profile during this period—he withdrew from public life in 832/1429, it is highly unlikely that he would have intervened on behalf of Turka. Binbaş, “Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī”, p. 118.

⁹⁶ TNMD, pp. 213–214. This, of course, directly contradicts what Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū would like us to believe.

⁹⁷ TNMD, p. 211.

the troubles that he and other intellectuals like him endured was their peculiar approach to the science of letters. It is evident that he had a deep sense of being misunderstood by his contemporaries. Therefore, it is worth having a quick look at how Turka saw the intellectual world of the fifteenth century in order to understand his mindset.

Turka provides a detailed taxonomy of the intellectual groups in the *Risāla-yi shaqq-i qamar va sāt*. In a short treatise written on 18 Rabī' I 829/28 January 1426, he contrasts seven different intellectual groups by comparing how they would interpret a specific Qur'anic verse (54:1–2): “The Hour (of judgment) is nigh, and the moon has cleft asunder”.⁹⁸

Ahl-i zāhīr, or the intellectuals who understand the outer meanings by specializing in the study of law and the prophetic traditions

Ahl-i zāhīr, or the philosophers and theologians, who understand the outer meanings, but passed the level of imitation (*taqlīd*) and came close to the independent verification (*taḥqīq*)

Ḥukamā-yi zāhīr va muta'akhhirān, *ḥukamā-yi mashhā'ī*, or the contemporary peripatetic philosophers

Ḥukamā-yi qadīm, *Ishrāqiyān*, or ancient philosophers and the Illuminationists (followers of Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī (d. 591/1194))

Muḥaqqiqān-i ṣūfiyya va ahl-i shuhūd, or the Sufis

Ramz-khvānān-i ḥurūf-i Qur'ānī, or the intellectuals who are able to decipher the mysteries of the Qur'anic letters

Martaba-yi ūlū al-aydī va al-abṣār, or those who are at the level of being pre-eminent in terms of authority and discernment

Turka's taxonomy is certainly one of the most comprehensive and sophisticated projections of the fifteenth-century Islamic life, and needs to be studied in itself.⁹⁹ For the purposes of this article, I will focus on last two groups, which appear to be the most controversial ones in the period leading up to the assassination attempt.

Turka identifies the sixth group in his taxonomy as the “decipherers of the Qur'anic letters (*Ramz-khvānān-i ḥurūf-i Qur'ānī*)” and the “experts in the science of letters (*Arbāb-i 'ilm-i ḥurūf*)”.¹⁰⁰ According to the intellectuals in this group, existence (*vujūd*) has multiple layers (*marātib*). Some of these layers are independent (*mustaqill*) and they can exist in themselves, such as the layers of spirits (*arvāḥ*), bodies (*ajsād*), and substances (*ajsām*). Some other layers are not independent and contingent on other layers, such as acts (*af'āl*) and speech (*aqvāl*). The layer of words (*martaba-yi kalām*) has a special place among them, as all other layers also exist in the layer of words. Therefore, the meaning of all other layers becomes manifest in this layer. The science of letters becomes the fundamental key to understand all other layers, which by definition encompasses the existence in its entirety. The most radical aspect of the methodology of the *Ahl-i ḥurūf* is that everything becomes explainable – no secret is beyond the reach of a proper understanding of the science of letters. Turka says that: “from

⁹⁸ TRShQS, pp. 103–117.

⁹⁹ Lewisohn compared Turka's taxonomy with al-Ghazālī's division of the intellectuals into four groups: Scholastic theology, Ismā'īlī authoritarianism (*ta'lim*), Philosophy, and Sufism. See Lewisohn, “Sufism”, p. 76. For a more comprehensive analysis of Turka's hierarchies, see Melvin-Koushki, “The Quest”, pp. 315–320.

¹⁰⁰ TRShQS, pp. 110, 116.

the beginning of the eternity without beginning to the end of the eternity without end, everything becomes manifest and nothing remains hidden”.¹⁰¹

The seventh and last group, the *Martaba-yi ūlū al-aydī va al-abṣār*, is a puzzle to modern researchers. The name of this group can tentatively be translated as “those who are at the level of being pre-eminent in terms of authority and discernment”. Turka says that they were the distinguished people of his own time,¹⁰² and they were superior to the experts in the science of letters.¹⁰³ They were the distinguished servants of the Prophet Muḥammad and the inheritors of his excellence. Turka hastens to add that unlike previous groups this seventh group is peculiar to the fifteenth century and their very presence is conditioned by a celestial conjunction.¹⁰⁴ So, who were these people? In brief, they were the holders of prophetic knowledge. According to Turka, prophetic knowledge (*kalām-i kāmīl-i khātīm al-nubuwwa*) embraces the totality of all other meanings, and the meanings of whatever happened in the past and will happen in the future. After the Prophet Muḥammad, only the *Ahl-i Bayt*, i.e. the descendants of the Prophet, could have had access to the totality of this knowledge. However, Turka continues:

Many masters with access the truth through the greatness of the divine grace of the unravelling of signs and the knowledge of discernment of emblems entered the right path of this knowledge. The great meanings become visible to them, but the entirety of the meanings and the totality of the wishes of obtaining this knowledge were not revealed to just anyone. . . . Indeed, the family of the Prophet (*Ahl-i Bayt*), who are his glorious descendants, were entrusted with *jafīr*, which included the totality of meanings.¹⁰⁵

At the centre of Turka’s discussion on the characteristics of the seventh group stands Prophetic knowledge, which was available only to his descendants through the Book of *Jafīr*. The Book of *Jafīr* is believed to include the knowledge of all the things and events in the past and in the future. In other words, whoever had access to this book could gain access to the knowledge about all things and events.¹⁰⁶

The belief in the presence of the Book of *Jafīr* was already well established by the fifteenth century, especially among Shīʿī-Ismāʿīlī circles. This is the reason why Corbin called Turka’s seventh group the Shīʿīs straightforwardly. According to the Lewisohn, the seventh group comprises simply the family of the Prophet, because Turka argued that the all-encompassing knowledge of the past, present and future would be revealed only to the descendants of the Prophet.¹⁰⁷ However, Turka adds that the intellectuals could acquire prophetic knowledge through discernment (*tahqīq*) and intuitive knowledge (*ẓawq*) with the help of the science of letters. Furthermore, the seventh group existed only in Turka’s own time. Had the seventh category included only the descendants of the Prophet, or *sayyids*, Turka would not have

¹⁰¹ TRShQS, p. 116 = “*Chunānchi har chi az avval-i azal ast tā ākhir-i abad hama āshikārā gardad va hich pinhān banamān*”.

¹⁰² TRShQS, p. 116 = “. . . *khāṣṣ-i īn zamān ast*”.

¹⁰³ TNMD, p. 210.

¹⁰⁴ TRShQS, p. 111 = “*khādīmān-i khāṣṣ-i Ḥaẓrat-i khatamī va vārithān-i kamāl-i arjumand-i ū-yand. Vā ẓuhūr-i īn ṭawr makhṣūṣ-i hamīn zamān-i sa ‘ādat-qirān ast*”.

¹⁰⁵ TRShQS, p. 112.

¹⁰⁶ Toufic Fahd, *La divination arabe*, pp. 219–228.

¹⁰⁷ Henry Corbin, “Typologie des spirituels selon Sâ’idnoddīn ‘Alī Torkeh Ispahānī (ob. 830/1427)”, pp. 259–260; Lewisohn, “Sufism”, p. 76.

restricted its focus to the fifteenth century, as the *sayyids* had held prominent positions in the social and intellectual life since the early centuries of the Islamic history. Therefore, I would suggest that what Turka is referring to in this category is a much more restricted group, an informal intellectual network, in which Turka played an important role. It is possible that this informal network is actually the *Ikhvān al-ṣafā'*, which I introduced above, but we need further in-depth research to pursue this line of argumentation.

As the chronology of Ṣā'in al-Dīn Turka's treatises demonstrates, he was forced to defend himself against accusations already before the assassination attempt. He wrote the *Risāla-yi i'tiqādāt* on 16 Jumādā I 829/26 March 1426, and the *Nafsat al-maṣdūr-i avval* on 8 Rajab 829/16 May 1426.¹⁰⁸ In fact, he was forced to defend himself as early as in 825/1422, almost five years before the assassination attempt. Therefore, it would be possible to suggest that the political pressure on the intellectuals who believed in the primary position of the science of letters may have been only indirectly related to the actions of the Ḥurūfīs. This does not mean to suggest that the assassination attempt was an act of revenge, as this would mean all those accused intellectuals were affiliated with the Ḥurūfīs. In fact, as we will see below, they were not, and some of them were even hostile to the Ḥurūfīs. Yet, both the interrogations of the intellectuals and the assassination attempt were part of a wider conflict between Shāhrukh's administration and those intellectuals who believed in the potency of the science of letters.

Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī's Majma' al-tahānī

Muḥammad Ṭūsī's *Majma' al-tahānī va maḥzar al-amānī* is the only non-annalistic account of the assassination attempt with an unapologetically pro-Shāhrukhid stance. The authorship of the *Majma' al-tahānī* is a puzzle to solve. The author names himself Muḥammad Ṭūsī in the text without providing further details.¹⁰⁹ Ṣādiq Kiyā, who partially edited the text in 1954, identified the author as Mawlānā Ṭūsī, a protégé of Abū al-Qāsim Bābur b. Bāysunghur (d. 861/1457). Mawlānā Ṭūsī was an eminent story teller (*maṣal-gūy*) and poet, and after the death of Abū al-Qāsim Bābur, he went to Azerbaijan and Baghdād to the courts of Jahānshāh Qaraqoyunlu (d. 872/1467) and his son Pīr Budaq (d. 871/1466). He lived a long life, as he was still alive when Dawlatshāh Samarqandī completed his *Tazkirat al-shu'arā* in 892/1487. Navā'ī reports that he was a hundred years of age when he died.¹¹⁰ Ṭūsī's close relationship with Mīrzā Bāysunghur's family makes him a likely candidate for the authorship of the *Majma' al-tahānī* for the text ends with an extolment for the same Timurid prince.¹¹¹ However, Ṣādiq Kiyā overlooked the fact that Mawlānā Ṭūsī's name is not Muḥammad, but 'Abdullāh.¹¹² Therefore, the more likely candidate for the authorship of the *Majma'*

¹⁰⁸ *TI*, p. 264; *TNMA*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁹ *MTMA*, p. 39.

¹¹⁰ Samarqandī, *Tazkirat al-shu'arā*, pp. 456–462; Navā'ī, *Mecālisü'n-nefāyis*, Vol. 1, pp. 20–21. Muḥammad Qazvīnī, the sixteenth-century translator of Navā'ī's biographical dictionary adds that he was a companion (*muṣāḥib*) of Mawlānā Rafiqī, who was a poet in the court of the Aq-Qoyunlu Sulṭān Ya'qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan (d. 896/1490). See; *idem*. *Majālis al-Nafā'is*. Trans. Fakhri-yi Harātī and Muḥammad Qazvīnī (Tehran, 1323 H.sh./1945), pp. 192, 304–305.

¹¹¹ *MTMA*, pp. 41–42.

¹¹² Ahmed Ateş, *İstanbul Kütüphanelerinde Farsça Manzum Eserler* (Istanbul, 1968), pp. 387–388; Zabihullāh Şafā, *Tārīkh-i adabiyāt dar Īrān* (Tehran, 1977), Vol. 4, pp. 458–459.

al-tahānī is Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī al-Ṭūsī, who was a prominent Sufi and a descendant of the twelfth-century scholar Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111). The fragmentary information we have on his life suggests that he lived in his home town Ṭūs; he was a very pious man and had very close relationships with the sultans and the *umarāʾ* of his time. He died in the vicinity of Aleppo on 24 Ramaẓān 830/19 July 1427, just five months after the assassination attempt, while traveling to Mecca for pilgrimage.¹¹³ The contents of the *Majmaʿ al-tahānī* favour the authorship of Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad Ṭūsī, too. An odd section at the beginning requesting Shāhrukh's support for the repairs of charitable buildings (*biqāʾ*) supports the argument that the author was associated with a scholarly family and large building complex, such as a *madrasa* or *khanqāh*.¹¹⁴ Given his family background and prominent status in Ṭūs, Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad Ṭūsī is the more likely candidate for the authorship of the *Majmaʿ al-tahānī*.

An inexplicable affinity between the *Majmaʿ al-tahānī* and Ḥāfiz-i Abrū's *Zubdat al-tavārikh* puts Muḥammad Ṭūsī in the close circle of pro-Shāhrukhid historians. Both texts resemble each other almost word for word especially in the section on the investigations following the assassination attempt, and they end with the same colophon and chronogram.¹¹⁵ This similarity led some scholars to argue that the *Majmaʿ al-tahānī* was one of the sources of Ḥāfiz-i Abrū for his *Zubdat al-tavārikh*.¹¹⁶ As I demonstrated above in the first part of this article, the textual history of the *Zubdat al-tavārikh* is exceedingly complicated, and it is almost impossible to determine which one is the source of the other. For the time being, I would like to leave this question open until further discoveries and other possible interpretations on this matter. Yet, the pro-Shāhrukhid nature of the *Majmaʿ al-tahānī* stands beyond doubt.

The treatise is almost entirely devoted to the attempt on Shāhrukh's life. In an introduction, which exalts Shāhrukh to the level of a sacral ruler, Ṭūsī has no qualms about pronouncing the assassination attempt an intervention in the cosmic order. He says that “when the sultan changes, the time changes”, and “if a malady strikes the king of the land, all the horizons would also fall ill”.¹¹⁷ For Ṭūsī, the assassination attempt is a regicide *par excellence*, aimed at disturbing the cosmic order embodied in the persona of Shāhrukh.

According to Ṭūsī, the *zindīqs* and *mullīds* (“unbelievers”), and the followers of Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ (the Ismāʿīlīs) are to be blamed for the assassination attempt. They are the ones who pervert the meanings of the words and follow the lead of the Devil. They try to explain the difficulties of the Qurʾān without knowledge, and comment upon it according to the rules and principles of the Devil. He complains about their intense activities, and that the assassination attempt was a futile tactical move to intimidate Shāhrukh and force him to retreat in his activities against the propagators of unbelief.¹¹⁸ According to Ṭūsī, the attack

¹¹³ *KMF*, p. 1113; Dawlatshāh Samarqandī, *Tazkirat al-shuʿarāʾ*, p. 377, *KHS*, Vol. 4, p. 6; ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī, (d. 898/1492), *Nafahāt al-uns min ḥazarāt al-quds*, ed. Maḥmūd ‘Abidī (Tehran, 1375 H.sh./1996–97), p. 454; Sayyid Aṣīl al-Dīn ‘Abdallāh Vāʾiz, *Maqṣad al-iqbāl-i sulṭāniyya*, ed. Māyil Haravī (Tehran, 1351 H.sh./1972–73), p. 85. There is another Muḥammad Ṭūsī, who was Khalīl-Sulṭān b. Mīrānshāh's Persian secretary, but I am not sure if he is identical with the author of the *Majmaʿ al-tahānī*. See *HMA*, f. 127a.

¹¹⁴ *MTMA*, pp. 15–16 = “*taʾmīr biqāʾ al-khayr min shīyam al-awliyāʾ*”.

¹¹⁵ *HAB*, Vol. 4, pp. 916–918; *MTMA*, pp. 28–31.

¹¹⁶ Āzhand, *Ḥurūfiyya*, pp. 71–72.

¹¹⁷ *MTMA*, p. 13 = “*idhā taghayyara al-sulṭān taghayyara al-zamān . . . gar buwad shāh-i mulk ra marazī * hama āfāq dar maraz bāshand*”.

¹¹⁸ *MTMA*, pp. 16–20.

occurred on a Friday at the *Masjid-i Jāmi'*, as Shāhrukh headed towards his palace after the Friday prayer. Shāhrukh escaped the attack with little injuries, and the assailant, whom Ṭūsī does not name, was beheaded by the guards (*chavushān*). In order to send a strong signal to all who had witnessed the incident, they hung his head from the roof of the gate of the portico, and dumped the body.¹¹⁹

The following section of the *Majma' al-tahānī* closely resembles Ḥāfīz-i Abrū's *Zubdat al-tavārīkh*. However, there are also some important differences in the two narratives. Muḥammad Ṭūsī does not reveal the name of Aḥmad-i Lur immediately. Instead, he quickly identifies Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt as the person who inspired the assailant and encouraged him to commit the crime. He says that a committee (*majlis*) consisting of the *amīrs* was set up to investigate the details of the assassination attempt. Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt was put under interrogation, but he did not say anything other than rejecting the accusations. The committee decided to torture him, and seeing the possibility of death, Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt revealed the names of various people who were engaged in unbelief (*kufṛān va khiḏlān*).¹²⁰ The ulama issued a *fatwā* against him, arguing "an ingrate (*kāfir-i ni'mat*) is much worse than an infidel (*kāfir*), but Shāhrukh intervened and pardoned him.¹²¹ This is most certainly related with the fact that Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt named 'Azud, a follower of Mawlānā Faḏlallāh Astarābādī, as the mastermind of the whole conspiracy. Curiously, Ṭūsī does not refer to 'Azud's family relationship with Astarābādī.¹²² 'Azud was also interrogated and tortured, and it is he who reveals the name of Aḥmad-i Lur in the version of the events as they are narrated by Muḥammad Ṭūsī.¹²³

Ṭūsī's account on Aḥmad-i Lur is very detailed. According to Ṭūsī, his "heresy" (*ilhād*) and unbelief (*zandaqa*) was such that he even drank wine at some point, and just as the Christians believed in the coming of another prophet after Jesus, he also believed in the continuity of prophethood. According to Ṭūsī, Aḥmad-i Lur was a follower of Amīr Manūchihr b. Amīr Shaykh in Shirvān. After the death Amīr Manūchihr, Aḥmad-i Lur came to Khorasan to kill Shāhrukh.¹²⁴ To the best of my knowledge, the identity of Amīr Manūchihr has not been explained properly in modern scholarship.¹²⁵ He appears not to have had any direct relationship with the Ḥurūfī circles. In fact, Ṭūsī does not suggest that either Amīr Manūchihr or Aḥmad-i Lur were Ḥurūfīs, but that they both had the same motivation as Faḏlallāh Astarābādī in deviating from the true path of Islam and taking the path of rebellion (*'iṣyān*) and unbelief (*ilhād*) instead.¹²⁶ In other words, the association of Aḥmad-i Lur with the Ḥurūfiyya was contextual, not personal.

¹¹⁹ *MTMA*, pp. 20–24.

¹²⁰ According to Ḥāfīz-i Abrū it was not Ma'rūf-i Khaṭṭāt, but 'Azud who was tortured. See *HAB*, Vol. 4, p. 918.

¹²¹ *MTMA*, pp. 21–28.

¹²² *MTMA*, pp. 28–30.

¹²³ *MTMA*, pp. 31–32.

¹²⁴ *MTMA*, pp. 32–33. The issue of the Christian belief in the continuation of prophethood is a reference to Qur'ān 61:6: "And when Jesus son of Mary said, 'Children of Israel, I am indeed the Messenger of God to you, confirming the Torah that is before me, and giving good tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad'".

¹²⁵ Only Āzhand refers to this figure without any explanation. See Āzhand, *Ḥurūfiyya*, p. 77.

¹²⁶ *MTMA*, p. 33.

Whatever Aḥmad-i Lur's association with the Ḥurūfīs, the wrath of Shāhrukh was nevertheless cast upon them. 'Azud and an unspecified number of his followers were beheaded in the marketplace of Herat, their bodies were later burned by the people of Herat and their heads were displayed on the porticos of the houses. Following the carnage in Herat, Shāhrukh showed his humility and generosity towards the people, a point which Ḥāfīz-i Abrū also endorses, although Ṭūsī does not specify the nature of Shāhrukh's beneficence.¹²⁷

Muḥammad Ṭūsī concludes his treatise with a long section praising Shāhrukh and Mīrzā Bāysunghur. Ṭūsī's text challenges the conventional accounts of the assassination attempt from various angles, the most important one being the absence of a direct association between Aḥmad-i Lur and the Ḥurūfīs. This view, in fact, corroborates the account of Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Muḥammad's letter discussed above.

Zayn al-Dīn Khvāfī's Manhaj al-rashād

Zayn al-Dīn Abū Bakr Muḥammad Khvāfī was arguably one of the most prominent Sufis in Herat during the reign of Shāhrukh. He was a disciple of the Egyptian Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Miṣrī, and lived outside Herat where he commanded a considerable respect and authority among the Timurid ruling elite until his death during a plague outbreak on 2 Shavvāl 838/1 May 1435.¹²⁸ He wrote the *Manhaj al-rashād* in Rajab 831/April-May 1428, almost a year after the assassination attempt, in Herat.¹²⁹ We have no direct evidence to suggest that Khvāfī was arrested or interrogated after the assassination attempt. However, since he wrote a treatise in which he demonised certain followers of Ibn 'Arabī, we can comfortably argue that the *Manhaj al-rashād* reflects on the circumstances of the period following the assassination attempt.

On the surface, the *Manhaj al-rashād* is a polemic against Ibn 'Arabī and his views on *vaḥdat-i vujūd*, but it actually provides a much broader and sophisticated taxonomy of intellectual groups in his own time. According to Khvāfī, Ibn 'Arabī's ideas are nothing more than an amalgamation of the ideas of the Sophists (*Sūfiṣṭā'iyān*), Materialists (*Dahriyān*), and Philosophers (*Faylasūfān*), and they are not the teachings of prophets and saints, but rather they are about the religion of treachery (*dīn-i khiyānat*).¹³⁰ He calls them the *mazhab-i mulḥidān* who adopted the *mazhab-i vujūd va ittihād*, i.e. the "sect of the unity of being", and the views of the *mashāyikh al-ṭarīqa*, i.e. Sufi shaykhs.¹³¹

The shortest definition of *illḥād* for Khvāfī is the deviation from the path of the Book and the prophetic tradition. For example, the Sophists are apostates because they adopt the method of argumentation and disputation (*munāzara va mujādala*).¹³² Khvāfī divides the

¹²⁷ *MTMA*, pp. 33–36.

¹²⁸ Zayn al-Dīn Khvāfī's biography is relatively well studied. For his life and intellectual network, see Bekir Köle, *Zeynüddīn Hāfī ve Tasavvufi Görüşleri* (Istanbul, 2011), pp. 25–122; H. T. Norris, "The *Mir'at al-Ṭālibīn*, by Zāin al-Dīn al-Khawāfī of Khurāsān and Herat", *BSOAS* 53 (1990), pp. 57–59; and for his influence and political activities, see Manz, *Power*, pp. 228–238; Jürgen Paul, "The Khwājagān at Herat during Shāhrukh's Reign", in *Horizons of the World: Festschrift for Isenbike Togan*, eds. İlker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kılıç-Schubel (Istanbul, 2011), pp. 223–226.

¹²⁹ *KMR*, pp. xxxiii–lxv, 473–579. See also Köle, *Zeynüddīn Hāfī*, p. 54.

¹³⁰ *KMR*, pp. 484, 554–556.

¹³¹ *KMR*, pp. 487–488.

¹³² *KMR*, p. 541.

apostates into two large groups: *Kuhna-mulhidān* and *Naw-mulhidān*. The *Kuhna-mulhidān* were simply a continuation of magians (*majūsiyān*) and fireworshippers (*ātash-parastān*). Confronted with the overwhelming power of Islam, those magians and fireworshippers decided to clothe themselves in an Islamic garb, and hid their own beliefs in the idea of the *bāṭin*, i.e. “gnosis”. What Khvāfi is trying to suggest is that the dichotomy of *ẓāhir* and *bāṭin* is in fact a legitimisation of the old Magian beliefs in the guise of an Islamic discourse.¹³³ The most prominent representative of the *Kuhna-mulhidān* in early Islamic history was Ḥamdān-i Qarmāṭī (d. ca. 286/899), the eponymous leader of the Qarmaṭian movement in the ninth century. Khvāfi devotes a section of his treatise to Ḥamdān-i Qarmāṭī and suggests that he was sent to Iṣfahān to propagate his views. However, he was not successful in Iṣfahān as the people there were not wont to change their ideas on specific issues. Therefore, Qarmāṭī spread his views in Quhistān, and the famous Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāh (d. 518/1124), the leader of Nizārī-Isma‘īlīs in Alamūt, eventually emerged out of this propagation.¹³⁴

As for the *Naw-mulhidān*, a term which denotes the *mulhids* of the Timurid period, their ultimate aim was to eradicate Islamic law. According to Khvāfi, these latter-day apostates appear in three forms: Sophists (*Sūfiṣṭā’iyān*), Materialists (*Dahriyān*), and those Philosophers who do not follow any prophet (*Falsafiyyān-i ghayr-i tavābi‘-i payghambarān*), and finally the “Proponents of the unity of being” (*Vujūdiyyān*).¹³⁵ The Sophists are those who believe that things have no existence (*vujūdi*) and permanence (*ṣabāṭi*), and whatever we see is illusion and fantasy (*khayālāt va mawhūmāt*), and their ultimate purpose is to overthrow prophecy and law (*nubuvvat va sharī‘at*). He also argues that they were the proponents of the unity of being (*Vujūdis*), too. They should be beaten and burnt so that they understand that the scourge of beating and the fire of burning have also existence (*vujūdi dārad*), and confess that the things have existence in this world.¹³⁶ As for the Materialists (*Dahriyān*), according to Khvāfi, the term mainly refers to those who believed in the eternity of life and being.¹³⁷ The *Dahriyān* reject the Day of Judgment, and the Day of Resurrection, but they do not deny the existence of God.¹³⁸ Khvāfi seems to be using the term Philosophers (*Faylasūfān*) in an even broader sense. He says that the philosophers are those who do not see politics and law, and temporal authority (*lit. ḥall*: elliptically for *ḥall va ‘aqd*, ‘loosing and tying’) and veneration (*ḥurmat*) as an important affair in this life, and that Heaven and Hell, and reward and punishment are all in this world, not in the afterlife.¹³⁹ He is particularly disturbed by the fact that some of his contemporaries took the guidance of the Greek philosophers (*ḥukamā-yi Yūnān*) rather than the prophets.¹⁴⁰

¹³³ KMR, pp. 544–546.

¹³⁴ KMR, pp. 546–547.

¹³⁵ KMR, pp. 553–554.

¹³⁶ KMR, pp. 554–555. In Islamic philosophy, the Sophist is “one who exercises arbitrary judgment” as opposed to dialectics. In other words, the Sophists were relativists. See I. R. Netton, “al-Sūfiṣṭā’iyyūn”, *EP* Vol. 9, p. 765.

¹³⁷ I. Goldziher [A. M. Goichon], “Dahriyya”, *EP* Vol. 2, p. 95. According to Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī, *al-dahr* is “the permanent moment which is the extension of the divine majesty and is the innermost part (*bāṭin*) of time, in which eternity in the past and eternity in the future are united”. Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta’rīfāt*, p. 111. The translation of *al-Ta’rīfāt* is by Goldziher.

¹³⁸ KMR, pp. 484, 555.

¹³⁹ KMR, pp. 484, 556.

¹⁴⁰ KMR, pp. 571–572.

The idea that tied all three beliefs to the category of the *Naw-mulḥidān* was the *Mazhab-i Vujūdiyyān*. The fundamental belief of the *Vujūdiyyān* was that existence is unique (*vāḥid*) and that existence itself is God truly and exclusively (*rāst va bas*). Other than God, nothing has any existence. The existence of God does not have any external attribution (*ta'ayyun*), and the existence of those visible things are the existence of God. The attributes of these visible things are the attributes of the Divine Knowledge (*'ilm-i ilāhī*), not the attributes of their visible being (*ta'ayyunāt-i 'aynī*). In other words, the existence of God (*vujūd-i Ḥaqq*) and the existence of creatures (*vujūd-i khalq*) are the same thing.¹⁴¹

If these *Naw-mulḥidān* say that the things have no existence other than their existence in God's unity, they are Sophists, and they commit blasphemy by rejecting the Qur'ān and the Day of Judgement. And if they claim that the created things have existence, but their existence is indistinguishable from God's existence, then it means that God's existence also has the qualities of life such as birth and death. Therefore, the idea of the *vahdat-i vujūd* is false.

The *Manhaj al-rashād* is a defense of Khvāfī's own position as a prominent intellectual of Herat. Khvāfī seems to have felt a certain pressure and needed to clarify his ideas. In every section, it is obvious that Khvāfī's main concern was the very unity of the community, which was established and secured by the Qur'ān and the *sunna*. Khvāfī constantly points the finger at the followers of Ibn 'Arabī, or the *Naw-mulḥidān*, who were responsible for destroying the unity of the community. Shāhrukh, according to Khvāfī, had exerted great efforts to support the *sharī'a* and abolished the Chinggisid law (*tura-yi Changiz Khān*), and now all those people with false beliefs (*bad-mazhabān*) in all corners of the world became increasingly daring in rejecting the prophetic traditions and law, and he encourages Shāhrukh to eliminate them.¹⁴²

Khvāfī's intention in his treatise is not simply to attribute a genealogy for various intellectual movements that he does not approve of in his own time, and reading his work to discover the traces of late antique and early medieval sectarian movements would be falling into the trap of Khvāfī's aggressive rhetoric. In fact, Khvāfī was trying to formulate a new taxonomy according to which the political authority, i.e. Shāhrukh in this case, is warned about the limits of what is acceptable and what is not. His rhetoric is so petulant that no other person other than his own followers would escape persecution. Therefore, it would be naïve to suggest that the *Manhaj al-rashād* was entirely unrelated to the purges of intellectuals which had been going on since the late 820s/1420s and peaked after the assassination attempt in 830/1427. What we cannot tell, at this point, is whether the *Manhaj al-rashād* was a defensive or offensive treatise. It is possible that suspicion fell on him due to his connections to the intellectual circles of Azerbaijan—he was a disciple of Kamāl Khujandī in Tabriz—and because of the significant influence he had on the Timurid ruling elite in Herat.¹⁴³ On the other hand, Khvāfī was also known to be a fierce opponent of Ibn 'Arabī and his idea of the *vahdat-i vujūd*. He did not even hesitate to attack his own protégé, Aḥmad Samarqandī, for reciting the poetry of Qāsim-i Anvār during his sermons in Herat, and persecute him and those close to him. As Shahzad Bashir observed, Khvāfī considered the

¹⁴¹ KMR, p. 556.

¹⁴² KMR, pp. 486–487.

¹⁴³ Norris, "The *Mir'āt al-Tālibīn*", p. 59; Manz, *Power*, p. 229.

notion of *vaḥdat-i vujūd* “amongst the most reprehensible intellectual movements in Islamic history”.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, in the context of the assassination attempt, Khvāfi’s *Manhaj al-rashād* appears to be an attempt to exploit the situation in which the tide turned against those who subscribed to the idea of the *vaḥdat-i vujūd*.

IV. Conclusion

After a close examination of the sources, we appear to be in a worse position in terms of understanding the regicide attempt on 23 Rabī’ II 830/21 February 1427 than we were at the beginning of this article. There is almost no single element in the story of Aḥmad-i Lur and Shāhrukh that remains unchallenged by another source, and we are left with no definite answer to the question of what really happened on that day, in Herat, after the Friday prayer. Who was Aḥmad-i Lur? Was he a Ḥurūfi assassin ordered to kill Shāhrukh, as Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū and ‘Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī would like us to believe, or was he sent by someone else to assassinate Shāhrukh, as Muḥammad Ṭūsī seems to be suggesting? What was the role of the Ḥurūfis? Were they the troublesome heretics or were they simply scapegoats who were easy targets for branding as heretics or unbelievers? What about Sā’in al-Dīn Turka, who was arrested and interrogated long before the assassination attempt? How were his troubles connected to the assassination attempt? Was Zayn al-Dīn Khvāfi simply scared when he menacingly brandished the accusation of *ilhād* against many other Timurid intellectuals—especially the ones who centred around Isfahan, or did he really believe that those unbelievers were about to take over the world? It is indeed difficult to build up a case based on the evidence available to us. However, in an investigation, be it a criminal or a historical one, actors matter as much as the motives and processes, and with a few exceptions, our sources demonstrate a remarkable consistency in emphasising the actors: Shāhrukh was the target, the assassin was Aḥmad-i Lur; the Ḥurūfis were either the perpetrators or victims, but other intellectuals, especially those who professed the science of letters, were definitely the victims.

One important exception is Mīrzā Bāysunghur. If we solely believe Samarqandī, how can we explain Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū’s failure to mention his patron’s presence on such an eventful day? After all, it was to Mīrzā Bāysunghur that he dedicated the *Zubdat al-tavārikh-i Bāysunghurī*. Perhaps he was trying to hide his patron’s misjudgement, which led to the killing of the most important witness to the event, Aḥmad-i Lur. But if Mīrzā Bāysunghur was not present, why would Samarqandī put such a prominent Timurid prince in the boots of someone who failed to protect his father and his king? Indeed, Mīrzā Bāysunghur’s role in the whole event invites suspicion. We do not really know what the nature of his relationship with Ma’rūf-i Khaṭṭāt and the reason of his enmity toward Qāsim-i Anvār was. Muḥammad Ṭūsī’s account of Mīrzā Bāysunghur is particularly noteworthy. Ṭūsī ends his treatise with a long dedication to Mīrzā Bāysunghur, in which he ascribes the title *sulṭān* to him and calls him the original king (*pādīshāh-i aṣl*). He goes on to describe how Mīrzā Bāysunghur’s temper and qualities would be suitable for rulership.¹⁴⁵ It is curious that Ṭūsī left his hometown soon after the assassination attempt and died *en route* to Mecca. Mīrzā Bāysunghur commanded an

¹⁴⁴Bashir, *Sufi Bodies*, p. 99.

¹⁴⁵MTMA, pp. 38–42.

enormous respect in the army and among the learned classes of the capital Herat, and he had been a *de facto* heir *designé* at least since 819/1416, when he was appointed as the *amūr-i divān*. He was also an accomplished calligrapher and a great patron of artistic production in Herat.¹⁴⁶ Yet his exact role in the events of 830/1426–27 is still shrouded in mystery.

Shāhrukh is touted to have been a great restorer of Sunnī Islam, and he was in fact relatively successful in casting himself as the defender of the *sharʿī* principles after Timur, who, by contrast, had been presented by the Timurid historians as the great supporter of the Chinggisid principles of politics.¹⁴⁷ However, as the most recent research has demonstrated, the relationship of Shāhrukh with the Timurid intellectuals was a contested and constantly negotiated affair.¹⁴⁸ The events surrounding the regicide attempt highlight the fact that Shāhrukh must have been seriously worried about his authority vis-à-vis the learned classes towards the middle of his reign.¹⁴⁹ The prevalence of messianic movements is a symptom of the political momentum gathering around radical millenarian ideologies, but it seems as though the problem did not simply consist of the containment of intellectual movements that had a direct political agenda, but it was rather about how to define and control the intellectual sphere which had been increasingly gaining autonomy either in the form of Sufi networks, such as the various competing Khvājagānī lineages in Central Asia, or in the shape of informal intellectual networks, such as the fifteenth-century *Ikhvān al-ṣafā*. The growing participation of intellectuals in the formal or informal intellectual networks created a new and independent intellectual sphere, which the Timurids often tried to control and manipulate through patronage and administrative regulation.¹⁵⁰ This cohabitation of the political and intellectual spheres appears to have turned into an open conflict in the late 820s/1420s, when Shāhrukh decided to interfere in the organisation of intellectual networks. What triggered this change of mind on Shāhrukh's part is not certain, but it is possible that the affair of Iṣḥāq Khuttalānī and his disciple Sayyid Nūrbakhsh, who led a messianic rebellion in 826/1423 in Khuttalān, was a decisive moment when Shāhrukh decided to be proactive about attempting to regulate the intellectual sphere on his own terms.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶Hans R. Roemer, "Bāysonḡor, Gīāt-al-Dīn", *EIr* Vol. 4, pp. 6–9.

¹⁴⁷Maria E. Subtelny studied Shāhrukh's pro-Sunnī policies in a range of studies. For her most recent contribution to the subject see Subtelny, *Timurids*, pp. 24–28. See also *eadem*, "The Sunni Revival under Shāh-Rukh and its Promoters: A Study of the Connection Between Ideology and Higher Learning in Timurid Iran", in *Proceedings of the 27th Meeting of Haneda Memorial Hall Symposium on Central Asia and Iran August 30, 1993* (Kyoto, 1993), pp. 14–23; *eadem*, "The Cult of 'Abdullāh Anṣārī under the Timurids", in *Gott ist schön und er liebt die Schönheit – God is Beautiful and he Loves Beauty*, eds. Alma Giese and J. Christoph Bürgel (Bern, 1994), pp. 377–406. See also Subtelny and Anas B. Khalidov, "The Curriculum of Islamic Higher Learning in Timurid Iran in the Light of the Sunni Revival under Shāh-Rukh", *JAOs* 115 (1995), pp. 210–236.

¹⁴⁸Bashir, *Messianic Hopes*, pp. 31–41; Manz, *Power*, pp. 209–210.

¹⁴⁹The classic study on patronage and its political function in the Timurid Empire is Jean Aubin, "Le Mécénat timouride à Chiraz", *Studia Islamica* 8 (1957), pp. 71–88. Aubin draws his examples mostly from an earlier period when Mirzā Iskandar b. 'Umar-Shaykh ruled in Shīrāz semi-independently soon after the death of Timur. In recent decades the Timurid artistic patronage has been studied relatively well from the perspective of art history. See Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision. Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles, 1989), pp. 67–157, and more recently Barbara Brend, *Muhammad Juki's Shahnamah of Firdausi* (London, 2010), pp. 22–37.

¹⁵⁰Manz, *Power*, pp. 209–210.

¹⁵¹Bashir, *Messianic Hopes*, pp. 45–54; Devin DeWeese, "The Eclipse of the Kubravīyah in Central Asia", *Iranian Studies* 21 (1988), pp. 54–63.

The cases of Zayn al-Dīn Khvāfi and Şā'in al-Dīn Turka epitomise the conflict as a whole and herald the status of Sufi networks in the second half of the fifteenth century. The former played a prominent role among the emerging Sufi networks, and the latter was the leading figure in the cluster of the informal network called *Ikhvān al-ṣafā* in Fārs. Khvāfi distanced himself from any form of political ambition by resorting to invented traditions and the “revival” of the perceived ills of earlier Islamic centuries, such as the Qarmaṭīs, the Ismā'īlīs, and the Bāṭinīs, whereas Turka tried in vain to explain what he was trying to propose without reverting to centuries-old clichés and tropes. Shāhrukh and his powerful *amīrs* preferred the ways of the former and punished the latter.

Whether the regicide attempt was a genuine Ḥurūfī plot or not, the Ḥurūfīs and those intellectuals who adopted the science of letters as a method of inquiry and organised themselves in informal intellectual networks bore the brunt of the purges in the wake of the assassination attempt. They were actually minor players in a bigger game in which the cards were dealt for a new age, in which new forms of politics, politics, and a new form of piety were about to be born.

Abbreviations

HMA

Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū (d. 833/1430). *Mu'izz al-Ansāb*. Paris Bibliothèque Nationale Ms. ancien fonds pers. 67.

HAB

Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū. *Zubdat al-tavārikh*. 4 vols. Ed. Sayyid Kamāl Ḥajj Sayyid Javādī, Tehran, 1380 H.sh./2001–02.

HAI

Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū. *Jughrāfiyā-yi Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū-Baksh-i Khurāsān* = Dorothea Krawulsky (ed.), *Ḥorāsān zur Timuridenzeit nach dem Tārīḫ-e Ḥāfeẓ-e Abrū (vetf. 817–823 h.)*. Wiesbaden, 1982.

JTK

Ja'farī, (fl. 851–855/1447–1451), *Tārīkh-i kabīr*. St Petersburg Gosudarstvennaia publichnaia biblioteka im. M. E. Saltykova-Shchedrina Ms. Pers. Nov. Seriiia 201; *Tārīḫ-i Kebīr (Tevārīḫ-i Enbiyā ve Mülūk*, facsimile ed. and trans. İsmail Aka, Ankara, 2011.

KHS

Khvādamīr (d. 946/1539–40). *Ḥabīb al-siyar fī akhbār-i afrād-i bashar*. Ed. J. Humā'ī and M. Dabīr-Siyāqī, Tehran, 1380 H.sh./2001.

KMF

Faṣīḥ al-Khvāfi (d. 849/1445). *Mujmal-i Faṣīḥī*. Ed. Sayyid Muḥammad Nājī Naṣrābādī, Tehran, 1386 H.sh./2007–2008.

KMR

Zayn al-Dīn Khvāfi, (d. 838/1435). *Manhaj al-rashād*. Published in Najib Māyil Haravī (ed.), *Īn barghā-yi pīr. Majmu‘a-yi bīst aṣar-i chāp-nashuda-yi fārsī az qalam-rū-yi taṣavvuf*, Tehran, 1381 H.sh./2002–2003.

MGM

Abdūlbaki Gölpınarlı, “Faḍlallāh-i Ḥurūfi’nin oğluna [sic.] ait bir mektup,” *Şarkiyat Mecmuası* 1(1956): 37–57.

MRS

Mīrkhvānd (d. 903/1498). *Rawzat al-ṣafā’ fī sīrat al-anbiyā’ wa al-mulūk wa al-khulafā’*. 10 vols., ed. ‘Abbās Parvīz, Tehran, 1338–9 H.sh./1959–60.

MTMA

Muḥammad Ṭūsī, *Majma‘ al-tahānī va maḥẓar al-amānī*, ed. Najīb Māyil Haravī in *Majmū‘a-yi rasā’il-i fārsī* 3 (1372 H.sh./1993): 9–43; Tehran Kitābkhāna-yi Millī-yi Malik Ms. 477/3, ff. 1b–31b.

NMT

Naṭanzī, Mu‘īn al-Dīn (f. 816/143–14). *Muntakhab-i tavārīkh-i Mu‘īnī = Extraits du Muntakhab al-Tavārikh-i Muīni (Anonyme d’Iskandar)*, ed. Jean Aubin, Tehran, 1336 H.sh./1957.

PL³

Storey, C. A., *Adabiyāt-i fārsī*. Trans. to Russian. Y. E. Bregel and trans. to Persian Yahyā Āryanpūr et al., Tehran, 1362 H.sh./1983–84

SMS

Samarqandī, Kamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Razzāq (d. 887/1482). *Maṭla‘-i sa‘dayn va majma‘-i bahrayn*. Vol. I.1: Ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā’ī, Tehran, 1353 H.sh./1974; Vol. I.2. Ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā’ī and Vol. II.1 and II.2. Ed. Muḥammad Shafī‘ in 1941–49 in Lahore [re-set by Navā’ī] Tehran, 1383 H.sh./2004–05.

TNMA

Turka, Šā’in al-Dīn ‘Alī (835/1431–32). *Naf̄sat al-maṣdūr-i avval*. Published in *Chahārdah risāla-yi fārsī az Šā’in al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Muḥammad Turka-yi Isfahānī*, eds. Sayyid ‘Alī Mūsavī Bihbahānī and Sayyid Ibrāhīm Dībājī, (Tehran, 1351 H.sh./1972), pp. 169–94.

TNMD

Turka, Šā’in al-Dīn ‘Alī. *Naf̄sat al-maṣdūr-i duvvum*. Published in *Chahārdah risāla-yi fārsī az Šā’in al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Muḥammad Turka-yi Isfahānī*, pp. 197–217.

TRI

Turka, Šā’in al-Dīn ‘Alī. *I’tiqādāt*. Published in *Chahārdah risāla-yi fārsī az Šā’in al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Muḥammad Turka-yi Isfahānī*, pp. 219–64.

TRShQS

Turka, Šā’in al-Dīn ‘Alī. *Risāla-yi Shaqq-i qamar va sā‘at*. Published in *Chahārdah risāla-yi fārsī az Šā’in al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Muḥammad Turka-yi Isfahānī*, pp. 101–17.

TZZ

Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū (?), *Tatimma-yi Zubdat al-tavārikh-i Bāysunghurī*. Oxford Bodleian Library Ms. Elliot 422, ff. 440b-446b.

YZN

Yazdī, Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī (d. 858/1454). *Zafarnāma*. 2 vols. Eds. Sa‘īd Mīr Muḥammad Şādiq and ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā‘ī, Tehran, 1387 H.sh./2008–09. ~~evrim.binbas@rhul.ac.uk~~

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