

Ismā‘īl Anqarawī’s Commentary on Book Seven of the *Mathnawī*:

A Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Sufi Controversy

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## ABSTRACT

### Ismā‘īl Anqarawī’s Commentary on Book Seven of the *Mathnawī*: A Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Sufi Controversy

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It is commonly accepted by Rūmī scholars that Rūmī’s *Mathnawī* is composed of six volumes. However, a few sources indicate the possibility of an extra volume known as “Book Seven” of the *Mathnawī*. My study particularly focuses on the unpublished commentary (*sharḥ*) on Book Seven written by Ismā‘īl Anqarawī (d. 1631), the most important Ottoman commentator on the *Mathnawī*. It is an addendum to his commentary on the *Mathnawī* entitled *Majmū‘at al-Laṭā‘if wa Maṭmūrat al-Ma‘ārif* (Collection of Subtleties and Hidden Store of Knowledge). Since the commentary and its publication received major criticism from Sufis belonging to the Mevlevī order, it is the aim of this study to explore the reasons for the composition of the commentary. Why did Anqarawī, a respected Mevlevī shaykh who was in charge of Gālātā Sufi lodge and taught the *Mathnawī* for several years, devote his energy to writing a separate commentary on a text widely considered to be spurious?

My study is based primarily on the textual analysis and close examination of 45 Ottoman manuscripts of Anqarawī’s *sharḥ*, which I consulted in the Süleymāniye library, Konya’s Mevlānā Museum, Bursa’s Inebey Manuscript Library, and Ankara’s Mellī Library. I argue that the debate in which Anqarawī engaged can be divided into two parts: First, that the *sharḥ* encountered heavy criticism within the Mevlevī circle for its falsification and spurious nature, and second, that the subjects discussed in the *sharḥ* resulted in strong opposition from orthodox ‘*ulamā*’ on the grounds that it promoted *bid‘a* (“innovation” or “heresy”). By

examining Anqarawī's introduction, which presents a detailed account of his debate with Mevlevī Sufis and Shaykhs, I argue that Anqarawī claimed authority as the ultimate commentator and *Mathnawī-khān* (*Mathnawī*-reciter) among the Mevlevī Sufis, a claim that was bolstered by his closeness to Sultān Murād IV (d. 1640).

Given that Anqarawī scholarship is only recently emerging and his monumental commentary has not been studied properly, the present work contributes to the study of Rūmī and reception of his *Mathnawī* not only in the Persian speaking regions, but also within Ottoman society. This study will shed light on various aspects of the social and religious debates among the '*ulamā*' in the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman Empire. It will also allow for a better understanding of the intellectual milieu of the empire, the social status and political roles of the '*ulamā*' and the power wielded by official religious institutions and their affiliated scholars.

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Library in Sarajevo. I am indebted to the staff of the library of the Institute of Islamic Studies in Montreal, particularly to the late Stephen (Steve) Millier and Sean Swanick for their friendship and the help they extended to me and for making the library a welcoming place to do research.

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## Transliteration Table (Library of Congress)

### Romanization Table for Ottoman Turkish

Letters of the Alphabet

Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Romanization
ا	ا	ا	ا	omit
ب	ب	ب	ب	b
پ	پ	پ	پ	p
ت	ت	ت	ت	t
ث	ث	ث	ث	ṡ
ج	ج	ج	ج	c
چ	چ	چ	چ	ç
ح	ح	ح	ح	h
خ	خ	خ	خ	ḫ
د	د	د	د	d
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	z
ر	ر	ر	ر	r
ز	ز	ز	ز	z
س	س	س	س	s
ش	ش	ش	ش	ş
ص	ص	ص	ص	ṡ
ض	ض	ض	ض	z
ط	ط	ط	ط	t
ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	z
ع	ع	ع	ع	' (ayn)
ف	ف	ف	ف	ğ
ق	ق	ق	ق	f
ک	ک	ک	ک	k
گ	گ	گ	گ	k
ن	ن	ن	ن	g
ی	ی	ی	ی	ñ
ل	ل	ل	ل	l
م	م	م	م	m
ن	ن	ن	ن	n
و	و	و	و	v
ه	ه	ه، ه	ه، ه	h
ی	ی	ی	ی	y

# Arabic

## Romanization table for Arabic Alphabet

Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Romanization
ا	ا	ا	ا	omit
ب	ب	ب	ب	b
ت	ت	ت	ت	t
ث	ث	ث	ث	th
ج	ج	ج	ج	j
ح	ح	ح	ح	ḥ
خ	خ	خ	خ	kh
د	د	د	د	d
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	dh
ر	ر	ر	ر	r
ز	ز	ز	ز	z
س	س	س	س	s
ش	ش	ش	ش	sh
ص	ص	ص	ص	ṣ
ض	ض	ض	ض	ḍ
ط	ط	ط	ط	ṭ
ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	ẓ
ع	ع	ع	ع	‘ (ayn)
غ	غ	غ	غ	gh
ف	ف	ف	ف	f
ق	ق	ق	ق	q
ك	ك	ك	ك	k
ل	ل	ل	ل	l
م	م	م	م	m
ن	ن	ن	ن	n
ه	ه	ه، هـ	ه، هـ	h
و	و	و	و	w
ي	ي	ي	ي	Y

# Persian

## Romanization table for Persian Alphabet

Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Romanization
ا	ا	ا	ا	omit (see Note 1)
ب	ب	ب	ب	b
پ	پ	پ	پ	p
ت	ت	ت	ت	t
ث	ث	ث	ث	s
ج	ج	ج	ج	j
چ	چ	چ	چ	ch
ح	ح	ح	ح	h
خ	خ	خ	خ	kh
د	د	د	د	d
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	z
ر	ر	ر	ر	r
ز	ز	ز	ز	z
ژ	ژ	ژ	ژ	zh
س	س	س	س	s
ش	ش	ش	ش	sh
ص	ص	ص	ص	s
ض	ض	ض	ض	z
ط	ط	ط	ط	t
ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	z
ع	ع	ع	ع	' (ayn)
غ	غ	غ	غ	gh
ف	ف	ف	ف	f
ق	ق	ق	ق	q
ک	ک	ک	ک	k
گ	گ	گ	گ	g
ل	ل	ل	ل	l
م	م	م	م	m
ن	ن	ن	ن	n
و	و	و	و	v
ه	ه	ه	ه	h
ی	ی	ی	ی	y

## Introduction

The commentary tradition on Rūmī's (d. 1273) *Mathnawī-i Ma'nawī* has been quite intensive since Rūmī's own time. Commentaries on the *Mathnawī* were composed in Persian, Turkish, Arabic and Urdu throughout the medieval and pre-modern periods, which indicates the importance of Rūmī's teachings and views on Sufism and the Islamic sciences. Rūmī's magnum opus was a source of inspiration for Ottoman and Indo-Persian writers and Sufis masters, who taught his teachings or had their disciples recite his poems accompanied by mystical music and dance. Commentators have taken different approaches to understanding the *Mathnawī* and have interpreted Rūmī's Sufi teachings in accordance with their own knowledge and the particular school they belong to. Some have taken the Sufi approach and interpreted the verses merely from a Sufi perspective; they have provided comprehensive explications for all the terms and phrases mentioned in the *Mathnawī*. Among this group, we find Ottoman commentators who belonged to the Mevlevī Order and regarded the *Mathnawī* as a source of teaching in their circle.

The Mevlevī Order was a repository of Ottoman high culture, one of the most well-known of the Sufi orders, which “was founded in 1273 by Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's followers after his death, particularly his son, Sulṭān Valad.”<sup>1</sup> The Mevlevī Order was well-established in the Ottoman Empire and many of its members served in various official administrative and political positions. The influence of Persian culture was especially strong among Mevlevīs because the teachings that inspired the order were those of Rūmī.

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<sup>1</sup> Franklin Lewis, *Rūmī: Past and Present, East and West: The Life, Teaching and Poetry of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī* (Boston: Oneworld, 2000), 425.

The Mevlevī Order, the so-called whirling dervishes, also had a particular educational role. “Since Persian was not taught in Ottoman *madrasas* (traditional schools),” it was above all “the Mevlevī lodges that provided instruction”<sup>2</sup> and were instrumental in maintaining the enormous prestige of Persian culture in the Ottoman Empire. Due to the unfamiliarity of the people with the Persian language, the important task of translating Rūmī’s poetry into Turkish was on the shoulders of the Mevlevī translators and commentators (*shāriḥān*), who, for the most part, benefited from the patronage of the Ottoman court.

The *Mathnawī* derives its name from the verse format that Rūmī employed, namely, rhyming couplets. It represents Rūmī’s teachings and manifests his Sufi doctrine, upon which Mevlevīs founded their Sufi order. It contains Sufi stories, Qur’ānic verses, Ḥadīth, and ethical and mystical teachings. Comprised of 25,575 verses, the work is commonly known to be divided into six books, and Rūmī wrote prefaces for each; three of them in Arabic and the others in Persian. Some sources indicate the existence of a seventh book attributed to Rūmī; however, its true authorship has been the subject of question and most Rūmī scholars cast doubts on the authenticity of the book.

My study focuses on the untouched and unpublished commentary (*sharḥ*) of Book Seven written by Ismā‘īl Anqarawī (d. 1631), the well-known and most important Ottoman commentator of the *Mathnawī*. It is an addendum to his commentary on the *Mathnawī* entitled *Majmū‘at al-Laṭā’if wa Maṭmūrat al-Ma‘ārif* (Collection of Subtleties and Hidden Store of Knowledge). Since the commentary has received major criticism by Mevlevī Sufis and its publication encountered strong disapproval by the latter, it is the aim of this study to explore the reasons for the composition of the commentary. Why did Anqarawī, a

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 426.

respected Mevlevī shaykh, who was in charge of Gālātā Mevlevīhāneh (Sufi lodge) and taught the *Mathnawī* for several years, write a separate commentary on a potentially spurious text?

Anqarawī scholarship is only in its infancy and his monumental commentary has not been studied properly. Therefore, this work contributes to the study of Anqarawī scholarship on the one hand, and, on the other hand, also focuses on Rūmī and the reception of his *Mathnawī* not only in Persian-speaking regions, but within the Ottoman Empire. One of the purposes of this study is also to examine Book Seven from the perspective of its poetic structure in comparison with the rest of the *Mathnawī* as a means of gauging its authenticity. My approach has been to read closely the primary sources, mostly in manuscript, both in Ottoman and in Persian, to assess the various levels of information that they convey. Through the study of manuscripts, we can track the intellectual activities of Sufis and gain insight into their opposition to the scholarly religious class, the ‘*ulamā*’, through their own *risālas* and commentaries on popular texts in the Sufi tradition. The current study can guide a historian to a venue where a confluence of texts and contexts allows for a meaningful study of Sufism in a particular social and religious setting. I shall also be underlining Anqarawī’s heavy reliance on the school of Ibn ‘Arabī (d. 1240), which can be seen by the fact that he based his commentary solely on latter’s teaching, thereby promoting Ibn ‘Arabī’s legacy while putting himself in strong opposition with the Ottoman Qāḍīzādeh religious revivalist movement. The present study therefore also provides a venue for further historical research on the popularity of the school of Ibn ‘Arabī and its impact on the intellectual milieu of Ottoman society, particularly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

## Sources and Methodology

The present study is focused on the textual analysis of unpublished and original manuscripts. It consists of two parts. In the first part, I begin by examining the “so-called” Book Seven attributed to Rūmī. To do so, I introduce the manuscripts, lithographs and published editions of Book Seven, which are preserved in several libraries around the world. This is followed by a detailed literary analysis of the book. Indeed, I have based my literary analysis on MS Konya No. 2033, the oldest surviving manuscript of Book Seven copied in 1411 and consulted by Anqarawī. Through numerous examples, I study stories, terms, expressions and vocabularies to demonstrate the incompatibility between Book Seven and the rest of the *Mathnawī*. Each example shows a different poetic style and other disconnections between the two texts.

The second part of the thesis is dedicated to the study of Anqarawī's commentary on Book Seven. I begin by assembling a range of manuscripts from around the world to show connections between them. My aim is also to demonstrate the connection and interrelationship between the manuscripts, authorship and the issue of patronage in order to answer why and how there existed numerous copies of the manuscript despite its being banned from distribution. The information provided on the colophon and the marginal notes confirms that the majority of the manuscripts were copied in Mevlevī lodges and were dedicated to Sultān Murād IV (d. 1640)<sup>3</sup> with a supplication prayer at the end. Each manuscript offers some information about its authenticity and the promotion of the text, thereby shedding light on the social and political conflicts among Sufis and ‘*ulamā*’. The

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<sup>3</sup> Murād IV, in full Murād Oğlu Ahmed I (born July 27, 1612, Constantinople, Ottoman Empire [now Istanbul, Turkey]—died February 8, 1640, Constantinople), was the Ottoman Sultān from 1623 to 1640, and is famous for having conquered Baghdad.



copyists chose to copy the manuscript because they found it both important and appealing and, on some occasions, their work was commissioned by the state. In some instances, we notice that a single copyist who copied the manuscript later on traveled a very far distance where the manuscript was preserved in a library archive, madrasa or Sufi lodge. I have concentrated my analysis on MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574 from the Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, since its date is the closest to the time of Anqarawī and its marginal notes were copied identically by later ascribes.

I offer a detailed and thorough survey and annotated study of the existing manuscripts, arranged in chronological order, and readers may refer to Appendices I and II for full bibliographic details of all manuscripts used in this study. Dependence on manuscripts, however, requires caution in several regards. The chronological order in which the manuscripts were copied indicates which Sultāns commissioned or heavily promoted the distribution of the texts, as well as in which lodges the texts were copied. According to the information gathered from library databases in Turkey, copies were made of the commentary from the time of Anqarawī up until 1893.

While Anqarawī's responses to his opponents reflects his social, political and religious status, it also provides us with some vital information about the major conflicts that were taking place between Sufis and orthodox '*ulamā*'. In particular, the information appearing as marginal notes in manuscripts assist us in better comprehending the nature of Ottoman religious conflict, while also allowing us to verify which groups of scholars were benefiting from royal patronage. This opens a new window onto the inner conflicts among Mevlevī Sufīs, as well as the external confrontations they had with the '*ulamā*'.

The analysis provided below is based on my own translation of various passages from Ottoman into English (as well as sometimes from Persian into English and Arabic into English), and is based on the introduction Anqarawī wrote to his commentary. I also provide a transcription of the important passages where the major arguments between other Sufis and Anqarawī are discussed. All the dates regarding publications, events and biographies are given in Common Era notation.

### **Outline of the Study**

Following a brief biography of Anqarawī and a survey of the literature in Chapter One, Chapter Two offers an evaluation of Book Seven based on the consultation of several manuscripts. Chapter Three goes on to analyze Book Seven through a detailed examination of its poetry, poetic style and structure, in order to establish the text's authorship. Chapter Four examines that various manuscript copies of Anqarawī's commentary, which were consulted in different libraries throughout Turkey. Their ownership, the royal patronage they received, the place they were copied and the reception of the text among the Mevlevīs are among the subjects discussed in this chapter.

Next, and of particular importance, is the historical study of the social, political and religious milieu of Ottoman society in the seventeenth century, which are treated in Chapter Five. Criticisms stemming from the '*ulamā*', particularly the Qāḏīzādeh family of Sufis, as well as disputes among Sufis of various orders, are discussed, following an examination of Anqarawī's social and religious status and his active participation in the political disputes in Ottoman society. The second part of the chapter is dedicated to Anqarawī's elaborate response and rebuttal to his opponents over the authenticity of Book Seven and his

justification for the *sharḥ* he composed. It will be argued that behind criticism of his commentary is Anqarawī's fervent adherence to the school of Ibn 'Arabī, upon which he based his theological views by offering his commentary on specific verses where the subject of Ibn 'Arabī is discussed. Thus, in conclusion, Chapter Six will be dedicated to the examination of Anqarawī's position on the school of Ibn 'Arabī.

## **Chapter One: Literature Review**

There has been growing interest among academics in the study of mystical and religious life in the Ottoman lands. Scholars may be responding to what William Chittick calls “a glaring gap in our knowledge about mystical literature and thought from the Ottoman period.”<sup>4</sup> Ottoman studies have until quite recently focused almost exclusively on social, economic and political history, even though these cannot be completely separated from the religio-cultural milieu. Indeed, as John Curry points out, the political and economic crises in the Empire’s history “often went hand-in-hand with spiritual crises that were equally influential in shaping the course of events.”<sup>5</sup> Cemal Kafadar has an interesting explanation for the neglect of Ottoman literature and mysticism. According to him, “Ottoman literary and cultural history has been traditionally viewed within the dualistic framework of ‘courtly’ versus ‘popular’. This schema took shape under the influence of cultural and religious studies in 19th-century Europe and the needs of incipient Turkish nationalism to distance itself from the Ottoman elite while embracing some form of populism.”<sup>6</sup> Kafadar maintains that the opening of Turkish archives to the scholarly community and the growing availability of statistical data has diverted most Ottomanists with social and historical questions away from the manuscript libraries and narrative or “literary” sources.

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<sup>4</sup> William Chittick, “Tasavvuf ii: Ibn ‘Arabī and After in the Arabic and Persian Lands,” in *EI2*.

<sup>5</sup> John J. Curry, *The Transformation of Muslim Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Empire: The Rise of the Halveti Order, 1350-1750* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Cemal Kafadar, “Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature,” *Studia Islamica*, no. 69 (1989): 121-150.

A promising beginning to the study of Turkish culture and literature was made by Fuat Köprülü (d. 1966), which might have led to a more textured reading of Ottoman cultural history. This, however, was unfortunately not pursued - mostly due to shifting emphasis in Ottoman studies towards archival research. Nevertheless, Köprülü's fundamental treatises *The First Mystics in Turkish Literature* (1918), *Contemporary Literature* (1924), *A History of Turkish Religion* (1925), *A History of Turkish Literature* (1928), and *Turkish Folk Poets* (1940–41) were a major contribution to the study of Turkish culture.

Recently, scholars have begun to pay more attention to Ottoman contributions to the religious and cultural life of their age and Sufism. For example, Valerie Hoffman notes that the political power of mystical orders during Ottoman times represents “an anomaly rather than the norm”;<sup>7</sup> and Dina Le Gall has demonstrated how the doctrines of the Ottoman Naqshbandīs of the early modern period were inclusive and thus very different from the contemporary order.<sup>8</sup> Ayfer Karakaya-Stump examines in her research the lives of ‘Alevīs, Bektāshis and Qizilbāsh Sufis in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and argues that the Qizilbāsh movements that emerged in the borderlands region of Eastern Anatolia during the Ottoman period built on pre-existing Sufi networks affiliated with specific lineages. Karakaya-Stump highlights in particular the acute problem of sources within the historiography surrounding ‘Alevīsm in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>9</sup> John Curry,

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7 Valerie Hoffman, *Sufism, Mystics, and Saints in Modern Egypt* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 15, 266-267 and 362.

8 Dina Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandis in the Ottoman World, 1450-1700* (Albany: Suny Press, 2005).

9 Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, “The Contested Legacy of Hacı Bektash: The Abdals of Rum, the Bektashi Order, and the Kizilbash Movement,” in “Subjects of the Sultan, Disciples of the Shah: Formation

furthermore, has analyzed in a recent pioneering study the key role played by the Halvetī Order in shaping the cultural and religious identity of the late Ottoman period through its influence over the masses.<sup>10</sup>

There is also Abu-Manneh Butrus's article that studies the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya order in the Ottoman lands during the early nineteenth century, where he examines the Khālidiyya, a sub-order of the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya order, which spread from India to Ottoman western Asia and Istanbul during that period. He argues that the Naqshbandiyya order continued to expand quietly with no recognized center or guiding hand and as a consequence fell under the patronage of the state.<sup>11</sup> Ahmet Karamustafa, for his part, deals with the Iranian antecedents of the Anatolian Sufis and suggests that the development of Sufism be studied as the product of specific historical circumstances.<sup>12</sup> Finally, Derin Terzioglu's study investigates the role of Sufis in the age of confessionalization.<sup>13</sup>

In considering this tradition of scholarship, one is struck by the near-absence of major studies specifically on the role of the Mevlevī Sufi Order in this period, even though the Mevlevīs formed an elite that deeply influenced the intellectual and cultural foundations of society and played an important role in Ottoman politics. Gölpınarlı's work

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and Transformation of the Kizilbash/Alevi Communities in Ottoman Anatolia," (PhD Thesis, Harvard University, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Curry, *The Transformation of Muslim Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Empire*.

<sup>11</sup> Abu-Manneh Butrus, "The Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya in the Ottoman Lands in the early 19th Century," *Die Welt des Islams*, Bd. 22, nr. 1/4 (1982): 1-36.

<sup>12</sup> Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period 1200-1550* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994).

<sup>13</sup> Derin Terzioglu, "Sufis in the age of state-building and confessionalization," in *The Ottoman World*, ed. Christine Woodhead (New York: Routledge, 2012), 86-99.

on the historical development of the Order and its role in shaping the culture of Ottoman society remains the only important study to this date. He studies the proximity of the Mevlevīs as a learned class to the Ottoman state and its ruling hierarchy and how this led to donations and assistance in erecting and maintaining lodges and the education they provided.<sup>14</sup>

### **Ismā‘īl Rusūkhī Anqarawī**

Little has been written on Anqarawī and his teachings in western languages. His role as a prominent Mevlevī shaykh remains to be studied, while the majority of his writings still need to be examined. We still have to turn to Ottoman sources such as Naw‘īzādeh ‘Aṭā’ī’s (d. after 1635) *al-Shaqā’iq al-Nu‘māniyya*, Būrsālī’s (d. 1925) *Osmānlī Müelliflerī*, Kātip Çelebī’s (d. 1657) *Kashf al-Zunūn*, and Sākib Muṣṭafā Dede’s (d. 1735) *Sefīne-i Nefīse-i Mevlevīyān* for basic information on Anqarawī’s life, Sufi practices, teachings and his role in Ottoman society in the seventeenth century.

Anqarawī, the *nisba* of Rusūkhī<sup>15</sup> al-Dīn Ismā‘īl b. Aḥmad b. Bayramī Mevlevī (d. 1631), and also known as Rusūkhī or Rusūkhī Dede, was a prominent Sufi shaykh in Istanbul in the seventeenth century. A native of Ankara, he ended a career of peripatetic study and teaching as the Shaykh of Gālātā Mevlevīhānesī (Mevlevi house) in Istanbul, a position he kept for 22 years until his death. Most sources record 1041/1631 as the year of

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<sup>14</sup> Abdūlbāki Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā’ dān Sonrā Mevlevīlik* (Istanbul: Inkılāp Kitabevi, 1953).

<sup>15</sup> The word *rustūh/rasūkh*, refers to people who have good knowledge in the field of Islamic sciences, probably from a Sufi perspective; see Mehmet Tāhīr Efendi Būrsālī ed., *Osmānlī Müelliflerī*, 3 vols. (Istanbul: Maṭba‘a ‘Āmirah, 1333/1917), v.1, 120; Bilal Kuşpınar, *Ismā‘īl Anqarawī on the Illuminative Philosophy, His Izāhu’l Hikem: Its Edition and Analysis in Comparison with Dawwānts Shawākīl al-hūr, Together with the Translation of Suhrawardīs Hayākīl al-nūr* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1996), 16; and S. Dayioglu, *Galata Mevlevihanesi* (Ankara: Yeni Avrasya Yaymları, 2003), 147-151.

his passing, but according to Usman Khalīfa<sup>16</sup> and Brockelmann<sup>17</sup> he died in 1042/1632. Būrsālī moreover informs us that he died in Istanbul and was laid to rest in the Gālātā Mevlevīhānesī.<sup>18</sup>

It is important to mention that Anqarawī's name is transliterated differently in Ottoman, Modern Turkish, Persian and European language sources. While Persian and early Ottoman sources such as *Osmānlī Müelliflerī*, *Sefīne-i Nefīse-i Mevlevīyan*, and *Shaqā'iq Nu'māniyya*, as well as Brockelmann, use "Anqarawī," modern Turkish scholarship cites him as Ankarawī.<sup>19</sup> Thus, in order to stay as close and faithful to the original texts as possible, I have decided to use the transliteration "Anqarawī" throughout this study. And, while the year of his birth is unknown, we know at least his birthplace, thanks to this element of his name.

Anqarawī occupies a central place not only in Mevlevī circles but also in the broader world of Ottoman literature. Part of his influence is due to the fact that he was exceptionally well versed in all branches of the Islamic sciences, as well as fluent in Arabic and Persian in addition to Ottoman Turkish. He was above all a theologian and philosopher who gained literary fame and social rank for the commentary (*sharḥ*) that he wrote on

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<sup>16</sup> Kātip Çelebī, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Wakālat al-Ma'ārif, 1941-1943), v.2, 1587.

<sup>17</sup> Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur (GAL)*, 2 vols., plus suppl. (Leiden: Brill, 1996), v.2, 591-592.

<sup>18</sup> Būrsālī, *Osmānlī Müelliflerī*, v.1, 120.

<sup>19</sup> Naw'īzādeh 'Aṭā'ī, *Shaqā'iq nu'Māniyya va Dhaylarī: Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥaqā'iq fī Takmilah al-Shaqā'iq*. 5 vols. (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1989), v. 2, 765.



Rūmī's *Mathnawī*. Due to this achievement, he earned the honorific title of “Respected Commentator” (Ḥazrat-i Shāriḥ).<sup>20</sup>

According to Ceyhan, Anqarawī travelled to Egypt in 1599, in order to complete his studies in Arabic and the Islamic sciences, staying there for 7 years.<sup>21</sup> He returned to Ankara in 1606 where he occupied himself with teaching the *Mathnawī*, but shortly thereafter – due to illness – Anqarawī moved to Konya. There he visited Būstān Çelebī, the head of the Mevlevī Order.<sup>22</sup> After spending a few years in Konya, he moved to Istanbul, and upon the recommendation of Būstān Çelebī became the Shaykh of Gālātā Mevlevīhāne, a position he kept until the last day of his life.<sup>23</sup> His exceptional knowledge of Arabic and Persian and his study of the exoteric sciences such as *sharī‘ah* (Islamic law), *tafsīr* (Qur’ānic exegesis), Ḥadīth (traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad), *kalām* (theology), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), and *ḥikmat* (philosophy), as well as other subjects related to *taṣawwūf* (mysticism), made Anqarawī an authoritative figure in the Mevlevī order. He went on to write numerous treatises (*risālas*), commentaries on Sufi texts, and even Sufi poetry of his own. ‘Azīz Maḥmūd Hūdā’ī (d. 1628), the well-known Ottoman Sufi and judge, became an admirer of Anqarawī and followed his teachings closely.<sup>24</sup> Among his students mention should be made of Ghanīm Dede (d. 1625), Cevrī Ibrāḥīm Çelebī (d. 1655), Vecdī (d. 1661),

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<sup>20</sup> Mehmed Ṭāhir Būrsālī, *Osmānī Müelliflerī*, 3 vols. (Istanbul: Maṭba‘a ‘Āmirah, 1333/43 - 1915/1925), v. 1, 118.

<sup>21</sup> Semih Ceyhan, *İsmail Rūsūhī Ankaravī: Mesnevī’nin Sirri, Dībāce ve İlk 18 Beytit Şerhi* (Istanbul: Hayykitap, 2008), 15.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Huseyin Vassāf Osmānzāde, *Sefīne-i Evlīyā*, 5 vols. (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2005), v. 1, 165.

Osmān Sīnārçāk (d. 1645), Dervish Şehlā (d. 1669), Aḥmet Çelebī, and Dervīsh Yūsuf Bağbān.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the political turmoil in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman society, Anqarawī's engagement in partisan activities must have been minimal; instead, he primarily sought to give spiritual advice to Sufis and Mevlevī devotees in accordance with his position. He also lived in the midst of a struggle between various Sufi groups and the infamous Qāḏīzādeh movement,<sup>26</sup> comprised of promoters of traditional Islam vehemently opposed to Sufi practices and any religious activities they deemed to be deviations from proper Islamic belief and practice (*bid'a*, lit., "innovation"). This movement, marked by hostile preaching and violent confrontation, was grounded in the thought of the Islamic scholar Qāḏīzādeh Mehmed (d. 1635), the puritanical leader from whom the Qāḏīzādeh drew their religious and political inspiration. Sufi rituals such as *samā'* and music, which were commonly practiced by Mevlevīs, were among their favorite targets. Although Anqarawī did not engage in the political currents of his time, he took some part in the ongoing debate, offering his own opinions through the lens of Mevlevī interpretation. In one instance, he wrote a *risāla* on the importance of Mevlevī *samā'* entitled, *Huccetu'l Semā'*, which is also associated with his other work *Minhācu'l Fukarā*, in which he explains the principles of Sufi conduct for adepts and Sufi novices. In fact, his major participation in the debate took the form of writing *risāla* and Sufi commentaries or delivering lectures in the Gālātā Mevlevīhāneh. Anqarawī also wrote poetry (a *dīvān* of poetry in Turkish is attributed to

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<sup>25</sup> Ceyhan, *İsmail Rūsūhī Ankaravī*, 17.

<sup>26</sup> Muştafā Sākib Dede, *Sefīne-i Nefīse-i Mevlevīyan*, 3 vols. (Matbaa-yı Vehbiye, 1283/1867), v. 2, 37.

him),<sup>27</sup> and was the subject of laudatory verses recognizing his contributions to mystical thought and his defense of the faith.

Among those who praised him in this way was Shaykh Ghālib (1757–1799),<sup>28</sup> who wrote the following verses in his *Dīwān*:<sup>29</sup>

ای کاشف اسرار نهان حضرت شارح  
روپوش تجلی عیان حضرت شارح

Your are the uncoverer of the hidden mysteries, the Eminent Commentator!  
You are the coverer of the clear theophany, the Eminent Commentator!

با نور یقین سالک اطوار حقیقت  
صاحب قدم کشف و بیان حضرت شارح

Upholding the light of the faith, you are the seeker in the paths to the truth,  
Of revelation and depiction, the honorary commentator!

اولموش لقبین علم لدنی ده رسوخی  
ممدوح جهان عرفانیله حضرت شارح

Your nickname has been prescribed as Rusukhi in the (Most High) Divine Knowledge  
You are praised all over the world with gnostic knowledge

## Sufi Practices

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 119. See also Semih Ceyhan's article on Anqarawī's poetry under the title "Ankaravī şiirler," *Keşkül Dergisi*, no. 19 (2011).

<sup>28</sup> Shaykh Gālib, 'Şeyh Gālib,' pseudonyms of Mehmed Es' Ad, also known as Galib Dede, is considered to be the last of the great classical Ottoman poets. Born in Istanbul in 1757, he was one of the most important figures in the Sufi tradition. A Mevlevī Sufi who later became the Shaykh of Galātā Mevlevīhāne, he is primarily known for his masterpiece, *Hüsn ü Ask* ("Beauty and Love"). Galib Dede is also known for his *Dīwān*. See Fahır İz, "Ghālib," in *EI2*.

<sup>29</sup> Victoria Rowe Holbrook, "Originality and Ottoman Poetics: In the *Wilderness of the New*," *JAOS* 112, no. 3 (1992), 443; Osmānzāde, *Sefīne-i Evlīyā*, v. 1, 165.

Anqarawī first followed a branch of the Khalwatī *ṭarīqa* (Sufī path) called the Bāyrāmiyya, before joining the Mawlawiyya order and becoming the representative (*khalīfa*) of its Shaykh (Sufī master), Būstān Çelebī.<sup>30</sup> Later on, he started teaching at and consequently took charge of the guidance of the disciples in the Galātā Mevlevihāne.<sup>31</sup> Considered to be among the most influential Sufī shaykhs of his time, he was a dedicated promoter of Rūmī’s spiritual teachings and dedicated his life to translating and writing commentaries on his poetry. His writings clearly represent his mystical notions and his approach to Sufī practices. For instance, Anqarawī considered the invocation of the name ‘Allāh’—in accordance with the Mevlevī method—the foundation of the spiritual path, and regarded this path of love and attraction as ultimately leading to truth and gnosis. For him (as for many other Sufīs), traversing the Sufī path consists of twelve stations (*maqāms*), in seven of which the wayfarer abandons all things to reach extinction (*fanā*) in the eighth and finally acquires the secret of unity (*tawḥīd*) in the twelfth.<sup>32</sup>

He further elaborates on the Sufī path in his *Minhācu’l-fukarā*, where he states that the Mevlevī path is composed of three spiritual circles: Mevlevī practices (the first section of the work); basic religious obligations (the second section); and the Sufī initiate's steps towards the divine unity (the third section). As Ambrosio explains, “[T]hese sections are not organically separate from each other; they instead represent three possible

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<sup>30</sup> Çelebī is the title given to Mevlevī leaders. Among Anatolian people, Çelebī also means gentleman, well-mannered and courteous.

<sup>31</sup> Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā dān Sonrā Mevlevīlik*, 203.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 193-195.

interpretations that overlap and intersect.”<sup>33</sup> Anqarawī’s methodology suggests that whoever wishes to embark upon the Mevlevī path should not forget the basic pillars of Islamic doctrine and praxis. But since the pillars are only one aspect of the journey, adepts have to keep in mind that they are concurrently forming a union with the One.

On the subject of *samā’*, the most important part of Mevlevī ceremony, Anqarawī presents his views in the final section of *Minhācu 'l-fukarā*. The synthesis of all Mevlevī practices was embodied in the whirling dance, which he interpreted as a fulfillment of the whole Sufi experience. For him, whirling is not a mere circular movement performed by Dervishes; rather, it manifests the envisioned journey towards God as taking on a circular shape. He further explains the categories of believers in terms of geometrical curves:

One of the more subtle symbols of whirling (*dawr*) is represented by the fact that the Mevlevī initiation (*sulūk*) is more circular, just as they make their exterior rotation, their moves are not linear path (*mustaṭīl*).<sup>34</sup>

Anqarawī’s poetry further reveals some of his mystical views, and demonstrates how, in the established tradition of Persian mystical poetry, he sees himself as a humble Sufi drunk on the wine of love and surrounded by His friends. For example, in one of his poems found in MSS. AEarb1056, Mellat Kütüphanesi, Anqarawī describes his spiritual endeavor and the stages he has passed through to attain unity with the One. His journey led him beyond asceticism and piety, while his main concern was that of negating his self and his ego. His desire was to be at the service of the needy and his view of himself was of one free from

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<sup>33</sup> Alberto Fabio Ambrosio, “Ismā‘īl Rusūkhī Anqarawī: An Early Mevlevī Intervention Into the Emerging Kadizadeli-Sufi Conflict,” in *Sufism and Society: Arrangements of the Mystical in the Muslim World, 1200-1800*, ed. John J. Curry and Erik S. Ohlander, 183-197 (New York: Routledge, 2012), 188.

<sup>34</sup> Anqarawī, *Minhācu 'l-fukarā*, 74.

the realm of unity and separation. His journey was one of seeking the beloved and enjoying the wondrousness of the spiritual journey, happy at being a simple *faqīr* on God's path. Following Rūmī's mystic advice, he criticizes partial intellect, stating that intellect ( *'aql*) is incapable of fathoming the spiritual state he is in.

Anqarawī's poetry attempts to demonstrate his humility, in that he calls himself an "ignorant one" who is wandering like a *qalandar* between the states of unity and diversity. His main attainment has been to free himself from his "I-ness" (*man o mā*) and finally to immerse himself in the sea of love, annihilated in Him (the Divine) while scarifying his life for the Beloved. Again, following the established Sufi tradition, love is a central theme in his poetry, as is the notion that while wandering on the spiritual path and trying to attain selflessness and negation of ego, one must acknowledge that such a state is beyond the intellect's capacity.

نوگفته اسماعیل افندی شارح مشکلات مثنوی

میخواره میخانه مستان خدا یوز      مستانه پیمانۀ مردان خدا یوز  
 سن صنمه بزی زاهد شیخ مقلد      رندان خرابات ندیمان دلیا یوز  
 بزد یگز عرقانیله بکر یوز اقا      فی نفس الامر جمله خدا یوز همه لایا یوز  
 عارف اول کور اکلہ سوز کم کمالیات      استرنگ کر کور ستره مهر شئی ده خدا یوز  
 فرقه و وصلته دکل روحی اکلہ      اعجوبه سیردر که وصال ایچره خدا یوز  
 نحو ایلتوز اوز و فری سوز و فری بزر      پس جوی قیوب صحوه کلوب اهل نقایا یوز  
 کر یوز ده اولور سق یوز یغیر بر یوزه سا جد      یوز یرده کر عشفله بر قاج فقیر یوز  
 صورته فنا شکل ایله اهل غف یوز      معنی ده غنایر دیر یچی منعم یوز  
 بر جوعه میه بدل ایده رز کار یغری اهب      عشر نگده یوز باده خور ز اهل صفایا یوز  
 پرواز ایده فر مغ خرد مرتبه موزه      بز اوج حقایقه کر ز طرفه ایما یوز  
 منزل کهر مرتبه وحدت و کثرت      هم آنده و هم بونده کور یوز بد لایا یوز  
 که عابد و که زاهد و که ناصح کله ستر کو      که صوفی و که صافی و که بی سرو پایا یوز  
 که مست و که آبق کله عالم کله فاسق      که حیرتله بر شئی بیلمز جهلایا یوز  
 بنکدن و سنکدن ایده اوز یغری پاک      المنة لله که بودم بی من و عایا یوز

مهر کیمکه **سوخنی** کله عشق ایله فادر  
 خاک رهنه جان ایله باشیله دایا یوز

Figure.1 MS. AEarb1056, Mellat Kütüphanesi, f.10b.

نو گفته اسماعیل افندی شارح مشکلات مثنوی

مستانه پیمانۀ مردان خدا یوز

میخواره میخانه مستان خدا یوز

سن صنمه بزی زاهد یا شیخ مقلد	رندان خرابات ندیمان و لایوز
بز دیمیز عرفانیله بر کمسه یوز اّمّا	فی نفس الامر جمله خدایوز همه لایوز
عارف اوله کور اکله سوزوم کسب کمال ایت	استرسک اکر کوستره هر شی ده خدا یوز
فرقتده و وصلتده دکل روحمز اکله	اعجوبه سیر در که وصال ایچره جدا یوز
محو ایلمشوز اوزومزی سوزومزی بز	پس محوی قیوب صحوه کلوب اهل بقا یوز
کر یوز ده اولورسق یوزیمز بر یوزه ساجد	یوز یرده کزر عشقله بر قاچ فقرا یوز
صورتده فنا شکلی ایله اهل غنا یوز	معنی ده غنا لر ویریجی منعم ما یوز
بر جرعه میه بذل ایده رز کاریمزی هب	عشرتکده یوز باده خورز اهل صفا یوز
پرواز ایده مز مرغ خرد مرتبه مزده	بز اوج حقایقده کزر طرفه هما یوز
منزل کهمز مرتبه وحدت و کثرت	هم آنده و هو بونده کورینور بدلایوز
که عابد و که زاهد و که ناصح سرّ کو	که صوفی و که صافی و که بی سر و پا یوز
که مست و که آیق کهی عالم کهی فاسق	که حیرتله بر شیئ بیلمز جهلا یوز
بنلکدن و سنلکدن ایدوب اوزیمزی پاک	المنة لله که بو دم بی من و ما یوز
هر کیمکه رسوخی کبی عشق ایله فنا در	خاک رهنه جان ایله باشیله فدایوز



An original poem by Anqarawī, commentator of the complexities of the *Mathnawī*

Drinkers from the divine tavern, intoxicated in His love, we are,  
Drunkards of God's Friends' cup, we are.

Don't call us ascetics, or slaves of the Shaykh,  
*Rinds* of the tavern of His intimates, we are.

Not claiming to be Sufis, however,  
In reality, all nothing but Him, negating the self, we are.

Be a mystic, comprehend my words, and acquire perfection,  
If you wish to see His manifestation in every particle, such mystics we are.

Oh, know, our spirit is beyond separation and union,  
A wondrous wayfarer, separated while in the state of union, we are.

We have negated our selves and words,  
Having left negating behind, came to sobriety, people of subsistence we are.

Being in diversity in a hundred ways, in adoration with the One, we are,  
Wandering in a hundred ways while intoxicated with love, a *faqīr* we are.

Outwardly we perish, but content we are,  
Inwardly a benefactor of abundance we are.

Sacrificing everything for a drop of wine,  
The tavern, the wine-drinker, and people of purity we are.

The bird of intellect cannot reach our state,  
Such a wondrous phoenix, hovering over the Truth we are.

Our station is the rank of unity and diversity,  
Being in both ranks, yet an ignorant one we are.

At times a worshiper, an ascetic, on occasion an admonisher and revealer of the secret,  
we are  
Now and then, a mystic, a man of purity or a *qalandar* we are.

Now and again a drunkard, a sober man, at times a sage, and a sinner we are,  
On occasion an ignoramus, astonishingly oblivious we are.

Being purified from self and ego,  
Praise be to God, at this moment free from 'I-ness' and 'we-ness' we are.

Those annihilated in love such as ‘Rusūkhī’,  
On their path, renouncing our life we are.

Anqarawī’s mystical journey is a spiritual ascent, not through intellect, but with the heart. On this journey, the seeker symbolically turns towards the truth, grows through love, abandons the ego, finds the truth and arrives at the Perfect. Anqarawī’s mystical approach reflects his close following of Rūmī’s teachings, which describe in detail the universal message of love and unity with the beloved:

Lover’s nationality is separate from all other religions,  
The lover’s religion and nationality is the Beloved (God).  
The lover’s cause is separate from all other causes,  
Love is the astrolabe of God’s mysteries. (*Mathnawī*, Book II, 1770; Book I, 110)

Also, it can also be argued that the main theme in Anqarawī’s poem is the concept of *tawhīd* – union with the Beloved from whom he has been estranged – and his longing and desire to restore it. This reflects the opening verses of the *Mathnawī*, where Rūmī uses the reed (*nay*) as a metaphor for the human soul. The *nay* in Rumi’s teachings stands for *al-Insan al-Kamil*, the Complete Person, and its mournful sound represents the pain of separation from a person’s divine origin.

Listen to the reed, how it complains, telling the story of separations  
Saying, “Ever since I was parted from the reed-bed, my lament has caused man  
and woman to moan.  
Everyone who is left far from his source wishes back the time when he was united  
with it.” (*Mathnawī*, Book I, 1-2, 4)

In short, the *nay* is a metaphor, which portrays the pain of separation between the lover and the Beloved. It expresses its pain as it tells the story of its separation from and longing

for union with its source. Anqarawī's mystical poem follows Rumi's in describing his mystical state as similar to that of the *nay*, which is cut off from the eternal ground of his existence, and, like the flute from the reed-bed, becomes resonant in separation and tells the secrets of its longing. It also represents the superiority of spiritual over physical reality.

## Writing

Early Ottoman sources such as *al-Shaqā'iq al-Nu'māniyya*, *Osmānlī Müelliflerī*, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, and *Sefīne-i Nefīse-i Mevlevīyan* list between them 32 works written by Anqarawī on various subjects such as mysticism, exegesis on the Qur'an, commentaries on other Sufi texts and his own poetry.<sup>35</sup> Among his most famous writings, special mention should be made of his commentary on the *Mathnawī*, entitled *Majmū'at al-laṭā'if wa-matmūrat al-ma'ārif* (The Selection of Subtleties and the Hidden Store of Knowledge). Crucially, unlike other Ottoman *Mathnawī* commentators who dealt only with selected couplets, Anqarawī comments on the entire *Mathnawī*, providing an separate explanation for each verse and extra information for the concluding line of each story, while also referencing other Islamic sources such as the Qur'ān and its exegesis and Ḥadīth, as well as Ibn 'Arabī's writings.

It is said that Anqarawī, who was having trouble with his eyesight, embarked upon this commentary on the *Mathnawī* once his condition improved – partly at Çelebī's suggestion but mainly out of gratitude for the restoration of his sight.<sup>36</sup> This commentary, which took him many years to complete, consists of two shorter works called *Jāmi' al-*

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<sup>35</sup> For a complete list of Anqarawī's writings, see Erhan Yetik, *Ismail-I Ankaravi. Hayati, Eserleri ve Tasavvufi Görüşleri* (Istanbul: Isāret, 1992), 68-75; and Kuşpınār, *Ismā'il Anqaravi*, 17-43.

<sup>36</sup> Sāqīb Dede, *Osmānlī Müelliflerī*, 38–39; Kuşpınār, *Ismā'il Anqaravi*, 6-8.

*Āyāt*, a commentary on the Qur’ānic verses and Ḥadīth in the *Mathnawī*, and *Fātiḥ al-Abyāt*,<sup>37</sup> which is sometimes confused with the larger commentary of which it is a part.<sup>38</sup> As we shall see, for his commentary Anqarawī relied upon a manuscript of the *Mathnawī* dated 1411, which, despite its antiquity, is considered of dubious authenticity by scholars today, particularly since it contains the controversial Book Seven. Anqarawī, apparently unaware of the questionable authority of the verses, took them as Rūmī’s words.<sup>39</sup> Salmāsīzādeh explains that some scholars believe that the text of Book Seven was written by someone from Iṣfahān named Najīb al-Dīn Riḍā’ī Tabrīzī under the title *Sab‘ al-Mathānī*.<sup>40</sup>

Anqarawī completed his commentary in 1626 and used it thereafter to teach his students and disciples. Although the commentary has not been translated into English, Nicholson quotes it in his own commentary on the *Mathnawī*, and, of all the Islamic language commentaries he consulted, it is the one he most often cites. He considered it to be “a work of great merit,” “the best Oriental exposition of the poem,” and the commentary by which he “profited most.”<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Javād Salmāsīzādeh, “Baḥthī Ijmālī dar bārah-i Shīvah-i Sharḥ-i ‘Aẓīm al-Sha‘n-i Mathnawī i Ma‘navi-i Mawlavī: Nicholson-Anqarawī-Furūzānfar,” *Majallah-i Danishkadah-i Adabiyat-i Tihiran* 22, no 1, (Spring 1354/1975), 198-207.

<sup>38</sup> Annemarie Schimmel, *The Triumphal Sun* (London: East-West Publications, 1980), 689; Salmāsīzādeh, “Baḥthī Ijmālī,” 199–200.

<sup>39</sup> Badī‘ al-Zamān Furūzānfar, *Risālah dar Tahqīq-i Aḥvāl va Zindigānī-i Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd Mashhūr bih Mawlavī* (Tih-rān: Kitābfürūshī-i Zavār, 1954), 159–161; Kātip Çelebī, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, v. 2, 1588–1589.

<sup>40</sup> Javād Salmāsīzādeh, *Sharḥ-i Chahār Tamāsīl-i Maṣnavī-i Mawlavī: bar Asās-i Tafsīr-i Raynūld Alayn Nīkulsun va Fātiḥ al-Abyāt va Rūḥ al-Maṣnavī*, 2 vols. (Tabrīz: Dānishgāh-i Āzarābādagān, 1976), v. 1, 24, ft. 1.

<sup>41</sup> Reynold Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī* (Oxford: E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 1926), v. 2, xvi.

Anqarawī's commentary consists of a translation of each line of the *Mathnawī* into Turkish, followed by explanations that often feature quotations from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth for the more difficult passages. It also attempts to explain each passage or story in a mystical light.<sup>42</sup> However, his commentary on the additional seventh book gave rise to serious opposition from Mevlevī masters and, consequently, they forbade Anqarawī to teach it.<sup>43</sup> Hence, only that part of the commentary covering books one to six was ever published, although it was to prove enduringly popular as evidenced by the proliferation of copies. It was printed in its original version in Egypt and Turkey (Bülāq in 1834 and Istanbul in 1872), while its Arabic translation and abridgement (by Yūsuf Dede Ṭarāblūsī), entitled *al-Minhāj al-Qawī fī Sharḥ al-Mathnawī*, was published in Cairo in 1872. A Persian rendering of the commentary by Akbar Bihrūz and 'Iṣmat Sattārzādah was published in Tehran in 1969.

Anqarawī's other important commentary is the one he wrote on the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, entitled *Zubdatu'l-Fuḥūs fī Naqshi'l-Fuṣūṣ* (The Gist of Deliberations from the Inscription of the Bezels), published in Istanbul 1910 and (in a modern Turkish edition by Ahmet Yıldırım) again in Istanbul in 2005. The book is based largely on 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī's (d. 1492) translation entitled *Naqd al-Nuṣūṣ*. In different sections, Anqarawī supports his commentaries and arguments on the chapters of the *Fuṣūṣ* with reference to Rūmī's *Mathnawī*; for, as a Mevlevī master, he would have regarded Rūmī as the touchstone for explaining Ibn 'Arabī's mystical teachings.

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<sup>42</sup> Lewis, *Rūmī: Past and Present, East and West*, 478-79.

<sup>43</sup> Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā dān sonrā Mevlevīlik*, 143.

## Anqarawī Scholarship

While the majority of Ottoman sources as well as some works of modern scholarship provide us with at least basic information on Anqarawī's commentary on the *Mathnawī*, none has examined the work in its entirety. Early Ottoman sources, perhaps out of embarrassment, rarely mention Anqarawī's commentary on Book Seven. One of the earliest bibliographical sources providing information on Anqarawī and his commentary on the spurious book is the *Kashf al-Zunūn* of Ḥājī Khalīfa, known as Kātip Çelebī (1609-57 CE). Under the entry *Mathnawiyyāt-i Turkī*, Kātip Çelebī talks about Anqarawī's *Mathnawī* commentary on Book Seven text and explains, “[H]e wrote the *Sharḥ* on Book Seven in 1625 based on a manuscript dated 1411.”<sup>44</sup> According to Kātip Çelebī, the *Sharḥ* was not received kindly by other Mevlevī shaykhs and Sufis. For this reason, “in an attempt to prevent its usage in Sufi centers, the opponents wrote a letter to Anqarawī presenting four different arguments explaining why the work is not original, and not written by Rūmī, thus it should not be taught in Mevlevī Sufi centers; to which, in a long letter, Anqarawī responded to his critics and refuted their argument.”<sup>45</sup>

Nū‘īzādah characterizes Anqarawī as a commentator on the *Mathnawī*, noting that the latter had written an independent commentary on Book Seven, which is dated 1631.<sup>46</sup> However, there is no mention of the commentary's reception either in Ottoman intellectual circles or among the Mevlevīs. In another source, *Sefīne-i Evlīyā*, the author, Osmanzādeh, narrates an account related to the Shaykh of the Yenīkāpī Mevlevī center Ebu'l Burhān

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<sup>44</sup> Kātip Çelebī, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, v. 2, 1587.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 1587-1588.

<sup>46</sup> Nū‘īzādah, *Shaqā’iq Nu ‘māniyya va Dhaylarī*, v. 2, 765.

Celāleddīn Dede Efendī that “it seems Anqarawī wrote a commentary on Book Seven.”<sup>47</sup> However, “in a conversation between Celāleddīn Efendī and his Sufī master Muḥammad Es‘ad al-Mevlevī, the latter informed us that Anqarawī took up the task of writing the spurious commentary under the compulsion (*jabr*) that fell on his shoulders from the Sultān of the time. The piece in question should be entitled “interpretation” (*ta’wīl*) rather than “commentary” (*sharḥ*).”<sup>48</sup>

Ahmed Cevdet Pāṣā’s (d. 1895) article is perhaps the only document that provides us with any substantial information along with brief textual analysis of the commentary on Book Seven. However, he does not provide us with any references to his sources and it is not clear to us which manuscripts or collections he consulted. Cevdet Pāṣā was a notable historian and administrator at the time of the Tanzimat reforms. In response to a request by the ‘Ābedīn Pāṣā asking him to examine the authenticity of Book Seven, Cevdet Pāṣā states that the Shaykh of the Murād Mūllā Sufī center did not approve of the book and that two well-known teachers of the *Mathnawī* (*Mathnawī-khāns*) known as Shaykh ‘Abdūlmecīd and Khawja Ḥusām Efendī used to teach only the six original books of Rūmī’s work.<sup>49</sup> According to Cevdet Pāṣā, the book in question supposedly appeared 300 years after Rūmī’s death and Anqarawī was the only scholar who wrote a commentary on it.<sup>50</sup> He further provides us with a series of arguments between Anqarawī and his opponents,

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<sup>47</sup> Osmānzāde, *Sefīne-i Evlīyā*, v. 1, 165.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ahmed Cevdet Pāṣā, “Cevdet Pāṣā’s response to ‘Ābedīn Pāṣā on the subject of Anqarawī’s commentary on Book Seven,” in *Mekteb* (Istanbul: Maḥmūd Bey Maṭba‘asī, 1894), v. 3, no. 33, 309.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 308.

including the famous commentator Shem‘ī<sup>51</sup> (d. after 1603), listing all the critiques raised by the latter group questioning the authenticity of the book. He points out that the copy of the *Mathnawī* used by Şadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (d. 1274) did not include a Book Seven.<sup>52</sup>

Referring to the infamous conflict between the followers of Qāḏīzādeh and Anqarawī, Cevdet Pāşā further explains that the former’s harsh criticism of Ibn ‘Arabī was even stranger when it came to Book Seven, where Ibn ‘Arabī’s name is mentioned a few times, prompting Anqarawī to defend him against his critics.<sup>53</sup> We also learn that in the preface to his commentary on Book Three of the *Mathnawī*, Anqarawī indicates that the *Mathnawī* comes in six books, whereas in the preface to Book Five he informs us of the existence of Book Seven and states that the content of the text held particular allure to him, to the extent that he intended to commence his commentary on Book Seven before completing that on Book Five.<sup>54</sup>

It is not clear to us what information persuaded Anqarawī of the authenticity of the Book Seven. Is it possible that his commentary was written primarily in order to counter the attacks of the orthodox ‘*ulamā*’ (mainly Qāḏīzādeh’s followers) and to defend the school of Ibn ‘Arabī? According to Cevdet Pāşā, even though Anqarawī engaged in intellectual and religious battle with orthodox theologians and scored some successes, he

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<sup>51</sup> Shem‘ī is the pen-name of a Turkish translator and commentator of Persian literary works who became famous in the second half of the 10th/16th century. Shem‘ī made a living as a private teacher of “the sons of the people and the servants of the great and the exalted.” He wrote numerous commentaries on Persian classics, which were dedicated to officials of the Ottoman court during the reigns of Murād III (982-1003/1574-95) and Meḥemmed III (1003-12/1595-1603). Shem‘ī used a fairly simple method in his commentaries, meaning that his commentary was a full Turkish paraphrase of the Persian text, to which very short explanatory remarks were added. See J.T.P. de Bruijn, “Shem‘ī,” in *EI2*.

<sup>52</sup> “Cevdet Pāşā’s response to ‘Ābedīn Pāşā,” 310.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 309.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 310.



lost the respect of his fellow Mevlevīs by writing a commentary on what they saw as a spurious book.<sup>55</sup>

Cevdet Pāṣā also mentions that Book Seven was translated into Turkish by Farrukh Efendī but that, due to the publication ban in Turkey, it had to be published in Egypt as part of Naḥīfī's edition of Anqarawī's commentary on the *Mathnawī*.<sup>56</sup> However, the numerous manuscripts of the commentary, which continued to be copied by scribes from the time of Anqarawī until the Tanzimat period, cast doubt on Cevdet Pāṣā's claim, and demonstrate a positive reception of the commentary at several Mevlevī centers in Turkey. It can be suggested that due to the patronage of the Ottoman Sulṭāns the work was copied several times, and was used in both *madrasa* and Mevlevīhāneh curricula. Cevdet Pāṣā concludes his letter by stating, "Mevlevīs noted correctly that Book Seven was spurious and that its style and poetic structure was inferior in comparison to the rest of the *Mathnawī*. It has become clear to me that the poems are not Rūmī's own wording and it is wrong to attribute the work to such an eloquent speaking poet."<sup>57</sup>

In modern scholarship, Erhan Yetik was the first scholar to provide a complete biography of Anqarawī with his *Ismā'īl-i Ankarawī: Ḥayāti, Eserleri ve Tasavvūfī Gorusleri*, published in modern Turkish, in Istanbul, 1992 (based on the author's doctoral thesis, 1986). Yetik's work is a very comprehensive study of Anqarawī's life, works and mysticism. The book is divided into three sections: a study of Anqarawī's life, an account of his Sufī ideas and a detailed discussion of all his works. Yetik's book remains the only

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 309.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 313.

book dedicated entirely to Anqarawī and his writings. Relying on Kātip Çelebī, Yetik dedicates a small section to Book Seven and its commentary and the controversy it caused after its composition. According to Yetik, Anqarawī defended the authenticity of Book Seven as having been written by Rūmī and continued teaching the commentary in Gālatā Mevlevīhāne until the time of his death.<sup>58</sup> Although Yetik mentions the conflict between Anqarawī and his opponents, he does not provide us with any details or analysis of the manuscripts where the conflict is mentioned, leading us to believe he did not consult the manuscripts of the commentary on Book Seven.

Some doctoral dissertations in Turkey have transcribed, translated and examined Book One of the commentary,<sup>59</sup> while other sections of the entire commentary have been selectively analyzed by scholars.<sup>60</sup> For example, Bilal Kuşpınar has produced a translation and analysis of Anqarawī's Arabic commentary on the introduction to the *Mathnawī*.<sup>61</sup> Alberto Ambrosio has, for his part, elucidated the notion of love as discussed by Anqarawī in the preface to the second book of the *Mathnawī*, arguing that love is the foundation of Rūmī's doctrine in the *Mathnawī*.<sup>62</sup> Semih Ceyhan and Mustafa Toptan have studied

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<sup>58</sup> Yetik, *Ismail-I Ankaravī. Hayati, Eserleri ve Tasavvufi Görüşleri*, 68-75.

<sup>59</sup> See Ahmet Tanyildiz's unpublished doctorate thesis entitled, *Ismā'il Rusūhī-yi Ankaravī Şerh-i Mesnevī (Mecmū'atü'l-Letāyif ve Matmūratü'l-Ma'ārif): I. Cilt, İnceleme-MetİN-Sözlük*, submitted to the Department of Sociology, Erciyes Üniversitesi, 2010; and Erdoğan Taştan's thesis submitted to the Faculty of Turkish Literature, entitled, *Ismā'il Rūsūhī Ankaravī'nİN Mesnevī Şerhī (Mecmū'atü'l-Letā'if ve Matmūratü'l-Ma'ārif) I. Cilt, ÇEVİRİYAZI-İNCELEME*, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2009.

<sup>60</sup> See Semih Ceyhan's article "Intersection of Horizons: Rūmī and Ibn 'Arabī According to Ismā'īl Anqarawī," *Journal of the Ibn 'Arabī Society* 54 (2013): 95-115; Ambrosio, "Ismā'īl Rusūkhī Anqaravī," 183-197; and Idem, "The Castle of God is the Centre of the Dervīsh's Soul," *Mawlānā Rūmī Review* 1 (2010): 82-99.

<sup>61</sup> Bilal Kuşpınar, "Simat al-Muqadinin (Spiritual Food for the People of Certainty): Ismā'īl Anqarawī's Arabic Commentary on the Introduction to the *Mathnawī*," *Mawlānā Rūmī Review* 3 (2012): 51-67.

<sup>62</sup> Alberto Fabio Ambrosio, "Boundless Love: Ismā'īl Anqarawī's Commentary on the Preface to the Socond Book of the *Mathnawī*," *Mawlānā Rūmī Review* 3 (2012): 68-94.

Anqarawī's commentary on the first eighteen couplets of the *Mathnawī*, analyzing the text through the prism of later Mevlevī terminology and associating each couplet to a particular mystical state such as annihilation (*fanā*), certainty (*yaqīn*), mystical love (*'ishq-i ilāhī*) and the perfect human (*insān-i kāmīl*).<sup>63</sup> Their work only devotes a small section to the controversial commentary on Book Seven, without elaborating on the commentary itself.

In his classic work, *Mevlānā'dān Sonrā Mevlevīlik*, Gölpınarlı gives a complete survey of Mevlevī commentators during the Ottoman period; he also studies the social and political transformation of the Mevlevī Order from the time of Rūmī onward, and includes a section on Anqarawī. Examining Anqarawī's commentary on the *Mathnawī*, the author provides a reference to Veled Çelebī İzbudāk's unpublished *risāla*, entitled *Al-Seif al-Qāṭi 'fī al-Sābi'*. Supporting İzbudāk's analysis, he maintains that Book Seven is a spurious work, falsely attributed to Rūmī and containing verses from Ibn 'Arabī (another sign of its inauthenticity, since it is not customary of Rūmī to provide such references).<sup>64</sup> Mention should also be made of the careful assessments of Anqarawī in Bilal Kuşpınar's examination of Suhrawardī (d. 1191).<sup>65</sup>

None of these studies, however, takes into account Anqarawī's full commentary or speaks about its context. They also do little to examine the origins and nuances of his hermeneutical method. With the exception of Cevdet Pāşā's article, no study has ever been done on Anqarawī's commentary on Book Seven. Any studies on this subject should first

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<sup>63</sup> Ceyhan, *İsmail Rūsūhī Ankaravī*, 48-50.

<sup>64</sup> Abdülbāki Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā Celāleddīn: Hayātī, Felsefesī, Eserlerī, Eserlerīnden Seçmeler*, (Istanbul: İnkilāp Kitabevi, 1952), 52, ft.6.

<sup>65</sup> For example, see Kuşpınar's *İsmā'īl Ankaravī on the Illuminative Philosophy*, 1996; and Idem, *The Lamp of Mysteries (Mişbāḥ al-Asrār): A Commentary on the Light Verse of the Quran by İsmā'īl Rusūkhī Anqarawī* (Oxford: Anqa Publishing, 2011).

aim at locating the manuscripts, so that we learn where exactly the book was copied, by whom and for what purpose. It is essential to understand what underlay the financial and political support for copying the manuscripts, which appear in numerous copies. The information that scribes have often left on the margins and in glosses provide additional data on the social and political context in which each manuscript was copied, and, in the case of Book Seven, we will see that such material can provide an answer.

## **Chapter Two: The “Seventh Book” of the *Mathnawī***

The extant copies of the so-called Book Seven of the *Mathnawī* can roughly be divided into two categories. In the first category, one can class those texts that were written in open tribute to Rūmī’s *Mathnawī* in its acknowledged six-book version. Some of these are anonymous in nature, while others are by poets who declare their authorship. They are alike, therefore, in making no claim to be genuine compositions by Rūmī. This leads us to the second category, occupied by one text, although it varies in content and length depending on the manuscript or printed edition. This is the Book Seven to which the great scholar Anqarawī devoted his commentary. He is the only commentator who wrote a commentary on the spurious text, even though the number of manuscript copies attests to the importance of this version of Book Seven. Anqarawī accepted its credentials, but there is considerable doubt on this score.

In this chapter different possible reasons for the composition of Book Seven will be discussed. A survey will be made of the texts from each category mentioned above and their manuscript sources, followed by an inventory of some of the linguistic and literary problems that lead us to confirm the majority view that the version of Book Seven of the *Mathnawī* accepted by Anqarawī is a literary fraud. Despite its inauthenticity, however, the study of Book Seven opens a window into the intellectual history of late Ottoman Sufi scholarship.

### **Literary Background**

It is commonly accepted by Rūmī scholars that the *Mathnawī* is composed of six books and six books only. Moreover, scholars also generally acknowledge that Book Six,

which ends with the story of the “The King and His Three Sons,” was never completed due to Rūmī’s illness, and that, hence, Rūmī’s masterpiece could only ever have consisted of six books.<sup>66</sup> Some scholars agree that even though this story remains incomplete (the last tale relating to the youngest prince is the shortest in length), its full meaning was expressed with the attributes and characteristics of all three princes described in full through highly metaphoric language.<sup>67</sup> Muḥammad Este‘lāmī, for instance, argues that the *Mathnawī* should be considered a completed work, since Rūmī concluded this story by covering all its aspects before coming to the end.<sup>68</sup>

Despite the certainty on this issue expressed by so many scholars, a small minority have advocated for the authenticity of a “Book Seven” of the *Mathnawī*. Perhaps the most important such proponent was Anqarawī himself, who, as we know, penned a commentary on the *Mathnawī* that translated and examined in an extensive fashion not only the acknowledged six books but also a seventh book. Though the true authorship Book Seven has yet to be established, it was most likely a deliberate forgery. According to Kātip Çelebī, among early *Mathnawī* commentators, only Anqarawī attributed this seventh book to Rūmī, basing himself on a text copied in 1411.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, several copies of this work survive in manuscript form in libraries in Turkey, including the Süleymaniye and Mevlānā Müzesi (Konya), among others.

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<sup>66</sup> For example, see Furūzānfar, *Zindagī-i Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Balkhī*, 158. Abdul Hussein Zarrīnkūb, *Pillah Pillah Tā Mulāqāt-i Khudā* (Tehran: ‘Ilmī, 2000), 266.

<sup>67</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn Humā’ī, *Tafsīr-i Mathnawī: Dāstān-i Qal‘ah-i Dhātuşşuwar Yā Diz-i Hush Rubā* (Tehran: Āgāh, 1969), 30.

<sup>68</sup> Muḥammad Este‘lāmī, *The Mathnawī*, 6 vols. (Tehran: Zawwār, 1992), Book 6, 399-400, notes and commentary under the verses 3593-3600.

<sup>69</sup> Kātip Çelebī, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, v. 2, 1587-1588.

The controversy regarding the seventh volume has been ignored by most Rumi scholars, despite the fact that there are several references to it in early sources (which will be surveyed in this chapter). The matter of the seventh volume is a bit of an elephant in the room: one suspects that there has been no examination of it precisely because it might jeopardize the scholarly integrity of the *Mathnawī*. It is better to ignore it in the hopes that it will be forgotten.

All the same, its existence poses many interesting questions. From the perspective of the present study, the chief question is why Anqarawī, a Mevlevī shaykh himself, should have believed in its authenticity and been motivated to write a commentary on the book. His commentary quickly became a subject of controversy and caused a backlash among Mevlevīs and other Sufis even during Anqarawī ‘s lifetime.<sup>70</sup> It gave rise to bitter arguments and accusations in his conflict with the Qāḏīzādeh movement, a prominent and influential religious and political force in Ottoman society at the time.<sup>71</sup> The controversy over authenticity, however, overlooks the fact that the book is itself an example of Persian Sufī poetry allegedly written in the seventh century A.H. (but no later than the eleventh century) and that, regardless of the intention of its composer, it is worth examining from a literary, to say nothing of a mystical, perspective.<sup>72</sup> It represents the popularity and

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<sup>70</sup> Şabūhī, the Mevlevī Shaykh (d. 1088/1668) of Yenikāpī in Istanbul, threatened that if Anqarawī attempted to read his forged commentary on volume seven, he would come and destroy his pulpit over his head. For more information, see Bīlāl Kuspīnār’s, article entitled, “Ismā‘īl Ankaravī and the Significance of His Commentary in the Mevlevī Literature,” published in *al-Shajarah: Journal of the Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 1 (1996): 51-75, at p. 73.

<sup>71</sup> The Qāḏīzādeh family was a prominent Ottoman family and Anqarawī lived during the midst of a struggle between various Sufi groups and the infamous movement of the Qāḏīzādeh family, an influential group who were agitating against religious practices they deemed to be deviations (*bid‘a*) from proper Islamic belief and practice. For further information, see Kuspīnār, “Ismā‘īl Ankaravī and the Significance of His Commentary in the Mevlevī Literature,” 62 and Ambrosio, “Ismā‘īl Rasūkhī Anqarawī,” 183.

<sup>72</sup> MS Āşir Efendī, No.443, f. 247b. In the fifth story from the Book Seven under the title, “The metaphor for human’s understanding of the depth of the absolute divine essence: the story of the blind (men)

continuation of Persian poetry in Ottoman society and could be the subject of study as a Persian poem written by a Turk, in comparison with Persian poetry written by native speakers. It is therefore the aim of this chapter to examine the content of Book Seven in order to demonstrate how unlikely it is that it was written by Rūmī himself.

### **Reasons for the Composition of a Book Seven**

There are different reasons for the various attempts at composing a Book Seven. First and foremost, I should mention Rūmī's son's (Sultān Valad) verses, which appear as an addendum at the end of the *Mathnawī*, which demonstrate the existing anxiety over completion of the book. One can also cite the old tradition of a disciple completing a book by a certain author as a matter of respect and paying tribute to his master. Then, there is the significance and importance of the number seven in the Islamic tradition. In the following section, I will try to examine all these factors as possible reasons for the composition of a Book Seven.

For the most part, the majority of *Mathnawī* editions, including the earliest witness, known as the Konya manuscript, Nicholson's edition and several editions published in Iran including those of Muḥammad Este'lāmī (first edition published in 1991) and Karīm Zamānī (first edition published in 1993), conclude with Book Six and end with the following four lines:

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تمثیل ادراک انسان در کنه ذات مطلق: قصه آن کوران است احتیاط طاووس شاه رفتند) (که به  
به), we find reference to the year 670/1271, an important date that supposedly indicates the date of  
composition of the *Mathnawī*. Apparently, the *Mathnawī* was written two years before Rūmī's death. مثنوی  
هفتمین کز غیب جست/ 670 تاریخ ویست. "The seventh book of the *Mathnawī*, which appeared from the hidden  
world, its date (of composition) is 670/1271."



تا بر آیم صبر مفتاح الفرج منطقی بیرون ازین شادی و غم از ضمیر چون سهیل اندر یمن زانک از دل جانب دل روزنه ست	صبر را سلم کنم سوی درج ور بجوشد در حضورش از دلم من بدانم کو فرستاد آن بمن در دل من آن سخن زان میمنه ست
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And make patience a ladder to climb upwards: patience is the key to success.  
 And if in his presence there should gush from my heart a speech beyond this (realm of) joy and sorrow,  
 I know that he has sent it to me from the depths of a soul (illuminated) like Canopus (rising) in Yemen.  
 The speech in my heart comes from that auspicious quarter, for there is a window between heart and heart.” (Book VI: 4913-4916)

*Sulṭān Valad’s additional verses*

However, certain later editions, especially those published in Turkey in the Ottoman and Republican periods, such as Abdūlbāki Gölpınarlı’s (d. 1982) edition, end with 54 additional verses entitled “tatimmah-i Sulṭān Valad,” Sulṭān Valad’s (Rūmī’s eldest son, d. 1312) completion of Book Six. As Gölpınarlı explains in a footnote, Valad’s closing lines are not found in the original *Mathnawī* (otherwise known as the Konya) manuscript, but most Ottoman editions maintain these lines, which begin thus:<sup>73</sup>

شد خمش گفتش ولد کای زنده دم بهر جه بستنی در علم لدن ماند ناسفته در سوم پسر نیستش با هیچکس تا حشر گفت بسته شد دیگر نمی آید برون	مدتی زین مثنوی چون والدم از چه رو دیگر نمی گویی سخن؟ قصه شهزادگان نامد به سر گفت نطقم چون شتر زین پس بخفت هست باقی شرح این لیکن درون
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<sup>73</sup> Abdūlbāki Gölpınarlı, *Nathr va Sharḥ-i Mathnawī*, trans. Tawfīq Subḥānī (Tehran: Sāzmān-i Chāp va Intishārāt-i Vizārat-i Farhang va Āmūzish-i ‘Ālī, 1374 /1996), v. 6, 972.

When some time had gone and my father became quiet from composing the *Mathnawī*, the son told oh you living one,  
For what reason you do not utter any more words? Why have you have shut the door for the esoteric knowledge?  
The story of the princes didn't come to conclusion; the pearl of the third prince remained unrefined.  
He said [the father]: my speech has come to sleep like a camel, it does not wish to utter any word until the Day of Resurrection.  
The account of this [story of three princes] remains to be told, however, the inner [heart] is shut, it [word] does not come out [of my mouth].  
(Book VI: tatimmah 1-5)

The concluding verses added to the end of Book Six by Rūmī's son indicate that he believed the *Mathnawī* to be essentially incomplete because the story of the third prince had yet to be told in full. This is despite the fact that, at the beginning of Book Six, Rūmī hints at the idea that this book would be the last of the *Mathnawī* collection:

(Now), O spiritual one, I bring to you as an offering the Sixth Part to complete the *Mathnawī*.  
From these Six Books give light to the Six Directions, in order that anyone who has not performed the circumambulation may (now) perform it (round the *Mathnawī*). (Book VI: 3-4)

Valad's verses point to the existence of a debate over whether or not the *Mathnawī* was incomplete or whether it needed further elaboration and completion. It also suggests that, even at the time of Rūmī, there was discussion over whether still more text or even another book needed to be added to the entire *Mathnawī*. Such a debate at that early stage certainly opens the door of speculation and attribution of further verses in the name of Rūmī. One can clearly see that Valad's closing verses could have inspired or encouraged later Sufis to take upon themselves the task of writing and including an additional book in an attempt to complete the allegedly unfinished work of Rūmī.

*Attribution of a work by a disciple to his master*

There is also the tradition of completing a poet's unfinished work, usually accomplished by the leading poet of a subsequent generation. Among famous cases of this phenomenon, we may mention Abū Mansūr Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Daqīqī Ṭuṣī's (d. 976/980) epic, which was completed by Ferdawsī (d. 1020). Daqīqī favored the nationalistic tendency in Persian literature and attempted to create an epic history of Iran beginning with Zarathustra and Gashtasb. A large number of couplets by him were included by Ferdawsī in his epic *Shāhnāmeḥ* (Book of Kings).<sup>74</sup> Mention should also be made of the completion of the *Mathnawī Farḥād va Shīrīn* written by Vaḥshī Bāfqī (d. 1583), which was completed almost 250 years after his death by Veṣāl-i Shīrāzī (d. 1852). The practice extended as well to prose works; thus, *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, written by Mawlānā Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Mawālī (d. circa 1060) and covering the historical events of Iran up to 1056, was later completed (or extended) by Maḥmūd b. Yūsuf Iṣfahānī (d. circa 1325) to include events between 1068 and 1324.<sup>75</sup>

The tradition of completing previous works is even a common practice in modern Iran. For example, the incomplete commentary on the *Mathnawī* written by Furūzānfār (d. 1970) was finished by one of his students, Ja'far Shahīdī (d. 2008). In all of the cases mentioned above, each author who took on the task of completing the work of his predecessor gave credit to the original work and provided information about his own role. In the case of the so-called Book Seven, its author failed (possibly deliberately) to provide his name, thereby leading readers to believe that the work actually belongs to Rūmī.

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<sup>74</sup> Arthur J. Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1958), 41.

<sup>75</sup> Malik al-Shu'arā Bahār, *Tārīkh-i Sīstān: Ta'līf dar Ḥudūd-i 445-725* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Khāvar, 1366 /1987), 382.

### *Significance of the number seven in the Islamic tradition*

Another explanation for the existence of Book Seven is the attraction to the number seven in Islamic texts. Even Rūmī invokes the allegory of numbers in his *Mathnawī*, and particularly the number seven, offering a metaphorical Sufi interpretation to this number. In this sense, he follows a long tradition. Throughout his *Mathnawī*, Rūmī employs the language of allegory to connect the names of natural phenomena such as water, plants, animals, stars, planets and heavenly bodies to different intellectual beings or to a place where the spiritual soul resides, in order to describe the divine majesty. The poet likes to use their names and qualities, describing them as living personalities. Similarly, Rūmī chooses to use the symbol of numbers when presenting his doctrine of unity versus multiplicity; for example, seven vs. one, various vs. single. In fact, as de Bruijn notes, “symbols are a means to deliver a sublime message of unity.”<sup>76</sup> Employing the language of symbol, Rūmī emphasizes the importance of returning to the origin of man and his unity with God. And whereas the number one is associated with the uniqueness of God, the number two brings to mind the Two Worlds, as well as the differences and disputes among people and opposites in the world around us.

Persian literature is full of examples manifesting the significance of the number seven. Among the examples of this are the epic or mystical stories such as *Haft Khān-i Rustam*, *Haft Khān-i Isfandīyār*, and the seven valleys in the *Mantiq al-Ṭayr* of ‘Attār (d. 1221). Some poetry collections reference the number seven, such as the *Haft Paykar* of Niẓāmī (d. 1209) or the *Haft Awrang* of Jāmī (d. 1492).

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<sup>76</sup> J.T.P. de Bruijn, *General Introduction to Persian Literature* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 216-217.

The number seven likewise has a significant meaning in the Islamic tradition. The Qurʾān talks about the Seven Sleepers or Companions of the Cave, known as *Aṣḥāb al-Kahf*,<sup>77</sup> while the tradition speaks of seven parts of the body, seven seas, seven climes, seven planets, the seven stars in Ursa Major, the seven days of the week and seven lines on the cup.<sup>78</sup> The magical properties of seven go back to ancient times and still influence a number of aspects of daily life in Iran. For example, some gestures and expressions are repeated seven times and there is the tradition of setting out seven items, called *haft-sīn*, at the time of the Persian New Year.<sup>79</sup> In the Sufi lexicon and according to Akbarian tradition,<sup>80</sup> there are seven *abdāls* or Sufi masters who play the role of *awlīyāʾ* and spiritual guides and appear to those who are qualified to see them whether in dreams or reality.<sup>81</sup>

Rūmī is no exception. His *Dīvān-i Shams*, his *Mathnawī* and his *Majālis-i Ṣabʿah* (Seven Sermons) contain poems, tales, sermons and anecdotes demonstrating the importance of the number seven. For example, in the story of Daqūqī (*Mathnawī*, Book III: 1878 – 2305), Rūmī describes Daqūqī’s encounter with the seven *abdāl*, “those who serve as a partial replacement to the role of the prophets or friends of God.” He employs the allegory of the number seven and discusses the importance of unity and of seeing singularity beyond varieties and multiplicity, maintaining that the manifestation may

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<sup>77</sup> “Those of the cave” is the name given in the Qurʾān and later in Arabic literature to the youths who, in the Christian Occident, are usually called the “Seven Sleepers of Ephesus.” The story is discussed in Qurʾān 18: 9-26. See R. Paret’s entry, “Aṣḥāb al-Kahf,” in *EI2*.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>80</sup> The term is derived from the nickname of Ibn ʿArabī (1165–1240), who was known as Shaykh al-Akbar, which means the greatest Shaykh. Akbarian tradition represents Ibn ʿArabī’s metaphysics, Sufi doctrine and school of thought.

<sup>81</sup> Abd al-Ḥusayn Zarrīnkūb, *Sirr-i Nay: Naqd va Sharḥ-i Tahlīlī va Taṭbīq-i Masnavī*, 2 vols. (Tehran: Intishārāt-i ʿIlmī, 1985), 188.

appear to be multiple, but, in reality, there is nothing but one. So, it would not be unreasonable to assume that, had Rūmī lived longer, he might have completed his *Mathnawī* in seven volumes instead of six.

Perhaps the composer of Book Seven had the intention of honoring Rūmī by completing his *Mathnawī*; nevertheless, the fact that the composer falsely attributes the book to Rūmī creates a problem. Had he indicated his name and declared his intention to offer a literary tribute, there would have been less confusion. Instead, Book Seven comes across as a kind of apocryphal work, suppressed because of its questionable value as compared to the rest of the *Mathnawī*. It is clearly not of the same standard as the *Mathnawī*: there are numerous grammatical errors and an unusual usage of terms, names and vocabulary, all of which will be discussed below in Chapter Three. The literary and poetic structure of the book in comparison with the rest of the *Mathnawī* will likewise be examined.

### **External Evidence for the Existence of “Book Seven” of the *Mathnawī***

Although Anqarawī was the only scholar who took up the task of writing an independent commentary on a Book Seven, the existence of various manuscripts and lithographs, which appear in many different forms, testifies to its enduring importance in the minds of some people. Different versions were written or published by authors stating that their aim was to complete Rūmī’s poetry. Book Seven has been independently edited and published twice in Iran, though not as part of the *Mathnawī* only find the work as an individual text or as part of a collection of Sufī manuals.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Book Seven was published as part of the *Mathnawī* for the first time in Iran in 1942, issued as part of a Rūmī collection entitled *Kulālah-i Khāvar* edited by Muḥammad Ramaḍānī (d. 1967). Later on, it

I have divided the manuscripts of Book Seven into two groups. In the first group I include two manuscripts that do not pretend to be an actual Book Seven of the *Mathnawī*; rather, their authors felt that the *Mathnawī* was incomplete and wanted to compose their own *Mathnawī* dedicated to Rūmī. The first of these is entitled *Mathnawī-i Sab‘ah Mathnawī*, written by Shaykh Najīb al-Dīn Riḍā Tabrīzī (d. 1698). The second title is *Mathnawī-i Shūr-i ‘Ishq*, written by Shaykh Muḥammad Tahānavī (d. 1889). Both works are independent collections of the authors’ own poetry, which is dedicated to Rūmī, inspired by the poet and not intended as a concluding chapter to the *Mathnawī*.

In the second category, I include the oldest copy of the Book Seven that forms the object of our interest in this study, which I call the Konya manuscript (MS Konya, No. 2033) copied in 1440, written by the hand of a Tabrīzī merchant known as Badī‘ Tabrīzī, who travelled to Konya and lived there. It is currently preserved in the Mevlānā Museum Library in Konya. This is the book that went on to inspire Anqarawī and upon which he wrote his famous commentary. I have made a complete examination of all the manuscripts, lithographs and printed editions of this Book Seven, which are listed in the Appendix I.

*Shaykh Najīb al-Dīn Riḍā Tabrīzī : Sab‘ah Mathānī*

Among the works that claim to provide a Book Seven for the *Mathnawī*, mention should be made of the famous *Mathnawī* entitled *Sab‘ah Mathānī* authored by Shaykh Najīb al-Dīn Riḍā Tabrīzī, one of the poets and masters of the Dhahabiyya Sufi order,<sup>83</sup>

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was separately edited by Manūchahr Dānish-pajūh and published under the title *Daftar-i Haftum-i Mathnawī: Surūdah-i Shā‘arī nā Shinākhtah, Ṭaḥrīr bi Sāl-i 1411(814)* by Intishārāt-i Ṭahūrī in Tehran in 2001. The edition is based on the Mumbai lithograph, which was published in 1931 (1349).

<sup>83</sup> The *Dhahabiyya* is one of the three main Shī‘ī Sufi orders in Iran (Khāksārī and three branches of Nimatullahī). Its name is connected to the word *dhahab* (gold). Its *silsila* (chain of spiritual authority) goes back to the Prophet, the first eight Imams and a succession of *aqtāb* beginning with Ma‘rūf Karkhī (d. 815-6). The line continues up to Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 1221), founder of the Kubrawiyya order, from which the

who lived during the Şafavīd period. In an article entitled *Sab‘a Mathānī: Tamām-i nā-Tamām-i Mathnawī*, Dāvūd Chūgāniān examines the work and explains that “upon seeing a dream in the year 1664, Najīb al-Dīn Tabrīzī was inspired to pen a *Mathnawī* similar to Rūmī’s magnum opus in structure and poetic style with the intention of completing Book Six of Rūmī’s *Mathnawī*. His *Sab‘a Mathānī* was finished in 1683 (1094) within forty days in Işfahān at the age of 47 and the number of its verses is equal to the entire six volumes of Rūmī’s *Mathnawī*.”<sup>84</sup> The piece in question consists of three sections; it begins with a preface followed by 287 titles and closes with a conclusion.

Tabrīzī calls himself the narrator (*qā’il*) of the poems throughout the book and maintains that the actual composer of *Sab‘ah Mathānī* is none other than ‘Alī Naqī Işṭahbānī (d. 1717). This means that he only took credit for copying down the verses, attributing the actual composition of the work to someone else. Regardless of the identity of the author, Ghūgāniān explains that “although *Sab‘a Mathānī*’s poetic style and structure is very similar to Rūmī’s *Mathnawī*, and should be considered a valuable and rich source of Sufī manual literature, it cannot be considered as the completion of the *Mathnawī*.”<sup>85</sup> In fact, Ghūgāniān maintains that, due to the content and various Sufī topics discussed in the book, it should have been entitled “An encyclopedia of Sufism in the Şafavīd period.”<sup>86</sup>

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*Dhahabiyya* emerged after the ninth century. The order’s literature and religious life follows “sober” Sufism and is aligned with Shī‘ī orthodoxy. See Matthijs E.W van den Bos, “Dhahabiyya,” *EI3*: [http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/dhahabiyya-COM\\_25996](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/dhahabiyya-COM_25996)

<sup>84</sup> Dāvūd Chūgāniān, “Sab‘a Mathānī: Tamām-i Nātamām-i Mathnawī,” *Faşlnāmah Takhaşuşī-i Adabiyāt-i Fārsī-i Dānishgāh-i Āzād-i Islāmi-i Mash‘had*, no.1 (2008): 18.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.



Tehran: MS Majlis Library, No. 359428 - Shaykh Muḥammad Tahānavī: *Mathnawī-i Shūr-i 'Ishq*

Another work held up as a Book Seven of Rūmī's *Mathnawī* is the *Mathnawī-i Shūr-i 'Ishq* written by Shaykh Muḥammad Tahānavī in 1884 (1301) in Mumbai. It is preserved in Tehran's Majlis Library under the number 359428 and amounts to 118 ff. in length. The work was copied and edited in 1891 by Muḥammad 'Umar Ṣāhib Charthāvalī. Tahānavī's work is written in the form of the *Mathnawī* and consists of a series of anecdotes, statements on the concept of love, prayers and an account of Rūmī's meeting with his spiritual mentor Shams-i Tabrīzī. It constitutes a rich collection of Sufī poetry dedicated to Rūmī with abundant marginal glosses. Tahānavī was a well-known Sufī and *Mathnawī* teacher. He was one of the eminent leaders of the revivalist movement of the Chishtiyya Ṣābiriyya order against British colonialism and eventually fled to Mecca where he died.<sup>87</sup> In the introduction to his *Mathnawī*, Tahānavī explains that his reason for writing it was "a dream in which Rūmī and his master Shams appeared to me several times and they inspired me to compose some poems of love. I entitled it *Mathnawī Shūr-i 'Ishq* and as a sign of respect [also] entitle the work 'the Book Seven'."<sup>88</sup>

Najīb al-Dīn Tabrīzī and Shaykh Tahānavī's works are examples of a prevailing anxiety in some circles to continue the *Mathnawī* and remind us that Rūmī's poetry inspired many poets to compose poems in the genre of a *Mathnawī*. They also point to a similar concern over the apparent incompleteness of Book Six. Some authors and copyists were convinced that the *Mathnawī* was such a valuable mystical treatise that it should not be left

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<sup>87</sup> See 'Abd al-Ḥayy ibn Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī al-Ṭālibī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir wa-Bahjat al-Masāmi' wa-al-Nawāzīr: Tarājim 'ulamā' al-Hind wa-a 'Yānihā*, 8 vols. (Haydarabad: Maṭba'at Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyah, [1931]-1970) v.8, 70-72.

<sup>88</sup> Muḥammad Tahānavī, *Mathnawī-i Shūr-i 'Ishq*, MS Majlis 835309, f. 9a.

incomplete. For these reasons, Rūmī has become the posthumous beneficiary of a large corpus of poetry of which he had no knowledge. In fact, if one examines the various manuscripts of the *Mathnawī*, one finds many different verses by other hands forming part of the collection.

The number of spurious verses grew over the course of time and, in the process, there was a general shift in the tenor of the poetry as well. All this makes it clear that what we have in the *Mathnawī* is not the monumental work of a single poet – Rūmī – but one that was very early dispersed and had to be reassembled over the generations; in effect, a sprawling, gradually evolving tradition that undoubtedly includes poems composed by several authors. It is true that there is unanimous agreement among Rūmī scholars that “Konya manuscript (no. 2113) with 252 leaves (504 pages), each page averaging 22 lines of verse, for a total of 10,810 lines and organized by meter was the earliest copy of Sulṭān Valad to be used as the most reliable edition.”<sup>89</sup> Thus, since Nicholson did not have access to the Konya manuscript for his edition up until Book Three and only after that “he obtained further manuscripts through the efforts of Helmut Ritter,”<sup>90</sup> even this carefully assembled, critical, edition of the *Mathnawī* relied on manuscripts that contained interpolations in the earlier books.

*Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No. 2033*

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<sup>89</sup> Lewis, *Rūmī: Past and Present*, 297.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 306.

Variant title: *Mawlānā'ya Izāfe Edilen Yedinci cilt*. Copied by Manūchahr al-Tājiriyya al-Munshī, known as Badī'-i Tabrīzī, in 1440 (844);<sup>91</sup> this is the oldest manuscript available of the version of Book Seven mentioned by Kātip Çelebī and consulted by Anqarawī himself. In fact, the latter based his commentary on this particular manuscript. Due to the early date of its copying, I have based my literary analysis of Book Seven on this manuscript.

The colophon gives the copyist's full name as Badī'-i Tabrīzī Muḥtadan va al-Qūnawī, known as Manūchahr al-Tājiriyya al-Munshī.<sup>92</sup> The marginal note on the left indicates the date of copying 1440 (844).<sup>93</sup> This is a very important manuscript since it is the oldest manuscript of Book Seven available in libraries and which was also consulted by Anqarawī and from which he based his commentary.<sup>94</sup> Qur'ānic verses and Ḥadīth quotations are written in red ink, as are separating marks. The poems appear in four adjacent columns surrounded by a border in red ink. While the poems are written in *nasta'alīq* script using black ink, the copyist inscribed the chapter headlines in beautiful *naskh* script using red ink. This manuscript has 35 folia and 25 lines per page, measuring 41 x 29 - 34.2 x 24.8. The recto of the first leaf contains several verses from Book Seven

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<sup>91</sup> As discussed by Sa'īd Nafīsī, Manūchahr known as Badī'-i Tabrīzī was among students of Kamal Khujandī, a famous poet of 8<sup>th</sup> century. Accompanying his father, Tabrīzī came to Anatolia in 794/1391 on a business trip and stayed there for a while. After his father's death, he moved to Ardabīl and later on settled down in Yazd. He was amongst the well-known writers and poets of his time. Among his books are a *Mathnawī* entitled *Anīs al-Ārifīn* and *Ihyā' fī Ḥall al-Mu'ammā*. For more information, see Sa'īd Nafīsī, *Tārīkh-i Nazm va Nathr dar Irān va dar Zabān-i Fārsī tā Pāyān-i Qarn-i Dahum-i Hijrī*, 2 vols. (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī-i Furūghī, 1965-1966), v. 1, 194; and Abdūlbāki Gölpinarlı, *Mevlānā Müzesi Yazmalar Kataloğu*, 4 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1967-1994), v. 2, 96-103.

<sup>92</sup> Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, f. 35a, colophon.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Gölpinarlı, *Mevlānā Müzesi Yazmalar Kataloğu*, v.2, 99.

and on the left side and there are two seals, one which explains that the manuscript was in the possession of Shaykh ‘Abdu’l Ḥalīm b. ‘Abdu’l Raḥmān al-Mawlawī, one of Rūmī’s decedents,<sup>95</sup> and the other indicating its *waqf* to the Rūmī library.<sup>96</sup> A separate note indicates the manuscript was gifted to Muḥammad Sa‘īd Efendī, also among the decedents of Rūmī.<sup>97</sup> Another note records the total number of verses as 1675 lines.<sup>98</sup> A third note, which is written in blue ink, points out that 1010 verses from Book Six were added to the manuscript, bringing the total number of verses to 2685.<sup>99</sup>

Throughout the manuscript we can note two different hands in the marginal notes indicating the work of perhaps two different examiners. The first set of notes is written in Ottoman script and in black ink, possibly not made by the copyist but by a different person, who most likely read the manuscript and left his correcting notes on the margins. Due to the information provided to us in the last folio, it can be suggested that the manuscript was examined by a certain ‘Abdu’l ‘Azīz b. ‘Abdu’l Wahhāb in 1440.<sup>100</sup> However, the second set of notes appears in blue ink and in Persian; these were apparently made by Shaykh Abdu’l Ḥalīm al-Mawlawī, since he signed his name at the bottom of each note.<sup>101</sup> He made a careful examination of the manuscript in conjunction with a parallel reading of Anqarawī’s commentary and left numerous remarks and notes related to those verses

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<sup>95</sup> Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No. 2033, f. 1a.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., f.35a, notes on the left side of the colophon.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., f. 3b, 4a, 8a.

passed over in silence by the latter. For example, in an explanatory note on the margin of folio 3b, we find 8 lines marked by Shaykh Abdu'l Ḥalīm stating that Anqarawī did not provide any commentary on these verses.<sup>102</sup>

Since the manuscript includes numerous verses from Book Six, it can be suggested that the author of the book aimed at presenting it as a continuation of Rūmī's book to complete the supposedly unfinished Book Six of the *Mathnawī*. Throughout the manuscript, we find marginal notes indicating correlations between some poems in the text and related verses from Book Six. This could suggest that the author (or copyist) sought to draw out possible connections between Books Seven and Six. For instance, all the verses marked in folio 4a are part of the poetry found in Book Six.<sup>103</sup> In another explanatory note, Shaykh Abdu'l Ḥalīm marks several verses borrowed from Book One of the *Mathnawī*, which are added to a story in Book Seven.<sup>104</sup>

### **Concluding note**

The existence of various manuscripts as discussed in this chapter and in Appendix I indicates that there was a certain anxiety over completing Rūmī's *Mathnawī* among authors and poets following his death. The first two manuscripts clearly indicate that the poems are not part of the *Mathnawī* yet, for the purpose of honoring Rūmī, they were written in the form of *Mathnawī* poems (spiritual couplets). They are titled differently, with

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid. The copyist marked numerous verses on the following folia, indicating they are from Book Six of the *Mathnawī*: f.3a, 4a, 5a, 8 a-b, 9 a-b, 10 a-b, 11b, 12 a-b,13b, 14 a-b, 15a, 19b, 20 a-b, 21 a-b, 22 a-b, 23 a-b, 24 a-b, 25 a-b, 26a, 27 a-b, 28 a-b, 29a.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., f.4a.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., f. 31b. The verses are from “the story of the poor Arab and his conversation with his wife about poverty,” Book One: 2252-2263, 2288-2314.

the stated intention of completing and dedicating the collection to Rūmī since their authors felt that Rūmī's magnum opus remained incomplete. Some of the composers even mention the inspiring dreams in which they were asked to complete Rūmī's work. It can also be suggested that almost all the manuscripts in Iran and Turkey of the Book Seven used by Anqarawī were copied based on MS Konya, No. 2033, since it is the oldest manuscript available to us.

In contrast to these honorific works, the distinguishing characteristic of MS Konya, No. 2033 is that its author tried to pass his work off as that of Rūmī, thereby stimulating the controversies and debates that we shall examine in later chapters of this work.

## **Chapter Three: Literary Examination of Book Seven**

### **Inconsistency with the rest of the *Mathnawī***

In this chapter, we will examine some internal evidence that indicates the inauthenticity of Book Seven. To this end, I examine some of the obvious grammatical errors, poetic inconsistencies and narrative disconnections between Book Seven and the rest of the *Mathnawī*. Some of the obvious flaws and problems that can be found relate to poetic style, structure, grammatical errors, usage of uncommon vocabulary or Turkic words, rhyming and meter, content, repetition of tales and anecdotes, uncharacteristic references to the well-known philosopher Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī and to Ibn ‘Arabī’s famous work the *Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam*, praise aimed at Rūmī using his honorific Sūfī titles such as Mullā-yi Rūmī or Mawlānā (given to him by Mevlevī dervīshes), numerous emphases placed on the number seven in order to justify the validity and authenticity of Book Seven, and an uncharacteristic use of Persian mythology and epic literary figures in some of the tales.

### *The Preface: dībācha*

Each book of the genuine *Mathnawī* begins with a prose preface (*dībācha*). The *dībāchas* of Books One, Three and Four are written in Arabic, while Books Two, Five and Six begin with Persian prefaces. Rūmī describes the content of the *Mathnawī* by elaborating separately on its importance and attributes in each preface.<sup>105</sup> The opening verses of all six books of the *Mathnawī* follow closely the basic principles discussed in each preface, constructed around a dialogue with Ḥusām al-Dīn Çelebī (d. 1284). Some of

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<sup>105</sup> For a comprehensive study of the *Mathnawī dībāchas*, see Muḥammad Ḥussein Husseinī Qazvīnī Shīrāzī’s (d. 1833) “Raṣā’il: Sharḥ-i Dībāchah-hā-ye Manthūr-i Mathnawī-i Mawlawī,” ed. Jūyā Jahanbakhsh, *Ayīnah-i Mīrāth*, no.38 (Autumn 2007), 345-432.

the prefaces describe the *Mathnawī* as a source of wisdom and spiritual knowledge, as well as the attributes of Rumi's companion, Ḥusām al-Dīn Çelebī.

As Ernst has argued, “these prefaces relate to the introductory sections of each of the six books of this epic of mysticism, each of which contains an opening dialogue between Rūmī and his chief disciple in later times, Ḥusām al-Dīn Çelebī.”<sup>106</sup> Although the relationship between text and preface is obvious in the first three books of the *Mathnawī*, it is more difficult to locate such a close connection between the rest of the prefaces and their subsequent verses. However, we may conclude that all the books reflect on some of the points discussed by Rūmī in the *dībācha* through his praise for or dialogue with Ḥusām al-Dīn.

For instance, in the first *dībācha*, Rūmī introduces the significance of the *Mathnawī* by describing it as “the root of the root of the root of the Islamic Religion to attain the mysterious Truth,” and compares it to the “divine light and garden of the paradise.”<sup>107</sup> He also elaborates on the formation of the *Mathnawī*, which was shaped according to the request of Ḥusām al-Dīn, and continues praising the latter and comparing his spiritual substances to the Sufī mystic Abū Yazīd Baṣṭāmī (d. 877/8). Thus, for example, in the first *dībācha*, the *naynāmeḥ* reflects on Unity, Truth, Love, and the integrity of the human being as the ultimate manifestation of the divine attributes. In the second *dībācha*, Rūmī explains the delay in composing the *Mathnawī* due to the illness of Ḥusām al-Dīn's wife, and compares the delay to God's wisdom (*ḥikmat*) whose secret is not fully comprehensible to

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<sup>106</sup> Carl W. Ernst, “A Little Indicates Much: Structure and Meaning in the Prefaces to Rūmī's *Mathnawī*, Books I–III,” *Rumi Review* 5 (2014), 15-25.

<sup>107</sup> Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalālu 'ddīn Rūmī*, v.1, 4.



humans. However, divine wisdom will always benefit us, since nothing takes place without His plan and even the composition of the *Mathnawī* is due to His divine mercy.<sup>108</sup> The *dībācha* to Book Three, meanwhile, begins by comparing divine wisdom to God’s army, which empowers human souls so that everyone is capable of comprehending divine wisdom based on their capacity. Rūmī concludes by calling the *Mathnawī* a divine text (*kitāb-i ilāhī-i rabbānī*), which reveals the spiritual teachings bestowed upon it by God’s mercy.<sup>109</sup>

In the *dībācha* to Book Four, the *Mathnawī* is described as the source for spiritual elevation, joy for the heart and tranquility for the human soul. Rūmī expresses his gratitude for composing the book and receiving the abundant spiritual knowledge bestowed upon him through divine mercy.<sup>110</sup> The *Mathnawī* is called “a spiritual statement” (*tibyān-i ma‘nawī*) in the fifth *dībācha*. As Rūmī reflects on the importance of *sharī‘at* and *ṭarīqat* as the two essential means to reach the Truth (*ḥaqīqat*), his *Mathnawī* contains important anecdotes on these important principles. However, *tibyān-i ma‘nawī* goes beyond *sharī‘at* and *ṭarīqat* and reflects the importance of *ḥaqīqat* and the spiritual teachings discussed in this book.<sup>111</sup> Finally, Rūmī concludes his message on the importance of the *Mathnawī* in the sixth *dībācha*, stating that the spiritual illumination of the *Mathnawī* cannot be comprehended through our physical senses, since they are bound by limitations.<sup>112</sup> One

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., v.2, 221

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., v.3, 4.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., v.4, 271.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., v.5, 3.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., v.6, 257.

must advance further and engage in their inner senses to grasp the spirit of the divine wisdom. The opening verses of all six books appear as a form of dialogue with Ḥusām al-Dīn, where Rūmī reflects on all the subjects discussed in the *dībāchas*.

In contrast to this, the *dībācha* to Book Seven begins by elaborating on the elegance of the language and profoundness of the book’s message, followed by a description of the seven stages of spiritual knowledge revealed to Sufis using the example of a bedouin (*a‘rābī* اعرابي).<sup>113</sup> Unlike previous prefaces, Book Seven’s *dībācha* does not elaborate on the significance of the *Mathnawī* as a source of wisdom and knowledge.<sup>114</sup> In the opening verses of Book Seven, the author offers brief praise for Ḥusām al-Dīn Çelebī and then immediately continues with verses on the importance of the number seven, which suggests that the author is seeking here to justify the completion of the *Mathnawī* in seven volumes.

Let us compare the opening verses of Book Seven with other books of the *Mathnawī*. Book One begins with the story of the “song of the reed” (*naynāmeḥ*) in 18 verses in which Rūmī speaks of separation and his longing for unity and return to the origin of soul. He employs the metaphor of the reed to refer to the human soul:

Listen to the reed how it tells a tale, complaining of separations  
Saying, “Ever since I was parted from the reed-bed, my lament hath caused man  
and woman to moan.” (I: 1-2)

The preface to Book One constitutes an exception: the prefaces to the remaining books all express Rūmī’s respect and praise for his companion Ḥusām al-Dīn Çelebī, at whose request the *Mathnawī* was composed. There was an interval due to Ḥusām al-Dīn’s

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<sup>113</sup> MS Konya, No 2033, f.2a.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., f.2b.

wife's illness. Out of respect for Ḥusām al-Dīn, Rūmī delayed composing Book Two of the *Mathnawī*.

This *Mathnawī* has been delayed for a while: an interval was needed in order that the blood might turn to milk.

Blood does not become sweet milk until the fortune gives birth to a new baby.

Listen well.

When the Light of God, Ḥusām al-Dīn, drew the reins back from the zenith of Heaven

For he had gone in the ascension to realities, without his life-giving springtide the buds of mystic knowledge were unburst (in my heart) (II: 1-4)

At the beginning of Book Three, Rūmī hints at the spiritual mysteries to be unfolded in the rest of the book. It is the keenness of Ḥusām al-Dīn's perception that will render everything sweet that is bitter:

O Light of the Truth, Ḥusām al-Dīn, bring (into verse and writing) this Third Book, for "three times" has become a *sunna*.

Open the treasury of mysteries; in respect of the Third Book leave excuses alone. (III: 1-2)

The opening verses of Books Four and Five also contain Rūmī's praise of Ḥusām al-Dīn's spiritual status:

O Dīyā'u 'l-Ḥaqq (Radiance of God), Ḥusām al-Dīn, you are he through whose light the *Mathnawī* hath surpassed the moon (in splendor).

O thou in whom hopes are placed, thy lofty aspiration is drawing this (poem) God knows whither.

Thou hast bound the neck of this *Mathnawī*: thou art drawing it in the direction known to thee. (IV: 1-3)

The (spiritual) King, Ḥusām al-Dīn, who is the light of the stars, demands the beginning of the Fifth Book.

O Dīyā'u 'l-Ḥaqq (Radiance of God), noble Ḥusām al-Dīn, master to the masters of purity, (V: 1-2)

And finally, Rūmī links Ḥusām al-Dīn with the statement that the *Mathnawī* is coming to an end with Book Six:

O Life of the heart, Ḥusām al-Dīn, desire for (the composition of) a Sixth Part has long been boiling (within me).  
Through the attraction (influence) of a Sage like thee, a Book of Ḥusām has come into circulation in the world.  
(Now), O spiritual one, I bring to thee as an offering the Sixth Part to complete the *Mathnawī*. (VI: 1-3)

The composer of Book Seven refers also to Ḥusām al-Dīn, but only in connection with the significance of the number seven and how creation is blessed and completed at the seventh level.<sup>115</sup>

دولتت پاینده فقرت بر مزید بر فراز چرخ هفتم کن مقرر زان که تکمیل عدد هفت است بس	ای ضیاء الحق حسام الدین سعید چون که از چرخ ششم کردی گذر سعدالاعداد است هفت ای خوش هوس
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O Dīyā'u 'l-Ḥaqq (Radiance of God), Ḥusām al-Dīn, the fortunate one, may your poverty be increased and your fortune last forever. As soon as you move from the sixth heaven, be settled over the seventh heaven.  
O zealous one, it is the most fortunate number, number seven, for the numbers are completed with seven and no more. (VII: 1-3)

Among the examples associated with the number seven that he presents in this 44-verse preface are heaven; the gates of hell; saints or *abdāl*, as discussed in Ibn 'Arabī's works; compass directions; and zodiacal constellations. While none of the other prefaces places any emphasis on a number, the author of Book Seven seems to overstress the idea

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<sup>115</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 2b.

that the *Mathnawī* can “only” have been completed in seven volumes. This creates an inconsistency with the other prefaces, and appears to be an exaggeration when compared with the rest of the *Mathnawī* and Rūmī’s style of writing. It also seems to stand in contrast with the overall spirit of Rūmī’s teaching, to emphasize a particular number as auspicious for the ending of any task.

*Inconsistency between the opening tale in Book Seven and the last story of Book Six*

Another inconsistency can be seen in the transition to the first anecdote of Book Seven, where a new tale begins with no connection to the last anecdote of Book Six. As noted above, it is acknowledged by some scholars, among them Rūmī’s son Sulṭān Valad, that Book Six remains incomplete. The first tale in Book Seven begins with a new story under the title, “*On the notion of Fayḍ al-Qudus being the ‘one’ and that every being acquires something based on their quality and talent and that fire, which is also a created being, resembles the light of divine ‘quds’.*” It starts with the following verse without offering any introduction or previous background:<sup>116</sup>

در مقامی آتشی شاعل شود      نور او جز شیئی واحد کی شود

If a place is set on fire, its light becomes one with the object (the place).

The author of Book Seven thus begins by elaborating on the quality and spiritual talent of people (*qābilīyat*), based on which they benefit from the divine fire and its light. If the intention of the author of Book Seven was to complete the *Mathnawī*, he might have

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., f. 3a.

been expected to complete the tale of the Three Princes and bring the story to an end. But we find nothing to succeed the final story of Book Six of the *Mathnawī*, entitled “*The injunctions given by a certain person that after he died his property should be inherited by whichever of his three sons was the laziest.*” (VI: 4876-4902) This may be a telling sign of the spurious nature of Book Seven.

#### *Grammatical errors, colloquial vocabulary*

Among the serious problems with Book Seven is the employment of incorrect or uncommon vocabulary, local dialect, loose terms and grammatical mistakes. Terms and vocabulary that were never or hardly ever used by Rūmī in his poetry can be found in Book Seven. Rūmī had an excellent command of Arabic and Persian and was able to write creatively in both, whether in the form of poems, prose or sermons. Sometimes he used a kind of colloquial Persian, Turkish or Arabic. However, his main profession was not composing poetry, as was the case with Sa‘dī (d. 1291)<sup>117</sup> or Ḥāfeẓ (d. 1389/90).<sup>118</sup>

In some cases, such as with the folklore tales in Book Five, we see that Rūmī employs common and even jocular language to connect with his readers. Rūmī belonged to a non-professional class of poets “whose living depended on expression of religious truth, the essence of Qur’an and Hadith, because they have effected their ego in the divine.”<sup>119</sup> Despite being a non-professional poet, Rūmī’s poetry is a fine example of the proper usage of metaphors, elegant poetic images, symbols, and grammatical rules while

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<sup>117</sup> Muḥarrif al-Dīn ibn Muṣliḥ al-Dīn was a Persian poet and one of the greatest figures in classical Persian literature. He is most well known for his *Būstān* (Orchard) and *Gulistān* (Rose Garden).

<sup>118</sup> Muḥammad Shams al-Dīn Ḥāfeẓ, born in Shīrāz, Iran, was one of the finest lyric poets of Persia.

<sup>119</sup> Lewis, *Rūmī: Past and Present, East and West*, 328.

maintaining a consistent rhyme scheme. Yet in reading Book Seven we encounter a number of violations of these standards, which we will begin to analyze by looking at various grammatical flaws.

Under the second subheading, “on the notion the divine grace is one...,” we find the following couplet:

چیست آن روحانی اخلاق حسن      آن ددیّت خود رذایل در زمن

What is that [soul]? Spiritual good behavior/The other one [body] is the savageness which includes the most degrading attributes on the earth.<sup>120</sup>

The noun derives from the adjective (*dadī* ددی), which means savageness or to act wildly. The word is an infinitive to describe the adjective of wildness and savageness. Its noun is (*dad*), which means wild animal or savage, and its infinitive is written in the form of (*ددی*). The suffix (*at*) یت is placed after the stem of the adjective ‘savage’ (*د*) to make the constructive infinitive or female form of infinitive and indicate the grammatical case of the adjective in Arabic grammar. This particular suffix is often used in the Arabic language to change a noun into an infinitive and provide a relative attribute to a particular word. As discussed by Dihkhudā in his encyclopedia, it is not recommended to use such a form in Persian grammar.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 3a, verse 5.

<sup>121</sup> ‘Alī Akbar Dihkhudā, *Lughat'nāmah-i Dihkhudā*, 15 vols. (Tehran: Mu’assasah-’i Intishārāt va Chāp-i Dānishgāh-i Tehran, bā Hamkārī-i Intishārāt-i Rawzanah, 1372-1373 [1993-1994]), v. 6, s.v. *dadī*, 9224, 1221-22.

### *Repetition of words and inconsistency in rhyming*

Under the third heading (داستان آن آتش پرست که اندر آب دریا غرق می شد... ) “The story of the fire worshiper who drowned in the sea” we find the verse:

معرفت جان است و انسان جسم او      آدمی بی معرفت لاشی نه شی

Knowledge is the soul and mankind is its body, the man without knowledge is nothing and worth nothing.<sup>122</sup>

In this verse the two expressions (la shay') لاشی and (na shay') نه شی mean “is worth nothing” and therefore share the same meaning. Here, the composer was forced into redundancy in order to maintain the rhyme. In fact, however, this repetition makes the rhyming and recitation awkward and renders the reading of the second hemistich difficult.

### *Employment of uncommon terms and vocabulary*

I need to mention that the language of Book Seven is quite Arabicized, which is not typical of the *Mathnawī*, with recherché vocabulary and unusual plurals that seem part of a strained attempt to keep to the meter. This makes the language rather obscure, whereas the language of the *Mathnawī* is generally as simple or straightforward as the subjects Rūmī discusses allow, since he addressed and wanted to reach a wide and popular audience. The recondite Arabic vocabulary is directly contrary to that aim. Let us examine some examples:

Under the fourth heading (تفسیر من عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه) “The commentary of the Ḥadīth ‘whoever knows his self, knows his Lord’” there is the following verse:

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<sup>122</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 7b, verse 12.



This way you touched upon the fortune of awareness, turning away from imitation you chose examination.<sup>123</sup>

The word (*taqallud*) تقلد is an Arabic word. The root of this word is ق , ل , د and the correct form should be (*taqlīd*) تقلید , meaning “imitation”.<sup>124</sup> The author probably meant to employ the word *taqlīd*, but since it does not fit the metre, he employed another form of the word with the same root. Presumably his aim was to offer a proper meter in the verse, even though the meaning does not appear correctly.

Under the sixth heading is this line:

گاو و خر را نیز هست این چشم باز      اشتر و جاموس و هم گرگ و گراز

Even the cow and donkey share physical eyesight, as do the camel, the African buffalo, the wolf and the boar.<sup>125</sup>

The word (*jāmūs*) جاموس (male African Buffalo) never appears in the standard six books of the *Mathnawī*. It is an Arabic name for buffalo, which is uncommon in Persian. According to *Dihkhudā*, the origin of the word is itself non-Arabic; however, it is now commonly used in Arabic.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., verse 8.

<sup>124</sup> *Lughat'nāmah-i Dihkhudā*, v. 4, s.v. *taqlīd*, 6031-32.

<sup>125</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f.6a. verse 24.

<sup>126</sup> *Lughat'nāmah-i Dihkhudā*, v. 5, s.v. *jāmūs*, 6499.

The word (*tarāsh*) تراش “to scratch” in the second hemistich seems to be used in this form only for the purpose of rhyming. As an infinitive, it should be used with another noun; thus, the hemistich looks incomplete in its meaning.

قائم است و راست، جیلا نیستش

این ترازو میل اصلا نیستش

There is no disparity in his balance,  
It is even and upright.<sup>127</sup>

Both the words (*aṣlā*) اصلا “not at all” and (*jīlā*) جیلا are only used for the purpose of rhyming. The word (*jīlā*) جیلا does not exist in the dictionary, and the correct form for *aṣlā* is *aṣlan*. It seems *jīlā* is taken opposite the word upright and right. Perhaps it is from *j-w-l* and actually an error for *jawlan*, so that the meaning is: This balance does not tip to one side at all/ It is even and upright; it does not wander. In both cases, the composer opted to omit *tanvīns* and use the short forms.

کش در اعضا نیست از زفتی کمی

شیر گفت: این باشد البت آدمی

The lion said: of course this is the man,  
Whose limbs are perfect, with no deficiency in them.<sup>128</sup>

The phrase (*albat*) “of course” البت, is an abbreviated form of (*albattah*) البته . It is perhaps wrong to employ (*albat*) البت here since it does not convey the full meaning

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<sup>127</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 13b, verse 22.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., f. 17a, verse 33.

properly.<sup>129</sup> It can also be suggested that the poetry reflects the influence of the Ottoman Turkish language, since *albat* is Turkish dialect for the word *albattah*. However, since there is no evidence for such a usage of Turkish vocabulary or Ottoman dialect in the rest of the *Mathnawī*, it can also be suggested that the author of Book Seven was someone from Anatolia, who was or under the influence of the Ottoman Turkish language.

گر چه رویش مشتعل چون آینه ست      هر امانت کش سپاری خائنه است

Even though his face (outward) is clear and shining like a mirror, (inwardly) he is not faithful for any trust.<sup>130</sup>

The Arabic adjective *خائنه* is used in the female form, but usage of this word in Persian poetry is very rare since there is a lack of gender in Persian grammar. It seems the author has used the word *khā'inah* instead of *khiyānah* - which is the natural word, as in the phrase "*khiyānat al-amānah*" and also properly parallel in sound (*khiyānah/amānah*). *Khā'inah* also does not really make sense (whereas *khiyānah* does); the author has had to fabricate a word to fit the metre.<sup>131</sup>

روستایی در قراپا و ضیاع      با خر و گوساله گشته همراضاع

The rural man in the villages and farms has become foster-brother of the calf and donkey.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> *Lughat'nāmah-i Dihkhudā*, v. 2, s.v. *albatta*, 2721-22.

<sup>130</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 30b, verse 8.

<sup>131</sup> *Lughat'nāmah-i Dihkhudā*, v.6, s.v. *khā'ina*, 8136.

<sup>132</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 19b, verse 16.

Your chief minister has become Satan, he is the master of your ballista  
(war engine).<sup>133</sup>

Both the words (*qurāyā*) قرايا “villages” and (*awzar*) “chief minister” اوزر are uncommon or wrong plural forms for (*qarya*) قريه and (*vazīr*) وزير. The common correct forms are (*qurā*) قری and (*vuzarā*) وزرا.<sup>134</sup>

The unusual use of vocabulary frequently happens in Book Seven. Some terms and words may have been introduced on purpose for the rhythm or rhyme (mostly unsuccessfully, I would add). It is especially odd to see such erroneous structural and poetic flaws attributed to Rūmī, who mastered Arabic and Persian grammar to the highest degree – a fact that casts even more doubt on the authenticity of Book Seven as a work composed by Rūmī. It brings the knowledge of the poet and his command of Persian and Arabic language into question. It is obvious that he was not familiar with Rūmī’s simple language, his style of writing, the structure of his poetry and the metaphors and terminology he used. The result was an imitation of Rūmī’s *Mathnawī* with some external similarities but ultimately inferior content.

*References to Rūmī’s honorific titles: Mawlānā, Mawlavī, Mullā-yi Rūm*

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, f. 11a, verse 11.

<sup>134</sup> *Lughat'nāmah-i Dihkhudā*, v.14, s.v. *vuzarā*, 20490-491, v. 10, s.v. *qurāyā*, 15428, s.v. *qurā*, 15472.

In the following verses (opening verses of Book Seven), the composer refers to Rūmī using his honorific title Mawlānā (Mevlānā in Turkish, Mawlavī is Persian), thus giving the impression that Rūmī is addressing himself as Mawlānā “our master” and praising his own spiritual state.

چون یکی دادی دو کن ای مولوی      چون لقب شد میکده ت را مثنوی

Oh Mawlavī, since you gave one, make it two,  
Since your tavern is named the *Mathnawī*.<sup>135</sup>

هم ضیاء الحق هفت اندر علوم      این چنین هفت دگر ملای روم

Also Ḍīya’ al-Ḥaqq’s name consists of seven letters, another name with seven letters is Mullā-yi Rūm.<sup>136</sup>

Using numerology, the poet calculates the total letters in Ḍīya al-Ḥaqq to consist of seven, as do the letters in the title Mullā-yi Rūm; thus, he concludes that this justifies the claim that the *Mathnawī* is comprised of seven books. This is a weak argument, and is moreover inconsistent with Rūmī’s rational and theological position, for he never used numerology to justify the composition of his *Mathnawī* or the spiritual state of his companion. Nor did he ever call himself Mullā-yi Rūm, let alone examine the title from a numerological perspective. This reinforces our doubt as to the authorship of Book Seven, it being very unlikely that Rūmī would address himself as Mawlānā “our master.” Rūmī’s full name is Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Balkhī al-Rūmī. He was born in

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<sup>135</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 34b, verse 18.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, f. 2b, verse 5.

Balkh and lived for most of his life in Anatolia, but it was referred to as “Rome” since the Anatolian peninsula had previously belonged to the Byzantine or eastern Roman Empire.

Thus, due to his birthplace and the geographical location in which he lived for the most part, Rūmī is alternately called Balkhī and Rūmī. Among Rūmī’s honorific titles are Khūdāvandigār “lord.” His biographers Sipahsālār (d. circa 1319) and Aflākī (d. 1360), usually refer to Rūmī by the Arabic title Mawlānā “Our master.” “There are also some non-Mevlevī sources such as *Risāla-i Iqbālī* by Simnānī (d. 1336) and *Tadhkirah-i Gozīdah* by Mustawfī (d. 1349) that refer to him as Mawlānā Rūmī ‘Our master of Rūm’.”<sup>137</sup> Today, he is widely referred to by this honorific title in the Indian subcontinent, Iran and Turkey. In Iran, he is known as Mawlavī and, in Turkey, he is referred to as Ḥaḍrat-i Mevlānā. In Afghanistan, he is often called Mullā-yi Rūmī. Rūmī himself makes reference in one of his Ghazals (*Dīvān-i Shams*: No.1493) to this title:

مخدومی شمس الحق تبریز گر آن جاست      مولای دمشقیم و چه مولای دمشقیم

If we are to serve Shams al-Ḥaqq-i Tabrīzī there,  
thus we are the humble servant of Damascus, what a servant we are for Damascus.

Although there is a reference here to the title Mawlā, the context in which the title is used evokes humility. Rūmī refers to himself as a servant of Shams and the city of Damascus where Shams went during his first departure. It is admittedly far-fetched for Sufi saints to refer to themselves as masters; such titles are normally given to them by their pupils and followers and later they become widely known in their community by these

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<sup>137</sup> Lewis, *Rūmī: Past and Present, East and West*, 10.

honorific names. Nevertheless, in the following verse the composer of Book Seven juxtaposes the names of Shams, Rūmī and Ḍīya' al-Ḥaqq next to each other.

"شمس" و "مولای" و "ضیاء الحق" یکی ست در میانشان یک سر مو فرق نیست

Shams, Mawlā-y and Ḍīya' al-Ḥaqq are the same,  
There is no tiny hair difference between them.<sup>138</sup>

In the second hemistich, the composer considers Rūmī's spiritual state as being on the same level as that of Shams-i Tabrīzī. It is, however, hard to believe that Rūmī would consider himself in the same rank as his companions Ḥusām al-Dīn and Shams. The relationship between Rūmī and his teachers was far subtler than that. There is a considerable literature, both primary and secondary – including writings by Aflākī, Schimmel and Lewis – discussing the spiritual state of Shams and Rūmī's dedication to and high regard for his spiritual master.<sup>139</sup> In fact, negating ego (*nafs*) and showing humility are among the more important Sufī lessons to which Rūmī alludes in his *Mathnawī*. However, it is unlikely of Rūmī to address himself *Mawlā*; in fact, the verse reads from the third person perspective as if someone else states the status of Rūmī and his companions. Unsurprisingly, such comparison is absent from the previous books of the *Mathnawī*.

#### *Reference to Ibn 'Arabī's Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*

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<sup>138</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 2b, verse 6.

<sup>139</sup> See chapters on Shams-i Tabrīzī in the following sources: Lewis, "Shams al-Dīn Tabrīzī," in his *Rūmī: Past and Present, East and West*, 134-202. Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Aflākī has dedicated a separate chapter on Shams in his *Manāqib al- 'Arifīn* trans. John O'Kane, "The feats of the knowers of God," (Boston: Brill, 2002), 422-489. Annemarie Schimmel discusses the life of Shams and his influence on shaping Rūmī's spiritual life in her book *Triumphal Sun*, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993), 18-58.

In the following verses, the poet apparently condemns Ibn ‘Arabī’s work *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and the commentary written on it entitled *Naqd al-Nuṣūṣ fī Sharḥ-i Fuṣūṣ* by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī. This is clear from the following lines in which he praises the importance of *sharī‘at* “Islamic law” over *ṭarīqat* “spiritual path”.

<p>دل تهی کن از فصوص و از نصوص  رخش در راه حقیقت رانده ام  پس طریقت پس حقیقت هم به شرع</p>	<p>در نصوص وحی صدق آر از خلوص  هم شریعت هم طریقت خوانده ام  جاده شرع است اصل و ذم به شرع</p>
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Have faith in the script of the divine revelation with sincerity,  
Disinterest yourself from *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and other texts.  
I have studied both *sharī‘at* and *ṭarīqat*,  
I have ridden my horse on the path of *ḥaqīqat* “the truth.”  
The path of *shar‘*, is the root, the life comes from the *shar‘*,  
Both *ṭarīqat* and *ḥaqīqat* is acquired through *shar‘*.<sup>140</sup>

In the above verses, the poet specifically refers to Ibn ‘Arabī’s famous book *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and Jāmī’s commentary (under the title of *Nuṣūṣ*), allegedly condemning the book while emphasizing the supremacy of *sharī‘at* over *ṭarīqat*. It is unlikely, however, that Rūmī should have mentioned here Ibn ‘Arabī’s work or the commentary written on it by Jāmī since he never does so in the six acknowledged books of the *Mathnawī*. Connecting Rūmī with Ibn ‘Arabī was simply part of a later attempt by scholars and commentators to explicate Rūmī’s verses through the prism of Ibn ‘Arabī’s thought. This tradition goes back to Jāmī and his *Risāla-i Sharḥ-i Nay*, in which he comments on the first two opening verses of the *Mathnawī* while heavily

<sup>140</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 7b, verse 23, 25-26.



relying on Akbarian theosophy. In fact, all the commentaries written on the *Fuṣūṣ* appeared after Rūmī's time and indeed the reference here to *Nuṣūṣ* (Jāmī's commentary) is especially anachronistic since Rūmī died in 1273 whereas Jāmī died in 1492.

Nowhere in the *Mathnawī* do we see any reference to Ibn 'Arabī and his works and there is no evidence to support the notion that Rūmī favored the Akbarian school of thought in which rational mysticism prevailed. As for the importance of *sharī'at*, it should be noted that Rūmī's mystical religiosity was based on the triad of Law, the Path and the Truth. According to Rūmī, a mystic observes the religious Law (*sharī'at*) while advancing as a wayfarer on the Path (*ṭarīqat*), seeking the Truth (*ḥaqīqat*).<sup>141</sup> In general, none of these three aspects of religion can be separated or emphasized away from one another. The term *sharī'at* appears in the above verses right after criticizing the *Fuṣūṣ*, giving readers the impression that the poet of Book Seven might be hinting at a lack of compliance with the *sharī'at* by Ibn 'Arabī, implying that he focuses too much on the spiritual journey in his *Fuṣūṣ*. He seems to criticize Ibn 'Arabī for distancing himself from the religious law and for offering a free interpretation of the Islamic disciplines.

#### *Praising Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī*

In the following verses, the composer praises Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. al-Ḥusayn at-Taymī al-Bakrī at-Ṭabaristānī Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī most commonly known as Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 1200)<sup>142</sup>:

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<sup>141</sup> William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rūmī* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 10.

<sup>142</sup> Abū 'Abd al-Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Rāzī, known as Fakhr-i Rāzī (1149-1209) was a Persian theologian, philosopher, mathematician and Qur'ānic exegete. He was a prolific author and among his famous books are *al-'Arba'īn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn* and *al-Masā'il al-Khamsūn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn*.

آن امين الله و موثوق اليه  
بر كمال ذات خلاق جليل

فخر رازی رحمة الله عليه  
غير اين جمله براهين و دليل

Fakhr-i Rāzī, may God’s mercy be upon him,  
God’s trustworthy one, upon him reliance stands.  
Other than his quality of debate and rational argument,  
He is the manifestation of the divine qualities.<sup>143</sup>

Among the many serious problems in Book Seven is that of the praise heaped on al-Rāzī by the poet and the high regard and respect he evinces towards the latter. He estimates al-Rāzī’s position as very high, calling him the trustworthy and reliable one, who benefits from the divine attributes, while excelling in the rational and intellectual faculties. Al-Rāzī was an excellent preacher, a prominent jurist, a formidable theologian and a well-known philosopher. It is even said that “Alā al-Dīn Muḥammad Khawrazmshāh (d. 1220) built a madrasa for him in Herat where he spent most of his life preaching and working.”<sup>144</sup> But al-Rāzī is supposed to have been well aware of his superior intelligence: his honorific title being Fakhr al-Dīn, he apparently used to say that “Muḥammad the Arabian” said such and such, whereas Fakhr al-Dīn says such and such.

This struck his listeners as the height of impiety – mentioning his name in the same breath as that of the Prophet. Shams-i Tabrīzī alludes to this saying of Rāzī’s in the following sermon:

What gall Fakhr-i Rāzī had to say, Muḥammad-i Tāzī says thus and Muḥammad-i Rāzī says thus”! Doesn’t this make him the apostate of his age? Was he not an absolute infidel? Unless he repents. (*Maqālāt*, 288)

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<sup>143</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 32b, verses 39-40.

<sup>144</sup> Lewis, *Rūmī: Past and Present*, 57.

Rūmī's father Bahā' al-Dīn Valad, according to Lewis, "found Fakhr-i Rāzī's worldliness and his friendliness with various rulers unsavory."<sup>145</sup> Rūmī himself criticizes Rāzī as an isolated philosopher who walked solely in the ways of the intellect:

If reason clearly saw its way along,  
Then on faith's truth had Rāzī zeroed in!  
But "he who has not tasted does not know,"  
And so his fancy reason just confused him. (Book V: 4144-5)

Rūmī was of a different opinion regarding philosophers, particularly those who were influenced by the Greek school of philosophy and their great masters such as Plato, Aristotle and Socrates. For him, philosophers are in the possession of a distinctive intellect that is responsible for the various aspects of their incoherence. He accuses the philosophers of rejecting religion and of denying the vision of God, revealed law and religious confessions.<sup>146</sup> (Book I: 3283-5)

Rūmī's master, Shams-i Tabrīzī takes upon himself the task of clarifying their contradictory statements on metaphysics, revealing the danger of their doctrines and their shortcomings by pointing out the incoherence of their beliefs. At the same time, he refutes the ancient philosophers. His main criticisms are aimed at Ibn Sīnā,<sup>147</sup> Fakhr-i Rāzī, Plato and Socrates. Shams-i Tabrīzī also castigates philosophers for their claim to know

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>146</sup> Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love*, 295.

<sup>147</sup> Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), also known in Persian as Shaykh al-Ra'īs, was born near Bukhara (980-1037). He is one of the foremost physicians, mathematicians and philosophers of the Islamic world. He is the main interpreter of the Greek philosopher Aristotle. Among his famous works are *al-Shifā*, *Cannon*, *al-Ishārāt wa'l-Tanbīhāt* as well as some mystical treatises. His philosophical arguments on ontology and epistemology have been very influential in forming the later schools of Islamic thought as well as later theologians and philosophers in Islamic world and the West.

everything, when in fact they know only a certain amount. Their main means of proof is the intellect and they follow rational and intellectual methodology; therefore, the philosophers are in denial with respect to any supernatural phenomena such as the divine miracles performed by the prophets, as for which there are no rational or scientific explanations. As he puts it: “They say: He is a philosopher. The philosopher is the knower of everything. I said: It is God who is the knower of everything; the philosopher is the knower of many things.”<sup>148</sup> Claiming that there is no firm foundation or perfection in their doctrine, both Shams-i Tabrīzī and Rūmī denounce their principles as weak, contradictory and unreasonable elements of thought.

#### *References to Persian mythology and epic literary figures*

Among the unusual subjects in Book Seven is that of the tale of Zāhhāk, Kāveh and Farīdūn, which comes under the title, *va shāver-hum fī al-amr* “consult them in the matters,” which is a reference to a Qur’ānic verse [3:159].

<p>آن دهن ضحاک و دل از فتح دور          خاسری و برده ای ظن خیر و سود          خالق کون و مکان در خواب نیست          گاو مرکوب آن فریدون اسد          می برآرد مغزت افریدون بدر</p>	<p>گشت<sup>149</sup> ضحاک اول از فرط غرور          ای تو ضحاک و دلت کور و کبود          ضحک تو گریه شود اشتاب نیست          کاوه حداد اینک می رسد          مغز ما تا کی خوری ای مار سر</p>
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“Due to his arrogance, he became Zāhhāk (cheerful),  
 His mouth was smiley but the heart was far from opening.

<sup>148</sup> William C. Chittick, *Me and Rūmī: The Autobiography of Shams-i Tabrīzī* (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2004), 23-24.

<sup>149</sup> Unlike the figure of Zāhhāk in Iranian mythology, the word “zāhhāk” in Arabic means to laugh and to smile.

You are the Zakhāk (cheerful outwardly) but blind in heart,  
You are at loss but assuming you are in advantage and benefit.  
No hurry, soon your laugh will turn into crying,  
Since the creator of the universe is not at sleep.  
Kāveh, the blacksmith is arriving,  
Whose riding horse (here cow) is that the lion like Farīdun.  
O snake head! How long you will eat our head,  
Soon Farīdun will take the brain out of your head.”<sup>150</sup>

Before examining the above-cited legends, it should be recalled that the *Mathnawī* is a poetic collection of various anecdotes and stories derived from the Qur’ān, Ḥadīth and everyday tales. Stories are told to illustrate a point and each moral is discussed in detail in the conclusion. The *Mathnawī* incorporates a range of Islamic wisdom, but primarily focuses on emphasizing inward personal Sufi interpretation. According to Chittick, the *Mathnawī* may be “referred to as a ‘sober’ Sufi text and it reasonably presents the various dimensions of Sufi spiritual life and advises disciples on their spiritual paths”.<sup>151</sup> It features stories that range from accounts told in the local bazaar to fables and tales from Rūmī’s own lifetime. It also includes quotations from the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth accounts from the time of Muḥammad.

On the other hand, epic legends and heroes from Iranian mythology almost never form the subject of discussion in the *Mathnawī*, where the emphasis is on Sufi or moral lessons. The three legends that are mentioned in the work are among the important mythical figures in Zoroastrian literature and are retold in Ferdawsī’s epic work known as the *Shāhnāmeḥ*. One of the tales deals with Zakhāk, (ذهاک / ضحاک), a figure in Iranian mythology who is usually representative of evil. It is retold several times in various

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<sup>150</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f. 10b, 49, f.11a, 3-4, 6-7.

<sup>151</sup> Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love*, 6.

Avestan myths and is mentioned parenthetically in many passages of Zoroastrian literature. In the *Shāhnāmeḥ*, composed by Abu'l-Qasim Ferdawsī between 977 and 1010, we learn that Zakhāk was “born as the son of an Arab ruler named Merdās. Zakhāk, or more correctly Azhī Dahāka, is from Babylonia and more or less a demon than a human. Ferdawsī masterfully recasts this mythical character as an evil tyrant.”<sup>152</sup> Because of his Arab origins, he is sometimes called Zakhāk-i Tāzī. This “characterization of Zakhāk as an Arab,” according to Hinnells, “in part reflects the earlier association of Dahāg with the Semitic peoples of Iraq, but probably also reflects the continued resentment of many Iranians at the seventh century Arab conquest of Persia.”<sup>153</sup>

Another figure discussed in Book Seven is that of Kāveh the blacksmith (کاوِه *Kāveh Āhangar*). Also known as the Blacksmith of Isfahan or Kāveh of Isfahan, he “is a mythical figure in Iranian mythology who led a popular uprising against a ruthless foreign ruler Zakhāk.”<sup>154</sup> Kāveh is one of the most famous Persian mythological characters due to his fabled resistance against despotic foreign rule in Iran, and his story is naturally retold in the *Shāhnāmeḥ*, based on the Avestan tradition. Kāveh expelled the foreigners and re-established the rule of kings of pure Iranian descent.”<sup>155</sup> Many followed Kāveh to the Alburz Mountains in Damavand, where Farīdun, son of Ābtīn and Faranak, was living. Afterwards, Farīdun became king and, according to the myth, ruled the country for about

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<sup>152</sup> John R. Hinnells, “Iran: iv Myths and Legends,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*: Vol. XIII, Fasc. 3, 307-321.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Edward William West, *Sad Dar* (Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 50.

<sup>155</sup> Afshīn Mar‘ashī, *Nationalizing Iran: Culture, Power, and the State, 1870-1940* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 78.

500 years. This Farīdun reappears constantly in Persian literature as an emblem of victory, justice and generosity. According to Ferdawsī's *Shāhnāmeḥ*, "Farīdun was the son of Ābtīn, one of the descendants of Jamshīd."<sup>156</sup>

It seems that the composer of Book Seven was familiar with Iranian mythology and epic literature. His interpretation of the tale hinges on a pun he deploys on the word *Zahhāk*, which refers to the mythological character in Avestan literature and, at the same time, means laughter in this Arabic-derived word (from the root ضحك). Employing the language of myth, the composer discusses the battle of light and darkness in which he associates *Zahhāk* with darkness, *Kāveh* with light and *Farīdun* with the help afforded to *Kāveh*.

Again, looking at the uncontested portions of the *Mathnawī* we notice that the tales and anecdotes are mostly borrowed from the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and other Islamic sources, not from Iranian myths. Rūmī also refers to some Sufī writings as sources for his anecdotes such as 'Aṭṭār or Sanā'ī (d. 1131), since they all contain didactic lessons. These sources stand in stark contrast to Iranian mythology, which is constituted of traditional tales and stories of ancient origin, all involving extraordinary or supernatural characters and heroes. Drawn from the legendary past of Iran, they reflect the attitudes of the society to which they first belonged, attitudes towards the confrontation of good and evil, the actions of the gods, and the exploits of heroes and fabulous creatures. As we have seen, there is little reference to Persian mythology or epic legends in the six original books of the *Mathnawī*. The fact that Persian mythological characters and their heroic acts are discussed for the

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

first time in Book Seven makes us wonder whether they belong to Rūmī or were penned by someone else.

*Redundancy, repetition of the stories*

It is not common for Rūmī to repeat a story, since each tale or anecdote is directed to a different subject drawn from daily life or Islamic didactic literature and offers a different conclusion. One of the stories in Book Seven therefore seems out of place, because it repeats a tale already discussed in detail earlier in Book Three. I intend to examine the actual story by Rūmī in comparison with the one discussed in Book Seven, in order to demonstrate the different styles and structures evidenced in each. I argue that, judging by poetic elements, symbols and construction (as if my preceding arguments were not evidence enough), Books One through Six and Book Seven are the work of two very different poets.

- The tale of the blind men and peacock

Among the best-known stories in the *Mathnawī* is that of the “Elephant in the Dark,” which originated in the Indian subcontinent where it was widely diffused. It is narrated in Book Three: 1260-1360. Contrast this with the fifth story in Book Seven entitled “The metaphor for human understanding of the depth of the absolute divine essence: the story of the blind men who went to visit the king’s peacock” (تمثیل ادراک احتیاط طاووس شاه رفتند) (انسان در کنه ذات مطلق: قصه آن کوران است که به

repeated but with different features. In Rūmī’s version, the examiners are not physically blind but rather are confronted by an elephant kept in a dark house. In the Book Seven anecdote, the examiners are physically blind and unable to recognize different parts of a



peacock. Here is a summary of Rūmī’s tale: Some Hindus had brought an elephant for exhibition and placed it in a dark house. Crowds of people were going into that dark place to see the beast. Finding that visual inspection was impossible, each visitor felt it with his palm in the darkness:

“The palm of one fell on the trunk.  
This creature is like a waterspout,’ he said.  
The hand of another lighted on the elephant’s ear. To him the beat was evidently like a fan.  
Another rubbed against its leg.  
‘I found the elephant’s shape is like a pillar,’ he said.  
Another laid his hand on its back.  
‘Certainly this elephant was like a throne,’ he said.” (Book III: 1262-1265)

Rūmī concludes that the sensual eye is just like the palm of the hand. The palm does not have the means to take in the whole of the beast. He encourages his reader to use instead “the eye of the Sea” (*dāda-i daryā*), which is sometimes obscured by foam. Let the foam go, he says, and gaze with the eye of the Sea. Rūmī often uses the image of the sea and the foam on its surface to depict the contrast between the spiritual and phenomenal worlds. Rūmī compares the palm of the hand (*kaf-i dast*), with which people touched the elephant in the dark, to what he metaphorically calls “the eye of the physical senses” (*chashm-i hiss*) (III: 1269). Just as those who touched the elephant could not encompass the totality of its form or characteristics by the touch of a hand, so too are people unable to perceive the nature of Reality by means of the physical senses. It is only if they look with what Rūmī refers to as “the eye of the Sea,” by which he means the inner or spiritual senses, that they will be able to see beyond the superficial phenomenal world, which he compares to the foam (*kaf*) on the surface of the sea (III: 1270).

The tale of the elephant in the dark is a reflection of Rūmī’s understanding of the underlying Reality of all religions and the reasons for the differences between them. In the title of the tale, he uses the term *ikhtilāf*, a technical term that denotes differences of opinion among religious scholars and jurists on particular points of theology or law. The use of the term would seem to hark back to the theological differences described in earlier versions of the tale and the disputes to which they gave rise. Rūmī reiterates the idea of individual perspective in the tale, again using the same phrase, *az nazargāh*, to describe the reasons for the differences of opinion that arose among the people who touched the elephant in the dark: “It was on account of [their individual] perspectives (*az nazargah*) that what they said [about the elephant] differed (*mukhtalif*) (III: 1267).” Like the darkness in which the elephant is kept, Rūmī maintains our sight is dim (*tīra-chashm*) because we are unable to see beyond the phenomenal world, and, even though the spiritual “sea” is of the clearest water, he compares us to boats crashing into each other (III: 1272). To this conundrum he provides a seemingly simple solution: If everyone had a candle (*sham ‘ī*) in his hand to illuminate the darkness, the differences in perspective would be dispelled (III: 1268). By “candle” Rūmī alludes to himself as spiritual guide and enlightener, roles he assumes throughout the six books of the *Mathnawī*. But given that he regarded the tales he retells in a mystical register as the very embodiment of his own spiritual state, it is in point of fact the *Mathnawī* which is the instrument of spiritual enlightenment; which, like that candle, he has placed in everyone’s hands (*dar kaf-i har kas*) (III: 1282).

The story of the blind men and the peacock as discussed in Book Seven offers a different version of the story. Seven groups of blind people were interested in encountering a peacock, famous for its grace and beauty that had been brought to the city of Multān by

Sultān Maḥmūd of Ghazna<sup>157</sup> (d. 1030) after conquering India. These seven groups touched seven parts of the bird each separately and made an assumption describing the bird incorrectly. The parts examined were the peacock’s crown, head, eyes, back, back feathers and his feet. Emphasizing the “seven groups,” who examined “seven parts” of the bird, the poet aims at demonstrating the importance of the number seven. He then concludes by summarizing the actions of the blind people, but without elaborating on why those groups were divided into seven or for what reason seven parts of the bird were examined.

<p>گاه نجم و گاه شمس و گاه بدر          نه ز تحقیق وی از معلوم خویش          هیچ گونه ذات رب العالمین          بر کماهی وی از بیگانه و گاه</p>	<p>هر گروهی را از او علمی به قدر          نکته ای و ازانده از مفهوم خویش          کس ندانسته به تحقیق و یقین          زو نشانها داده و نابرده راه</p>
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Each group has knowledge of her (the bird) to some degree,  
 Sometimes to the extent of the star, sometimes the sun and sometimes like the moon.  
 They utter a remark based on their understanding,  
 Not based on the examination of the subject, rather based on their own knowledge.  
 No one has ever been able to rely on their knowledge,  
 To comprehend the divine essence.  
 They have pointed to His signs without having any clue,  
 On occasion they speak of His quiddity.<sup>158</sup>

The poet stresses the uncertainty and incomplete knowledge that the examiners have of the bird, which is increased by their physical blindness. They cannot see anything, thus they rely on their own assumptions and speculation. Due to the lack of true knowledge,

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<sup>157</sup> Yamīn al-Dawla Abul-Qāṣim Maḥmūd ibn Sebükteġin, more commonly known as Maḥmūd of Ghaznī (Persia: غزنوی محمود / Maḥmūd-e Ghaznavī also known as Maḥmūd-i Zābulī, in Persian: محمود زابلی), was the most prominent Turkic ruler of the Ghaznavīd Empire. In the name of Islam, he conquered the eastern Iranian lands and the northwestern Indian subcontinent (modern Afghanistan and Pakistan). See T. A. Heathcote, *The Military in British India: The Development of British Forces in South Asia: 1600-1947* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 6.

<sup>158</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f.5a, verses 10-13.

their remarks are invalid and speculative. The poet compares the superficial knowledge of the blind people in the story to those philosophers who discuss God's essence and divine attributes. He criticizes such an attempt on the part of philosophers as equally superficial, for it is based on their limited acquired knowledge. They do not really know Him, for this can only be achieved by way of illumination and inner knowledge. The poet offers his advice to those trying to understand God by saying:

تا بدانی حسن صنع حیّ را خوش یقینی بی شک و ریب و ریا کاملان بر سوی ایقان می زنند	خویش را اول نکو دان ای فتی چون که دانستی یقین باید تو را از یقین ارباب عرفان می تنند
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To recognize the beauty of the living creator (God).  
Acquire knowing yourself well!  
When you come to realization, you will acquire faith,  
The noble faith goes beyond any doubt and uncertainty.  
By the way of certainty the Sufis speak,  
The perfect ones come to faith.<sup>159</sup>

To know God, one needs to know oneself and ponder on one's inner world so that certainty and faith can be acquired, which subsequently leads to knowing God. The poet emphasizes faith and certainty as prerequisites for Sufis and perfect ones before embarking on any examination of the divine essence. However, he does not elaborate on how such a certainty can be acquired. How can a man who is physically blind acquire vision and enlightenment and remove the cover from his eyes? Instead, the author of Book Seven concentrates more on the number of people (seven groups) examining the peacock in the second story, without elaborating on the achievement of the visitors or their dark

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid., verses 14-16.

imaginations. Nor does he ever make it clear *why* there were seven groups, or for what purpose they examined seven parts of the bird.

Returning to the *Mathnawī*, one realizes that Rūmī often begins his remarks by narrating a tale or anecdote followed by a discussion on elements of the tale, after which he concludes with the moral of the story or the advice that he wants to give to his audience. However, in the tale of the blind men and the peacock in Book Seven, the story ends without any such moral tale or advice to the audience to seek to know God and His attributes. Rūmī typically goes beyond the outline or shell of a story and takes his readers on a spiritual journey to the kernel of the truth, something that is missing in the story in Book Seven.

#### *The date of composition for Book Seven*

After concluding his tale, all of a sudden and out of context, the author points out the date of composition of Book Seven, the year 1271, an important piece of information that supposedly also indicates the date of the composition of the *Mathnawī*, which apparently took place two years before Rūmī's death.

مثنوی هفتمین کز غیب جست      670 تاریخ ویست

The Seventh Book of the *Mathnawī*, which appeared from the hidden world: its date (of composition) is 670/1271.<sup>160</sup>

Often authors and poets indicate the date of completion at the end of or in the preface to their writings. It is unusual for a poet to include such a date in the middle of his composition. His reference to the date at mid-point in the book comes unexpectedly and

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., f.8a, verse 41.

out of context. This is yet another reason for questioning Rūmī's authorship of Book Seven. Nowhere in the earlier books of the *Mathnawī* do we find such an exact date of completion or composition as we do in this particular book.

### **Concluding Notes**

Taking all the previous factors into consideration, I am led to conclude that the authorship of Book Seven is highly questionable and that, for several reasons, we are safe to say that it was not composed by Rūmī. We have seen that the poet made use of numerous uncommon vocabularies and some unusual terms or words in folk dialects, and referred to some extent to Persian epic or Iranian legends such as Kāveh and Zahhāk. There are also frequent references to the number seven, even to the point where the author breaks precedent and, instead of writing opening verses that contain praises to Ḥusām al-Dīn Çelebī, prefaces Book Seven with a list of the benefits of the number seven.

The poet also praises Aristotelian philosophers such as Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, of whom Rūmī, Shams-i Tabrīzī and Rūmī's father Bahā'-i Valad were highly critical in their writings, for the most part rejecting his purely rational approach in acquiring esoteric knowledge. Similarly, while Rūmī never mentions Ibn Arabī's writings in his *Mathnawī*, Book Seven refers quite explicitly to the work *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and Jāmī's commentary on it entitled *Naqd al-Nuṣūṣ fī Sharḥ al-Fuṣūṣ*. The book also includes such epithets as "Mawlānā" or "Mullā-yi Rūmī." It is, however, very unlikely that Rūmī would have described himself as Mawlānā and heaped praises on his own spiritual status, especially as it was an honorific title bestowed on him by his followers.

Thus, Book Seven may be considered an apocryphal work due to its dubious authorship, veracity and authority. It had lain virtually hidden for several years until

Ismā‘īl Anqarawī embarked on writing his commentary on it, which in turn led to controversy once it was brought to the attention of scholars and Sufis. Furthermore, the book must have been ignored as well due to its questionable literary value compared to the rest of the *Mathnawī*. It is easy for scholars of Persian language and literature to spot failings of a linguistic or stylistic nature in Book Seven, especially when compared to the rest of the *Mathnawī*. However, the existence of numerous manuscripts, prints and lithographs of this or other versions of a Book Seven indicate a certain anxiety among authors to complete what many considered to be an unfinished work. Whether as a separate book, an addendum or an independent Sufi manual, they all testify to the interest among some authors and scholars to perfect the *Mathnawī*, sometimes mainly out of a numerology-based belief that Rūmī would have extended the work to comprise seven volumes, had he lived long enough.

It is also significant that most of the manuscripts of this book and its commentary were copied in Ottoman Turkey mainly by the hand of Mevlevī dervishes who most likely benefited from the Sulṭāns’ patronage. It is clear that they were the main promoters of Book Seven, most likely in response to the words of Sulṭān Valad, Rūmī’s son, whose verses caused anxiety among dervishes and encouraged them to take up the task of completing the *Mathnawī*, since they assumed it remained unfinished. The chapter that follows examines the manuscripts of the commentary on Book Seven written by Anqarawī preserved in the various libraries in Turkey.

## **Chapter Four: Anqarawī's commentary on Book Seven of the *Mathnawī*: A survey of existing manuscripts in Turkey's libraries**

This chapter will examine the existing manuscripts of Anqarawī's commentary on Book Seven of the *Mathnawī*. Based on the information extracted from the colophon of these manuscripts, it can be suggested that the commentary under study received heavy promotion by the Mevlevī Order and perhaps even court patronage by the Ottoman Sultāns. One should note that the oldest manuscripts, which also include numerous pieces of information provided by the copyists and appearing in the gloss, will be examined in this chapter. However, those manuscripts with secondary ownership, which were copied at later dates and do not contain any marginal notes, will be discussed in Appendix II.

Looking at the long history of Ottoman Sultāns who favored Persian poetry as well as the popularity of the Mevlevī Order, which was established in Anatolia since the time of Rūmī, can help to explain why scholars were encouraged to write their commentaries on Rūmī's *Mathnawī*. The transmission of Persian culture to Anatolia began with the foundation of the Saljūq state in the twelfth century and gained speed after the Mongol invasion of Persia in the thirteenth century. Many Persian scholars, writers and poets fled to the empire of the Saljūqs of Rūm following the Mongol onslaught on Iranian lands. These highly educated men played an important role in the revival of Persian culture and literature, which had already begun at the beginning of the thirteenth century. As a result, Persian became the language of literature and poetry, and Persian words were often used for place-names, personal names and occupational activities, as well as in certain religious, legal and official records.



Due to the fact that Persian became the language of the court and of literature, there was a great interest in Persian poetry and literature among the Ottoman Sultāns and Ottoman scholars were highly encouraged to translate Persian poetry into Ottoman or write commentaries on it. Anqarawī lived during the reign of Murād IV, which constitutes an important epoch in the history of Ottoman poetry. According to Gibb, “There was an ongoing battle between the Persian and Turkish schools, the battle was being fought out and finally due to the decisive victory of Sultān Aḥmad III (d. 1736) that the Classic period ended and the Transition begun.”<sup>161</sup> It was during this so-called classical period that the influence of Iranian forms reached its highest point in the history of Turkish poetry.

Furthermore, throughout this period individual Ottoman Sultāns received a good education during their youth, in which they learned Arabic as a scientific language and Persian as the language of literary expression. As a result, many subsequent Ottoman Sultāns showed an interest in Persian literature and even wrote Persian poems themselves. Among them were “prince Çem Sultān (d. 1495), Selīm I, Süleymān I the Magnificent (d. 1520-66), prince Beyezīd (Bāyazīd) (d. 1562), Murād III and Murād IV, who wrote Persian poetry collected in *divāns* (poetry collections), which have survived to the present day. Among the Ottoman Sultāns who paid more attention to Persian during their reigns were Beyezīd II (d. 1481-1512) and Selīm I (d. 1512-20).”<sup>162</sup> The great interest shown in Persian language and literature by the Ottoman Sultāns resulted in producing manuscripts leading to the collection of Persian works or commentaries in the Ottoman palace library. The

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<sup>161</sup> E.J.W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry* (London: Luzac, 1904), v. 3, 245.

<sup>162</sup> Osman G. Özgüdenli, “Persian Manuscripts in Ottoman and Modern Turkish Libraries,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (online).

majority of them are in the fields of literature and history. Thus, we see that most of the manuscripts were dedicated by their copyists as *waqfs* (pious endowments) to the Sultān of their time.

The Ottoman Sultāns also established a considerable number of libraries as charitable foundations (*waqf*), which existed alongside the private ones, for the benefit of *madrasa* students and the public. Mevlevī Sufis played an important role in the *madrasa* curriculum and pedagogical system by writing numerous manuscripts on Sufi manuals and poetry, which were subsequently used as teaching material. To preserve the manuscripts, “several libraries were established in provincial Ottoman cities such as Edirne, Bursa, Skopje (formerly Üsküp, in Macedonia), Amasya, Konya, Afyon and Beyşehir, in the second half of the fifteenth century.”<sup>163</sup> Such libraries belonged to *madrasas*, which were engaged mainly in the teaching of religious subjects, and, therefore, most of the manuscripts written in Arabic and Persian were kept at these libraries.

The copying of Persian books for instruction or for the private libraries of Ottoman Sultāns decreased gradually after the sixteenth century; indeed, by the 17th century, translation activities from Persian into Ottoman-Turkish had steadily increased in Anatolia.<sup>164</sup> These dates coincide with the time of Anqarawī, who lived through this period and who benefited greatly from the translation movement. In particular, his commentaries on Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and Rūmī’s *Mathnawī* were copied several times. They all were kept in *madrasas* or Sufi *tekkes* (Sufi centers) before being transmitted to the public or transferred to state libraries of Beyazid and Cem.

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

## The Commentary as a *Takmila* (“Completion”) of Book Six

Descriptions of translations or of commentaries on the *Mathnawī* sometimes lead to confusion over the absence or presence of Book Seven. Very often Book Six was treated as consisting of two parts. Such was the case with Naḥīfī’s translation; as mentioned by Cevdet Pāṣā, “the Turkish translation of Book Six of the *Mathnawī* by Naḥīfī was divided into two parts, the second half of the book was published as Book Seven.”<sup>165</sup> Also, due to the criticism Anqarawī faced from his opponents, there was an attempt to prevent the manuscript of his commentary on the *Mathnawī* from being further copied, published or distributed. Thus, some library catalogues list Book Six in two separate records, cataloguing it under two different titles. Although Anqarawī’s commentary appears in seven volumes, Book Six is in fact divided into two parts and catalogued as Book Six-Part 1 of Book 6 and Book Six-Part 2 of Book 6. For example, here is how the record for Muṣṭafā Shem‘ī’s<sup>166</sup> (d. circa 1601) commentary on Book Six appears in two manuscripts listed as R.446 and R.447 in the Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi:

**MS Topkapi, No R.446** – Copied by dervish Abūbākr b. ‘Abdullah in 1159/174. It has 435 folia and 33 lines per page, measuring 290x200 - 435x135 mm. On the 1<sup>st</sup> protective leaf of the MS, it is written: جلد سالت من شرح المثنوى و شرح جلد سادس. On the recto of

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<sup>165</sup> Cevdet Pāṣā, “Javāb-Nāmāh,” *Maktab* 33, 309.

<sup>166</sup> Muṣṭafā Shem‘ī was among the best known Ottoman commentators who lived at the time of Anqarawī. He wrote a commentary on the *Mathnawī* “upon request of Sūltān Murād III; beginning in 1587 and finishing in 1601. This commentary became popular among the Mevlevīs and was frequently read and taught in Mevlevī lodges. However, according to ‘Āshiq and Ḥasan Çelebī, Shem‘ī was lacking moral ethics and used to drink most of the time, eventually dying in poverty. Gölpınarlı considers his commentary to be defective and erroneous, and states his drinking may be responsible for its poor quality. See Abdūlbāki Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā dān sonrā Mevlevīlik*, translated into Persian as “Mawlavīyyah ba’d az Mawlānā” by Tofīq Subhānī (Tehran: Zavvār, 1990), 207.

the f. 1, it is written: *الجلد السادس من شرح المثنوى خطوط مختلفة السطر*. Here is the beginning of the text (f. 1v) as it reads:

الحمد لله الذى جعل القسم السادس من كتاب المثنوى الالهى بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وبه نستعين  
الربانى مظهر العجايب والعبر [...] [...]

An examination of the contents of this volume shows that it only covers the first half of Book Six.

**MS Topkapi, No R.447** – Containing 352 folia and 31 lines per page and measuring 300x200 - 362x140 mm, the copyist's name is unknown and he also does not provide the copy date. However, as recorded by Karatay, it was copied in the seventeenth century.<sup>167</sup> It starts with a *basmala* and it is obvious that it was copied from Shem'ī's commentary on Book Six. On the recto of the 2<sup>nd</sup> protective leaf, it reads:

جلد سادس : جلد السادس من شرح مثنوى لشمعى – حكمت درانى جاعل في الارض خليفة -  
مثنوى شرح شمعى

Although there is no explicit mention of the fact, an examination of the contents of this manuscript shows that it contains the second part of the commentary on Book Six.

The aversion to Book Seven in the case of Anqarawī's commentary was such that its presence was sometimes described in manuscripts or catalogues as the second part of Book Six of the *Mathnawī* or as a *takmila* of the latter book. Thus, some library catalogues list Book Six in two separate records, describing Book Six as part 1 of book 6, and Book Seven as part 2 of book 6. Another strategy was to describe the commentary on Book Seven

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<sup>167</sup> Karatay, Fehim Adhem, *Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Arapça Yazmalar Kataloğu*, 6 vols. (Istanbul: Topkapi sarayı müzesi, 1962-), v.2, 68.

as a “completion” (*takmila*) of the Book Six. For example in the following list of manuscripts of Anqarawī’s commentary, Book Seven is described as the *takmila* of Book Six:

Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi - MS Fethi Sezai Türkmen Mat, No. 401

-----, MS Zühtü Bey, No. 102-007

-----, MS Hüdai Efendī, No. 345-07

-----, MS H. Husnu Pāşā, No. 802-007

-----, MS Sami Benli, No. 677

-----, MS Hacı Maḥmut Efendī, No. 2201-007

-----, MS ‘Āṭif Efendī, No. 2094-007

Istanbul - Hacı Selim Ağa Kütüphanesi: MS Hüdai Efendī, No. 345

Istanbul – Beyazıt Devlet Kütüphanesi: MS Diyanet, No. 013595/

-----, MS Diyanet, No. 002529

-----, MS Diyanet, No. 004704

Istanbul – Türk Tarih Kurumu Kütüphanesi: MS No. 5290

Ankara – Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Kütüphanesi, MS No. 29175

Ankara – Gazi Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Kütüphanesi, MS Gn.1, No. 004343/49

Marmara M.U.İLAH (Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Kütüphanesi), MS Ogut, No. 562

-----, MS Arapgırlı, No. 0009

-----, MS Okturk, No. 189

-----, MS Genel, No. 1158

-----, MS Genel, No. 11785

## Anqarawī's Commentary on Book Seven: Bibliographical Background

In this part of the study, we examine the various manuscripts of Anqarawī's commentary on Book Seven of the *Mathnawī* in order to discover the relationship between the manuscripts and their copyists, their *waqf* (endowment) status, the glosses and secondary notes left on the margins, and their patronage (royal or otherwise). All of this information will help us to determine the importance of the manuscript and its place and role in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman society and afterwards.

Among the earliest bibliographical sources that provide us with some information about Anqarawī's commentary on Book Seven is the *Kashf al-Zunūn* of Ḥājī Khalīfa, known as Kātip Çelebī, 1609-57. Under the entry *Mathnawiyyāt-i Turkī*, Kātip Çelebī talks about Anqarawī's *Mathnawī* commentary and explains, "he wrote the *sharḥ* (commentary) on Book Seven in 1625 based on a manuscript dated 1411."<sup>168</sup> According to Kātip Çelebī, the *sharḥ* was not received kindly by other Mevlevī shaykhs and people of *ṭarīqat* or "Sufi order". "In an attempt to prevent its usage in Sufi centers, the opponents wrote a letter to Anqarawī presenting four different arguments explaining why the work is not original, and not written by Rūmī, thus it should not be taught in Mevlevī Sufi centers; to which in a long letter, Anqarawī responded to his critics and refuted their arguments."<sup>169</sup> Another early source, which mentions Anqarawī's name as a commentator of the *Mathnawī* who also wrote an independent *sharḥ* on Book Seven, is Naw'izādeh 'Aṭā'ī's *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥaqā'iq fī Takmilat al-Shaqā'iq*.<sup>170</sup> Anqarawī's name appears in the list of religious

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<sup>168</sup> Kātip Çelebī, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, v. 2, 1587.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 1587-1588.

<sup>170</sup> *Al-Shaqā'iq al-Nu'mānīyya fī 'Ulamā' al-Dawla al-'Uthmāniyya* is an important reference source for the history of religious scholars during the Ottoman period written by Aḥmad Taşköprizāde (1490-

scholars ('*ulamā*') who lived at the time of Sulṭān Murād b. Aḥmad Khān. According to Naw'izādeh 'Aṭā'ī, "Anqarawī was among the illustrious religious scholars, poets and Mevlevī shaykhs who died in 1630. He was known as the commentator of the *Mathnawī* and wrote an independent *sharḥ* on Book Seven in 1625. He was a *Mathnawī-khan* (teacher of the *Mathnawī*) and resided in the *zāvīya* of Iskandar Pāṣā in Gālātā Mevlevīhāne."<sup>171</sup>

As discussed by Cevdet Pāṣā, "Anqarawī's commentary on the six books of the *Mathnawī* was published by Maṭba'a 'Āmira, but Book Seven did not receive permission to be published. However, Farrukh Efendī translated the poetry of Book Seven into Turkish and, as an addendum, it went on to be published along with Naḥīfī's Turkish translation of the entire *Mathnawī*, by the Naḥīfī publication house, Egypt."<sup>172</sup> Despite strong opposition and disputes imposed by Mevlevī Shaykhs and Sufis such as Ṣabūḥī, the Shaykh of Yenīkāpī Mevlevī lodge<sup>173</sup>, Anqarawī went on to write his commentary on Book Seven. He maintained using it for the purpose of teaching as curriculum material at the Gālātā Mevlevī lodge, where he was training his pupils and students.

Thus, it does not come as a surprise that Anqarawī's commentary was copied the most by Mevlevī dervishes, including his direct disciples. It also benefited greatly from

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1561). It includes the biographies of more than 500 religious scholars and Sufī shaykhs who lived in the Ottoman Empire before 1558. The work has been completed by several authors. For example, mention should be made of Aṣīk Çelebī's (d. 1572) Ottoman translation and completion, Muḥtasibzāde Meḥmed Ḥakī's (d. 1567) translation under the title *Ḥadā'iq al-Rayḥān*, Mehmed Mecdi's (d. 1590) translation entitled *Ḥadā'iq al-Shaqā'iq*, and the continuations of İṣṭipli Ḥüseyin Sadrī (d. 1585), Lütüfibezyade Mehmed b. Mustafa (d. 1587), and 'Alī b. Bali (d. 1584). However, Naw'izādeh 'Aṭā'ī's (d. 1635) *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥaqā'iq fī Takmilat al-Shaqā'iq* has become the standard continuation from which other biographers continued the work from the date he left off. For further explanation, see Atcil's PhD Thesis, "The formation of the Ottoman learned class and legal scholarship (1300-1600)," 11-12.

<sup>171</sup> Naw'izādeh 'Aṭā'ī, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥaqā'iq fī Takmilat al-Shaqā'iq*, v. 2, 765.

<sup>172</sup> Cevdet Pāṣā, "Javāb-Nāmāh," 310.

<sup>173</sup> Yetik, *Ismail-i Ankarawī: Hayati, Eserleri ve Tasavvufi Görüşleri*, 69.

Sultān Murād IV’s patronage, a fact mentioned in the colophon of the manuscripts. According to the records of various library catalogues, the manuscript was copied frequently since the time of Anqarawī and remained in the *awqāf* of Mevlevī *tekkes*, *madrasas*, Sufi Shaykhs or Mevlevī leaders before the copies were transferred to the “manuscript” (*yazmālār*) or the “rare books” (*nādir eserler*) collections of the Ottoman libraries. Despite the fact that its publication was prevented, the manuscript maintained its popularity for over 300 years and was copied several times, benefiting from the patronage of various Ottoman Sultāns over time. The earliest date of copy as indicated in the colophon of the manuscripts is 1035 AH during the reign of Sultān Murād IV and it went on to be reproduced until 1893 CE, which coincides with the time of Sultān ‘Abdulḥamīd II (d. 1918).

The piece under study appears under various titles:

*Fātiḥu ’l- Ebyāt,*

*Şerḥ-i Cild-i Sābi ’-i Mesnevī,*

*Şerḥ-i Mesnevī,*

*Şerḥ-i Cildi’s- Sābi ’-i Mine ’l Mesnevī,*

*Mesnevīnīn Yedinçī Cildīnīn Şerḥī,*

*Kit’a min Şerḥ-i Mathnawī al-Mawlavī l’il Ismā ’l Anqarawī,*

*Şerḥ-i Mesnevī-i Anqarawī,*

*Cild-i Sābi ’,*

*Mesnevī Şerḥī,*

*Çild-i Sābi ’, li Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī Ma’a Şerḥi-hi al-Anqarawī*

Anqarawī’s commentary on Book Seven appears for the most part as an individual text and, in few rare cases, is copied as part of his commentary on the entire *Mathnawī* (Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi – MS Nūruosmāniye, No. 2473). All of which confirms that



there was a growing interest in this book along with an anxiety over producing Book Seven and attributing it to Rūmī. For the most part, the copyists were the Mevlevī dervishes or Shaykhs who were residents of Mevlevī *tekkes* such as Gālātā Mevlevīhāne, Murād Mullā or Qāsim Pāṣā and dedicated their work to the Sulṭān of their time, Sulṭān Murād IV. In some cases, pupils of Anqarawī such as Ghanim Dede or Kātip Dede wrote out the commentary. This could suggest that Gālātā Mevlevīhāne dervishes were the main copyists, transmitters and promoters of the commentary. The majority of the manuscripts were copied during Anqarawī’s lifetime or shortly after his death, which indicates the heavy promotion the commentary received from some Mevlevī Shaykhs. However, despite the fact that the Mevlevīs in general benefitted from the Sulṭān’s patronage, due to the strong opposition by some Mevlevī Shaykhs and Sufis, the manuscript never gained permission for publication. But its abundant copies suggest that it was used as teaching material in some *madrasas* and Mevlevī *tekkes*.

Interestingly enough, the Topkapi Palace Library does not hold a copy of Anqarawī’s commentary on Book Seven. It is worth mentioning that the palace archive preserves some of the oldest and most important archival records concerning the history of the Ottoman Empire. Since the establishment of the palace in the fifteenth century, archival records and books have always been stored at the palace library. From the earliest periods of the dynasty’s history, learned men donated and dedicated their works to the Ottoman Sulṭāns. Its holdings are distinguished by many rare and unique manuscripts, including many early copies of important works and a number of autographed manuscripts. “The majority of the library’s collection consists of works related to Islamic religious sciences

along with many works of history, grammar, poetry, *belles lettres*, and other sciences.”<sup>174</sup>

It was expected to find a copy of Anqarawī’s commentary on Book Seven at the Topkapi Palace Library, since other volumes of his *Mathnawī* commentary are listed in the Topkapi catalogue.<sup>175</sup> However, despite the patronage Anqarawī and several copyists received for writing and copying the commentary, the palace collection surprisingly does not include a single copy of Book Seven. This raises a question as to why Anqarawī did not send a copy of his commentary on Book Seven to the palace? Did he write the commentary merely for the purpose of teaching it in the Gālātā Mevlevīhāne and, due to the conflicts he had with some religious groups, he refrained from sending it to the palace? Given that the Topkapi collection is an indispensable source for historians concerned with Ottoman history prior to the nineteenth century, the lack of certain documents or sources could suggest that either certain documents or books were sent out to the palace as gifts, or perhaps were lost over time, or were destroyed, or, due to certain political or social pressures imposed upon specific authors or religious scholars, the original documents were not sent to the palace in the first place. Having a copy of Anqarawī’s signed manuscript at the Topkapi Palace Library would have suggested that it had attained both authority and legitimacy. Thus, the commentary could have been established as an approved document to be authorized officially by the Sultān and consequently could have received permission (*ijāza*) to be taught officially in *madrāsas* or Mevlevī *tekkes*.

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<sup>174</sup> For further information see Christopher Markiewicz, “Topkapi Palace Museum: Archive and Library,” *HAZİNE*, 10 October 2013, <http://hazine.info/2013/10/10/topkapiarchiveandlibrary/>.

<sup>175</sup> For instance, Anqarawī’s *sharḥ* entitled *Fātiḥu’l-Ebyāt* appears in the Topkapi catalogue as follows: vol.1 of the *Mathnawī* is listed as K.1011, vols. 1-4 and 4-5 as A.1360, vol. 3 as R.452. For detailed information on each volume, see Fehim Adhem Karatay, *Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Arapça Yazmalar Kataloğu*, 6 vols. (Istanbul: Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi, 1962- ), v.2, 64.

## Historical Survey of the Manuscripts

The existing manuscripts of Anqarawī's commentary on Book Seven are preserved in Turkey's various libraries as follows: Süleymaniye, Istanbul Üniversitesi Merkez, Belediye, Konya's Mevlânâ Müzesi Kütüphanesi, Ankara's Mellî Kütüphanesi and Bursa's İnebey Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi. I have divided the manuscripts into two categories:<sup>176</sup>

a) Manuscripts with first ownership include those copied by the first author with abundant marginal notes, or commissioned by wealthy patrons or Sultāns, or transcribed by scholars and students in dedication to Anqarawī or for their personal use. Numerous certificates of transmissions, collation notes and the word *waqf* demonstrate the status of first ownership. With the exception of Konya MS Mevlânâ Müzesi, No.2067, all of the first ownership manuscripts are preserved at the Süleymaniye Library (MS Hāmīdiye, No. 675, MS Nūruosmāniye, No. 2473, MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, MS Ayāşofya, No.1929, MS Dārulmesnevī No.245). The Süleymaniye holds the oldest copy of the manuscript, with ample information on *waqf* ownership, including numerous marginal notes on the subject of the conflict between Anqarawī and his opponents. The copyist's name along with a supplication for the Sultān to whom the manuscript is dedicated and the Sufi lodge that endorsed the manuscript appears in the colophon. Some manuscripts are copied on illuminated paper decorated with golden color framed lines and written in beautiful *nasta'alīq* script. Because of their importance for this study, these manuscripts will be discussed in the current chapter.

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<sup>176</sup> I have followed Adam Gacek's model of categorizing manuscripts based on their ownership; see Adam Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts: a Vademecum for Readers*, (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

b) Manuscripts with subsequent ownership: these manuscripts include often-incomplete copies lacking the name of the copyist or the date of copying. They are copied from earlier manuscripts with no information on the *waqf* status and without supplication or marginal notes. For the most part, they are copied much later than Anqarawī's time. In some cases, the handwriting is unreadable. Some of these manuscripts are preserved at the Süleymaniye and the rest belong to Bursa's Inebey, Ankara's Melli and Konya's Mevlānā libraries. Due to their secondary importance and in order to make it easier for readers to follow the line of argument, the analysis of these manuscripts is found in Appendix II.

A): Manuscripts with first ownership

*Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi*

The Süleymaniye Library (Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi) has one of the largest collections of Islamic manuscripts in the world and is also the largest manuscript library in Turkey. Since its establishment in 1918, the library's vast collection of manuscripts has made it one of the most important centers for researchers working on all periods and regions of the study of Islam. The library is located within the Süleymaniye Mosque complex in the Fātiḥ District of Istanbul and holds an extensive collection of manuscripts in Ottoman Turkish, Arabic and Persian. "Manuscripts range in copy date from the 11<sup>th</sup> century to the twentieth century, with the majority produced in the seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries."<sup>177</sup>

Most of the copies of Anqarawī's commentary on Book Seven with first ownership

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<sup>177</sup> For more information on the Süleymaniye Library and its manuscript collections, see Nir Shafir and Christopher Markiewicz, "Süleymaniye Library", *Hazine*, 10 October 2013, <http://hazine.info/2013/10/10/suleymaniye-library/>.

are preserved in the Süleymaniye Library in the following collections: ‘Āṭif Efendī, Hālet Efendī, Hālet Efendī Ek, Dārulmesnevī, Esed Efendī, H. Hayri-‘Ābid Efendī, Ḥamīdiye, Ayāşofya, Nūruosmāniye, Yāzmā Bāgişlar, Lāla Ismā‘il and Mihrişāh Sulṭān. As mentioned above, the Süleymaniye collection is significant for preserving the oldest copies of Anqarawī’s commentary on Book Seven. Most of the copyists were Mevlevī dervishes at Gālātā Mevlevīhāne or Anqarawī’s pupils, such as Ghanim Dede and Dervish Muḥammad Mawlavī known as Kātip Dede. In most cases, the manuscripts are dedicated as a *waqf* to Mevlevī centers. Per valuable information that we gather from the colophons, most of the copies were dedicated to Sulṭān Murād IV as a gift and possibly benefited from his patronage. All of which indicates that there was an increasing interest in copying the controversial manuscript despite the backlash it had received and the heavy criticism its author faced from other Sufis, Mevlevī Shaykhs and dervishes.

- **Süleymaniye MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574**

Variant title: *Mesnevīnīn Yedīnçī Cildīnīn Şerhī*; “Commentary on Book Seven of the *Mathnawī*.” A note on the recto of the protective leaf claims that the manuscript was copied in 1625 (1035) by Anqarawī himself.<sup>178</sup>

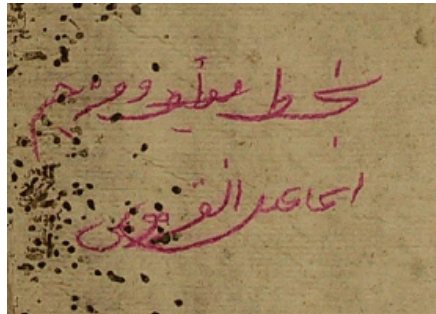


Figure 2. MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574, verso of the first protective leaf

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<sup>178</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574, verso of the first protective leaf.

It has 200 folia and 35 lines per page, measuring 293 x 179 – 230 x 124 mm. There is some information about its provenance. According to the seal appearing on the first leaf, the manuscript became part of the collection of Muḥammad [...] ‘Ārif-zādeh, Qāḍī of *Yenişehir Fenār*, sābiqan in 1718.<sup>179</sup>

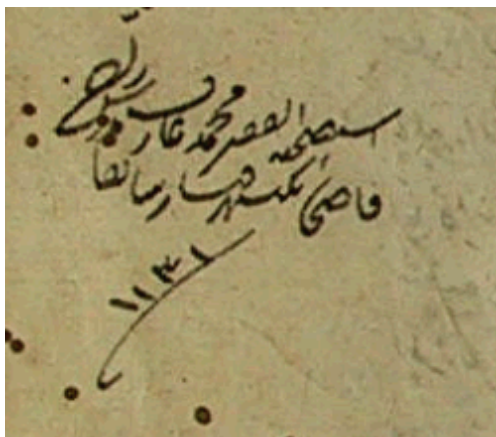


Figure 3. MS *Yāzmā Bāgişlar*, No. 6574, verso of the first protective leaf

The margins of the paper are damaged due to mold and humidity; numerous small holes appear on both sides of each folio leaf and in the binding area. Unlike other manuscripts copied by different copyists who mentioned Anqarawī’s name in their gloss to clarify what he meant in his commentary, the notes in the gloss of the *Yāzmā Bāgişlar* manuscript appear more as self-explanatory remarks, as if the copyist, possibly Anqarawī himself, added extra notes and remarks for further clarification. Nevertheless, by comparing the piece in question with two other manuscripts of the commentary on Book One of the *Mathnawī* surely written in Anqarawī’s handwriting according to Süleymaniye cataloguers,

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 1a.

Süleymaniye: Hâlet Efendî, No. 274 and Şehid ‘Alî Pâşâ, No. 1269, we come to realize that Yāzmā Bāğışlar was most probably not copied by Anqarawî.

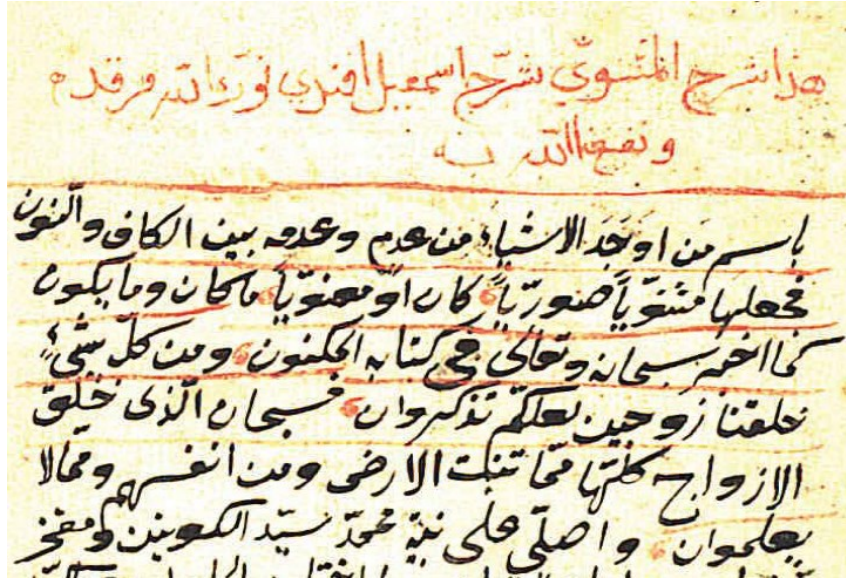


Figure 4. MS Hâlet Efendî, No. 274, f.1b. Book One of the *Mathnawî*

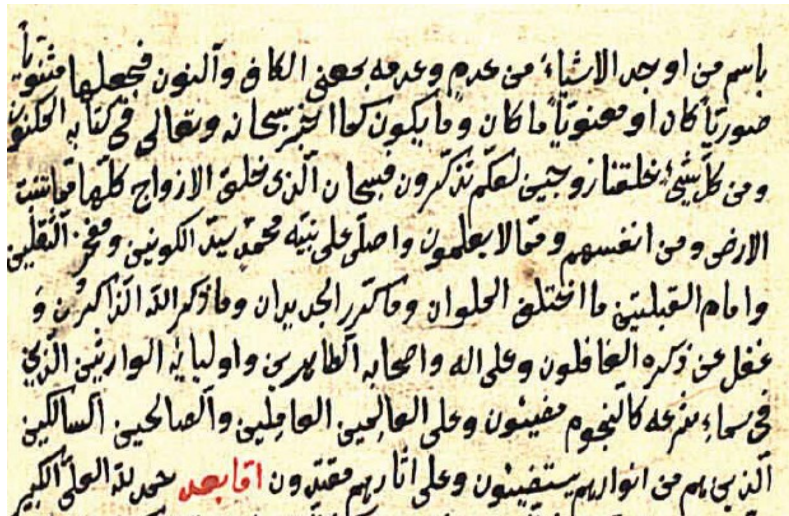


Figure 5. Şehid ‘Alî Pâşâ, No. 1269, f.1b. Book One of the *Mathnawî*

While the handwriting of Süleymaniye: Hālet Efendī, No. 274 and Şehid ‘Alī Pāşā, No. 1269 are very similar, the handwriting of Yāzmā Bāğişlar is different. Furthermore, the words (*li mu'allifihu*) “for the author” at the end before the concluding prayer of Yāzmā Bāğişlar is a proof that someone copied from another manuscript and added an extra note in praise of Anqarawī.<sup>180</sup>

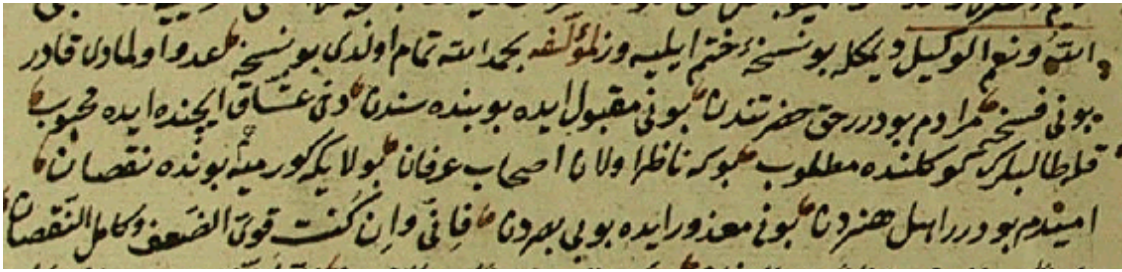


Figure 6. MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, f.200 a.

The additional praising words and prayer are identical in all manuscripts, suggesting that perhaps it was added by one of his close pupils, such as Ghanim Dede, and that all other manuscripts are copies of Yāzmā Bāğişlar.

Yāzmā Bāğişlar also makes reference to the name of a copyist or glossist on the gloss of f.123b. His name is Seyyed Riḍā Naqshbandī. In an attempt to make some clarifications and explanatory notes, the copyist of Yāzmā Bāğişlar was not sure about the reading, so he mentioned the latter’s name. The explanation for this could be that an older manuscript of Book Seven was copied by Riḍā Naqshbandī from which the copyist of Yāzmā Bāğişlar prepared his commentary or that he compared his edition with

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid., f. 200a.



Naqshbandī's edition and added extra note to the gloss. However, he does not provide us with any information on Naqshbandī's copy, its date and location.

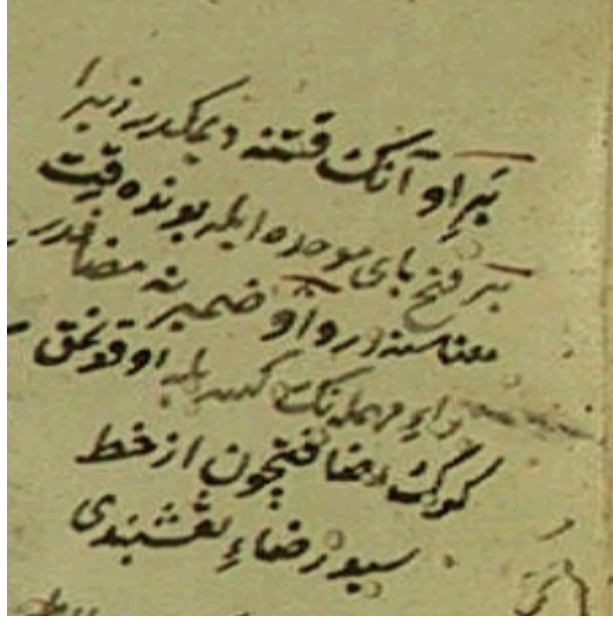


Figure 7. MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574, f.123 b. Note on the gloss.

It is also worth mentioning that some of the notes appearing in the gloss were copied wrongly by other copyists. For example, in an explanatory note appearing on the gloss of folio 48b, the copyist or author of the gloss explains that Book Seven appeared in the Shām in 1010 (1601/1602 CE) and its appearance came to the attention of Būstān Çelebī, the leader of the Mevlevī order, who sent a few dervishes to the Shām to investigate the authenticity of the book. Upon their return, the dervishes affirmed that the book was authored by Rūmī:

This humble servant (faqir) heard from reliable sources that the Book Seven appeared in Shām sometime around 1010. Its reputation was spread among people, so that even Būstān Çelebī sent a few dervishes to Shām to acquire a copy of the

book. The dervishes went to Shām, made some investigations and were able to acquire a copy. Through the divine wisdom (*ḥikmat*), it became clear who the author of the text is.<sup>181</sup>

Unlike other notes in the gloss that are completed with the word *ṣaḥiḥ* (meaning that a correction was made by the copyist), the abovementioned note on the gloss ends followed by the phrase *minhu* (منه; i.e. from him). The explanation is that the copyist is referring to the fact that the information comes to us from Anqarawī himself and the copyist copied the note exactly as it was made by Anqarawī in his gloss, or, perhaps, he even heard the story from Anqarawī directly. Likewise, a note left in the gloss of MSS Ayāşofya, No. 1929, which, however gives 1012 (1603/1604), repeats the story about that Būstān Çelebī sending his dervishes to investigate Book Seven.<sup>182</sup>

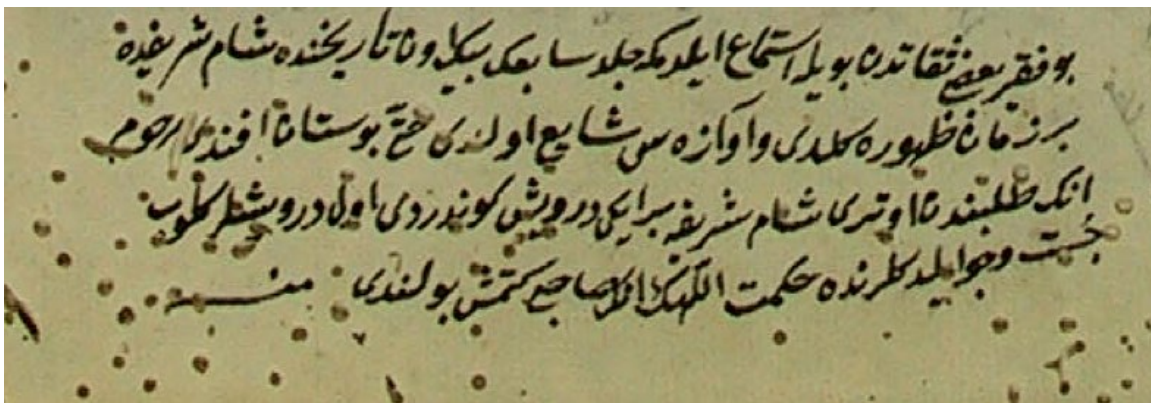


Figure 8. MS Yāzmā Bāğışlar, No. 6574, f.48b. Note on the gloss.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., f. 48b.

<sup>182</sup> MS Ayāşofya, No 1929, f. 75a.

Ayāşofya 1929 is an early manuscript, which was most likely copied in 1625 (1035) and the difference in the dates could indicate a grammar mistake, inconsistency or misreading by the copyist.

In another marginal note, the copyist highlights the name of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī in reference to the section where his name appears in the commentary.<sup>183</sup> The manuscript ends with a concluding prayer indicating gratitude to the Lord Almighty, who protected the commentary from the hand of opponents and evil ones, which will be used as a guidance and light for those who are in the path of Sufism surrounded by the darkness of ignorance and obliviousness. There is also a signature on the right side of the colophon indicating that the manuscript was read and studied by someone called Muḥammad [...] b. Ibrāhīm.<sup>184</sup> Indeed, this otherwise unknown Muḥammad [...] b. Ibrāhīm may be the copyist of Yāzmā Bāgişlar.

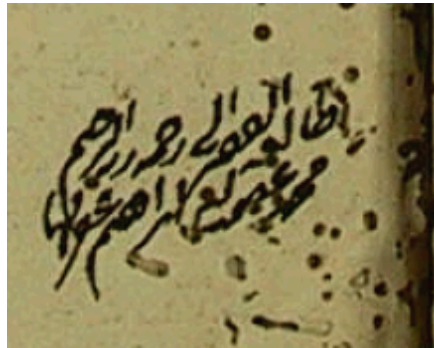


Figure 9. MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574, f.200 a.

All of this proves that this is a very valuable manuscript, which provides important information on its authorship and ownership status. There is no information on the *waqf*

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid., f. 178b.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., f. 200a.

status of the manuscript, and the colophon ends with a supplication to Sulṭān Murād IV. Due to its early date of copying and the abundance of information in the gloss and marginal notes, I have primarily based my analysis on this particular manuscript.

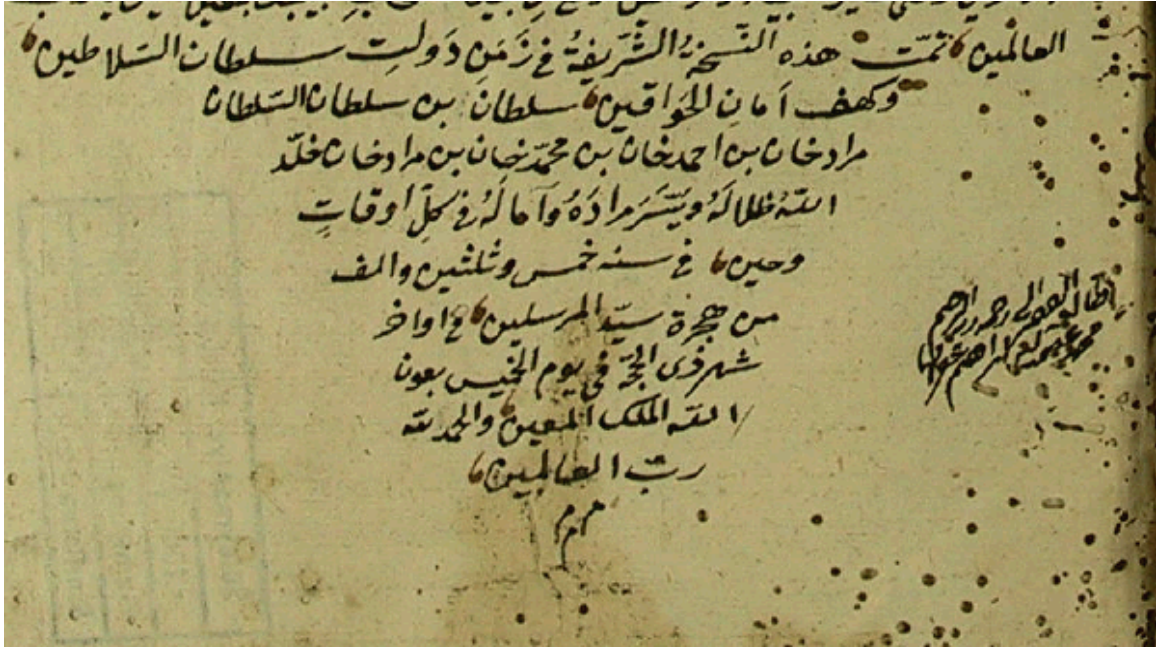


Figure 10. MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, f.200 a. colophon.

- **Süleymaniye MS Dārulmesnevī No.245**

Variant title: *Şerḥ-i Cild-i Sābi‘-i Mesnevī*. The manuscript was copied in 1625 (1035) by Ḥāfiẓ Khalīl al-Mudarris. It has 435 folia and 23 lines per page, measuring 190 x 170 - 140 x 110 mm. This manuscript contains separating marks, where sentences are separated; the Ḥadīth and Qur’ānic verses are underlined and each verse begins with the word “*Mathnawī*” in red. The chapter headings and titles of the tales are also written in red. There is a note and a seal on the protective leaf indicating the name of Ḥāfiẓ Khalīl as the

copyist<sup>185</sup> and the record from the Süleymaniye library catalogue confirms this information. However, there is a note that appears at the end of the colophon mentioning Dervish Maḥmūd al-Mawlavī as the copyist.<sup>186</sup> The first 24 folios contain abundant marginal notes and corrections.

The notes and remarks that appear in the gloss provide useful information on what Anqarawī meant by his comments and arguments and clarify that the copyist wants to defend the commentator and support his arguments. The verse in which the date of the composition of Book Seven (670/1271) is mentioned is highlighted in the gloss.<sup>187</sup> It should be mentioned that before beginning his commentary on the poems of Book Seven, Anqarawī provides us with an elaborate detailed introduction where he explains why there was a need to write a commentary and also mentions the dispute he had with his opponents.

In the following chapter, I will be examining Anqarawī's introduction to the commentary on Book Seven. In fact, in his commentary, Anqarawī criticizes Muṣṭafā Shem'ī, who was also a *Mathnawī* commentator, for his lack of understanding of the *Mathnawī*. In a supporting note left on the margin, Ḥāfiẓ Khalīl argues that Anqarawī's critique is justified, and points out his critique of Shem'ī's obvious errors.<sup>188</sup> The marginal note clearly defends Anqarawī and, since the copy date took place during the lifetime of Anqarawī himself, this could also suggest that Ḥāfiẓ Khalīl was one of Anqarawī's pupils and adherents. This important manuscript is very useful in providing us with extra

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<sup>185</sup> MS Dārulmesnevī, No. 245, 1a.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., f. 434b.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., f. 4b.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., f.13b. Anqarawī's arguments regarding his justification for writing the commentary is the subject of the next chapter, where I examine Shem'ī's critique and Anqarawī's response.

information on the ownership of the manuscript as well as about the dispute between Anqarawī and other Mevlevī Shaykhs, Sufis or *Mathnawī* commentators. However, it is not clear why Ḥāfiẓ Khalīl provided his elaborated marginal notes only on the first 24 leaves and did not continue with his clarifications and remarks.

The extra information provided in the gloss can raise some important questions. It is important that the manuscript was copied at the time of Anqarawī, likely by one of his close pupils, and perhaps even viewed by Anqarawī himself. The detailed information about the dispute between Anqarawī and his opponents revealed by the copyist in the gloss begs the question to what extent Anqarawī approved of such revelations. Had he wanted to expose his opinions about the *'ulamā'*, other *Mathnawī* commentators and the Sufis of his time on the subject of Book Seven, he could have done so himself; why then would he allow his pupils and other dervishes to reveal the details of the debate?

Two seals on the protective leaf and one seal on the first folio indicate that the manuscript was in the *waqf* of Seyyed Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Murād, the Shaykh of the Murād Mullā *tekke*, before being transferred to the Süleymaniye's Dārulmesnevi collection. The *waqf* seal could suggest that the Shaykh of Murād Mullā *tekke* was amongst the supporters of Anqarawī and had a favorable view towards Book Seven and its commentary. Ḥāfiẓ Khalīl ends his copy with a prayer to Sulṭān Murād IV and by dedicating his book as a *waqf* to him.<sup>189</sup>

- **Süleymaniye MS Ayāşofya, No. 1929**

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

Variant title: *Fātiḥu'l- Ebyāt*. It has 320 folia and 25 lines per page measuring 206 x 142 - 168 x 112 mm. The seal on the last folio reads that it is in the *waqf* of Hājī Muḥammad Pāšā, although the seal on the protective leaf reads that it was gifted as a *waqf* to Sulṭān al-Ghāzī Maḥmūd Khān (d.1754). The colophon informs us that the manuscript was copied and dedicated to the Sulṭān Murād Khān IV.<sup>190</sup> This manuscript was copied in 1625 (1035) and several correcting notes and comments appear in the margins. There is a note highlighting the date of composition (the year 670/1271), which is an attempt to suggest that Book Seven was composed by Rūmī two years before his death.<sup>191</sup>

The copyist's remarks shed some light on the origins of Book Seven. For instance, on the issue of the place and the date that Book Seven was composed, the copyist highlights Anqarawī's note:

Apparently Book Seven was found in 1012 (1603/1604) in the Shām and its fame came to the attention of so many Sufis including Būstān Çelebī – the leader of Mevlevī order at the time of Anqarawī—who then sent some of his dervishes to the Shām to investigate the authenticity of the book and, with the help and guidance of the Lord Almighty, I was able to verify its author.<sup>192</sup>

There is a change of handwriting that takes place starting from folio 265a until the end of the manuscript. According to the Süleymaniye catalogue, the copyist's name is recorded as Ismā'īl Ḥaqqī (Ḥakkī) b. Muṣṭafā al-Jalvetī al-Būrsevī (also pronounced Būrselī, someone who is from Bursa) (d. 1725).<sup>193</sup> This cannot be true due to the fact that Ḥaqqī

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<sup>190</sup> MS Ayāşofya, No.1929, ff. 2a, 320b.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 2a.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., f.75a.

<sup>193</sup> The Ottoman scholar, Sufi, poet, calligrapher and musician Ismā'īl Ḥaqqī Būrsevī was a famous Shaykh of the Jalwatiyyah order founded by the Shaykh Üftade (d. 1581) and 'Azīz Maḥmūd Hüdayī (d. 1628). He was born in Aydos, in present-day Bulgaria. He was educated in both *sharī'a* sciences and Sufism

Bürsevī was born in 1653, whereas the manuscript was copied in 1625 (1035). However, the handwriting and the copy date indicate that this is one of the oldest manuscripts and was probably copied at the time of Anqarawī. Having two different handwritings makes it difficult to verify who the actual copyist was and there are no remarks or notes on the gloss explaining the change in handwriting. Since the manuscript was copied by more than one person, none of them decided to sign the manuscript as the sole copyist.

- **Süleymaniye MS Nūruosmāniye, No. 2473**

Variant title: *Fātiḥu'l- Ebyāt*. This is one of the rare collections where the manuscript appears as part of the entire *Mathnawī* and appears in the continuation of Book Six. It has 643 folia and Book Seven includes ff. 438-644 with 35 lines per page. None of the copies include marginal notes or correcting remarks. There was no record in the catalogue about the measurements of the paper or book cover. According to the seal on the recto of the protective leaf, the manuscript was in the *waqf* of Sulṭān Abū al-Najīb ‘Uthmān Khān b. Sulṭān Muṣṭafā Khān, known as ‘Uthmān III (d. 1757).<sup>194</sup> According to the colophon, Book Six was copied in 1626 (1036) by Dervish Ghanim,<sup>195</sup> the beloved disciple and pupil of

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and, in 1685, he moved to Bursa. Bürsevī authored over one hundred books and treatises in Arabic, Persian and Turkish. His most important works are in the field of Qur’ānic commentary and Sufism, but he also wrote on *Ḥadīth*, jurisprudence, *kalām*, grammar, literature, and history. Bürsevī’s writings reflect the heavy influence of Ibn al-‘Arabī, Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī and Rūmī, and are in many ways a synthesis of the Akbarī and Mawlawī perspectives; a synthesis that we see throughout Ottoman intellectual history. With respect to this kind of writing, Bürsevī’s commentary on the *Mathnawī* is particularly interesting. For further information see “Bürsevī, Isma‘īl Ḥakkī” in *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Oliver Leaman (Oxford: Continuum, 2006).

<sup>194</sup> MS Nūruosmāniye, No. 2473, 4a.

<sup>195</sup> Dervish Ghanim, or Ghanim Dede also known as (*qūzī*) “lamb,” was among Anqarawī’s beloved disciples. As an orphaned baby, he was placed on Anqarawī’s doorstep, was adopted by the latter and grew up at his master’s house and trained as a Mevlevī dervish. He is also famous for his fine handwriting and copied all of Anqarawī’s commentaries on the *Mathnawī*. Due to his close relationship with Anqarawī, his copies are considered among the most reliable manuscripts. He is buried in the graveyard next to Anqarawī’s



Anqarawī.<sup>196</sup> The colophon of Book Seven concludes with a closing prayer but there is no date or copyist's name mentioned. However, the handwriting and script of both volumes are identical; thus, we may conclude that both copies were written by Dervish Ghanim. Since Ghanim was living at the time of Anqarawī and the latter had confidence in the loyalty and knowledge of the former, it can be suggested that Nūruosmāniye No. 2473 is amongst the most reliable manuscripts with few errors in editing and copying.

The importance of this manuscript lies not only in the undoubtedly reliable copyist, who was one of the most loyal pupils of Anqarawī, but also in the fact that it is an illuminated and illustrated manuscripts, which includes a beautifully decorated opening page. Golden borderlines throughout the manuscript are used to cover the writing. Inverted commas are in red ink and gold linked counters are used as paragraph marks or as text dividers. The main text is executed in an elegant heavy *naskh* script. The binding consists of red and gold leather covered boards with gilt onlaid medallions and corner-pieces. Indeed, the high quality of the manuscript may indicate that it was meant to be gifted as a *waqf* to the Sultān. The chapter headings, titles and the word *Mathnawī*, used as a separating mark for the verses, are all in red. There is no information on who the illuminator of the manuscript was. The manuscript ends with a concluding supplication.

- **Süleymaniye MS Ḥamīdiye, No. 675**

Variant title: *Şerḥ-i Mesnevī*. The manuscript was copied by Ismā'īl b. Baktāsh in 1628 (1038). It has 237 folia and 35 lines per page, measuring 295 x 175 - 230 x 100 mm. As

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tomb in Gālātā Mevlevī, Istanbul. See Muştafā Sākib (Sākib Dede), *Sefīne-i Nefīse-i Mevlevīyān*, 3 vols. (Mişr: Maṭba'a Vehbiyye, 1867), v. 3, 54-55.

<sup>196</sup> MS Nūruosmāniye, No. 2473, ff. 421b-422a.

indicated on the recto of the protective leaf it was in the *waqf* of Sultān ‘Abdul Ḥamīd Khān b. Sultān Aḥmad Khān (d.1730) and his representative (*dā‘ī*) Seyyed ‘Alī Bahjat.<sup>197</sup> It is illuminated with two seals: the first one appears above the *waqf* statement and includes a prayer note and the second and smaller seal appears on the bottom of the note that mentions the *dā‘ī* Seyyed ‘Alī Bahjat.<sup>198</sup> There are some correcting notes and remarks in the margins.

The copyist Ismā‘īl b. Baktāsh provides us with some useful information about the nature of the conflict between Anqarawī and his opponents by adding his own comments in the gloss. For example, on the subject of Ibn ‘Arabī’s alleged excommunication (*takfīr*) by Anqarawī, Ismā‘īl b. Baktāsh highlights the section where he assumes Anqarawī criticizes Ibn ‘Arabī.<sup>199</sup> His comments confirm the commonly-held theory that Anqarawī was forced to excommunicate Ibn ‘Arabī in his commentary on Book Seven in order to reconcile with other religious scholars with whom he was in conflict. If this assertion is to be believed, Anqarawī’s attempt contradicts his heavy reliance on Akbarian doctrine in his commentaries on the *Mathnawī* and the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*.

As discussed by Cevdet Pāşā, the actual author of Book Seven directly attacks the doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī. Likewise, in order to have a reconciliation with the Qāḍīzādeh family, Anqarawī was forced to write a commentary on this book to disassociate himself from Ibn ‘Arabī’s teachings.<sup>200</sup> Elsewhere, Ismā‘īl b. Baktāsh highlights the lines where

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<sup>197</sup> MS Ḥamīdiye, No. 675, f. 2a.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> The gloss appears on the margin of f. 27a.

<sup>200</sup> Cevdet Pāşā, *Tazkira*, ed. Cavid Baysun (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basimevei, 1986), 4: 229-236.

Anqarawī criticizes Ibn ‘Arabī by adding his own note clarifying the position of Anqarawī on the matter.<sup>201</sup> All of which highlights the political and religious conflict Anqarawī had with his opponents and emphasizes the importance of the issue at the time. It therefore helps us to understand the intellectual milieu, and social and religious conflicts among the ‘*ulamā*’ and Sufis in Ottoman society in the seventeenth century. The manuscript ends with a supplication to Sultān Murād IV, pointing out its dedication as an endowment to the Sultān.<sup>202</sup>

- **Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No.2067**

Variant title: *Şerh-i Mesnevī: Mawlāna’ya Isnād Edilan Yedinci Cild-in Şerhī* “commentary on the alleged Book Seven attributed to Rūmī.” The manuscript was written in 1824 (1239) and appears in 275 folia with 29 lines per page, measuring 24 x 17 - 17 x 11 mm. It is among the most important manuscripts since it belonged to a Çelebī, a family member of Rūmī and a leader of the Mevlevī order. As indicated on the protective leaf, it was copied from an earlier manuscript by Dervish Idrīs Sar Khalīfa-i Qalam-i Muqābalah-i Sawārī in 1824 (1239).<sup>203</sup> It also includes the handwriting of Mehmed Said Hemdem Çelebī (d. 1858-9), the 23<sup>rd</sup> Çelebī, Rūmī’s 15<sup>th</sup> great- grandchild,<sup>204</sup> indicating that the manuscript came to his possession as a *waqf* from Partev Pāşā, who was in charge of the

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<sup>201</sup> MS Hāmidiye, No. 675, ff. 75b-76b.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., f. 237b.

<sup>203</sup> MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No. 2067, f. 1a.

<sup>204</sup> After Rūmī’s death, his pupil Husameddin Çelebī was offered the post of Mevlevī leader. Later it became a tradition to select a post Çelebī among the male members of Rūmī’s family. The current Çelebī, Faruk Hemdem, is the son of Dr. Çelebī and is the 20<sup>th</sup> great-grandson of Rūmī (22<sup>nd</sup> generation descendant) and he is the 33<sup>rd</sup> Çelebī to occupy the post. For further information on the Çelebī family see [http://mevlana.net/family\\_list.html](http://mevlana.net/family_list.html)

minister's office in 1832.<sup>205</sup> The text is written in red ink to indicate the importance of the certificate note. The note is accompanied by three other seals verifying the spiritual position of Muḥammad Sait Hemdem Çelebī, describing him as “sitting on the sheep skin” (*pūst-nashīn*).<sup>206</sup> The title is given to the *baba*, Shaykh or head of a dervish *tekke* in Persian and Ottoman Turkish Sufi practice. On the first protective leaf, we find a different handwriting using blue ink as opposed to the black ink used for the composition, pointing out the words “unseen (divine) gift” (*vahab-i ghaybī*). The term is mentioned in a verse from Book Seven (f. 65a) and explains that the attributed title of Book Seven is the “divine gift.”<sup>207</sup>

MS Istanbul Atatürk Kütüphanesi OE-Y2, No. 36, copied by dervish Şeydā in 1625,<sup>208</sup> also makes reference to the term *Vahab-i ghaybī*. This could suggest that dervish İdrīs (the copyist of the Konya manuscript) had possibly seen Şeydā's copy or provided his copy based on the former manuscript. This also shows the relationship between two different manuscripts and their authors produced in two different time periods. The copyist also provides a table of contents for the commentary (ff. ib-ia), which makes it easy to find different tales and anecdotes. There are few marginal notes and corrections in the gloss and the manuscript ends with a prayer remark. This is an illuminated manuscript with motifs and decorated head-crowns painted in gold, green and red. The actual text appears within a gold frame line (ff. 1b-2a), whereas, in the rest of the manuscript, the text appears

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., protective leaf 1a.

<sup>208</sup> MS Atatürk Kütüphanesi OE-Y2, No. 36. F. 1a.

within a red frame line. Gold and red dots are used as separating marks and titles and the beginning of each verse are written using red ink.

### **Concluding Notes**

The aforementioned manuscripts have provided us with very useful information about the text and its authorship, ownership, *waqf* status and the patronage it received from the Ottoman Sultāns, as well as about the commentator, the nature of Anqarawī's dispute with his opponents, and his pupils' engagement in said famous dispute. Most of the manuscripts followed Anqarawī's colophon in praising Sultān Murād IV and expressing gratitude on being able to complete the copy and protect it from enemies and ignorant ones. Although *Yāzmā Bāğışlar* 6574 is the oldest manuscript I was able to find, it is doubtful that it was written by Anqarawī himself. Despite the note on the cover leaf naming Anqarawī as the main author, the handwriting of *Yāzmā Bāğışlar* is different than that of the *Ḥālet Efendi* 274 and *Şehīd 'Alī Pāşā* 1269 manuscripts, where the authenticity of Anqarawī's handwriting is not disputed.

Among the verses highlighted by the copyists through the extra notes and remarks is the verse in which the date of the composition for Book Seven is mentioned. The copyists emphasized that the poetry was completed a few years before Rūmī's death. Another point that drew their attention was that Anqarawī allegedly excommunicated Ibn 'Arabī; copyists and composers' remarks in fact seem to overemphasize the importance of this issue. However, there is no explanation as to why there was such a sudden shift in an Akbarian commentator's mind and beliefs. Finally, Būstān Çelebī's awareness of Book Seven and his sending of a few of his dervishes to the Shām, where the initial copy appeared, to investigate its authenticity is another important issue brought to the light in the glosses by

the copyists. All of which demonstrates how important it was for the copyists to deal with the authenticity of Book Seven, try to solve or clarify the dispute over the composition of the commentary and highlight the social conflicts and personal clashes that existed among ‘*ulamā*’ and Sufis over particular theological matters.

Since the copyists were Mevlevī dervishes or somehow affiliated with the Mevlevī order, we may also conclude that the commentary was heavily promoted by the Mevlevī order. Most of the manuscripts were dedicated to Ottoman Sultāns and the concluding notes appearing in colophons could even be a sign of royal patronage received from Sultān Abdulḥamīd or Sultān Murād IV. Furthermore, the Konya manuscript, Mevlānā Müzesi 2067, includes a few more interesting details, among which the fact that it was in the possession of a Mevlevī Çelebī (Mehmed Sait Hemdem), which puts a seal of approval on the authenticity and importance of the copy. It is also important to note that Mevlānā Müzesi 2067 was produced from the earliest copy of Book Seven (Konya 2033), copied in 1440/844, to which Anqarawī had access and on which he based his commentary.<sup>209</sup>

The following chapter will examine the social and religious turmoil among the ‘*ulamā*’ and Sufis in the Ottoman society in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, where majority of the manuscripts were copied. Studing the manuscript in the historical context will help us to have a better understanding of how and why Anqarawī took upon the task of writing his *sharḥ* on the spurious Book Seven.

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<sup>209</sup> Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā Müzesi Yazmalar Kataloğu*, v. 2, 96.

## **Chapter Five: The Intellectual milieu in the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth century**

### **The Intellectual Milieu in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Ottoman Anatolia**

Ottoman society was shaped upon the principles of Islam and the traditional Turkish and Near Eastern concepts of state. This combination of religion and tradition contributed to lively debate amongst intellectuals in Ottoman Anatolia and gave rise to a tradition of higher education in religious studies, particularly Islamic jurisprudence, but also theology and mysticism. With the support of the Ottoman Sultāns, many higher educational institutions (*madrasas*) were established where religious scholars were engaged in teaching and writing new texts and commentaries in a wide variety of fields and in languages that reflected the extent of the Empire: Arabic, Persian and Turkish.

### **The Learned Men (*'ulamā'*)**

Among the various groups and classes in Ottoman society, learned men (*'ulamā'*) and Sufis enjoyed a very special and distinguished position and commanded considerable respect from the people as well as the rulers, for they were seen as representatives and guardians of the *sharī'ah* and as teachers of religion and morality.<sup>210</sup> They received their education in *madrasas* or Sufi lodges and subsequently became part of the educational establishment that trained the next generation of scholars. Learned men and Sufis worked closely with the rulers to create a perfect Islamic society. It was, however, the *'ulamā'* who were regarded as the true guardians of Islamic law; they served the rulers in an advisory

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<sup>210</sup> Necati Öztürk, "Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans in the Seventeenth Century with Special Reference to the Qāḍīzādeh Movement," (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1981), 48.

capacity and held important posts in the government and administration as viziers, *qāḍīs*, preachers and teachers. They were responsible for keeping rulers strictly within the bounds of Islamic traditions and enjoyed the public's trust in this capacity. In return, rulers and officials who were aware of the power and influence of the '*ulamā*' over the public treated them with respect, giving them the opportunity to take an active part in the administration, thus gaining public confidence and support in the process for themselves.

This relationship between the state and the '*ulamā*' was also used by the former as a means of controlling the masses and gaining their confidence in the event of confrontation; for, if the scholar (*ālim*) concerned failed to convince the Sulṭān, his fate was either dismissal or exile. Thus, to avoid controversy, scholars and jurists hesitated to use their social power against the Sulṭān's will. As representatives of the *sharī'a*, the '*ulamā*' possessed legitimate authority, and, through their control over religious observances, educational institutions and *waqfs* (which were a vast source of revenue), they wielded considerable power. This double function provided the '*ulamā*' with a strong moral and political power over the masses.

The '*ulamā*', who organized and supervised the religious institutions, mosques, religious endowments and legal system received their training in the *madrāsas* or similar institutions of learning. These were founded quite early in the Empire's history; as Atcil writes: "The first Ottoman *madrasa* was established by Orkhān Kāḍī in 1331 in Iznik. In the course of time, numerous *madrāsas* were established in Bursa, Edirne and Istanbul and other cities and towns of the state by successive Sulṭāns and statesmen."<sup>211</sup> Since these

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<sup>211</sup> Abdurrahman Atcil, "The Formation of the Ottoman Learned Class and Legal Scholarship (1300-1600)," (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Chicago, 2010), 65.



educational institutions were built and endowed by the Sultāns, “the influences of the Ottoman dynasty and society on the legal, theological and Sufi scholarship was reflected in the choices of topics to be studied and preferences for and suppression of particular opinion.”<sup>212</sup> The *madrassa* represented the established and official educational institution of the Ottoman state, and its official curriculum included “the study of classical Arabic and a survey of the accepted Islamic sciences such as exegesis (*tafsīr*), Ḥadīth, jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and theology (*kalām*).”<sup>213</sup> The ‘*ulamā*’ were the purveyors of Islam, the guardians of its traditions and the moral tutors of the public. In fact, the *madrassa* system (‘*ilmiyyes*), as one of the fundamental organizations of the state, had a very important role to play. This was largely due to the fact that teachers in the ‘*ilmiyyes* held posts in the government and other institutions and also trained officials for several government offices.

### **The Sufis**

Another influential group in the Ottoman state was that of the Sufis, who organized themselves into various orders (*ṭarīqat*). Sufis not only acted as the spiritual leaders of the masses but sometimes even served as their political leaders. They were also largely responsible for whatever education the general public received, since the *madrassa* syllabus was beyond the reach of the common man. The Sufis took up the task of disseminating some areas of knowledge through the medium of a language that would be understood by a wider public. Known for their considerable learning – in the *tekkes* – a follower could expect to study the Qur’ān, Ḥadīth, Arabic and Persian, as well as receive instruction in

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>213</sup> Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 112.

mystic literature.<sup>214</sup> Sufis produced a rich literature known for its mystical approach to the Islamic sciences of exegesis and Ḥadīth in addition to commentaries on the great Sufi works and many translations of classical works into Turkish.

Sufis exercised an immense power over rulers and the social, political and cultural life of the public alike. They played an important role in the Islamization of the Ottoman territories. But the Sufis were anything but uniform in their approach. With regard to their organization and rituals, the Sufi orders may be divided into two major groups:

The first consisted of the established orders which had their own *waqfs* and *tekkes*, as well as their own distinct ways of worship, rituals and special dress. These orders were usually supported by the rulers and pious rich; among them may be included the Mevlevīs, Naqshbandīs, Bayrāmīs, Bektāshīs. These orders were known for their support of the establishment and involvement in the state apparatus. The second group was made up of the dervish orders, which had no organized system of membership or code of dress and whose rituals were secret and esoteric.<sup>215</sup>

Unlike the former, the second group had no relations with the state, and from time to time even opposed the government and established authorities. Inalcik comments that they “maintained a militant Shī‘a feeling and exploited at every opportunity any weakness in the central government. Among those were the Haydarīs, Qalandarīs and Malāmatīs.”<sup>216</sup> The Sufi orders also provided a system of communication and mutual hospitality throughout the different regions of the vast Ottoman lands. A Sufi could be sure of finding

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<sup>214</sup> John Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (London, Oxford University Press, 1973), 238.

<sup>215</sup> Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: the Classical Age 1300-1600*, trans. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 190-191.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

within these brotherhoods a network of associates that spanned the empire in a way that was not paralleled by the secular administration.

Some orders opened their doors to a certain class of society only, whilst others welcomed all. Similarly, some *ṭarīqas* tended to promote particular cultural activities, as in the case of the Mevlevīs, who excelled in music.<sup>217</sup> In fact, it was in the *tekke* that poetry, music and calligraphy most flourished. The Mevlevīs made a major contribution in this field through their encouragement of the teaching of the Persian language and mystic poetry.<sup>218</sup> The orders acted as focal points around which various elements of Muslim society would gather under the spiritual guidance of a Sufi. These groups were able to derive strength from the intensity of the spiritual feelings of their members. Often they provided the only forum in which various classes of society could mix, so that people from diverse backgrounds could come together not only for spiritual development but also for social interaction. However, it must be noted that, with time, certain orders became associated with particular classes in society, so that, as Trimingham points out: “Mevlevīs came to be associated with the cultural elite and the Bektāshīs with the common soldiery.”<sup>219</sup>

The heads of the orders were usually respected as community leaders in their areas. They were more popular than officials, who invariably stood for the government. The Sufi Shaykhs of the established orders represented the views of their followers to the governing powers and could be confident that they would be respected by the government by virtue

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<sup>217</sup> Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 114.

<sup>218</sup> Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 238.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, 81-82.

of the great influence, which they could bring to bear on their disciples. When it was necessary, they voiced the grievances of the people and condemned corruption and injustice. The role of these Sufi orders in the establishment of law and order as well as in the maintenance of social stability is undeniable.

The Sufis' approach to Islam and their way of presenting Islamic principles made them the targets of criticism by the *'ulamā'*. This approach often took on the character of "popular religion," while that of the *madrasa* constituted "official religion."<sup>220</sup> "Popular religion" was regarded as incorporating other traditions, customs and beliefs not associated with Islam in its pristine form. Among the innovations associated with the *ṭarīqas* were certain practices such as the veneration of saints and tombs, the celebration of certain festivals and the ritual use of music and dance.<sup>221</sup> In short, the *madrasa* favored a more rational approach to the faith through learning, rewarded by advancement and promotion through the traditional hierarchy, whereas the *tekke* addressed the heart of the novice in a spirit of mystical love. The Sufi sciences were presented as a metaphor for the knowledge or love of God, and had a profound influence upon the people and on Muslim civilization.<sup>222</sup> Due to the popularity of Sufism among the masses, Sufi shaykhs benefited greatly from the Sultāns' patronage and this ensured that they remained loyal to the rulers. Sufi leaders thus helped in the maintenance of order and stability among the general population.

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<sup>220</sup> George J. Waardenburgh, "Official and Popular Religion in Islam," *Social Compass* 22 (1978), 13-14, 315-341.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Arthur John Arberry, *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam* (London: Unwin, 1950), 45-119.

However, the relationship between state, Sufis and '*ulamā*' began to change from about the mid-sixteenth century onward. During the seventeenth century, there was a major decline in the *madrassa* system. The decline of the '*ilmiyye*' can be traced back to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and may be discerned in two important areas: firstly, in the changing attitude of the '*ulamā*' towards the rational sciences being taught in the *madrassas* and secondly in the corruption occurring in the institution itself as a whole. By the late sixteenth century, there was an obvious change in the attitude of the '*ulamā*' towards learning. They had turned against subjects such as mathematics, geometry and medicine, and, as a result of that, the curriculum of the *madrassa* began to change.<sup>223</sup> The elimination of scientific and philosophical texts reflected the wish of Ottoman '*ulamā*' to concentrate more on law. This process, according to Kātip Çelebī, marked the end of intellectual development and the beginning of stagnation in the Ottoman '*ilmiyye*'.<sup>224</sup>

On the other hand, due to social injustice, political corruption and the official prohibition of the use of tobacco and coffee in sixteenth century, there was a public tendency towards spirituality and Sufi activities. Although Sufism came in for harsh criticism by some '*ulamā*' and revivalist movements during the seventeenth century, Ottoman society witnessed significant development and growth in Sufi orders as well as an increase in intellectual activities by prominent Sufi shaykhs. Sufis during this period demonstrated their intellectual ability and proved their superiority over their opponents by producing scholarly works and convincing, well-documented, arguments. The end of the

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<sup>223</sup> Kātip Çelebī, *The Balance of Truth*, trans. G. L. Lewis (London: George Allen and Unwin LTD, 1957), 23-26.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century furthermore witnessed the development of a close relationship between the rulers and the Sufi shaykhs. While 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman society faced decline as well as new challenges from within and without, certain intellectuals, learned men, religious scholars and statesmen who were concerned about the future of the state and society raised their concerns and spoke out against corruption and social injustice.<sup>225</sup> Their aim was to explain the mistakes and shortcomings of the existing system in comparison with the previous one that had made the Ottoman state strong and successful.

### **The Qāḍīzādeh Movement**

In the course of the seventeenth century, according to Öztürk:

[T]hree points of view emerged: firstly that of the Sufis, who embraced these novelties, secondly the Qāḍīzādes, who were violently opposed to them, and finally the *'ulamā'*, who found it increasingly difficult to steer an even course through the violent factions. The *'ulamā'* were responsible for the maintenance of orthodoxy and social order. While the former responsibility would have steered them in the direction of the Qāḍīzādes, the violent tactics of this latter group tended to push them more towards the Sufis, whose role in the disputes was far more passive.<sup>226</sup>

The increase in Sufi activities marked a new development and it earned them the enmity of a new group of people who were to form the major opposition to the Sufis and who were militant enough to make a clash with the Sufis inevitable.

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<sup>225</sup> Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 30.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.

This opposing group consisted of a number of preachers, inspired by the teachings of Qāḍīzādeh Mehmed (d. 1635), who considered the practices and some beliefs of the Sufis to be uncanonical, innovatory and heretical. It was during the reigns of Murād IV (1612-1640) and Ibrāhīm (1615-1648) that the famous Qāḍīzādeh<sup>227</sup> revivalist movement took shape under the leadership of Ustuvānī Mehmed (d. 1661).<sup>228</sup> The negative position of the Qāḍīzādeh towards the rational sciences naturally encouraged the growing bigotry and fanaticism among Ottoman *'ulamā'*.<sup>229</sup> The movement erupted in response to the perception that the Sufis and their *'ulamā'* supporters had become the standard for mosque preachers. The Qāḍīzādeh family was popular and influential in the palace; its leaders were extremely vigilant in observing the rules of faith and punctilious in their ritual observances.<sup>230</sup> They provided a distinguished ideological basis for provincial rebellions, even political ones. The movement drew for this on the inspiration of Birgīlī Mehmed (1523-73), a scholar of ethics and law whose *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (the Muḥammadan Path, 1572) became one of the most popular manuals of practical ethics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>231</sup> Birgīlī placed special emphasis on “commanding right and forbidding wrong,”<sup>232</sup> a principle that was at the heart of the

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<sup>227</sup> For a full account of Qāḍīzādeh movement, see Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Empire*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans in the Seventeenth Century*; Derin Terzioğlu, *Sufis and Dissidents in the Ottoman Empire: Nīyāzī-i Mişrī (1618-1694)* (unpublished PhD Thesis, Harvard University, 1999); and Madeline Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman 'Ulamā' in the Postclassical Age (1600-1800)* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988).

<sup>228</sup> Zelfi, *The Politics of Piety*, 141.

<sup>229</sup> Kātip Çelebī, *The Balance of Truth*, 130.

<sup>230</sup> Zelfi, *The Politics of Piety*, 132.

<sup>231</sup> Kātip Çelebī, *The Balance of Truth*, 128-130.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

Qāḍīzādeh movement, providing the basis upon which they harshly criticized other preachers, Sufis and religious scholars. Regarded by some as fanatics, the Qāḍīzādeh movement wanted to take advantage of the turmoil and decadence that confronted Ottoman society in the seventeenth century.<sup>233</sup>

The movement emerged within the context of a specific disagreement between Qāḍīzādeh Mehmed and another famous preacher at the time, Shaykh ‘Abdulmecīd Sīvāsī (d. 1639) over several issues ranging from the permissibility of coffee and tobacco to Sufi practices including whirling (*samā’*), meditation (*dhikr*) and the teachings of Ibn ‘Arabī.<sup>234</sup> Their fallout led to a general condemnation of many Ottoman religious practices that Qāḍīzādeh felt were innovative (*bid‘a*) and non-Islamic.<sup>235</sup> Driven by zeal and marshalling fiery rhetoric, Qāḍīzādeh was able to inspire many followers to join his cause to rid the land of any and all corrupt practices.

Between 1630 and 1680, there were many violent clashes between the followers of Qāḍīzādeh and those that they disapproved of, including the privileged members of the Ottoman ‘*ulamā’*, preachers and Sufi shaykhs.<sup>236</sup> The Qāḍīzādeh “presented themselves as the champions of orthodoxy, opposing every sort of innovation and declaring Sufis to be heretics and innovators.”<sup>237</sup> They particularly targeted “Bektāshī, Halvetī and Mevlevī members and created a feeling of suspicion and hostility amongst the masses against these

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<sup>233</sup> Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 14.

<sup>234</sup> Zelfi, *The Politics of Piety*, 136.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 25.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., 26.



orders.”<sup>238</sup> They denounced the Sufis from the pulpit as innovators who included “whirling in their ritual, and indulged in the paradox of chanting the words of the *shahādah*”<sup>239</sup> in a manner held by Qāḍīzādeh to be un-Islamic. His followers attacked Sufi *tekkes* and suggested that, “the very act of entering a *tekke* was the act of an infidel (*kāfir*).”<sup>240</sup> In general, they became increasingly intolerant towards those who did not adhere to their views. Qāḍīzādeh had launched an intensive campaign aimed at denigrating the Sufis, but it was motivated to a great extent by the increasing popularity and influence of the Sufi orders, particularly in the Ottoman court and among state officials, which excited jealousy amongst Qāḍīzādeh and his followers.

The arrival of coffee in Istanbul during the mid-sixteenth century and the introduction of tobacco at the beginning of the seventeenth century provided fuel for intense debate amongst ‘*ulamā*’, who passed competing judgments concerning their legality or illegality. This gave some scholars the opportunity to also express their condemnation of some Sufi practices such as music, dance (*samā’*), meditation (*dhikr*) and performing rituals in Sufi tombs. A number regarded such practices as innovatory and irreligious.<sup>241</sup> Qāḍīzādeh and his followers were especially vocal in rejecting these novelties and appealed directly to the people to achieve their goals, sometimes inciting them to violence. The Sufis, on the other hand, sought a peaceful, even intellectual, approach, going to the heart of the matter by “criticizing Birgīlī’s *al-Ṭarīgat al-*

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<sup>238</sup> Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 8.

<sup>239</sup> Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 236.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 129.

*Muḥammadiyya*, which was regarded as a guide and source of inspiration for the Qāḍīzādeh.”<sup>242</sup>

According to Qāḍīzādeh, Ottoman Sufis were not real Sufis; they were people of innovation, whose practices and beliefs were either wholly or partly incompatible with the *sharī‘at*. So, as reformists dedicated to bringing about changes in society in accordance with the Qur’ān and *sunna*, the Qāḍīzādeh felt it was a religious duty to prevent the Sufis from continuing with these practices and activities. They could easily justify their actions by the tradition which urges every Muslim who sees a bad action or practice to change it either by persuasion or by hand, and failing these, by disapproval in his heart.

The Qāḍīzādeh followed this injunction only in part. Öztürk tells us that “[t]hey began by attacking the Sufis in their sermons and in their writings and when they felt that they had failed in their attempts they resorted to attacking and demolishing the *tekkes* as well as beating up the Sufis.”<sup>243</sup> Mevlevī and Halvetī Sufis, who had assumed higher positions in the government, were particular targets. In the view of the Qāḍīzādeh, the Sufis were “*zindiqs, kāfirs* and *ahl al-bid‘a*” (heretics, unbelievers, and followers of innovation).<sup>244</sup> In order to win public support for their cause, they placed upon the Sufis much of the blame for the social, economic and moral problems that were then confronting Ottoman society. Indeed, the Qāḍīzādeh presented this whole situation as stemming from the displeasure of God at innovation and religious negligence, which they blamed squarely on the Sufis. However, their harsh and ruthless treatment of the Sufis played an undeniable

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<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 245.

<sup>243</sup> Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 421.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 422.

role in their losing the support of the general public, upon whom the Sufis had enormous influence. The result of their intolerance was that many ordinary people were more sympathetic to the Sufis than to the Qāḍīzādeh.

The latter were vehemently critical of the scholarship produced by the eminent Sufi masters of their age, among them ‘Abd al-Majīd Sīvāsī (d. 1635), ‘Azīz Maḥmūd Hudā’ī (d. 1628), Nīyāzī al-Miṣrī (d. 1694) and Anqarawī.<sup>245</sup> Qāḍīzādeh’s criticism focused on what was seen as the Sufis’ innovative approach to commentating or interpreting Islamic sources. The majority of Sufi scholarship featured exegesis, Ḥadīth criticism and writings on particular topics that were much discussed during this period. The Sufi masters who came directly under attack from the Qāḍīzādeh movement were adversely affected by these anti-Sufi trends and responded by turning their efforts and studies towards defending the practices and beliefs of the Sufis.<sup>246</sup> Others concentrated their attention on the composition of commentaries on the works of the early Sufis, for example, Rūmī’s *Mathnawī*, Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, or devoted themselves to producing detailed interpretations of some chapters of the Qur’ān or collections of various traditions.<sup>247</sup> Of course, they also wrote books and *risālas* on Sufism itself, its way of life and its importance, as well as *qaṣīdas*, *na‘t* and other forms of poetry in which they expressed their love of God and His Prophet.<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā’dān Sonrā Mevlevīlik*, 185; Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 110.

<sup>246</sup> Öztürk, *Islamic Orthodoxy Among the Ottomans*, 111.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

Furthermore, as discussed by Baer, Sulṭān Murād IV himself was on a good terms with some Sufi orders and particularly favored Mevlevīs, although he later banned Mevlevī practices such as Music and whirling dance, due to the influence of Qāḍīzādeh. But he gave pensions to dervishes such as the “dervish free from care and worry” and, from 1667 until the end of his reign, he employed Aḥmed Dede, a Mevlevī, as his chief astrologist, a man who opposed the Qāḍīzādeh movement.<sup>249</sup>

#### *Qāḍīzādeh’s critique of the notion of bid‘a*

Qāḍīzādeh’s criticisms have been preserved in those documents or writings of scholars and Sufis responding to the attacks by Qāḍīzādeh or by his family members and supporters. Among which mention can be made of Kātip Çelebī’s famous work *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq fī Ikhtiyār al-Aḥaqq*. Kātip Çelebī was among the students of Qāḍīzādeh, but later turned against him and was well aware of the nature of the protest and dispute being pursued by his followers. The book is divided into twenty-one chapters, each discussing issues that provoked debate between jurists and Sufis over the centuries. For example, the final chapter of the book is devoted to the controversy between Sivāsī and Qāḍīzādeh. In this section, after giving a brief account of the arguments of both of these shaykhs, Kātip Çelebī states that, “in most of the issues which have been discussed in the book, Qāḍīzādeh upheld one side and Sivāsī the other. Both sides became more extreme in their views and their followers only inflamed the dispute even further.”<sup>250</sup> The chapter headings in the book

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<sup>249</sup> See chapter 3 and 5 of *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* by Marc David Baer, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>250</sup> Kātip Çelebī, *The Balance of Truth*, 133.

– translated here by Lewis – give an insight into the subjects that so incensed Qāḏīzādeh and his fellow travelers:

1. the account of the life of the Prophet,
2. singing,
3. dancing and whirling,
4. invoking of blessings on prophets and companions,
5. tobacco,
6. coffee,
7. opium and other drugs,
8. the parents of the prophet,
9. the anecdote regarding the faith of Pharaoh,
10. teachings of Ibn ‘Arabī,
11. cursing of Yazīd,
12. innovation (*bid‘a*),
13. pilgrimages to Sufī tombs,
14. the supererogatory prayers,
15. shaking hands,
16. bowing,
17. enjoining right and forbidding wrong,
18. the religion of Abraham,
19. bribery,
20. the controversy between Abu’l-Su‘ūd Efendī and Birgīlī Mehmed Efendī,
21. the controversy between Sivāsī and Qāḏīzādeh<sup>251</sup>

We see from this list that most of the subjects identified by Çelebī as controversial dealt with Sufī practices and rituals, which were condemned as innovation (*bid‘a*) – a belief or practice for which there is no precedent from the time of the Prophet. *Bid‘a* is the opposite of *sunna* and is a synonym of *muḥdath* or *ḥadath*. While some Muslims felt that every innovation must necessarily be wrong, some scholars divided innovative thoughts, ideas and practices between good (*ḥasana*) or praiseworthy (*maḥmūda*), and bad (*sayyi‘a*) or blameworthy (*madhmūma*).<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid., 5, Table of Contents.

<sup>252</sup> J. Robson, “Bid‘a.” *EI2*. On the meaning of the term *bid‘a*, see also Bernard Lewis “Some Observations on the Significance of Heresy in the History of Islam,” *Studia Islamica* 1-2 (1953): 43-63.

The word *bid'a* became a theological weapon in the battle over the precise interpretation of the *sunna* of the Prophet and thus came to represent all the new ideas and usages that inevitably began to confront Muslims in the modern era. Scholars were challenged by dogmatic innovations not in accordance with the traditional sources (*uṣūl*) of the faith and by ways of life different from those of the Prophet. The Qāḍīzādeh family quite naturally strongly opposed *bid'a* and any innovative rituals not in accordance with the *sunna*.

Ottoman Sufis of the seventeenth century found themselves accused of being engaged in *bid'a*, of making false, innovative, interpretations of the Ḥadīth and the Qur'ān and of deviating from the *sunna* and traditional Islam; actions that were declared to be heresy by orthodox preachers of the time such as Qāḍīzādeh and his followers.

The word *bid'a* literally means innovation, novelty or recentness. But in the law it is used to define any belief or practice which does not have its roots in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth or in the authority of the Companions. The concept of *bid'a* evolved gradually and from the second century A. H. had been an important issue amongst Muslim scholars. Two main groups emerged; those who opposed *bid'a* completely, such as the Ḥanbalites, and those who tolerated it to varying degrees.<sup>253</sup>

In their writings, members of the Qāḍīzādeh movement subjected this issue to a thorough investigation in accordance with the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. They objected to Sufi notions as expressed in treatises, where certain concepts were discussed without any reference to the traditional sources.

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<sup>253</sup> Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, trans. by S. M. Stern and C. R. Barber, 2 vols. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1971), v. 2, 33-37.

Their opposition led to the prosecution by the authorities of some Sufi shaykhs, who were officially accused of blasphemy. Some, considered particularly dangerous to the political and religious stability of the Ottoman Empire, were even executed. For example, according to Öngören, “Oglan Shaykh Ismā‘īl Ma‘shūkī, a Shaykh of the Bāyrāmī-Melāmī order, was executed in 1538-9 along with twelve of his followers, based on the judgment of a group of jurists that counted Ebūssu‘ūd among its members.”<sup>254</sup> Another prominent Sufi leader, Shaykh Muḥyiddīn Kermānī of Istanbul, was executed in 1550 following yet another decision issued by Ebūssu‘ūd Efendi;<sup>255</sup> this was followed by Shaykh Ḥamza Ball, who was also decapitated in 1561-2. Ebūssu‘ūd had been appointed Grand Mufti of the capital in 1545 on the orders of Sulṭān Süleymān.<sup>256</sup> According to him, “practices such as Sufi *samā’* ceremonies and various forms of movement that took place in them, which he defined as ‘dancing’ were prohibited by Islamic law and must be banned. For this reason, Ebūssu‘ūd condemned them in his fatwas, or formal religious opinions.”<sup>257</sup>

### **Anqarawī’s Role in the Religious Disputes with the Orthodox ‘ulamā’**

With the culmination of this first stage of the struggle over the legitimacy of various Islamic practices, Anqarawī enters the historical record. His writings were at the center of

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<sup>254</sup> R. Öngören, “Ebūssu‘ūd’un Taşavvufî Yönü,” in *Türk Kültürümüzde İz Birakan İskilipli Âlimler (Sempozyum: 23-25 Mayıs 1997 - İskilip)*, ed. Mevlüt Uyanık (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), 299.

<sup>255</sup> Son of a Bāyrāmī Shaykh, Muḥyiddīn Yavsī (d. 920/1514), Ebūssu‘ūd Efendi became a prominent *Shaykh al-Islam* and Ḥanafī scholar. He is frequently credited with legal and religious reforms aimed at re-organizing the Ottoman state during the time of Sulṭān Süleymān (r. 927-74/1520-66). He also worked to better integrate the Ottoman administrative system and Islamic religious law, forming the basis for the creation of the *Shaykh al-Islam*’s position; see Schacht, “Abū l-Su‘ūd,” in *EI2*; and C. Imber, *Ebu s-Su‘ūd: the Islamic Legal Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997).

<sup>256</sup> Ambrosio, “Ismā‘īl Rusūkhī Ankaravī,” 183.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, 183-184.

controversy due to their subject matter; in fact, these writings -- discussed in this chapter - - were singled out for their perceived innovation (*bid'a*) and their so-called pro-Ibn 'Arabī and anti-Islamic stance. He was a devout Sufī, a spiritual master of the Mevlevī order, who lived in one of the most important Sufi lodges: Gālātā Mevlevīhāneh. As Ambrosio points out:

[A]t the time of Anqarawī's mission, there would have been three Mevlevī *tekkes* in the Ottoman capital in addition to the Gālātā Mevlevīhāneh; the Yenīkāpī Mevlevīhāneh on the Marmara seacoast founded in 1597-8; the Beşiktaş Mevlevīhāneh opened in 1622; and the Kāsimpāşā Mevlevīhāneh opened in 1623. Anqarawī arrived in Istanbul in 1610 as the sheikh of the Gālātā Mevlevīhāneh and joined by his fellow sheikhs 'Abdī Dede (d. 1631) in Gālātā Mevlevīhāneh, Āgāzāde Mehmed Dede (d. 1653) in Beşiktaş and Dogāni Aḥmed Dede (d. 1630) in Yenīkāpī, The latter arrived at the Yenīkāpī Mevlevīhāneh in the same year that Anqarawī reached the capital, and also worked to combat the Qāḏīzādeh. This suggests that the Istanbul-based Mevlevī Sheikhs formed a common front against the activities of puritanical groups.<sup>258</sup>

As an authoritative Mevlevī shaykh running the most important of the Mevlevī lodges, Anqarawī wrote extensively on Mevlevī teachings and rituals and avoided all direct involvement in political disputes with the Qāḏīzādeh family and followers. However, his constant writing and commentary work did constitute an indirect response and demonstration of his disagreement with the latter.

There is no evidence indicating that Anqarawī was ever directly involved in the social and political disturbances putting Sufis against puritan reformists in his day; however, his numerous works in defense of *samā'* and its links to the five pillars of Islam is an example of how vigorously he defended Sufi ceremonies as part of the Islamic tradition. For instance, in *Niṣāb al-Mawlavīyya*,<sup>259</sup> which is a selection of materials from

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid., 186-187.

<sup>259</sup> Ismā'īl Rusūhī Anqarawī, *Niṣābū 'l-Mevlevī (Tasavvufi Konulara Göre Mesnevî' den Secmeleri)*, ed. Y. Safak and I. Kunt (Konya: Tekin Kitabevi, 2005).



the *Mathnawī*, the author draws on Rūmī's work to explain the order's beliefs and discusses Mevlevī practices in the light of the prophetic tradition. In *Minhāj al-Fuqarā*,<sup>260</sup> the author presents the secrets of the Mevlevī path in terms of both the sacred law (by linking it to the five pillars of Islam) and the path to understanding the Divine Unity. A section of this book is dedicated to the ceremony of *samā*' (whirling or spiritual dance), which the author presents as the synthesis of all Mevlevī practices. *Hujjat al-Samā*<sup>261</sup> is another brief treatise in defense of *samā*' , among the most important rituals of Mevlevī dervishes, which became associated with *Minhāj al-Fuqarā*.<sup>262</sup>

### **Controversy Over the Commentary on the *Mathnawī* and Accusations of *bid'a***

Anqarawī's commentary on the spurious seventh volume of the *Mathnawī* was, if anything, even more controversial, creating a backlash and furious debate among both fellow Sufis and the '*ulamā*' who constantly accused him of *bid'a*. On the one hand, it encountered heavy criticism within Mevlevī circles for the support it lent to a piece of writing regarded by many as spurious in nature, while, on the other, it addressed subjects strongly opposed by orthodox '*ulamā*'. Two aspects in particular raised the ire of Qāḍīzādeh's followers, who declared them to be *bid'a*: the first was Anqarawī's tendency to treat the *Mathnawī* like the Qur'ān and to offer exegetical interpretation by comparing its content to the *Fātiḥa* (the opening chapter of the Qur'ān), while the second was his application of the exegetical rule of abrogation (*naskh*) in order to make his case.

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<sup>260</sup> Anqarawī, *Minhacu'l-Fuqarā*, S. Ekici (ed.) (Istanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 1996).

<sup>261</sup> Anqarawī, *Risāletu 'l-Ḥucceṭü's-Semā*' (Cairo: Būlāq, 1256/1840).

<sup>262</sup> For more information, see Ambrosio, "İsmā'īl Rusūkhī Ankaravī."

## Comparing the *Mathnawī* to the *Fātiḥa*

Before presenting his argument, Anqarawī begins with the following words of praise for the *Mathnawī*, which he believed had been written in seven books. He does indeed compare the contents of Book Seven to the story of the creation of the seven heavens and to their illuminations and solidity, as mentioned in the Qur’ān. The commentary to Book Seven begins with an opening prayer where Anqarawī praises the book and goes on to compare it with the opening chapter, the *Fātiḥa* (*sab ‘a mathānī*), in the Qur’ān:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَ بِهِ نَسْتَعِينُ.  
الحمد لله الذي جعل المثنويّ الالهيّ الربّانيّ مثل السموات السبع سبع طبقات و سيرّ ابياته المنيرة  
المضيئة كالقواكب الدّارى و النجوم الثاقبات الثابتات ليهدى بها السالكون فى ظلمات الاوهام و  
الشبهات و ليعلموا مراتب السلوك و المقامات و الصلوة و السلام على خير خلق الله محمّد انزل  
عليه القران على سبع لغات و سبع قرأت و اتاه الله سبعاً من المثاني. و ايده بالمعجزات و على اله و  
اصحابه الذين كملو انفسهم بالفضائل و الكمالات و بلّغوا احسن المتابعة اياه ارفع الدرجات و اعلى  
الغرفات. اما بعد: حمد الله العزيز الغفور و الصلوة و السلام على محمّد شفيع يوم النشور.

And from Him we seek help. All praise is due to Allāh who made the divine *Mathnawī* in seven strata like seven heavens and rendered its illuminated verses so bright and shining like shimmering planets, and piercing and fixed stars; in order to guide the travelers of the path who suffer from the darkness of illusions and suspicions; and to teach the degrees of spiritual journey and mystical states. Peace and greetings be upon the best of God’s creatures, Muḥammad (PBUH), upon him the Qur’ān was revealed in seven words and seven forms of reading and was brought him forward [by God] *al-sab ‘an min al-mathānī*<sup>263</sup>

<sup>263</sup> Among the titles of the first chapter of the Qur’ān, *al-Fātiḥa*, is *al-sab ‘a al-mathānī*. The title is also mentioned in the Qur’ān: “and we have certainly given you, [O Muhammad], seven of the often repeated [verses] and the great Qur’an,” [15:87]. The title was the subject of discussion among exegetes and commentators, who give different meanings for *al-sab ‘a al-mathānī*. For example, according to Ibn ‘Abāss’ exegesis, “God honored the prophet with seven verses of the Qur’an, which are read in every unit of the prayer, i.e. the opening chapter of the Book (*al-Fātiḥah*); it is also said that this means: We honored you with the following of the Qur’ān, for the whole Qur’ān consists of pairs or couples: commands and prohibitions, promises and threats, the lawful and the unlawful, the abrogating and the abrogated, a literal meaning and an allegorical meaning, ambiguous verses and unambiguous verses, news of the past and events of the future, the praise of some people and the rebuke of others, (and the great Qur’ān) He says: and We honored you with the great, glorious and magnificent Qurān just as We revealed the Torah and Gospel to the Jews and Christians.” See Ibn ‘Abbās, *Tafsīr Ibn ‘Abbās: Great Commentaries on the Holy Qur’ān*, trans. Mokrane Guezzo, 2 vols. (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2008), v. 2, 327. Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī, on the other hand, in his *Tafsīr* explains that “*al-sab ‘a al-mathānī* refers to the chapter *Fātiḥa* in the Qur’ān because it consists of seven verses and all the words are repeated and dual.” Narrating from Imam ‘Alī, he relates that “the verses of the *Fātiḥa* are also repeated in two units (*ruk‘at*) of the daily prayers.” He also narrates from Abī Ka‘b that, “once he asked the Prophet about the meaning of the *al-sab ‘a al-mathānī*, and the Prophet responded:

the chapter *Fātiḥa* “the opener” twice. And God supported him with miracles, friends and companions; those who elevated their spirit with virtues and perfections and attained the best manners, with him are in the highest ranks and the most elevated positions. And then: All praise is due to Allah, the most precious and forgiving; praise and greetings be upon Muḥammad the intercessor of the day of resurrection.<sup>264</sup>

The opening praise indicates Anqarawī’s high regard for Book Seven and his deep belief that its verses guide spiritual wayfarers through the temptations of mental darkness and illusions. He compares the *Mathnawī* with the *sab‘a mathānī*, as though each book in the *Mathnawī* were a reflection of each verse of the *Fātiḥa*. Such a comparison could also be seen as a reflection of the quote attributed to Jāmī’, that is, “the *Mathnawī* is the Qur’ān in the Persian language.” The quote is commonly accepted by Mevlevī Sufis and appears on the cover of several *Mathnawī* manuscripts.

The opening chapter of the Qur’ān is highly regarded by scholars and exegetes for several reasons. The verses describe God’s attributes as the most beneficent and merciful (*rahmān* and *rahīm*) to all human beings in general (*‘āmm*), but to the elite in particular, such as the prophets (*khawāṣṣ*). The verses are a testimony of His divine attributes, as recognized by human beings, particularly His role as the sole creator of the universe, His unity, His role as provider for all beings and as the one who changes them from one state to another, His possession of the Day of Resurrection and of His excessive blessings upon His servants whom He has guided to believe in Him.

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*alhamdu li’llāh hīya al-sab‘ al-mathānī sūrat al-Fātiḥa*. Indeed, the chapter *Fātiḥa* is the seven verses repeated twice.” Narrating from other religious scholars, such as ‘Abdullāh ‘Abbas , al-Rāzī explains that “the longest chapters of the Qur’ān, which are chapters 2. *al-Baqarah*, 3. *Āl-i ‘Imrān*, 4. *al-Nisā’*, 5. *al-Mā’idah*, 6. *al-An‘ām*, 7. *al-‘Arāf*, and 9. *al-Tawbah* are called *sab‘a al-mathānī*, because the Islamic laws, rules and principles mentioned in these chapters are repeated twice.” See Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr-i Shaykhinā al-Ajall Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī bi Taṣṣīḥ wa Hawāshī Mahdī Ilāhī Qumshah’ī*, 10 vols. (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī va Chāpkhānah-i M.H. ‘Ilmī, 1334-1335 /1955-1956), v. 6, 171-173.

<sup>264</sup> MS Yāzmā Bağışlar 6574, f. 1b, lines: 1-8.

These verses also represent human beings' worship of God, from whom they obtain confidence and to whom they plead for help and guidance on the straight path. The first chapter is thus the ultimate justification for worship of God because He is kind towards His created beings and, hence, they praise Him. Ibn 'Abbās, in his *Tafsīr*, states, narrating from Imām 'Alī, that the *Fātiḥa* is recited by Muslims several times through the daily prayers, thus it is a testimony of God's unity and power and manifestation of man's pleading and requests for guidance and help.<sup>265</sup>

Therefore, not only did Anqarawī believe in the authenticity of Book Seven as having been written by Rūmī as part of his *Mathnawī*, he also viewed the book in the light of *sab'a mathānī*, where each book illuminates the spirit and brings awareness, confidence and light into a life. Such exaggeration in equating a book written by the hand of a person with divine revelation inevitably stirred controversy and was considered misleading and as meriting excommunication, if not worse. What made it worse was the fact that there was no firm proof that Book Seven was actually written by Rūmī. Thus, Anqarawī could be criticized both for attributing a spurious text to Rūmī and subsequently declaring all seven books of the *Mathnawī* to be equal to the seven verses of the opening chapter of the Qur'ān, whose importance to Muslim believers may be considered paramount.

#### *Application of the rule of abrogation (naskh)*

The second objection was to the response that Anqarawī gave to one of the arguments put forth to him. According to critics, Sulṭān Valad's verses, which were later added as an addendum to the *Mathnawī*, testify to the fact that the *Mathnawī* was completed

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<sup>265</sup> Ibn 'Abbās, *Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās*, v. 2, 327.

in six volumes only. In these verses, Valad engages in an imaginary dialogue with Rūmī and expresses his sadness and anxiety over the incompleteness of the *Mathnawī*:

مدتی زین مثنوی چون وادم از چه رو دیگر نمی گویی سخن؟ قصه شهزادگان نامد به سر گفت نطقم چون شتر زین پس بخفت هست باقی شرح این لیکن درون	شد خمش گفتش ولد کای زنده دم بهر چه بستی در علم لدن ماند ناسفته در سوم پسر نیستش با هیچکس تا حشر گفت بسته شد دیگر نمی آید برون
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When some time had gone and my father became quiet from composing the *Mathnawī*, The son told, ‘Oh you living one, For what reason you do not utter any more words? Why have you shut the door for esoteric knowledge? The story of the princes didn’t come to a conclusion, the pearl of the third prince remained unrefined.’ He [the father] said, ‘My speech has come to sleep like a camel, it does not wish to utter any word until the day of resurrection. The account of this [story of three princes] remains to be told, however, the inner [heart] is shut, it [a word] does come out [of my mouth].’<sup>266</sup>  
(Addendum to Book VI: 1-5)

These critics argued that Valad’s verses were sufficient evidence for the fact that the *Mathnawī* consisted of six volumes; however, their claim was refuted by Anqarawī in an unusual manner. In replying to the argument, Anqarawī engages in an analogical debate. After commenting on all the verses, he concludes that they reflect Rūmī’s illness and do not indicate the final extent of the *Mathnawī* in six volumes. On the contrary, he insists, Rūmī was able to complete his book in seven volumes after recovering from his illness.<sup>267</sup> In applying his analogical argument, Anqarawī applies the principle of abrogation (*naskh*) by insisting that Book Seven constituted Rūmī’s own words, abrogating his previous claim

<sup>266</sup> Gölpınarlı, *Mesnevī: Tercemesi ve Şerhi*, 3 vols. (Istanbul: İnkilâp ve Aka, 1981-84).

<sup>267</sup> MS Yāzmā Bağışlar 6574, f. 9b, lines: 28-32.

that Book Six might be the end of the *Mathnawī*. Hence, the new book was the abrogator and the verses declaring Book Six to be the conclusion of the *Mathnawī* were the abrogated matter.

Technically, *naskh* refers to the abrogation of a religious ruling through another religious ruling involving commands and prohibitions, with the abrogation taking place either through a Qur’ānic statement, a Ḥadīth or the consensus of Muslim society (*ummah*). *Naskh* furthermore involves two elements: *nāsikh* (the abrogating one, revision) and *mansūkh* (the abrogated one, alteration).

This is an important discipline for those who attempt a deeper understanding of the Qur’ān. The principle is even enunciated in the verse: *We do not abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten except that We bring forth [one] better than it or similar to it. Do you not know that Allah is over all things competent?* (2:106). The renowned scholar Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūfī (d. 1505) quotes the consensus of earlier scholars that “no one should try to interpret the Book of Allāh before learning its abrogating and abrogated verses.”<sup>268</sup> But there is at least one Ḥadīth suggesting that a well-known companion of the Prophet did not believe in *naskh*. In a Ḥadīth mentioned in Bukhārī’s (d. 870) *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Ibn ‘Abbās reported that ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 644) had said:

The best Qur’ānic expert among us is ‘Ubayy and the best legal expert among us is ‘Alī. But we ignore some of what ‘Ubayy states because he says: ‘I will never abandon anything I heard from the Messenger of Allāh,’ yet Allāh has said: ‘Whatever *āya* (verse) We *nansakh* (abrogate) or cause to be forgotten (*nunsikha*) (2.106).’<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>268</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūfī, *Al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’an*, 4 vols. (al-Qāhirah: Dar al-Turāth, 1985), v.4, 1435.

<sup>269</sup> Muḥammad al-Bukhārī, *Al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 10 vols. (Vaduz: Jam‘īyat al-Maknaz al-Islāmī, 2000-2001), v.3, no. 4300, 8.

Anqarawī explains that there are “three kinds” of abrogations:

اقسام نسخ اوچ گونه در 1. اولاً بر آیتک هم حکمی و هم تلاوتی معاً نسخ اولمقدر. 2. و  
ایکنجی نسخک نسخی تلاوتدر اما حکمی نسخ اولمیوب باقی قالمقدر. 3. اوچینجی نسخ اولدر که  
بر آیتک حکمی بر آخر آیت ایله منسوخ اوله اما اول منسوخه اولان آیت مصحف شریفده واقع اوله  
و تلاوت قرآن ایلین انی تلاوت قبیله انک حکمیله عمل قیلیمیه.

- 1) Abrogation of the recited (verse) together with the legal ruling,
- 2) Abrogation of the recited (verse) without the legal ruling,
- 3) Abrogation of the legal ruling based on another verse, without the abrogation of the recited (verse).<sup>270</sup>

Anqarawī then goes on to say: “Further, it also happened that a verse, or a whole chapter was revealed and then, when the contingency was over, was removed from the people’s memory.”<sup>271</sup> He then compares the divine words in the Qur’ān with Rūmī’s verses in his *Mathnawī* and applies the rule of abrogation. Elaborating on Sulṭān Valad’s verse: *He [the father] said, ‘My speech has come to sleep like a camel, it does not wish to utter any word until the day of resurrection,’* Anqarawī states that, “Valad’s verse deals with matters related to abrogation (*nāsikh va mansūkh*). His word is recited, but its ruling is abrogated, meaning that another word of Rūmī (that is, Book Seven) abrogated his previous word (what he said in Book Six); thus, the ruling implied in *my speech has come to sleep like a camel* is abrogated.”<sup>272</sup>

This indicates the style of his commentary and the theological approach he takes to interpreting Rūmī’s verses. Comparing the *Mathnawī* with the Qur’ān, he takes an exegetic approach and penetrates the shell of the text to reach the kernel of its meaning. It is not,

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<sup>270</sup> MS Yāzmā Bağışlar 6574, f. 10a, lines: 13-25.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid., lines: 13-25.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid., lines: 26-30.

however, common to apply abrogation theory to non-Qur'ānic subjects. Jurists apply the rule in matters of jurisprudence, but using a technique normally applied to the divine revelation in order to elucidate a man-made text was highly unusual. Even in the case of the Qur'ān, according to its commentators, the verses subject to abrogation became *mansūkh* only through the divine command. It is unusual to equate a human word or act with the Qur'ān, especially when the comparison is done by a theologian and devoted Sufi like Anqarawī.

What is more, opting for this exegetical rule as justification rendered his argument somewhat irrelevant when confronted with the reliance of his opponents on the seemingly plain language of Rūmī in his *Mathnawī*. Perhaps it would have been more effective to give a different interpretation of the same verses instead of attempting a rare and completely different method. Such bold claims and unusual interpretation (*ta'wīl*) in religious matters clearly put Anqarawī in direct confrontation with the religious scholars (*'ulamā'*) of his time, such as the Qādīzādeh family.

Islamic tradition does not reject the idea of the alteration of God's word:

Traditional Sunnī Islam recognizes at least three forms of such revision. The Qur'ān itself (Q 13:39; 87:6-7, etc.) speaks of God as editor, causing Muḥammad to forget some revelations or even deleting verses from the Qur'ān. Additional divine revision comes in the form of the doctrine of *nāsikh va mansūkh*, 'abrogating and abrogated.' According to this principle, the Qur'ān altered and revised itself in the midst of being revealed; later Qur'ānic rulings that appear to contradict earlier statements are, in fact, replacing them, terminating the earlier statements in favor of new decrees (for example, Q 4:11 abrogates Q 2:180, Q 24:2 replaces 4:15-6). Some maintain that Muḥammad acted as the Qur'ān's editor as well.<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Shari Lowin, "Revision and Alteration," in *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, General Editor: Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Washington DC: Brill Online, 2014): [http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-the-quran/revision-and-alteration-SIM\\_00358](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-the-quran/revision-and-alteration-SIM_00358)



According to the jurists' interpretation, abrogation is "the replacement of the ruling but not of the text in which it appears," whereas, to the exegete, it is understood as "the withdrawal of both the ruling and its wording."<sup>274</sup> According to Burton, "Al-Shāfi'ī's theory that the abrogating verses of the Qur'ān had once existed was not accepted by all of his contemporaries, but it later gained widespread support. Mālikīs and Ḥanafīs had no general need of this principle, while Shāfi'īs had no need whatever to posit that the *sunna* abrogated the Qur'ān or vice-versa."<sup>275</sup> Nevertheless, abrogation remained confined to the exegetical and jurisprudential realms; writings on spirituality, moral questions, rational theology and literary criticism were not subjected to this analytical tool.

Anqarawī's innovations did not stop here: combining Qur'ānic interpretation and Sufi traditions, he also sought to link Rūmī's spiritual and poetic sensibilities with the theoretical approach of Ibn al-'Arabī's mysticism, in which the latter offers a mystical interpretation for several key Qur'ānic verses. In reading Anqarawī's arguments, it is clear that his command of the Islamic sciences was strong, especially on the evidence of his application of exegetical principles to Sufi texts. His critics were of a similar caliber in their ability to use the Islamic sciences and commentary tradition against him, and, so, Anqarawī really had no choice but to use the same tools in responding to their attacks.

### **Criticism of the Authenticity of Book Seven and Conflicts with Mevlevī Circles**

Attributing the spurious Book Seven to Rūmī and writing a separate commentary on it placed Anqarawī at the center of controversy and even led to his "excommunication"

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<sup>274</sup> Ibid.; John Burton, "Abrogation," in *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, General Editor: Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Washington DC: Brill Online, 2014): [http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-the-quran/abrogation-COM\\_00002](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-the-quran/abrogation-COM_00002)

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

in the eyes of a majority of Mevlevī Sufis. The opposition was so fierce that, until today, no manuscript of Book Seven of the commentary has received the permission to be published. The introduction that Anqarawī wrote to his commentary on Book Seven presents a detailed account of the harsh debate in which he was engaged with Mevlevī Sufis and further explains why he decided to write a separate commentary on the spurious book of the *Mathnawī*. It constitutes an apology for his interpretation of religious doctrine and Sufi thought as well as demonstrates his social authority and power as a Mevlevī shaykh of the first rank.

It was due to Anqarawī's position and authority within Mevlevī circles and his reputation as a teacher at the Gālātā Mevlevīhāne that, despite the hostility he faced from his opponents among Mevlevī shaykhs, he was able to complete his commentary and use it as an instructional text within the curriculum of his *tekke*. The number of manuscripts of his commentary copied by various dervishes and distributed in various *madrāsas* and Sufi centers likewise indicates the popularity of his *sharḥ*. All of this is testimony to the powerful position that he enjoyed within Mevlevī circles and potentially the strong political and financial support he received from Sulṭān Murād IV. As discussed earlier, the manuscript was copied several times over until the Tanzimat period, which indicates its popularity among some Mevlevī Sufis, especially those residing in Gālātā Mevlevīhāneh.

Anqarawī's introduction to his commentary provides very little specific information about who his opponents were and he certainly does not mention their names. However, for the first time, we do learn about the identity of some of his critics and their strong opinions. This could shed some light on various aspects of the arguments between religious scholars (*'ulamā'*) and Sufis in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Anatolia and help us to better

understand the social status and political affiliations of scholars as well as the power that religious institutions enjoyed and exercised through them.

Anqarawī begins his commentary<sup>276</sup> by affirming the appearance of Book Seven in the year 1411 and confirming its authenticity.

حکمت الهی و تقدیر ربانیہ ایلہ سکزیوز اون دورت (814) تاریخندہ یازلمش جلد واحد  
ایچره یدی مجلد بر مثنوی بین الناس ظهور قلدی

Due to the divine wisdom and heavenly will, in the year 814/1411 a certain *Mathnawī* known as the Book Seven appeared among the people.<sup>277</sup>

He then expresses his interest in its contents and his belief that the entire *Mathnawī* was written in seven books, each opening a new door of knowledge and illumination in people's hearts and minds.<sup>278</sup> Anqarawī's interest in the newly discovered book led him to believe that the *Mathnawī* must have been written in seven books. He thus emphasizes the significance of the number seven and refers his readers to the explicatory notes he provided on this matter as part of his commentary on Book One.<sup>279</sup>

Anqarawī also provides some useful information on the manuscript that he used as the basis for his commentary. He explains that, "I began this commentary on Book One in 1620 and by the time I reached the middle of Book Five in 1625, I became aware of the existence of Book Seven and obtained a copy of it that dated from 814/1411."<sup>280</sup> He

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<sup>276</sup> All the references in this sections are to MS *Yāzmā Bāğişlar* 6574, copied in 1625, one of the oldest manuscripts of the commentary on Book Seven, as discussed in Chapter Four.

<sup>277</sup> MS *Yāzmā Bāğişlar*, No. 6574, f. 2a, lines: 2-4.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 2a, lines: 3-6.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*, lines: 7-8.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, f.2a, lines 9-14.

became so intrigued with the contents of the book that he read the entire book before completing the task at hand. He states that his intention was to commence the commentary on Book Seven immediately and then return to Book Five.<sup>281</sup> However, he changed his mind and decided to follow the chronological order of the *Mathnawī*. The date is highlighted and appears as a marginal note added by several copyists while writing out manuscripts of Book Seven.<sup>282</sup>

Though he refrains from naming his opponents, Anqarawī does lay out their arguments and expresses his sadness and dismay at their ignorance. He adopts an *ad hominem* position in answering his critics, questioning their credentials, knowledge and spirituality:

اما شکل و صورت مزده اولان بعض اخوان و رسم و هیات مزله ترسم و توسم قیلان بر قاچ  
اخوان بو دفتر عالیشانک او انئی ابیاتنده موضوع اولان اسرار و معانی ابنی نوش ایتمکه قادر اوله  
میوب و اول آب حیوانک لذت و چاشنسی نه کونه ایدوکنی بله میوب و ادراک قیله میوب بو سمتده  
اولنره مخالفت ایدوب اشد انکار ایله انکار ایتدیلر و اعراض و اعتراض طریقنه کتدیلم

Those so to speak dervishes, friends and Sufis who dress and behave like Mevlevī dervishes but have failed to grasp the esoteric meaning and sublime secrets of the verses of this sublime Book, those who were not able to benefit from or recognize the taste of the ‘elixir of immortality’ (*āb-i ḥayāt*), they harshly targeted my friends who believed in the authenticity of the work (Book Seven) with their severe attacks and took the opposite direction. They are nothing but ignorant ones.”<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Ibid., line: 2.

<sup>282</sup> For example, in a manuscript copied by Ghanim Dede (Süleymaniye - MS Halet Efendi EK 252, f. 1b. lines: 6-23), Anqarawī mentions his decision to begin his commentary on Book Seven while he was in the middle of writing his commentary on Book Five. He says that he later changed his mind and decided to complete his commentary on the first six books before moving on to Book Seven.

<sup>283</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, lines: 15-19.

The nearest that Anqarawī comes to identifying his opponents is when he says: “some of our friends who appear in the same attire (Sufi dress) and behave like us (Mevlevī dervishes) but were not able to benefit from the mystical remarks mentioned in this book, nor even able to grasp the profound meaning of Rūmī’s message, declared their strong denial and criticism.”<sup>284</sup> The only information left to us is a marginal note (f. 6b) provided by the copyist of MS Dārulmesnevi, No. 245, where he mentions two names: “The shaykhs of Qāsim Pāšā (*tekke*), ‘Abdī Efendī, and Şabūḥī Dede.” The scribe, known as Ḥāfiẓ Khalīl al-Mudarris, explains on the gloss that “they were the ignorant and pretentious scholars and Sufis who were in dispute with Anqarawī and the reason why Anqarawī refrained from mentioning their names lies in his humility and courtesy.”<sup>285</sup>

Anqarawī also reaffirms the authenticity of Book Seven and tries to silence his critics by employing authoritative language and a harsh tone. According to him, the language of Book Seven is consistent with the rest of the *Mathnawī* and so too are the subjects discussed in this book and the earlier books in the work. Anqarawī’s opponents, however, disagreed and presented arguments against Book Seven as outlined in the following list:

- 1) The poetry is not Rūmī’s wording, but rather it was written by an ‘*ajam* (here means an Iranian, but ‘*ajam* in general means “someone not skilled in language” or “someone who does not know Arabic) poet who lacked any insightful understanding of Rūmī’s spirituality and mystical teachings. What he achieved was a mere imitation of Rūmī’s words and his style of poetry, while its content

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<sup>284</sup> Ibid., f. 2a, lines: 15-19.

<sup>285</sup> MS Dārulmesnevi 245, f. 6b, marginal note.

lacks any profundity, spiritual expression and insights as compared to the rest of the *Mathnawī*. The book was added as an addendum to the rest of the *Mathnawī*.

2) If the book was indeed written by Rūmī, his biographers and hagiographers, like Farīdūn Sipahsālār (d. circa 1319), would have mentioned it. The latter's *Risāla* contains a section where he explains the structure of the *Mathnawī* and where he cites the opening verses of all six books separately. But since there is no mention of any part of Book Seven in Sipahsālār's *Risāla*, we may conclude that the book was not written by Rūmī.

3) In the opening verses of Book Six, Rūmī says:

*O spiritual one, I bring to you as an offering the Sixth Part to complete the Mathnawī.* (VI: 3)

Citing the abovementioned verse, Rūmī himself made it clear that the *Mathnawī* consists in six books and is complete.

4) In Sulṭān Valad's closing verses he says that the last story of the *Mathnawī*, "Three Princes," remained incomplete on the eve of his father's death. This confirms that the *Mathnawī* is complete and comes in six books and that any extra notes or books should be considered as addenda, i.e., written by others and added later.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574, ff.2a (lines 19-35)-2b (lines 1-4).

It is clear from the above arguments referring to Rūmī's own writings or his biographers that his critics had extensive knowledge of Rūmī and his works. Most likely the Ottoman commentator of the *Mathnawī*, Muṣṭafā Sham'ī (d. circa 1603-1604), was among the opponents, since his name is mentioned elsewhere by Anqarawī, who harshly challenged the comments and criticisms of the former. These Mevlevī shaykhs and dervishes did however make good points and raised serious concerns about the validity granted to Book Seven by Anqarawī after he embarked on his commentary. In fact, the opponents were perhaps most upset that the commentary put the seal of approval on the legitimacy of Book Seven.

Before analyzing Anqarawī's response to his critics, I would like to address the first point made by them, to wit, that Book Seven was an addendum composed by an Iranian poet. As we saw in Chapter Three, the spurious poetry of Book Seven attributed to Rūmī suffers from an inferior quality (inconsistency between the stories and anecdotes), grammatical errors, employment of unusual and odd vocabulary, none of which infelicities can be found in the rest of the *Mathnawī*. In addition, its frequent usage of Turkish words, poor technical control of meter, lack of innovative spontaneity and poor poetic style (rhyming, expressions, metaphors), all make it easy to recognize the discrepancy between the piece in question and the rest of the *Mathnawī*.

No information is provided as to why critics assumed an Iranian provenance for Book Seven. It is not clear to us whether they had seen a specific copy of the book written by an Iranian poet. Indeed, there is every possibility that a non-Iranian could have composed it. It was a common practice to compose poetry or to write prose *risālas* in 7<sup>th</sup>-century Anatolia under the Saljūks.

There is no reason why we should not believe that the work was composed by an Anatolian poet. For example, Rūmī's son Sulṭān Valad maintained his father's poetic legacy after the latter's death and remained a prolific author himself who has left us a considerable body of Persian literary writings. Though Lewis argues that "Valad does not always display technical control of the meter of his verse, but he is generally a competent Persian poet."<sup>287</sup> Among Valad's works, mention should be made of his letters to the authorities, rulers and Sulṭāns of his time, his prose work entitled *Ma'ārif-i Valad*, his verse writings such as *Ibtidā Nāma*, *Rabāb Nāma*, *Intihā Nāma* and *Dīvān-i Valad*. Valad's Persian writings indicate that the Persian cultural environment established by Saljūk rulers remained strong throughout Anatolia at least until the early Ottoman period. Thus, we cannot rule out the possibility of Book Seven being written by an Anatolian in such a Persian cultural environment patronized by Turkic rulers.

The last two criticisms voiced by Anqarawī's opponents are based on their understanding and interpretation of Rūmī's verses in Book Six of the *Mathnawī* as well as his son's closing verses. Among other arguments and remarks made by these critics is the lack of any references to Book Seven in Sīpahsālār's *risāla*. Farīdun Sīpahsālār was among the admirers of Rūmī and later wrote a complete biography of his life entitled *Risāla-i Sīpahsālār*.<sup>288</sup> His biographical *Risāla* is among our three main sources for the life and

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<sup>287</sup> Lewis, *Rūmī: Past and Present*, 240. For a detailed discussion of Valad's writings see *Ibidem*, 237-241.

<sup>288</sup> An edition of the *Risāla-i Sīpahsālār* was printed for the first time under the title *Risāla-i Farīdūn b. Aḥmad Sīpahsālār* by Seyyed Maḥmūd 'Alī, (Kanpur, India in 1901). It was reprinted in Iran under the same title and edited along with extensive notes by Sa'īd Nafīsī (Tehran: Iqbāl, 1947). Recently, a new edition entitled *Risāla dar Manāqib-i Khudāvandīgār* edited by Muḥammad 'Alī Muvahḥid and Ṣamad Muvahḥid was published in Iran (Tehran: Nashr-i Kārnāmah, 2012). However, there is yet to be an English translation of the *Risāla*.



virtues of Rūmī and his disciples (the other two being the *Manāqib al-‘Ārifīn* of Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad Aflākī ‘Ārifī, who died between 1286 and 1291, and the *Ibtidā nāma* of Sulṭān Valad). It is “amongst the oldest sources, only next to Sulṭān Valad’s *Ibtidā Nāma*, written half a century after Rūmī’s death.”<sup>289</sup>

Sipahsālār claims that he spent some forty years in the master’s presence. However, given that his treatise was completed in 1312, as pointed out by Tawfīq Subḥānī (the later sections on the Mevlevīs after Sulṭān Valad’s poems were added by Sipahsālār’s sons between the years 1320 and 1338),<sup>290</sup> it can be suggested that he might have exaggerated the time he spent in Rūmī’s circle. His treatise consists of thirteen chapters, among which he devotes an entire section to Husām al-Dīn Çelebī in chapter nine. There, he discusses the composition of six books of the *Mathnawī* separately and cites the opening verse of each book; however, there is no mention of Book Seven. Quoting Sipahsālār, opponents criticized Anqarawī for making a false claim and attributing a forged addendum to Rūmī.

In terms of the two other standard sources, it is notable that Anqarawī’s critics did not mention Aflākī’s *Manāqib* and instead referred to Sipahsālār’s *risāla*. As we noted, Aflākī, who lived at the time of Rūmī, clearly stated that the *Mathnawī* consisted of six volumes and even gives the total number of verses for the entire book. One scholar, Bahrām Behzād, has even claimed that Sipahsālār’s *risāla* reproduces a considerable amount of material from Aflākī’s *Manāqib al ‘Ārifīn*. Each of these works do contain some historical errors and some exaggerations in their accounts of Rūmī and his disciples’ conducts and

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<sup>289</sup> Lewis, *Rūmī: Past and Present*, 243.

<sup>290</sup> Rūmī, *Maktūbāt-i Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī*, ed. Tawfīq Subḥānī (Tehran: Markaz-i Nashr-i Dānishgāhī, 1992), 292.

manners. Many false miracles were attributed to them and much information was fabricated.<sup>291</sup>

Sa‘īd Nafīsī also raises questions as to the originality of the *Risāla*, pointing out the historical flaws in Sipahsālār’s claim to have been Rūmī’s disciple for forty years. According to Nafīsī, “the *Risāla* was written between 719 and 729, and almost 40 years before Rūmī’s passing he joined his circle of companions, this would make his date of birth around 1215, and, if we assume he lived no longer than 1319, thus he would have lived around 107 years. Even if we assume he was 10-years-old when he attended Rūmī’s circle, he would have lived 97 years.”<sup>292</sup> All of this makes it difficult to believe his claim of having spent 40 years at Rūmī’s side.

Mention should also be made of a reference to the *Mathnawī* in *Manāqib al-‘Ārifīn*, which indicates that the entire work appeared in six volumes, each dedicated to Ḥusām al-Dīn Çelebī, Rūmī’s beloved companion upon whose request the *Mathnawī* was composed. Speaking of Ḥusām al-Dīn, Aflākī states that “Mawlānā addressed him with the title ‘Guardian of treasures of the celestial throne,’ and the six volumes of the *Mathnawī*, which consists of twenty-six thousand, six hundred and sixty couplets (26,660 *beyt*), were a commentary on his innermost secret and were not sent down as a description of him.”<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Bahrām Bahīzād, *Risalah-i Manhul-i Sipahsalar: Nuskhah-i Gumshudah-i Masnavi* (Tehran: Mu’assissah-i Khadamat Farhangi-i Rasa, 1997), 25-28.

<sup>292</sup> Sa‘īd Nafīsī, *Risāla-i Farīdun b. Aḥmad Sipahsālār dar Aḥvāl-i Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Mawlawī* (Tehran: Chāpkhānih-i Iqbāl, 1946), 4.

<sup>293</sup> Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad Aflākī ‘Ārifī, *The Feast of the Knowers of God (Manāqib al-‘Ārifīn)*, trans. John O’Kane (Brill: London, 2002), 432; Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad Aflākī, *Manāqib al-‘Ārifīn*, editd by Taḥsīn Yāzīchī, 2 vols. (Anqurah: Chāpkhānah-i Anjuman-i Tārīkh-i Turk, 1961), v. 2, 628.

## Anqarawī's Response to the First Argument: Method and Analogy

As a scholar of the religious sciences – jurisprudence, theology, Sufism, philosophy and Qur'ānic exegesis – Anqarawī had expertise in debate and analogical reasoning (*qīyās*) that allowed him to respond to his critics on their own terms. Adopting a compare and contrast methodology, he responded to each of their criticisms while citing many examples from the *Mathnawī* in support of his arguments. Anqarawī discusses each of their arguments in detail and comes up with his own interpretations, reasoning and explanations to prove the fallacies of his critics – at least to his own satisfaction – and ultimately validate the authenticity of Book Seven.

A) In response to the first argument that Book Seven is not Rūmī's own wording, quoting from the preface (*dībācha*), Anqarawī states that “there is no evidence indicating that the poetry is not from Rūmī. In fact the opening lines in the preface of this noble book read: ... مجلد هفتم از جمله دفاتر مثنوی و طوامیر معنوی ... (Book Seven is one of the *Mathnawī* books and among the spiritual scrolls ...). If the book was not among the spiritual accounts or *Mathnawī* couplets, the poet would not make such a false claim.”<sup>294</sup> This is an attributed statement describing the book and placing it in a high position next to previous books of the *Mathnawī*, meaning that after reading the Book Seven Anqarawī believes that its content is superior to the rest of the *Mathnawī*. “How anyone was able to make a false and erroneous statement, if it was not written by Rūmī.”<sup>295</sup> Anqarawī further posits, “Besides, only Rūmī was able to compose such eloquent verses.”<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, f. 2a, lines: 23-28.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid. f. 3a, lines: 5-7.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

Since the opponents quoted some of the opening verses of Book Six to support their claim, Anqarawī offers his own interpretation of these lines, concluding that indeed Rūmī hinted at composing an extra volume to complete his *Mathnawī*. In truth, Rūmī’s own verses in the preface of Book Six testify that there will be another book to be added to the *Mathnawī*.

Afterwards, maybe the permission will come from God: the secrets that are supposed to be told will be told,  
With an eloquence that is much clearer and easier to understand than these subtle recondite allusions. (VI: 6-7)

As further proof, Anqarawī cites one of the verses in Book Seven, where its composition date is supposedly mentioned:

The Book seventh of the *Mathnawī*, which appeared from the hidden world, its date (of composition) is 670/1271.<sup>297</sup>

Taking the date literally, Anqarawī argues that “since the date of composition is the year 1271, two years before Rūmī’s death, thus we are to believe that the actual author of the book is none other than Rūmī.”<sup>298</sup> Confident that the book was composed by Rūmī, Anqarawī makes the theological mistake of supporting his argument with evidence from the disputed text itself, whose validity and authorship is at the heart of the controversy. His first task should have been to prove the latter on the basis of outside evidence before quoting the poetry of Book Seven as a valid source of reference.

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<sup>297</sup> MS Konya, No. 2033, f. 8a, verse 41.

<sup>298</sup> Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, f. 3a, lines: 1-4.

Anqarawī further maintains, entirely contrary to fact, that the verse cannot be from someone else because “throughout history we never heard of a case where another writer or poet wrote a book and credited it to someone else.”<sup>299</sup> He goes on: “It is nearly impossible for anyone to come forward and claim that he had such a profound knowledge of Sufism, the Qur’ān, exegeses and Islamic science and was well acquainted with Rūmī’s poetic style and articulate writing, but decided to hide his identity and claim the work was done by Rūmī.”<sup>300</sup> For the sake of argument, “if there was such a person, historians, hagiographers and biographers would have eventually discovered his identity, had mentioned his name in their texts and we would have learned about those ghost writers. Even if someone steps forward to make such a bold attempt, the quality of his work is not at par with Rūmī’s writing.”<sup>301</sup> Anqarawī rejects the possibility of this having occurred, for if there was such a case, scholars and writers eventually would have been able to identify the author’s identity and explain his motive. He concedes that there have been cases where an author completes another author’s work, but insists that, in such cases, the true author “always” mentions his name and states the intention of his work as paying tribute to the original author.<sup>302</sup>

Anqarawī further supports his argument by again quoting from a reference made in Book Seven to Ḥusām al-Dīn Çelebī and Shams-i Tabrīzī, speciously arguing that only Rūmī was able to praise Ḥusām al-Dīn and Shams the way he did. No one, he insists, would

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<sup>299</sup> Ibid., lines: 7-10.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., lines: 11-13.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., lines: 14-17.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid., lines: 27-30.

have employed such metaphorical terms to praise the two Sufi masters. For example, in the case of Ḥusām al-Dīn he writes:

O Dīyā' u 'l-Ḥaqq (Radiance of God), Ḥusām al-Dīn, the fortunate one, may your poverty be increased and your fortune last forever.<sup>303</sup>

The problem with this argument is that, since in all of the previous books of the *Mathnawī* Rūmī paid tribute to Ḥusām al-Dīn, it is no surprise to see that Book Seven follows a similar style. Regardless of who the real author may have been, as has been argued in Chapter Three, stylistically speaking the book is a poor imitation of the *Mathnawī* being essentially nothing more than a collection of sporadic anecdotes and stories. It is therefore unsurprising to see its author imitate Rūmī in praising Ḥusām al-Dīn or Shams. Once more, Anqarawī falls into the trap of supporting his arguments through comparison of actual information from the *Mathnawī's* verses with elements of Book Seven that could easily have been imitated by the author of the latter. For Anqarawī's argument to have been persuasive, the similarities would have to be subtler, more stylistic or language-based, where imitation is harder and any similarity more convincing. In short, not only does Anqarawī at times draw his information from a suspect source, but he also chooses to compare material that is easily forged. His argument is badly skewed to support his overall position, notwithstanding his comprehensive knowledge and masterful command of the *Mathnawī*.

Criticizing his opponents for not being familiar with Rūmī's work, Anqarawī states that “their dispute looks like a battle with the ego (*da 'vā-yi nafs*, دعواى نفس), meaning that,

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<sup>303</sup> Ibid., f. 3b, lines: 3-5.

since his opponents do not understand Rūmī's message, they deny the existence of Book Seven. Whereas, friends of Rūmī are able to recognize his words even in the darkness of doubts and imaginations."<sup>304</sup> Quoting from Book Two of the *Mathnawī*, he argues that those who are not able to recognize the words of Rūmī in Book Seven are uninspired, ignorant, fools who are baffled in their own disbelief and suffer from spiritual illness, which prevents them from grasping the truths of the soul:

Moreover, the delight of hearing the voice of his relative has become witness to the truthfulness of that dear relative.  
Again, the uninspired fool who in his ignorance does not know a stranger's voice from a relative's—  
To him his speaker's words are mere assertion: his ignorance has become the source of his disbelief;  
But to him of keen insight, within whom are the spiritual lights, the very nature of this voice was just the immediate evidence of its reality. (II: 3578-81)

The implication is that those who possess true spiritual knowledge (*ma'rifa*) and are thirsty for spiritual wisdom know that these are Rūmī's own words.<sup>305</sup> Just as a single subject reproduces various entities, so too Rūmī wrote different books and verse compositions which vary from one another.<sup>306</sup> Furthermore, it must be recalled that even in Rūmī's own time, many people criticized his *Mathnawī* and considered his words inferior.

Some people say that this discourse, namely, the *Mathnawī*, is inferior; it is the story of the Prophet and consists of imitation;  
And there is no mention of theosophical investigation and the sublime mysteries towards which the saints make their steeds gallop. (III: 4233-34)<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> Ibid., f. 4a, lines: 1-5.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid., lines 5-7, 13-15.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., f. 4b, lines: 9-12.

Anqarawī further argues that Rūmī’s opponents’ denigration of the *Mathnawī* as an inferior text was due to their ignorance and lack of knowledge and spirituality, just as in earlier times many had said that the Qur’ān is nothing but stories of the Ancients (*asāfir al-awwalīn*, اساطير الاولين);<sup>308</sup> this does not mean that they were correct in their assessment. Similarly, “our adversaries who deny the legitimacy of Book Seven are among the ignorant ones who lack spiritual knowledge and are wrong in conclusion.”<sup>309</sup>

Again, Anqarawī’s analogy unfortunately relies on materials which are taken out of context and lack any firm resemblance. The verses he quotes from Books Two and Three of the *Mathnawī* were composed in different contexts, and appear to address a different dispute in which Rūmī was involved and where he had to address his opponents. For example, those who questioned the *Mathnawī* and said it was of poor quality wanted to compare Rūmī’s mystical poetry with Qur’ānic verses and Ḥadīth containing Qur’ānic text that it incorporated. Muslims would not consider the *Mathnawī* to be entirely equal to the Qur’ān, but justifying Book Seven by comparing it to the *Mathnawī* is an entirely different issue. For one thing, they are both man-made works, and, besides, few would say that Book Seven even meets the minimum standards of Rūmī’s art. Hence, the argument is neither strong nor convincing.

By referring his critics to Rūmī’s own words from the *Mathnawī*, Anqarawī tries to present the authenticity of Book Seven as a *fait accompli*. However, some of his references

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<sup>308</sup> According to the Qur’ān, “We tell you stories of the prophets, which will strengthen your heart, and thus bring you the truth, and exhortation and a memorial for the believers” (11:120); and “Say (O Prophet) travel through the earth to find out surely the consequences of those who denied the truth” (3:42). Of particular significance is the repeated reference to *asāfir al-awwalīn* meaning *stories of the Ancients*, a term occurring nine times in the Qur’ān (6:25, 8:31, 16:24, 23:83, 25:5, 27:68, 46:17, 68:15, 83:13). The commentators connected its use at one point with the opponents of the Prophet. See Franz Rosenthal, “Asāfir al-Awwalīn,” *EL*.

<sup>309</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, f. 4b, lines 9-12.



are taken out of context and used as invalid justification in terms of analogical reasoning. In other words, the similarities he claims between the examples he uses and his critics' arguments do not in fact exist. The verses quoted from Book Two and Three refer to the validity and importance of the *Mathnawī* in comparison with the Qur'ān. The subject is completely different from the subject of the authenticity and originality of Book Seven and therefore irrelevant. While it is true that Rūmī had written many works featuring different genres and styles, this cannot be used to support the claim that he also wrote Book Seven.

Anqarawī's reasoning is often disproportionate and irrelevant to the main argument laid out by his critics. His method would have worked only if he had restricted himself to what was relevant to the argument. But relevance is not something about which we can be terribly precise; it is always possible in principle to tell a story in the context of which anything may turn out to be relevant. Moreover, it is surely significant that despite the numerous errors and flaws in Book Seven, Anqarawī, otherwise such a skillful commentator of the *Mathnawī*, was not able to differentiate the inferiority of the verses in Book Seven from the rest of the *Mathnawī*.

### **Response to the Second Argument: Sipahsālār's *Risāla***

B) Responding to the second argument, where it is pointed out that Sipahsālār did not mention Book Seven in his biographical work, Anqarawī argues that the intention of Sipahsālār was not to discuss merely Rūmī's works per se. Thus, he only briefly mentions the *Mathnawī* in the chapter devoted to Ḥusām al-Dīn. I should mention that Sipahsālār's work in Sa'īd Nafīsī's edition,<sup>310</sup> which is based on the Kanpūr manuscript, consists of three sections as follows:

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<sup>310</sup> Nafīsī, *Risālah-i Farīdun Sipahsālār*, 10-12.

First section.

- Ch.1: The chain of mystical teachers from the prophet to Bahā' al-Dīn Valad,
- Ch. 2: The acts of Bahā' al-Dīn Valad,

Second Section

- Ch.1: The birth of Rūmī,
- Ch.2: The chain of mystical teachers from the Prophet to Rūmī,
- Ch.3: The acts of Rūmī,

Third Section

- The companions and successors of Rūmī,
- Burhān al-Dīn Muḥaqqiq Tarmidhī
- Shams al-Dīn Tabrīzī,
- Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Zarkūb,
- Çelebī Ḥusām al-Dīn,
- Sultān Valad,
- Çelebī 'Ārif,
- Çelebī b. Shams al-Dīn 'Ābid,
- Rūmī's companions and disciples.

In the third section of his *Risāla*, Sīpahsālār discusses the life of Ḥusām al-Dīn and cites the opening verses of all six books of the *Mathnawī* to demonstrate the importance of Çelebī in Rūmī's life and the respect and the high regard the latter had for the former.

Anqarawī argues that it is true that Sīpahsālār discussed Çelebī in his *Risāla*, but claims that in fact he meant to discuss the life of Ḥusām al-Dīn as one of Rūmī's close companions and it is only in this connection that he mentions the composition of the *Mathnawī*. According to Anqarawī, the reason that only six books of the *Mathnawī* are mentioned in this chapter is because Ḥusām al-Dīn was the source of inspiration for composing the *Mathnawī*.<sup>311</sup> In a somewhat unconvincing argument, he states that if Sīpahsālār's goal had been to discuss Rūmī's writings, he would have examined them thoroughly and would have mentioned all seven books of the *Mathnawī* in his chapter.<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, f. 5a, lines: 16-26.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

## Anqarawī's Response to the Second Argument: Rūmī's Pen Name (*takhalluṣ*): The Account of Rūmī's Writings

### *Rūmī's writings*

Among the controversial statements made by Anqarawī, one may point to the list he prepared of Rūmī's works. He maintains that Rūmī wrote several books and *risālas* that are not discussed in the aforementioned chapter by Sipahsālār. He also points out that there was a delay between Rūmī's completing Book One and his composing Book Two. This is also where Anqarawī insists that it is highly possible that, after Rūmī recovered from his illness, he wrote Book Seven.<sup>313</sup> He then offers a list of Rūmī's works, all of which he claims to have seen, read and examined closely. The list includes:

- 1) *Mathnawī*,
- 2) *Dīvān-i kabīr*,
- 3) *Dīvān-i ṣaghīr*,
- 4) *Fīh-i mā fīh*,
- 5) *Maqālāt-i Shams*,
- 6) *Tajallīyāt*,
- 7) *Tarassulāt*,
- 8) *Mavā'iz*,
- 9) *Ma'ārif* (similar to Bahā'-i Valad and Sulṭān Valad's *Ma'ārif*, which I saw in Konya),
- 10) *Marghūb al-Qulūb* (a poetry collection in the honor of Shams-i Tabrīzī),
- 11) *Risālāt-i 'Ishq-nāma, Āfāq-i Anfus, Tarāvush-nāma.*"<sup>314</sup>

The list provided by Anqarawī includes some works that cannot be found in any other primary or secondary sources. Drawing upon Sipahsālār's *Risāla* and Aflākī's *Manāqib al-Ārifīn*, Furūzānfar lists Rūmī's writings as follows: a): Poetry: *Dīvān*, which consists of all his poems including *ghazaliyyāt*, *qaṣā'id*, *tarjī-'band*, *tarkīb-band*,

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<sup>313</sup> Ibid., f. 6a, lines: 1-4.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., f. 5b, lines: 7-13.

*rubā'iyāt* and the *Mathnawī*; b): Prose: *Fīhi Mā Fīh*, *Makātib*, *Majālis-i Sab'ah*.<sup>315</sup>

According to Furūzānfar, there are also several poems in different literary genres and poetic meters that were falsely attributed to Rūmī.<sup>316</sup> He argues that usage of the nickname “Shams” does not lend authenticity to the ghazals since the style and subjects are far from Rūmī’s style of composition.<sup>317</sup> Some contemporary Rūmī scholars who have also studied Rūmī’s life and teachings and examined his writings follow Furūzānfar’s biography and have based their studies mainly on the list provided by Aflākī and Sipahsālār.<sup>318</sup> A close reading of Anqarawī’s list suggests that *Dīvān-i Kabīr* and *Dīvān-i Şaghīr* may possibly be a reference to the collections of Rūmī’s ghazals (*ghazaliyyāt*) and quatrains (*rubā'iyāt*). By *mavā'iz*, he may have been referring to Rūmī’s seven sermons (*Majālis-i Sab'ah*).

Anqarawī included Shams’ *Discourses* (*Maqālāt-i Shams*) in the list, which could suggest either that he believed the *Discourses* were collected and edited by Rūmī or that he assumed that they were written by him and attributed to Shams. As for *Marghūb al-Qulūb*, Sipahsālār argues that, due to the inferiority of the poems, it is unlikely that Shams-i Tabrīzī composed them.<sup>319</sup> Quoting the closing verses of the book where the date of composition is mentioned as 1356, Sipahsālār further explains that, since the date suggests *Marghūb al-Qulūb* was composed 114 years after the disappearance of Shams from Konya,

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<sup>315</sup> For a detailed examination of Rūmī’s works, see Badī’ al-Zamān Furūzānfar’s *Risālah dar Tahqīq-i Ahvāl va Zindigānī-i Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn* (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī Zavvār, 1954), 148-170.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*, 150-152.

<sup>317</sup> For a comprehensive examination of Rūmī’s poems and their authenticity in his *Divān*, see *Ibid.*, 150-158.

<sup>318</sup> See, for example, Lewis, *Rūmī Past and Present*, 292-305; Gölpinarlı, *Mevlānā Celāleddin: Hayātī, Eserleri, Eserlerinden Seçmeler*, 57-58; and Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love*, 5-7.

<sup>319</sup> Nafīsī, *Risāla-i Sipahsālār*, 311.

it is not possible that the book was composed by Shams.<sup>320</sup> It might have been written by someone else who shared a similar name and who possibly came from Tabriz. In short, since the book is not mentioned in any biographical sources, we may conclude that it was written by someone else.<sup>321</sup>

The fact that the Shams' *Discourses* were mentioned by both Aflākī and Sipahsālār in their biographies as words and sermons attributed to Shams, but listed by Anqarawī under the works composed by Rūmī, raises serious concern about Anqarawī's familiarity with Rūmī's works in general and Shams-i Tabrīzī's *Discourses* in particular. Shams was a very influential figure in Rūmī's spiritual growth and became a distinguished character in Rūmī's circle of friends and companions. Failing to acknowledge a work attributed to him and counting it as part of Rūmī's writings certainly casts serious doubt on Anqarawī as an authoritative figure in Rūmī scholarship.

Then, there is the failure to mention other works he attributed to Rūmī including *Ma'ārif* that he claimed to have read while being in Konya. The list raises a number of serious questions: Why had no one else mentioned these obscure works by Rūmī? If Anqarawī was able to find information about their existence, would it not be safe to say that both Aflākī and Sipahsālār, as well as Sulṭān Valad, would have discussed them in their writings? Even if we assume that the attributed writings used to exist before Tamerlane's invasion, some scholars, learned men, Mevlevī Sufīs or companions of Rūmī from that time would have mentioned them in their writings. How then did only Anqarawī manage to acquire the list?

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<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

Despite Anqarawī's familiarity with the biographical *risālas* as well as the numerous references that he provides in his commentary from both Sipahsālār and Aflākī indicating his articulate knowledge of both hagiographers' works and their content, it is nevertheless concerning to see him attribute so many inauthentic writings to Rūmī, which are not mentioned in any reliable biographical work.

Anqarawī maintains:

بعضی ثقاتدن بو فقیر بویله استماع ایتدیم که حضرت مولانانک یکر می بش (25) قطعه  
تصنیفی واریمش لکن تیمور خان قونیه دیار کلدکده اول حضرتک تصانیفینی الوب و بولدوغی  
یردن جمع قلوب دیار رومده بو کونه کلمات طیبه نک قدرنی بیلور یوقدر دیوب کوترب عجم  
دیارنه الوب کتمش. اما شش مجلد مثنوی شریف اکثر دیارده منتشر اولدوغندن انی الوب کیده  
ممش. و دیوان کبیر و دیوان صغیری و فیه ما فیه و بعضی حالا رومده اولن رساله لرنی بر محبه  
خاتون بر تنور ایچره اخفا ایدوب اول کندنصکره اخراج ایلمش تا نسخه لری منتشر اولمش. اما  
مناقب صاحبلرینک هیچ بریسی اول حضرتک تصنیفات شریفه و تألیفات لطیفه سنی ضبط ایلمکه  
مقید اولمه مشلر.

I heard from reliable sources that Rūmī has left about 25 writings behind, and after the Tamerlane's (d. 1405) invasion of Konya, he (Tamerlane) took all the books with them to Iran (*dīyār-i 'ajam*) claiming that no one in Anatolia would appreciate Rūmī's works. However, by then the six volumes of the *Mathnawī* as well as his *Dīvān-i Kabīr*, *Dīvān-i Şaghīr*, *Fīhī mā Fīh* and some of his other *risālas* had been known, published and widely spread among people. So, he could not take the *Mathnawī* with him. A certain woman under the name Muḥibbah Khātūn collected all Rūmī's books and kept them in an oven (*tannūr*) of her place, and, after the fall of Tamerlane, she made them public. However, none of the hagiographers cared to list Rūmī's entire delicate poetry and fine prose works in their *Manāqibs*.<sup>322</sup>

There are serious flaws with this account. Anqarawī fails to provide us with any information regarding Muḥibbah Khātūn and her identity. Who is she? It is not clear to us how she, and nobody else, was able to collect all the writings of Rūmī. Was she a Mevlevī Sufī with proper education and training? To what extent was she familiar with Rūmī and

<sup>322</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāğışlar, No. 6574, f. 5b, lines: 14-20.

his teachings to take on the responsibility of keeping his writings safe from possible damage by the troops of Tamerlane? Her name is not listed in any of the biographical sources on early Ottoman Sufis. Anqarawī also fails to provide his source of information on the matter.

Another consideration is that Rūmī died in 1273, whereas Tamerlane came to power almost 100 years later, in 1370. His reign ended in 1405. Furthermore, both Aflākī (d. 1291) and Sipahsālār predeceased Tamerlane, and their biographical works were actually written and published before his time. It is hard to believe that there were more writings by Rūmī accessible to Anqarawī than were known to his biographers. If we are to accept Anqarawī's claim as to the authenticity of Book Seven, we must ask ourselves why all six volumes of the *Mathnawī* were published in the early time period but without Book Seven as part of the collection?

We know that Tamerlane's short-lived empire melded the Turko-Persian tradition in Transoxiana and that in most of the territories he incorporated into his empire Persian became the primary language of administration and literary culture regardless of ethnicity. As Beatrice Manz points out, his dynasty, which ruled Transoxiana and Iran until the early sixteenth century, was noted for its patronage of Turkish and Persian literature.

In Temür's government, as in those of most nomad dynasties, it is impossible to find a clear distinction between civil and military affairs, or to identify the Persian bureaucracy as solely civil or the Turko-Mongolian solely with military government. In fact, it is difficult to define the sphere of either side of the administration and we find Persians and Chaghatays sharing many tasks. (In discussing the settled bureaucracy and the people who worked within it, I use the word Persian in a cultural rather than ethnological sense. In almost all the territories which Temür incorporated into his realm, Persian was the primary language of administration and literary culture. Thus the language of the settled 'dīvān' was Persian and its scribes had to be thoroughly adept in Persian culture, whatever their ethnic origin).<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>323</sup> Beatrice Forbes Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 109.

Although Persian was the official language for bureaucracy and literature and despite Tamerlane's great fondness for Persian poetry, mention should be made of his support for Turkish culture. During his reign, many contributions to Turkic literature were penned, with Turkic cultural influence expanding and flourishing as a result. For example, a literary form of Chagatai Turkic came into use alongside Persian as both a cultural and an official language.<sup>324</sup> Given this patronage of both Persian and Turkish language and culture, it is hard to believe that Tamerlane would collect all Persian sources from Turkish regions and remove them to Iran. Consequently, there is really no supporting evidence for Anqarawī's claim that Tamerlane transferred all Persian sources from Konya.

### **Anqarawī's Response to the Third Argument: Rūmī's Pen Name (*takhalluṣ*)**

In responding to the third argument, where critics refers to one of the verses from Book Six:

O spiritual one, I bring to you as an offering the Sixth Part to complete the *Mathnawī*. (VI: 3)

Anqarawī offers a different interpretation, arguing that it does not mean that the *Mathnawī* appeared only in six volumes; rather, it signifies that this is the sixth book from the *Mathnawī*, presented as an offering, with the possibility of its being followed by a seventh book.<sup>325</sup> He continues by saying that another reason for assuming that the *Mathnawī* was incomplete after the sixth book was that "often poets and authors conclude their *dīvān* with their nickname (*takhalluṣ*) and a prayer (*duā*) to God, or the Prophet, and, as we see, Book

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<sup>324</sup> Olivier Roy, *The New Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 7.

<sup>325</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, f. 6a, lines: 17-22.



Seven ends with the prayer, which makes us to believe that Rūmī completed his work in seven volumes.”<sup>326</sup>

In the Persian poetic tradition, most poets used a pen name called the *takhalluṣ*. This can be either a part of a poet's given name or something else adopted as an identity. The traditional convention in identifying Persian poets is to include the *takhalluṣ* at the end of the name. The word *takhalluṣ* is derived from the Arabic root *khalaṣa* (خلص), meaning “ending”. This is because in the *ghazal*, the poet would usually incorporate his or her pen name into the final couplet (*maqṭaʿ*) of each poem as a type of ‘signature.’ As discussed by Schimmel, “the concept of pen name was introduced at a rather early stage in Persian poetry, either to be mentioned for identification or for self-praise. It was often chosen by the poet himself to emphasize one of his qualities or ideals, otherwise it was given by his master in poetry or his mystical mentor.”<sup>327</sup> Rūmī’s pen name in his *dīvān* was either “The Silent One” (*khāmūsh*) or “Shams-i Tabrīzī”. As Lewis notes, “[*K*]hāmūsh usually calls for an end to the complaint of existential or ontological pain experienced in the absence of the object of love.”<sup>328</sup> The signature also acts as a command to the reader or the mystic desirous of revealing the secrets of mystical love. Lewis suggests that Rūmī “adopted the persona of Shams-i Tabrīzī by way of union with his spirit.”<sup>329</sup> Although most classical Persian poets, such as Sa’dī (d. 1291) in his *Gulistān*, conclude their poetry with their

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<sup>326</sup> Ibid., lines: 23-29.

<sup>327</sup> Annmarie Schimmel, *A Two-Colored Brocade: The Imagery of Persian Poetry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 26.

<sup>328</sup> Lewis, *Rūmī Past and Present*, 328-329.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

nickname or a dedicatory prayer to the prophet, a religious figure or their patron, there are others, such as ‘Aṭṭār, who refrain from using their pen name.

Rūmī begins his *Mathnawī* with a prayer to God and words of praise to his spiritual master Shams-i Tabrīzī and his companion Ḥusām al-Dīn:

Saith the feeble slave who hath need of the mercy of God most High, Muḥammad son of Muḥammad son of al-Ḥusayn of (the city of) Balkh—may God accept (this offering) from him: I have exerted myself to give length to the Poem in Rhymed Couplets ... at the request of my master and stay and support, who holds the place of the spirit in my body, and is the treasure of my to-day, the Sheikh, the exemplar for them that know God and the leader of them that possess right guidance and certainty, the helper of humankind ... the charge deposited by God amongst His creatures, and His choice amongst His creation, and (the object of) His injunctions to His Prophet and (of) His secrets (imparted) to His chosen one, ... the trustee of the riches stored in the earth, the father of virtues, the Sword (Ḥusām) of the Truth and Religion, Hasan son of Muhammad son of al-Hasan, generally known as Ibn Akhī Turk, the Abū Yazīd of the time, the Junayd of the age, the entirely veracious son of an entirely veracious sire and grandsire—may God be well-pleased with him and with them.<sup>330</sup>

In fact, Rūmī begins Book One with the above prayer in prose while the rest of the *Mathnawī* includes praises in verse to Ḥusām al-Dīn. It can be suggested that, since the opening remarks include Rūmī’s nickname followed by a prayer and a tribute to Ḥusām al-Dīn Çelebī, there was no need to conclude each book with extra prayers or by adding his nickname at the end.

### **Conflict with Mevlevī Sufis: Muṣṭafā Sham‘ī**

In Anqarawī’s challenge to his critics’ third argument, we encounter, for the first time, the name of Mevlānā Sham‘ī as one of his opponents. Muṣṭafā, who was well known by his pen name (*takhalluṣ*), Sham‘ī, was among the famous Ottoman commentators who

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<sup>330</sup> Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī*, v. 1. 3-4.

lived at the time of Anqarawī. He wrote a respected commentary on the *Mathnawī* at the request of Sulṭān Murad III; beginning it in 1587 and completing it in 1601. His commentary became popular among the Mevlevīs and was frequently read and taught in Mevlevī lodges. However, according to Gölpınarlı, Sham‘ī was lacking moral ethics and used to drink most of the time and eventually died in poverty.<sup>331</sup> Gölpınarlı considers his commentary to be defective and erroneous and states that his drinking may have contributed to the inferiority of his commentary.<sup>332</sup>

Anqarawī takes Sham‘ī to task for his lack of spiritual insight and poor judgment respecting Rūmī’s mystical teachings.<sup>333</sup>

نیچه شمعی کبی کیمسلرک عقلی و علمی بر یره جمع اولسه انک وادی معانیسنده حیران  
اوله لر و مبادئ اسرار و حقایقنده سرکردان قاله لر ایدی

Even if several people with Sham‘ī’s intellect and knowledge are gathered in one place, they fall short of comprehending the profound meaning of Book Seven. In fact, they will be perplexed to grasp the in-depth gist of its secrets and concepts.<sup>334</sup>

Anqarawī thus pursues an *ad hominem* attack on Sham‘ī by questioning his credentials.

Instead of responding to his critiques, Anqarawī accuses his opponent of lacking spirituality and a poor knowledge of the *Mathnawī*. Yet as discussed in Chapter Four, Ḥāfiz Khalīl, the copyist of MS Dārulmesnevi 245 (ff. 13b-15a), who adds some comments to

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<sup>331</sup> Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā dan Sonrā Mevlevilik*, 207.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, f. 6b, lines: 20-23.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid., lines: 34-35.

the gloss, supports this by pointing out that “Sham‘ī’s argument is weak, and, although Anqarawī’s comments might appear severe and discourteous to some people’s eyes, he (Sham‘ī) was not able to grasp the spiritual meaning of the *Mathnawī*, thus his critique of Anqarawī is invalid, baseless and comes as a result of his lack of spirituality and misunderstanding of Rūmī’s teachings.”<sup>335</sup>

In his commentary on Book Six, Sham‘ī supports the argument based on verse 3, which reads: “I bring to you as an offering the Sixth Part to complete the *Mathnawī*.” Therefore, “Rūmī’s verse indeed demonstrates his spiritual miracle by foreseeing his death when he stated that there will be no more books and this is the last of the six volumes.”<sup>336</sup> On the subject of miracles, Anqarawī states that a miracle has to satisfy the following conditions: “a) It must be contrary to the usual course of events and impossible for ordinary people to perform it; it should be impossible to contradict it; b) It’s actuality must not be subject to any doubt and hesitation; and c) It must not be contradicted or questioned by the course of future events.”<sup>337</sup> Thus, the entire *Mathnawī* appears to be a spiritual miracle by Rūmī and those who are in denial and refuse to admit the authenticity of Book Seven, including Sham‘ī and others, are deemed by him to have fallen into doubt, are trapped in their own dark imagination and lack spiritual awareness.<sup>338</sup>

Anqarawī continues his attack by citing more historical facts, for example that “at the time of Sham‘ī only six volumes of the *Mathnawī* were published; thus, he had no way

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<sup>335</sup> MS Dārulmesnevi 245, f. 13b, marginal note on the right side of the gloss.

<sup>336</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574, f. 6b, lines: 1-4.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., f. 6b, lines: 7-10.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid., lines: 28-33.

of consulting the book or knowing about the seventh volume and that explains the reason for his disavowal and rejection. Had he had the opportunity to see and examine the book closely, he would have approved it.”<sup>339</sup>

There is a historical problem with this claim. Since Sham‘ī lived almost at the same time as Anqarawī, and if the earliest copy of Book Seven appeared in Konya in 1411, Sham‘ī and other commentators should have been able to examine the book. Indeed, in Chapter Four, we learned that, according to Anqarawī himself, Book Seven was apparently found in the Shām (Syria) sometime between 1601 and 1604, prompting Būstān Çelebī to send Mevlevī Sufis to go and verify its authenticity. How, then, was it possible that only Anqarawī obtained a copy of the text and became convinced of its authenticity, while the manuscript was not accessible to other *Mathnawī* commentators or Mevlevī shaykhs?

Anqarawī’s harsh and lengthy response to Sham‘ī also raises the question of whether Sham‘ī was among the critics to whom he alludes in his introduction. We are safe to assume that Sham‘ī was among his main critics, since he discusses his comments and critiques at length. In his analogical debate (*jadāl*) – as we see in the case of Shem’ī Efendī – Anqarawī follows the method of analogical argument and inductive references by use of disanalogy and counter-argument and by pointing out unintended consequences of his critics’ analogy to devalue their arguments. He offers his premises through explanatory comparisons and concludes that two examples are alike in a certain respect because they are alike in other respects.

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<sup>339</sup> Ibid., f. 7a, lines: 20-25.

## Concluding Notes

Anqarawī's elaborate response demonstrates his serious engagement in debate over the authenticity of Book Seven with Sufis and Mevlevī shaykhs of his time. He tries to demonstrate his supremacy over other *Mathnawī* commentators on the subject of Rūmī's Sufī doctrine and ability to comment on his *Mathnawī*. It can be suggested that, by criticizing Sham'ī's knowledge of Rūmī's teachings and by pointing out his flaws and his lack of spirituality, Anqarawī was attempting to belittle Sham'ī's commentary while at the same time presenting his own commentary as the most reliable and comprehensive *sharḥ* ever written on the *Mathnawī*. In other words, Anqarawī's principal aim was to promote himself as an authority and a formidable scholar of Rūmī who would utter the last word and present himself as the ultimate expert and the most reliable commentator in Mevlevī circles.

There is no doubt that Anqarawī's full command of Persian and Arabic and his articulate knowledge in the fields of exegeses, theology, philosophy and jurisprudence contributed to his high status in Ottoman society and placed him among the elite scholars who benefited from the Sultān's patronage. This in turn contributed to his power and superiority over other Mevlevī shaykhs. It can also be suggested that, by writing a separate commentary on Book Seven, while ignoring other Mevlevī Shaykhs' disapproval and criticizing other scholars for not being able to understand Rūmī's Sufism and spiritual message properly, Anqarawī was claiming his authority as the ultimate commentator and *Mathnawī-khān*. It is obvious that his harsh criticism of other *Mathnawī* commentators and some Mevlevī shaykhs is indicative of his political and social power or his desire to achieve more political and social power. It is no exaggeration to state that when Anqarawī spoke,

Mevlevīs listened. The fact that his *sharḥ* has been the most consulted among Ottoman commentaries – which to this date remains the only source used for teaching *Mathnawī* to Mevlevīs (by Maqām Çelebī) in Mathnawī-khāns. – is a sign of his powerful status.<sup>340</sup> Its popularity reaches beyond the geographical borders of Turkey and Ottoman Empire and it was considered by Nicholson to be the most valuable source of its kind, while writing his own English translation and commentary of the *Mathnawī*.<sup>341</sup> These are endorsements that must be taken into consideration when measuring Anqarawī’s reputation.

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<sup>340</sup> Anqarawī’s commentary on the *Mathnawī* is commonly known in Turkish as *Mesnevī Şerḥi* and remains “a primary authority for teaching the *Mathnawī* and Anqarawī’s name and work have always been expected on the certificates issued to candidates for the position of Mathnawīkhān (i.e. a lecturer on the *Mathnawī*),” see Kuspīnār, “Ismā‘īl Rusūkhī Ankaravī and İzāḥu’l-Ḥikem,” 18-19.

<sup>341</sup> In the introduction to volume 2 of his translation of the first and second books of the *Mathnawī*, Nicholson states that “The oriental commentaries, with all their shortcomings, give much help. Among those used in preparing this translation, I have profited most by the *Fātiḥu’l-abyāt* (Turkish) of Ismā‘īl Anqiravī and the *Sharḥ-i Mathnawī-yi Mawlānā-yi Rūmī* (Persian) of Walī Muḥammad Akbarābādī.” Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī*, v. 2, xvi.

## **Chapter Six: Anqarawī’s Theosophical Approach in his *Sharh-i Mathnawī: The Influence of Ibn ‘Arabī***

This chapter offers an examination of those verses from Book Seven that appear to show the influence of Ibn ‘Arabī’s thought according to Anqarawī. Though an expert and heavy promoter of Mevlevī teachings, Anqarawī was also deeply knowledgeable in and even a follower of the Akbarian School, as shown most notably by his own commentary on Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. There are numerous references to the latter work and to Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* in the commentary he wrote on Rūmī’s *Mathnawī*. In our discussion of these verses, we will examine Anqarawī’s advocacy of the concept of sainthood and Pharaoh’s faith – both discussed favorably by Ibn ‘Arabī – despite the unfavorable reception he received from his detractors who held Ibn ‘Arabī responsible for a decline of morals in Islamic society.

We will also address the claim that, due to his conflict with religious scholars (the *‘ulamā’*) and mainly the Qāḍīzādeh movement, Anqarawī was later forced to “excommunicate” Ibn ‘Arabī in his commentary on Book Seven in order to reconcile with them. Cevdet Pāşā argues that the hostility shown to the school of Ibn ‘Arabī by Qāḍīzādeh’s followers was exacerbated by the fact that Anqarawī cited him so often in Book Seven of the *Mathnawī* and declared his support for his positions.<sup>342</sup> Anqarawī defends the views of Ibn ‘Arabī at many points in his commentary, both in a subtle fashion on single points and in relation to the major controversies concerning the faith of Pharaoh and the concept of sainthood (*wilāya*). In this chapter, I will address these two important

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<sup>342</sup> Cevdet Pāşā, *Tazkira*, ed. Cavid Baysun (Ankara: Turk Tārīh Kurumu Basimevei, 1986), 4: 229-236.



issues, which Anqarawī treats at length: Pharaoh’s repentance at the time he faced death and Ibn ‘Arabī’s concept of sainthood (*wilāya*). Investigating these controversial subjects, I will also examine briefly the poetic metaphor on God’s divine attributes (*jamāl, jalāl*), which is mentioned in the story of Pharaoh. All of these examples indicate that Anqarawī was well aware of the accusations of heresy directed at Ibn ‘Arabī, yet he never appears to be less than a strong advocate of Akbarian doctrine, trying to justify the verses in which Ibn ‘Arabī was harshly criticized.

### **Ibn ‘Arabī and His Influence in the Ottoman Empire**

Muhyiddīn Ibn ‘Arabī was a mystic, philosopher, poet, sage and one of the world’s great spiritual teachers. Known as Muhyiddīn (the Reviver of Religion) and the Shaykh al-Akbar (the Greatest Master – an honorific title bestowed upon him by his disciples due to his spiritual insights and immense knowledge of the Islamic sciences), he was born in 1165 AD into the culture of Andalusian Spain, the center of an extraordinary flourishing and cross-fertilization of Jewish, Christian and Islamic thought, through which the major scientific and philosophical works of antiquity were transmitted to Northern Europe. He was a prolific author and most importantly famous for his *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, an exposition of the inner meaning of the wisdom of the prophets in the Judaic/Christian/Islamic traditions, as well as for his *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, a vast encyclopedia of spiritual knowledge, which unites and distinguishes the three strands of tradition, reason and mystical insight.<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>343</sup> For a good introduction to Ibn ‘Arabī, see Claude Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life of Ibn ‘Arabī* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1993); Michel Chodkiewicz, *The Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1993); Stephen Hirtenstein, *The Unlimited Mercifier: The Spiritual Life and Thought of Ibn ‘Arabī* (Ashland: White

In Anatolia, and under the rule of the Turkish Saljūk dynasty, Ibn ‘Arabī came in touch with the Sufī traditions of the Turco-Persian speaking world of the eastern Muslim lands of Khurāsān and Central Asia. Furthermore, it was in Anatolia that the textual community of Ibn ‘Arabī (d. 1240) took shape and it was through the efforts of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 1274) and a host of his disciples that the School of Ibn ‘Arabī came to influence many respected and prominent scholars such as Qayṣarī (d. 1350), Qāshānī (Kāshānī) (d. 1329), Jandī (d. 1291) and Mullā Fenārī (d. 1431). Even though his textual community remained for quite some time exclusively Arabic and Persian in expression, its influence was the greatest in Anatolia, and, because of its geographical distribution, it was destined to be inherited by the Ottomans whose rise to power Ibn ‘Arabī allegedly predicted. He was one of the great thinkers and spiritual masters of the Muslim world as well as one of the “most polarizing figures in later Islamic thought”<sup>344</sup> among the Ottoman educated class, “both those learned in religious sciences and Ottoman bureaucrats and administrators.”<sup>345</sup>

According to ‘Abdullāh al-Busnevī (d. 1644), an Ottoman commentator on *Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam*:

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Cloud Press, 1999); William Chittick, *Ibn ‘Arabī: Heir to the Prophets* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005); and Alexander D. Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabī in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).

<sup>344</sup> This information is drawn from Ahmed Zildžić’s unpublished PhD dissertation, *Friend and Foe: The Early Ottoman Reception of Ibn ‘Arabī*, under the supervision of Ḥāmid Algar, (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2012), 26. The author addresses the continuation of Islamic intellectual and spiritual traditions into the Ottoman period. He suggests that the early Ottoman world was rather intellectually isolated from the Arabic-speaking heartlands of Islam, and, as such, evinced an independent and seemingly wholly positive engagement with Ibn ‘Arabī and his legacy. This, however, changed with the Ottoman conquest of Mamlūk territories; the Ottomans were now confronted with the intellectual traditions of the Arabic-speaking world and the long and more contentious debates on the acceptability of Ibn ‘Arabī’s teachings (pp. i-v).

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*, iv.

Ibn ‘Arabī’s saintly figure was largely intact among the Ottomans until Sulṭān Selīm (d. 1520) conquered the Arab world. After Selīm’s seizure of the two traditional centers of Muslim scholarship that were in Mamlūk possession, namely Damascus and Cairo, the heated debates regarding Ibn ‘Arabī’s acceptability, or lack thereof, from the works of Arab *fuqahā*’ who lived in those centers of learning were transferred into the Ottoman scholarly milieu and wrought havoc there.<sup>346</sup>

This suggests that the early Ottoman world was intellectually isolated from the Arabic-speaking heartlands of Islam, and, as such, evinced an independent and seemingly wholly positive engagement with Ibn ‘Arabī and his legacy. This, however, changed with the Ottoman conquest of Mamlūk territories; the Ottomans were now confronted with the intellectual traditions of the Arabic-speaking world and the long and more contentious debates on the acceptability of Ibn ‘Arabī’s teachings.

There is little doubt that Ibn ‘Arabī was on very close terms with the ruling house of the Anatolian Saljūks; this is a fact noted by all traditional and modern biographers. As a matter of fact, Şadr al-Dīn’s *zāwiya* (Sufi center) in the city of Konya proves that the Akbarian textual community did not consist solely of a number of disciples and associated individuals, but that it was soon institutionalized and that Akbarian scholarship came to be recognized and was shaped as part of this institution. He helped to define Ibn ‘Arabī’s ideas and thus defined the main contours for future commentaries of Ibn ‘Arabī’s work. Şadr al-Dīn Qūnawī’s hospice and great library became a center for the study of Ibn ‘Arabī’s teachings in Anatolia, which gathered around it many great minds and spiritual geniuses, who in turn produced a number of monumental commentaries on Ibn ‘Arabī’s works. The Ottomans, naturally, relied heavily on existing traditions in Anatolia and incorporated, amongst others: “Qūnawī’s *zāwiya* and its textual treasures, *waqfs*, books and scholars,

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<sup>346</sup> Ibid., v.

some of whom became pioneers in erecting a distinct Ottoman scholarly tradition, beginning with the Ottoman ‘firsts’: the first Ottoman *madrasas* and their respective teachers, the first muftis and *qāḍīs* were not just under the heavy influence of Ibn ‘Arabī’s teachings but even its formulators and proponents.”<sup>347</sup>

However, there was a major problem that members of the ‘*ulamā*’ had with Ibn ‘Arabī and this was the manner in which he claimed to receive knowledge. Even though Ibn ‘Arabī had mastered the core sciences that an ‘*ālim*, or member of the ‘*ulamā*’ class, was expected to, he did not accord book learning the paramount status that the ‘*ulamā*’ had assigned it. For Ibn ‘Arabī, book learning was secondary to the supreme source of knowledge, direct divine inspiration and unveiling. Thus, Ibn ‘Arabī’s spiritual experiences and writings “amount to nothing less than a grossly intolerable material transgression of the fundamental principles of scholarly authenticity laid down by the ‘*ulamā*’ in order to protect the integrity of the Muslim ‘*umma*’ as and its interpretative community, and thus to establish and maintain the social order of Muslim politics.”<sup>348</sup> Despite the above mentioned conflicts and debates, which led to a division in the Akbarian reception in Ottoman lands, the School of Ibn ‘Arabī remained popular in later Ottoman society and many scholars remained faithful to his teachings and dedicated much of their writings to him.

### **Ibn ‘Arabī on Pharaoh’s Faith**

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<sup>347</sup> Ibid., 81-82.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., 37.

The current chapter is an analysis of verses in Anqarawī's commentary from Book Seven in which the subjects of Pharaoh's faith and sainthood are discussed, largely from the standpoint of Ibn 'Arabī, and it examines how Anqarawī expounded upon Rūmī's poetry from a theological perspective. Anqarawī demonstrates a close association with the Akbarian school and a great fondness for Ibn 'Arabī's system of thought. There is no doubt that Anqarawī was among those who inherited the Akbarian institution and dedicated a great deal of his writings to the exposition of Ibn 'Arabī's works, which appeared in the form of either commenting directly on the former's books and treatises, or explicating mystical texts such as Rūmī's *Mathnawī* or Ibn Fāriḍ's (d. 1235) mystical poem, *Qaṣīdah-t al-Tā'iyya*, along the lines of Ibn 'Arabī's theology. The second attempt definitely encountered disapproval and sharp criticism from scholars in the field who demonstrated their condemnation by saying that "Anqarawī [took] too much from Ibn 'Arabī, which indicates his lack of understanding of Rūmī's own Sufī teachings."<sup>349</sup> On the subject of Pharaoh's faith, Anqarawī argues that his declaration of faith was genuine and his sin was forgiven by God due to His divine attribute of mercy, which encompasses all creatures and beings. Despite some evidences from the Qur'ān, where Pharaoh's sin, tyranny and disobedience are mentioned, Anqarawī believed his sins were forgiven due to his sincere declaration of faith and God's divine mercy.

#### *Pharaoh's repentance in the face of death?*

Fir'awn (Pharaoh) is the epitome of arrogance and tyranny in the Qur'ān, where the account of his battle with Moses and his kingship are narrated in several chapters.

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<sup>349</sup> Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā'dān Sonrā Mevlevīlik*, 203.

According to Wensinck, “The word is explained by the commentaries on Sūra ii. 46 of the Qur’ān as a *laqab* or ‘*alam* of the Amalakite kings, like Kisrā and Ẓaiṣar of the Kings of the Persians and Romans. The verb *tafar’ana* means ‘to be arrogant and tyrannous’, hence the Qur’ānic Fir’awn is called *al-Djabbār* ‘the tyrant’ by al-Ya’qūbī.”<sup>350</sup> The story of Pharaoh’s repentance while crossing the Red Sea, which is mentioned several times in chapters 4, 10, 17, 38, and 40 of the Qur’ān, has been the subject of debate among scholars. Theologians and exegetes have taken different stands on this controversial subject with each arguing in favor of or against the sincerity of his confession.<sup>351</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī’s thesis of the validity of Pharaoh’s confession of faith is perhaps one of the most controversial written on the subject and has generated a remarkable amount of comments from both supporters and detractors. Before examining Ibn ‘Arabī’s commentary on this issue, let us assess the Qur’ānic verses on Pharaoh’s confession. It is not clear whether Pharaoh’s repentance was sincere or came as a result of fear and imminent death. And, was his repentance accepted by God or was it only his body that was saved from drowning? According to the Qur’ān (10:90-92), Pharaoh repented “in the sight of death” and his body was saved:

*And We brought the Children of Israel across the sea, and Pharaoh with his hosts pursued them in rebellion and transgression, till, when the (fate of) drowning overtook him, he exclaimed: I believe that there is no Allah save Him in Whom the Children of Israel believe, and I am of those who surrender (unto Him). What! Now! When hitherto thou hast rebelled and been of the wrong-doers? But this day We*

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<sup>350</sup> Wensinck, A.J. and G. Vajda, "Fir’awn," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, first edition, ed. P. Bearman, et. al. (Leiden: Brill, 1965), v. 2, 917.

<sup>351</sup> See Eric Ormsby, “The Faith of Pharaoh,” in *Reason and Inspiration in Islam: Theology, Philosophy and Mysticism in Muslim Thought, Essays in Honor of Hermann Landolt*, ed. Todd Lawson (London: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 2005), 471-489; Carl Ernst, “Controversy over Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ*: The Faith of Pharaoh,” *Islamic Culture* 59 (1985): 259-66; and Alexander D. Knysh’s study on Pharaoh’s faith in his *Ibn ‘Arabī in the Later Islamic Tradition*, 158-165.

*save thee in thy body that thou mayst be a portent for those after thee. Lo! most of mankind are heedless of Our portents.*

But Qur'ān 4:18 indicates clearly that such a repentance is invalid for those who have done evil: *The forgiveness is not for those who do ill-deeds until, when death attendeth upon one of them, he saith: Lo! I repent now; nor yet for those who die while they are disbelievers. For such We have prepared a painful doom.* Also in another chapter, Qur'ān (40:84-85) says: *Then, when they saw Our doom, they said: We believe in God only and reject (all) that we used to associate (with Him). But their faith could not avail them when they saw Our doom. This is God's law which hath ever taken course for His bondmen. And then the disbelievers will be ruined.* It is understood from the above verses that the repentance of those who acknowledged God's unity and declared their faith after they saw the punishment is not accepted.

However, the statement relating to Pharaoh's body (10:92) *But this day We save thee in thy body that thou mayst be a portent for those after thee* has been the subject of arguments among exegetes. Was it only Pharaoh's body that was saved, or is it saying that God saved more than simply his body? Was he forgiven due to his sincere repentance? Does God's mercy surpass his punishment and will His everlasting grace reach all human beings after they repent of an act of evil?

Let us compare the verses in which the subject of Pharaoh's repentance is mentioned: (10:100) does say that *It is not for any soul to believe save by the permission of Allāh. He hath set uncleanness upon those who have no sense,* and verse 103 affirms that *Then shall We save Our messengers and the believers, in like manner (as of old). It is incumbent upon Us to save believers.* Then in (10:90) Pharaoh clearly confesses *I believe*

that there is no god except Him whom the Children of Israel believe in: I am of those who submit. So, according to 100 and 103, this was a work of God and He will deliver him, yet (4:18) says this is impossible. On the other hand, (17:103) makes it clear that Pharaoh was indeed drowned and no repentance is indicated in this passage. According to Muslim tales and Jewish legends, Gabriel made Pharaoh wait so that it was too late to make a confession “by cramming his mouth with sea slime.”<sup>352</sup> What is left unclear is the meaning of Pharaoh’s being “saved” in the verse (10:90-92). Nevertheless, some clarity is provided by comparing verses (10:90-92) and (4:17-18) with (38:42).

Ibn ‘Arabī, in his *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, placed Pharaoh in among the “four groups of the damned,” who will remain eternally in hell because they entertained pretensions to divinity.<sup>353</sup> However, in chapter 25 of his *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, which is dedicated to Moses, he discusses the story of Pharaoh and his confession of faith to God. He states that God had granted Pharaoh belief and that he died as a believer, pure and cleansed of all his sins:

Pharaoh’s consolation was in the faith God endowed him with when he was drowned. God took him to Himself spotless, pure and untainted by any defilement, because He sized him at the moment of belief, before he could commit any sin, since submission extirpates all that has occurred before. God made him a sign of His loving kindness to whomever He wishes, so that no one may despair of the mercy of God, for indeed, no one but despairing folk despairs of the spirit of God (12:87). Had Pharaoh been despairing, he would not have hastened to believe.<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>352</sup> Wensinck, "Fir‘awn," 917.

<sup>353</sup> Ormsby, "The Faith of Pharaoh," 472.

<sup>354</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, ed. A. ‘Affifi, 2 vols. (Cairo: ‘Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalab, 1946) v. 1, 201; translation by R.W.J. Austin, *The Bezels of Wisdom* (New York, 1980), 255.



Ibn ‘Arabī’s main argument rests on a close and literal reading of the Qur’ānic text. He observes that Pharaoh was not certain of dying at that moment and hence his confession was valid, unlike those who will belatedly protest their faith when they see the punishments of hell before them. Thus, God both saved him from the punishment of the afterlife and preserved his body from the flood. Ibn ‘Arabī acknowledges that most people consider Pharaoh among the damned, but points out that no verse of the Qur’ān clearly states this, though the case is different with Pharaoh’s people. Numerous Qur’ānic passages refer to the punishment of the latter in hellfire, but Pharaoh himself is never explicitly condemned in this way.<sup>355</sup>

#### *Debates among scholars of Ibn ‘Arabī*

Pharaoh’s faith as discussed by Ibn ‘Arabī has been the subject of extensive analysis, debate, refutation and critiques by theologians, Sufis and scholars of Islamic disciplines. Ibn ‘Arabī’s controversial comments made him the target of harsh accusations, some of them *ad hominem*. He was labeled as a heretic, an infidel, mentally unbalanced and a ranting fanatic. For example, Shaykhī master Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Dīn al-Aḥsā’ī (d. 1826) lambasted Ibn ‘Arabī with such titles as “Murderer of Religion” (*mumīt al-dīn*, a play on his honorific title “Reviver of Religion” or Muḥyiddīn) and ‘The Supremely Moronic Shaykh’ (*al-shaykh al-aḥmaq*, instead of the usual *al-shaykh al-akbar*, ‘The Greatest Shaykh’).<sup>356</sup> As Ḥājjī Khalīfa relates, “people in general have fallen into the snare of finding fault with the Shaykh in this matter, and have swarmed about his head like ants and

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<sup>355</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, v. 1, 211-212; trans., 265.

<sup>356</sup> Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Dīn Al-Aḥsā’ī, *Jawāmi’ al’Kalim*, 2 vols. (Tabriz, 1859), v. 2, 113-115.

horns.”<sup>357</sup> While some scholars such as al-Taftāzānī (d. 1390), Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209) condemn Ibn Arabī’s theological position on Pharaoh’s faith, some Akbarian commentators such as Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawwānī (d. 1501), Dāwūd Qayṣarī, (d. c. 1350), ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī (d. 1329) and Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (d. 1274) were ardent supporters of the Shaykh and did not see any contradiction between his views and what is stated in the Qur’ān on the subject of Pharaoh’s declaration of faith.

Let us look at some examples of arguments set forth by scholars on this matter. Among Ibn ‘Arabī’s opponents was the famous theologian ‘Alī al-Qārī al-Hirawī (d. 1605), who argues that the whole idea of Pharaoh as a true believer is false according to the Qur’ān and *Sunnah* and the consensus of the ‘*ulamā*’. On the level of theological arguments, he maintains Pharaoh’s profession of faith was not merely insincere but even worse: he did not complete the full *shahāda* since he did not proclaim his belief in the prophet-hood of Muḥammad.<sup>358</sup>

Al-Hirawī states that Ibn ‘Arabī himself, in the sixty-second chapter of the *Futūḥāt*, mentioned Pharaoh along with Nimrūd as one of the sinners who claimed divine lordship for themselves and are hence in hellfire eternally. He further comments that Ibn ‘Arabī did not really contradict this correct view in the *Fuṣūṣ*, but only meant that the proof of Pharaoh’s infidelity appears less than decisive.<sup>359</sup>

Jalāl al-Dīn Dawwānī, on the other hand, argues that God, out of his compassion and mercy, forgives those who repent of their sins. He wrote an independent essay in

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<sup>357</sup> Kātip Çelebī, *The Balance of Truth*, 76-77.

<sup>358</sup> See al-Hirawī’s comments on Pharaoh’s faith in GAL, v. 2, 517; GALS, v. 2, 539.

<sup>359</sup> Ernst, “Controversy over Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ*,” 265.

defense of the Shaykh where he asks his readers “to cast aside any sectarian prejudice and attempts to prove that Pharaoh’s confession of faith was legally valid as an act of assent in the heart and confession with the tongue, without coercion. This submission erased his previous sins, and Pharaoh’s bodily preservation is a sign for others of divine forgiveness.”<sup>360</sup>

Among Ibn ‘Arabī’s chief opponents was Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī. According to al-Rāzī, Pharaoh did not truly believe in God and was not saved. Al-Rāzī argues that a man cannot articulate the profession of faith at the moment of drowning, and that in fact what matters the most is the validity of ‘internal speech’ (*al-kalām bi’l-nafs*) as opposed to ‘voiced speech’ (*kalām bi’l-lisān*); only internal speech is genuine.<sup>361</sup> In other words, articulate speech may not be possible at the time of death. Another disqualifying reason mentioned by al-Rāzī is that Pharaoh says nothing about the Prophet Muḥammad in his declaration of faith (*shahāda*), as is required, which demonstrates the invalidity of his belief.<sup>362</sup>

Al-Taftāzānī, on the other hand, sees the most obvious example of Ibn ‘Arabī’s heresy in his portrayal of the Qur’ānic Pharaoh. Analyzing al-Taftāzānī’s critique of how Ibn ‘Arabī interpreted Pharaoh’s faith, Alexander Knysh argues that “he located Ibn ‘Arabī within the taxonomy of heretics and unbelievers developed in the Muslim heresiographical literature.”<sup>363</sup> For al-Taftāzānī there is no doubt that Pharaoh embraced Islam only when faced with an unavoidable death, but, according to Knysh, “his ignorance of the underlying

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<sup>360</sup> Ernst, “Controversy over Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ*: The Faith of Pharaoh,” 262.

<sup>361</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, *Maḥāṭib al-Ghayb: al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, 32 vols. (Cairo: al-Maṭba‘ah al-Bahīyah al-Miṣrīyah, 1938), v. 17, 153 ff.

<sup>362</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>363</sup> Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabī in the Later Islamic Tradition*, 158.

motives of Pharaoh's behavior that Ibn 'Arabī had in mind, his critical thrusts miss the mark."<sup>364</sup> Knysh concludes that most of Ibn 'Arabī's opponents in the sixteenth century based their arguments on Ibn Taymiyya's critique and did not provide a credible textual analysis of their own when criticizing Ibn 'Arabī.<sup>365</sup>

#### *Anqarawī's argument on Pharaoh's faith*

To defend Ibn 'Arabī's views on the faith of Pharaoh, Anqarawī expounds on the following verses from Book Seven, emphasizing the divine mercy and compassion which embraces all beings regardless of their actions. However, the verses that may be interpreted as critical of Ibn 'Arabī's argument on Pharaoh's declaration of faith in Book Seven are as follows:

شمع پیش باد او خوش خفته است  
سر ببرف و کون به بیرون می نهد  
می شمارد او فتاده در شکی

روح فرعون آنکه طاهر گفته است  
حکم اغلب را پس کون می نهد  
موسی و فرعون را هر دو یکی

The one (Ibn 'Arabī) who declares the spirit of the Fir'awn appears pure,  
Like a candle in the wind, his weak logic has gone to sleep in front of the strong  
wind [argument] of his opponents.  
He places the commonly accepted rule under his ass [irrational thought],  
Putting his head under the snow [ignores the fact and refuses to accept the  
unanimous agreement on Pharaoh's infidelity], he places his ass [his unsettling  
argument] out.  
The one who considers Moses and Pharaoh's [character] to be similar, he has  
fallen on doubt and disbelief.<sup>366</sup>

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<sup>364</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid., 161-165.

<sup>366</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f.7b, verses: 15-17.

The composer of Book Seven here rather harshly criticizes Ibn ‘Arabī’s statement on Pharaoh’s faith and his confession of unity at the time of his death. He goes so far as to employ insulting phrases such as “placing his head under the snow like a partridge” and describes his ignorance of theological dogma like “placing them under his ass.” The composer likens Ibn ‘Arabī’s unsettling logic in defending Pharaoh’s faith to a feeble candle flame about to be extinguished by the wind as opposed to the solid arguments of theologians, who base their understanding on the Qur’ān. He places Ibn ‘Arabī’s unsettling and unconvincing argument at the lowest rank as opposed to the solid commentary of his opponents. Placing both Moses and Pharaoh on an equal spiritual level reveals Ibn ‘Arabī’s doubt, lack of belief and even heresy, according to the verses of Book Seven.

Defending Ibn ‘Arabī’s argument, Anqarawī offers a new reading and an esoteric interpretation of these verses. The position that Anqarawī establishes at the beginning deploys his own *ad hominem* arguments to question his opponents’ credentials, accusing them of lack of insight and of not being capable of understanding Rūmī’s message. It is his belief that those who accuse Ibn ‘Arabī of heresy are ignoramuses incapable of understanding his technical terminology. According to Anqarawī, the exoteric meaning of the verses does not imply any criticism of Ibn ‘Arabī; in fact, it is the lack of spirituality and confusion on the part of readers who fail to understand Rūmī’s verses clearly. Engaging in a theological debate and employing an analogical (*qīyās*) methodology, he offers his rebuttal by emphasizing certain verses to defend Ibn ‘Arabī’s argument. He explains that “there has been misunderstanding and misconception among commentators regarding these verses – in fact, Rūmī does not criticize Shaykh al-Akbar, rather, he provides some clarification on Sufism indicating that indeed there is no difference between the two

mystics' (Rūmī and Ibn 'Arabī's) thoughts and Sufi teachings. Quite the contrary, not only is there no discrepancy between their ideas, in fact, the verses demonstrate Rūmī's praise and admiration for the latter."<sup>367</sup>

While the literal meaning of the verses clearly demonstrates condemnation of Ibn 'Arabī on the subject of Moses and Pharaoh, Anqarawī decides to offer a different interpretation, which somehow contradicts the original meaning. He begins by citing Qur'ānic verses where God mentions Pharaoh's punishment: (79:25) *So Allāh seized him in exemplary punishment for the last and the first*; then Moses' conversation regarding Pharaoh's wealth (10:88) *And Moses said, 'Our Lord, indeed You have given Pharaoh and his establishment splendor and wealth in the worldly life, our Lord, that they may lead [men] astray from Your way. Our Lord, obliterate their wealth and harden their hearts so that they will not believe until they see the painful punishment;*' and finally Pharaoh's disobedience (10:91) *Now? And you had disobeyed [Him] before and were of the corrupters?*<sup>368</sup>

However, he does not comment on the Qur'ānic verses, assuming they are clear proof for his argument. He then returns to the poetry and explains that there is a poetic technical rule employed by Rūmī in this verse, which might have caused the confusion. The poetic rule, known as "implicit or submerged" metaphor (*isti'ārah-i maknīya* استعاره مكنیه),<sup>369</sup> is a technique of comparison where the poet "borrows" a word, expression or

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<sup>367</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574f. 67b, lines: 14-20.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid., f. 67a, (lines: 30-35), f. 67b. (lines: 1-6).

<sup>369</sup> Ibid., f. 67b, lines: 7-11.

concept to apply it in other than its literal (*ḥaqīqī*) sense.<sup>370</sup> However, Anqarawī does not elaborate on the significance of the “implicit metaphor,” which leaves us to assume that his readers and disciples were familiar with the rules and regulations of Persian literature and poetry. Here it may be described as a process in which the poet places the compared word (*mushabbah*) next to the elements of the simile indicatives (*mushabbah bah*). For example, in the following line from Hāfez, ghazal 214:

Who planted not love, nor plucked a rose for its loveliness,  
In the wind’s path, the tulip’s care-taker was.

The word “love” is likened to a seed, which can be planted and produce fruit. In fact, Hāfez employed the word “love” in place of the hidden word “seed,” which has a quality not normally associated with love. Thus, in the following verse:

حکم اغلب را پس کون می نهد                      سر بیرف و کون به بیرون می نهد

He places the commonly accepted rule under his ass,  
Putting his head under the snow [ideas and debates], he places his ass [his  
unsettling argument] out.

Anqarawī explains that the term “commonly accepted rule” (*ḥukm-i ghālib*) refers to Pharaoh’s infidelity and the falsity of his profession (which is accepted by the majority of theologians and exegetes), but the word snow (*barf*) is a metaphor for beliefs and ideas. The resulting meaning is that Ibn ‘Arabī holds a dissenting opinion compared to the majority opinion of theologians on the subject of Pharaoh. Thus, he turns his back (*pas-i*

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<sup>370</sup> For metaphor, see Julie Scott Meisami, “Este‘āra,” *Encyclopedia of Iranica*, v. 8, Fasc. 6, 649-651; and Muḥammad Riḏā Shafī‘ī Kadkanī’s chapter on Este‘āra, in his book *Šuvar-i Khīyāl dar Shi‘r-i Fārsī : Taḥqīq-i Intiqādī dar Taṭavvur-i Īmāzh’hā-yi Shi‘r-i Pārsī va Sayr-i Naẓarīyah-i Balāghat dar Islām va Iran* (Tehran: Mu’assasah-i Intishārāt-i Āgāh, 1366/1987), 107-123.

*kūn mīnahad*) to their opinion and expresses his disagreement and challenge (*kūn ba bīrūn mīdahad*) on the matter. In return, he provides his own analytical argument, attempting to offer a new reading of the Qur’ānic text and exegetical interpretation, where he employs his own technical term and theological methodology basing himself on divine grace and forgiveness.<sup>371</sup>

The one who considers Moses and Pharaoh’s [purity] to be similar, he has fallen on doubt and disbelief.

The verse refers to Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ*, where he states his belief in the purity of Pharaoh’s soul after he confessed God’s unity. The composer of the poem seems to criticize the Shaykh for placing both Pharaoh and Moses’s purity and faith on the same level. On the subject of Pharaoh’s purity, as discussed earlier, Ibn ‘Arabī states:

God took him to Himself spotless, pure and untainted by any taint, because He took him in the act of commitment, before he could commit any sin, since submission [to God] erases all that has gone before it. Thus, He made of him a symbol of the loving care He may bestow on whomsoever He wills, lets anyone should despair of the mercy of God, *For only the unfaithful one despairs of the spirit of God (12:87)*.<sup>372</sup>

According to Anqarawī, the verses are not addressing Ibn ‘Arabī, since the Shaykh nowhere claimed that Pharaoh was pure. He challenges his opponents by saying:

Although Pharaoh expressed his repentance and announced his belief to the unity of God, there is no mentioning of his purity and piety in *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. Those who claimed that there are references on this matter in Ibn ‘Arabī’s book, they

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<sup>371</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574, f. 67b, lines: 11-16.

<sup>372</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, 201; trans., 255.



should know that the alleged section has been added falsely to some editions, in fact they are not Ibn ‘Arabī’s words.<sup>373</sup>

To support his argument, Anqarawī points out two sources as his reference: the first one is a commentary written on the *Fuṣūṣ* by Mehmet b. Şālih Efendī Yāzīcīzade (d. 1451) and the other one a summary of the *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* entitled *al-Yawāqīt wa-‘l Jawāhir fī Bayān ‘Aqā’id al-Akābir* (Rubies and Gems Explaining the Doctrines of the Elders) by Ibn ‘Arabī’s Egyptian devotee, Abdulwahhāb b. Aḥmad al-Sha‘rānī (d. 1565). Both sources indicate that the alleged passages related to Pharaoh’s purity at the time of his death after his confession of faith were added to the *Fuṣūṣ* by later scholars, Anqarawī explains.<sup>374</sup> He does not cite nor does he elaborate on the relevant passages. However, he states that “due to Ibn ‘Arabī’s contradictory notes on the subject of Pharaoh in the *Futūḥāt* and *Fuṣūṣ*, the note on the latter must have been added by scholars whose aim it was to damage Ibn ‘Arabī’s reputation.”<sup>375</sup>

Quoting al-Sha‘rānī, he explains that it does not make sense for Ibn ‘Arabī to have placed Pharaoh in his *Futūḥāt* “in among the ‘four groups of the damned’ who will remain eternally in hell because they entertained pretensions to divinity,” and then later in the *Fuṣūṣ*, to clear him of all sins and introduce him as pure and a beneficiary of divine grace.<sup>376</sup> Perhaps the answer is that the passages in the *Fuṣūṣ* was added later by those who aim at disrespecting the Shaykh and tarnishing his credentials.<sup>377</sup> It can be concluded,

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<sup>373</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574, f. 67b, lines 16-24.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid., f. 67b, lines: 29-33.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid., f. 68a, lines: 2-7.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid., lines: 9-15.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid., lines: 16-18.

therefore, that Anqarawī separates Pharaoh’s purity from his confession. While he admits that God blessed Pharaoh with His divine grace, due to his previous sins, he cannot be called pure (*tāhir*). Hence, the related passage in the *Fuṣūṣ* is not the Shaykh’s own wording since it appears to contradict his previous statement in the *Futūḥāt*. Thus, Pharaoh was subject to punishment for all the sins he committed before his confession, but later he was forgiven by God due to his faith, even though such a confession does not place him among the pure ones. While supporting Ibn ‘Arabī vehemently, Anqarawī offers his justification on the inconsistent statements of the Shaykh while directing an *ad hominem* argument against the opponents of Ibn ‘Arabī, even to the point of questioning their credentials and accusing them of lack of knowledge, spirituality and being judgmental.

*God’s divine attributes: beautiful (jalāl) and majestic (jamāl)*

Anqarawī then goes on to unravel the esoteric meaning of the verses by stating that, since Ibn ‘Arabī is among the perfect saints of his time who also praised God by His Beautiful (*jamāl*) and Majestic (*jalāl*) attributes, in these verses, Pharaoh must be a metaphor for the *jalāl* attribute, or ego (*nafs*), and Moses the manifestation of the *jamāl* attribute, or rational soul (*nafs-i nāṭiqā*). The former is the indication of our lower soul, while Moses symbolizes our rational soul and intellectual faculty.<sup>378</sup> Thus, God’s divine mercy is one of His attributes, which encompasses every being. His attributes of grace and compassion result in the forgiveness of Pharaoh’s sins since his declaration of faith was sincere. Anqarawī further explains that Ibn ‘Arabī often employs metaphorical language in his texts; while talking about a believer (*mu’min*) or an infidel (*kāfir*), he means to discuss

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<sup>378</sup> Ibid., f. 68a, lines: 24-27.

the state of man's lower soul (*nafs*) and spirit (*rūh*).<sup>379</sup> For this reason, the verses in question, which speak about Pharaoh's purity, are not a criticism of Shaykh al-Akbar, Anqarawī concludes.<sup>380</sup>

More can be said of the concept of God's divine attributes (*jalāl* and *jamāl*) as discussed by Ibn 'Arabī. In the Qur'ān, God is referred to at one point as "Possessor of Majesty and Generosity" (*dhu-l-jalāl wa-l-ikrām*) (55:78). Sufis traditionally believe that God's *jalāl* expresses His quality of overpowering might (*qahr*), while His *jamāl* expresses His quality of merciful benevolence (*lutf*). Ibn 'Arabī's understanding of the distinction between God's *jalāl* and His *jamāl* marks a radical departure from the interpretation of earlier Sufis. Early Sufis connected the condition of intimacy with Beauty and the condition of awe with Majesty. In his essay entitled *Kitāb al-jalāl wa-l-jamāl*, Ibn 'Arabī makes explicit his departure from the pietistic interpretation:

Now then: *jalāl* and *jamāl* are amongst [the topics] that have captured the interest of those Sufis who attest to the Real and know God [*al-muḥaqqiqūna l-‘ālimūna bi-llāhi min ahli l-taṣawwufi*]. Each of them has pronounced upon the two [terms] in a way that is attributable to his own state [*nataqa fihimā bi-mā yarji ‘u ilā, ḥālihi*]. The fact is that most of them take intimacy [*al-uns*] to be bound up with Beauty, and awe [*al-hayba*] to be bound up with Majesty. The situation is not as they have said [*wa-laysa l-amru ka-mā qālūhu*]; and yet, in a sense, things are as they have said [*wa-huwa ayḍan ka-mā qālū bi-wajhin mā*].<sup>381</sup>

According to Ibn 'Arabī, Majesty and Beauty are two attributes of God and awe and intimacy two attributes of human beings. Thus, when the souls of the Knowers witness

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<sup>379</sup> Ibid., lines: 28-31.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid., f. 68b, lines: 1-2.

<sup>381</sup> *Kitāb al-Jalāl wa-l-Jamāl*, contained in *Rasā'il Ibn 'Arabī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2004), 25. There is also an English translation by R.T. Harris, "On Majesty and Beauty: The *Kitāb al-jalāl wa-l-jamāl* of Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabī," *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabī Society* 8 (1989): 5-32.

Majesty, they feel awe and diminution and when they witness Beauty, they feel intimacy and elation. Because this is so, the Knowers have equated Majesty with God's overpowering force and Beauty with His mercy; they came to this decision because of what they experienced in themselves. Instead, he insists that the distinction should be interpreted so that a more basic tension is seen to be at issue:

First of all, I say that God's Majesty is something that links Him to Him [*ma'nan Yarji'u minhu ilayhi*], and He has prevented us from apprehending it. Beauty is something that links Him to us [*ma'nan yarji'u minhu ilaynā*]; it is what gives us the knowledge that we have of Him, along with revelations, perceptions, and states.<sup>382</sup>

Wisnovsky argues that divine Majesty is a demonstration of God's quality of transcendence, or His separateness from the world, while divine Beauty signifies God's quality of immanence, or His involvement with the world:

Ibn 'Arabī has isolated divine Majesty - understood 'in itself', that is, in a strict sense - in order to uphold God's utter transcendence of the world. Since believers cannot apprehend divine Majesty *per se*, feelings of awe that might be produced in us cannot be the effect of that transcendent quality. Instead, feelings of awe produced in us are the effect of one of the two aspects of divine Beauty, which has now been divided by Ibn 'Arabī into a sublime or elevated aspect and an earthly, proximate aspect.<sup>383</sup>

In conclusion, according to Ibn 'Arabī, "God's *jalāl* expresses that transcendent aspect of the divine being which is totally beyond our reach, while God's *jamāl*, by contrast,

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<sup>382</sup> Ibn 'Arabī, *Kitāb al-Jalāl wa-l-Jamāl*, 25.

<sup>383</sup> Robert Wisnovsky, "One aspect of the Akbarian Turn in Shī'ī Theology," in *Sufism and Theology*, ed. A. Shehadeh (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 52.

expresses that immanent aspect of the divine being which expands and contracts in our world, and which acts as a cause by propelling and impelling us.”<sup>384</sup>

In discussing God’s attributes, Ibn ‘Arabī elaborates on the comprehensive aspect of these two attributes and how they complete one another. According to him, God possesses two realities and has described Himself as having two Hands, with the whole of existence following this pattern: “Nothing can exist without something else which is its opposite existing. No divine saying related through transmitters from God contains anything indicative of Majesty without its being accompanied by something of Beauty to counter it. It is the same way in all revealed scriptures, and in everything.”<sup>385</sup> By applying “this principle of opposition (*muqābala*) to the Names of God, Ibn ‘Arabī explains that if a Name indicates an aspect of Majesty, that is, the Majesty of Beauty, another Name will have an opposite meaning to this and will indicate an aspect of Beauty; and by analogy, if a verse of the Qur’ān or a Prophetic Tradition contains a mercy (*rahma*), there will always be another verse or another related tradition, of opposite sense, containing a punishment (*naqma*), which is its contrary.”<sup>386</sup>

Referring to this principle of opposites and the dual character of the divine attributes, Anqarawī justifies his interpretation of the verses by stating that, “since each character reflects some aspect of the divineness in the universe, thus both Pharaoh and Moses reflect an aspect of *jalāl* and *jamāl* attributes.”<sup>387</sup> But, in the end, both complement one another

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<sup>384</sup> Ibid.

<sup>385</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *Kitāb al-Jalāl wa-l-Jamāl*, 26.

<sup>386</sup> Pablo Beneito, “On the Divine Love of Beauty,” *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabī Society* 18 (1995): 5.

<sup>387</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar 6574, f. 68a lines: 24-34.

and each contains mercy and majesty behind their designated character, eventually bringing harmony and balance. Therefore, given the doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī on the subject of the divine attributes and their manifestation, one cannot differentiate the attributes completely, since they have a complementary nature with each representing a certain aspect of the divine. Anqarawī therefore concludes that it is not possible to believe that Rūmī meant to criticize Ibn ‘Arabī on the subject of Pharaoh’s faith, since Pharaoh manifests the attribute of Majesty,<sup>388</sup> and since Rūmī was familiar with the doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī, he would not have been critical of the latter.

### **The Seal of Sainthood (*khātām al-awlīyā*)**

The idea of friendship with God is a major theme in Ibn ‘Arabī’s writings,<sup>389</sup> but it is also among the most controversial subjects that he addresses, since it is an attribute of religious prestige that certain persons build in their community. It enables a person to enjoy extraordinary power in society – a rank above that of ordinary people. The concept of sainthood as discussed by Ibn ‘Arabī could be interpreted as a powerful means of increasing the social and political status of religious figures by adding to their leadership, collective responsibility, charisma and social networks. It is often condemned by religious and traditional ‘*ulamā*’, who marked the term as heresy (*kufīr*). For example, he was accused by Ibn Taymiyya of claiming to be the supreme saint of the Muslim community.<sup>390</sup> Anqarawī’s promotion of the idea of sainthood, because of his because of his strong belief

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<sup>388</sup> Ibid., f. 68b, lines: 1-2.

<sup>389</sup> See Gerald T. Elmore, “Ibn al-‘Arabī’s Book of the Fabulous Gryphon (‘Anqā’ Mughrib),” *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabī Society* 25 (1999): 61-87.

<sup>390</sup> Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabī in the Later Islamic Tradition*, 196.

in the importance of the sainthood, laid him open to heavy criticism by those opposed to Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrine.

It should be noted that the articulation of the theory of sainthood is associated with the well-known gnostic al-Ḥakīm Tirmidhī (d. 910), who discussed the notion of sainthood and the seal of sainthood in his book, *The Seal of Saints or the Tradition of Saints*. Tirmidhī explains sainthood by way of definitions at the beginning of *Sīrat al-Awliyā*. He makes “a major distinction between two kinds of friends of God. One kind he calls *walī Allāh*, and the other *walī ḥaqq Allāh*. While the term *walī Allāh* presents no particular difficulty – it means simply “friend of God” – the translation of *walī ḥaqq Allāh* is more complicated. The complication arises from the exact definition of the term *ḥaqq*. *Ḥaqq* means ‘right’, ‘true’, ‘Truth.’”<sup>391</sup>

Tirmidhī’s idea went on to become the foundation stone upon which Ibn ‘Arabī based his argument. In brief, relying on the Qur’ānic verse (10:62): *the friends of God will certainly have nothing to fear, nor will they be grieved*, Ibn ‘Arabī follows the mainstream of the Islamic tradition by asserting that, “God chooses as his friends those who embody the best qualities of the human race. God’s friends are first and foremost the prophets, His revelations to the prophets then make it possible for others to become his friends as well.”<sup>392</sup> Each prophet is a source of guidance and a model of human goodness and perfection. Those who achieve the status of friendship with God by following a prophet may then be given an “inheritance” from that prophet. According to one of Ibn ‘Arabī’s

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<sup>391</sup> Bernd Radtke, “A Forerunner of Ibn ‘Arabī: Ḥakīm Tirmidhī on Sainthood,” *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabī Society* 8 (1989): 43-44.

<sup>392</sup> Chittick, *Ibn ‘Arabī Heir to the Prophets*, 12.

doctrines about sainthood (*walāya*), “God’s friends are those who inherit their knowledge, stations, and states from the prophets, the last of whom was Muḥammad. The *walī* is the one who is selected by God to be for Him.”<sup>393</sup>

The Arabic words for saint and sainthood are *walī* (pl. *awlīyā’*) and *walāya/wilāya*, respectively.<sup>394</sup> They are both derived from the root *walī*, the meaning of which is “to be close to.” To be close to someone means to be his friend, and, by being the friend of a powerful person, one can acquire a certain power oneself; thus, power may be delegated. In Arabic, *walāya* is both the act of delegation and that which is delegated.<sup>395</sup> Thus, we can say that the word *walī* or *walī Allāh* describes a person who has an especially close and privileged relationship with God and this relationship is called *walāya*. How does one achieve this privileged relationship with God and in what way does it manifest itself once it has been acquired? Ibn ‘Arabī emphasizes the idea of divine assistance (*nuṣra*) and intimacy with God in *awlīyā’*.<sup>396</sup> According to him, prophet-hood (*nubuwwah* and *risāla*) comes to an end, but “*wilāya* subsists to eternity, that is why God is called *walī* as a divine name.” He adds, “*wilāya* is superior to *nubuwwa* since it is the enduring face of beings.”<sup>397</sup>

In Ibn ‘Arabī’s conception of *walāya*, *walī* is the widest concept, comprising both prophet and apostle and apostle is the narrowest of all. Every apostle is a prophet and every prophet is a saint, but not *vice versa*. In this respect, “the Saint is radically different from

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<sup>393</sup> Ibid.

<sup>394</sup> Gerald T. Elmore, *Islamic Tradition in the Fullness of Time: Ibn al ‘Arabī’s Book of the Fabulous Gryphon* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 111.

<sup>395</sup> For further information see B. Radtke, “Walī,” in *EI2*.

<sup>396</sup> Chodkiewicz, , *Seal of the Saints*, 26.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid., 30.



the Prophet and the Apostle because the words *nabī* and *rasūl* are not Divine Names; they are peculiar to human beings. *Walī* is a Name of God, but God has neither called Himself *nabī* nor *rasūl*, while He has named Himself *walī* and has made it one of His own Names.”<sup>398</sup> In other words, since *walī* is a name common to God and Man, and as God exists everlastingly, sainthood will exist forever. Thus, according to Ibn ‘Arabī, as long as there remains in the world even a single man of the highest spiritual power who attains to the rank of sainthood – and, in fact, such a man will certainly exist in every age – sainthood itself will remain intact.

One of the key terms of Ibn ‘Arabī’s theory of *walāya* is the seal (*khātam*), meaning the ultimate and final unit of a series. According to him, the term *khātam* appears in two phrases: the Seal of the Prophets (*khātam al-anbīyā*) and the Seal of the Saints (*khātam al-awliyā*). The first phrase, Seal of the Prophets, designates the Prophet Muḥammad himself. The phrase is often used in accordance with the common belief in Islam that, historically, the Prophet Muḥammad represents the last ring of a long chain of Prophets. At the same time, in several passages of his works, Ibn ‘Arabī identifies himself with the Seal of the Saints, or with the “Seal of Muḥammadan sainthood.”<sup>399</sup> His bold comments and assertions infuriated his adversaries, who accused him of abrogating the prophetic mission of Muḥammad and replacing it with the supreme Sufī saint. Some scholars vehemently opposed the concept of sainthood and offered arguments challenging the doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī. For instance, al-Dhahabī (d. 1348) portrays him as a “victim of excessive

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>399</sup> See Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 159-179; and Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabī in the Later Islamic Tradition*, 105-111.

asceticism and self-mortification,” and condemns his “heretical claim to be the Seal of sainthood.”<sup>400</sup> In Dhahabī’s view, such a claim falls under the heading of *kufr* and he believed it to be a sign that he was a “deluded individual afflicted with a severe mental illness.”<sup>401</sup> According to Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn ‘Arabī misrepresents Islamic tradition – which portrays the Prophet Muḥammad as the last prophet – and places himself on an equal footing with the prophets.<sup>402</sup>

In sum, for Ibn ‘Arabī, the friendship of God has two components: on the one hand, the act of being chosen by the grace of God, and on the other, human effort. The friend of God who has been chosen through the love of God alone is higher in rank. Only he can overcome his self – and by extension, the world – and become selfless in God. He alone can act in the full sense in God. He can go out into the world and lead men as a successor of the Prophet. So, Ibn ‘Arabī places the friendship of God within a cosmological context, pointing to a very decisive similarity and acknowledging divine inspiration even after the death of the Prophet Muḥammad. This is one source of the controversy that raged around Ibn ‘Arabī in Anqarawī’s day and that still has repercussions in our own.

#### *The Concept of sainthood in Book Seven*

Among the issues discussed in Book Seven is the controversial statement of Ibn ‘Arabī addressing himself as the Seal of the Saints (*khātam al-awliyā*) and the Seal of the Prophets (*khātam al-anbiyā*). The verses reflect heavy criticism of those believing in Ibn

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<sup>400</sup> Knysh, 116.

<sup>401</sup> Ibid.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid., 105.

‘Arabī’s sainthood status. The author of Book Seven strongly condemns those who call Ibn ‘Arabī the Seal of the Saints and Seal of Prophet-hood, stating that they will be condemned to hell. In fact, such a bold statement contradicts Islamic tradition. He is criticized for calling himself a prophet, for suggesting that the friends of God, the saints, possess a higher station than the prophets and for considering his spiritual state to be higher than all the prophets.

گو حجیم است و سقر مأوی ترا  
این تصرف عین کفر است ای عزیز  
که گرفتیم راه ختم الاولیا

آنکه ختم الاولیا خواندی ورا  
این تصوف نیست هم توحید نیز  
کرده ترک قول ختم الانبیا

Those who call him (Ibn ‘Arabī) the Seal of the Saints (*khātm al-awlīya*), their place is hell and inferno, This is not Sufism, nor does it mean unity (*tawhīd*), O, dear one, such an assertion is mere infidelity, He (Ibn ‘Arabī) has opted not calling himself the Seal of the Prophets (*khātm al-anbīya*), declaring to have chosen the path of the Seal of the Saints (*khātm al-awlīya*).<sup>403</sup>

However, in an attempt to justify the claim, Anqarawī interprets the verses as a manifestation of Ibn ‘Arabī’s belief in *sharī‘at* and unity (*tawhīd*) and as a clarification of the superiority of God’s divine revelation over his own book *Fuṣūṣ* and other human words. Citing at least two sources from *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, sections 65 and 43 – where Ibn ‘Arabī claims, “I am the seal of the God’s friends” and “a revelation came to me in a dream that God spoke to me in His own words” – Anqarawī explains that the meaning of “Seal of the Saints” is misinterpreted by those who are not familiar with the works of the Shaykh

<sup>403</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f.12b, verses: 18-20.

al-Akbar.<sup>404</sup> Those familiar with Ibn ‘Arabī’s words and writings know well that such an expression is relative and a matter for interpretation (*amr-e ‘itibārī*), having no existence except in the minds of those who conceive it, but those who are not able to understand his teachings misunderstand his words and accuse him of infidelity.<sup>405</sup>

In a similar interpretation, Chittick explains that “Ibn ‘Arabī was aware of God’s words, that everything is His speech and that human beings as divine forms are communicating with reality through speech.”<sup>406</sup> Indeed, his writings are addressed to his contemporaries and other scholars and he was fully aware of his historical role in transmitting God’s words. The fact that he called himself “the seal of the Muḥammadan friends” expresses such a historical awareness; he did not address his writings to those who were not trained properly in the Islamic sciences.<sup>407</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī also differentiates between the two concepts of prophet-hood and sainthood saying that God had spoken to him several times just as He had spoken to the prophets, but that the content of His revelation was different. Prophets bring “rules” (*aḥkām*) through revelation, whereas saints bring “reports” (*akhbār*) and knowledge of different matters.<sup>408</sup>

However, in Book Seven:

کجروی بگذار و از منزل ممان  
دل تهی کن از فصوص و از نصوص  
رخش در راه حقیقت رانده ام

جاده شرع است راه راست هان  
در نصوص وحی صدق آر از خلوص  
هم شریعت هم طریقت خوانده ام

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<sup>404</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāgişlar 6574, f. 68b, lines: 25-35.

<sup>405</sup> Ibid., f. 69b, lines: 2-6.

<sup>406</sup> Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God*, xxxiv.

<sup>407</sup> Ibid.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid., 12.

Beware! The path of *sharī'at*, is the path of the truth, don't go astray and stay in this path,  
 Have faith in the script of the divine revelation with sincerity, disinterest yourself from *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and the *Nuṣūṣ*.  
 I have studied both *sharī'at* and *ṭarīqat*; I have ridden my horse on the path of *ḥaqīqat* "the truth,"  
 The path of *shar'*, is the root, the life comes from the *shar'*, both *ṭarīqat* and *ḥaqīqat* is acquired through *shar'*.<sup>409</sup>

In the above quotation, we see that the author of Book Seven emphasizes the importance of Islamic law and its supremacy over *ṭarīqat*, stating that *sharī'at* is the correct path leading one to the Truth (*ḥaqīqat*), whereas turning away from *sharī'at* leads the traveler on the path astray. The poem also appears to denigrate Ibn 'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and Jāmī's commentary on the same entitled *Naqd al-Nuṣūṣ*, inviting readers instead to read closely the Qur'ān, which is the divine revelation and to refrain from holding to other texts such as *Fuṣūṣ* and *Nuṣūṣ*.

For the author, the concepts of *sharī'at*, *ṭarīqat* and *ḥaqīqat* are interconnected for the Sufi practitioner. *Sharī'at* is derived from the Arabic root *shara'a*, "to introduce" or "to prescribe" and refers to the canonical law of Islam. *Ṭarīqat* literally translates to "path" and is used as a synonym for "school," "brotherhood," or "order" of mystical Sufis. *Ḥaqīqat* means "truth" or "reality" and refers to the concept of an esoteric essential truth that transcends human limitations. In the poem, therefore, Ibn 'Arabī is strongly criticized for following *ṭarīqat* too closely and not following or favoring *sharī'at*. It also recommends preferring the Qur'ān as the main source for Islamic law over *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*.

<sup>409</sup> MS Konya, No.2033, f.12b, verses: 21, 23, 25-26.

Anqarawī maintains that those who grasp the meaning of the definition of *khātam al-awlīyā* and who are qualified to address Ibn ‘Arabī as the Seal of the Saints, also recognize his emphasis on the importance of *sharī‘at*. Thus, they will recognize that by saying *Have faith in the script of the divine revelation with sincerity, disinterest yourself from Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam and the Nuṣūṣ*, the author of Book Seven/Rūmī did not mean to disrespect the *Fuṣūṣ*; rather, as one of those familiar with Ibn ‘Arabī’s words and writings and believing in the supremacy of the divine revelation over other texts, he (Rūmī) realized that *sharī‘at* is an essential means for seekers of the truth.<sup>410</sup> In other words, Anqarawī offers a different understanding of the verses stating that both *sharī‘at* and *ṭarīqat* are essential means for Sufis and travelers on the spiritual path. Those who believe in the concept of sainthood recognize and acknowledge the importance of *sharī‘at* as the initial and central part for understanding and reaching the Truth.<sup>411</sup> Anqarawī therefore criticizes readers for their misreading and lack of proper understanding of the verses and Rūmī’s spiritual teachings.

The *Futūḥāt* describes the numerous possibilities for man to attain the state of sainthood. Ibn ‘Arabī identifies many of these stations, like repentance, spiritual exertion, devoutness, piety, silence, humility, trust, gratitude, patience, meditation, wisdom, companionship, *walāya* and love.<sup>412</sup> From another aspect, Ibn ‘Arabī does not restrict spiritual stations to what he describes, but leaves the door open for the seeker so that he can enter through any order of authority in the Qur’ān or the Ḥadīth that can be obeyed.

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<sup>410</sup> MS Yāzmā Bāğişlar, No. 6574, ff. 70b-71a.

<sup>411</sup> Ibid.

<sup>412</sup> Souad Hakim, “The Way of Walāya (Sainthood or Friendship of God),” *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabī Society* 18 (1995): 31.

According to him, the seeker can attain a spiritual station in this manner. Thus, Anqarawī interprets the verse in such a way that Ibn ‘Arabī leaves the door of the path open to all seekers, whether they choose to follow *sharī‘at* or *ṭarīqat* to attain the Truth.

I suggest that, in an attempt to declare his full adherence to the school of Ibn ‘Arabī, Anqarawī offers an explanation justifying the former. In his interpretation of the verses, he asserts that those who criticized Ibn ‘Arabī did not grasp the full meaning of the verses, nor were they familiar with Rūmī’s or Ibn Arabī’s teachings. Their criticism reflects their lack of understanding of the Sufi teachings of the two masters, according to which there is no contradiction between following religious law and believing in sainthood. Only one who is fully cognizant of the doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī can understand the message in Book Seven that there is no single path for experiencing the friendship of God.

### **Concluding Notes**

Anqarawī challenges his opponents with an argument designed to prove that their understanding of the poetry in Book Seven is deficient. By employing “implicit metaphor,” the author of Book Seven/Rūmī makes his point by using language that hides another meaning, in this case Pharaoh’s purity (*rūḥ-i ṭāhir*). And, in defense of Ibn ‘Arabī, he engages in a theological debate whereby he offers an esoteric interpretation of the poetry. While the verses seem clearly to reinforce the accepted belief of theologians and Sufis regarding the insincerity of Pharaoh’s confession, Anqarawī looks at different accounts of Pharaoh’s life in the *Fuṣūṣ* and *Futūḥāt*, suggesting that Ibn ‘Arabī’s statements are not contradictory since they are drawn from the Qur’ān. They discuss Pharaoh’s confession

but in no way pronounce on his purity and piety; instead, they emphasize the forgiveness granted to him by divine mercy.

Anqarawī also suggests that both Pharaoh and Moses represent, respectively, God's attributes of Beauty and Majesty, which complement each other due to Ibn 'Arabī's doctrine on the attributes of *jalāl* and *jamāl*. Anqarawī's explanation and commentary take the line of justification (*ta'wīl*) and are incompatible with the approach of other Sufis, who interpret the poetry differently. On the subject of *walāya*, he does not see any contradiction between the controversial poems and the doctrine of Ibn 'Arabī. In fact, he elaborates by saying that both *ṭarīqat* and *sharī'at* were treated on an equal basis by Ibn 'Arabī and that the door of sainthood is open to everyone who can grasp its meaning and take the necessary action to become a friend of God.

In sum, contrary to Cevdet Pāşā's claim, Anqarawī does not disassociate himself from the school of Ibn 'Arabī. Rather, he provides his readers with some justification and his own explanations of controversial verses, taking a firm stance against his opponents and their critiques by introducing himself as an avid follower of Ibn 'Arabī. Given that he dedicated his entire life to preaching and promoting Ibn 'Arabī's teachings and writing commentaries based on his doctrines, it is difficult to imagine that he would have taken a different stance or compromised his principles in the face of opposition within Ottoman intellectual circles. His words were a declaration of his faithfulness to Ibn 'Arabī's teachings and they demonstrate to what extent he was an avid promoter of and formidable preacher in his school. His commentary especially placed him at the center of debate and explains to a large degree the nature of his conflicts with religious groups who stood in opposition to the doctrines of the Shaykh al-Akbar.



## **Conclusion**

This research set out to introduce an important yet little-known book in Rūmī scholarship to a Western scholarly audience. Indeed, Anqarawī's commentary on the *Mathnawī* is considered the most important Ottoman commentary ever written on this Sufi text. Perhaps inevitably, the work has caused some controversy due to the attribution of a spurious volume known as Book Seven of Rūmī's work. In this study, I have therefore endeavored to offer a new understanding of Anqarawī as a Shaykh of Gālātā. His theological debates and belittling way of confronting his opponents reflects on his religious authority as a power-seeking figure and his closeness to the Sultān.

Despite the fact that many Rūmī scholars' confidently asserted that the *Mathnawī* was completed in six volumes, I argue that the existence of numerous manuscripts, prints and lithographs of Book Seven indicate no small anxiety among some authors to complete the unfinished book of the *Mathnawī*. Whether they were composed as separate books, addenda or independent Sufi manuals, these texts all represent the interest some authors and scholars had in the number seven and their insistence on completing the *Mathnawī* in seven volumes, given their belief that Rūmī would have done so had he been alive and had the chance to do so. I argue that the verses added by Rūmī's son, Sultān Valad, which appear at the end of the *Mathnawī* edited by Gölpınarlı added to the existing anxiety and encouraged Sufis or poets to compose additional poems in order to complete Rūmī's supposedly incomplete work.

Furthermore, this study has examined Book Seven from the literary perspective. I have concluded that, due to the poetic style and employment of uncommon vocabularies,

terms and metaphors, which are not mentioned in the previous books of the *Mathnawī*, it is unlikely that Book Seven was written by Rūmī himself. Examination of numerous manuscripts and lithographs of Book Seven and the commentary written on it, indicate that Ismā‘īl Anqarawī was one of the few who accepted the authenticity of Book Seven and that, by writing a separate commentary, he gave validity to the spurious text.

The numerous copies of manuscripts of Anqarawī’s commentary are indicative of:

- 1) The popularity of Persian literature within Ottoman society. It also demonstrates the commonality of commenting on unauthentic, spurious and apocalyptic texts by Ottoman scholars. The purpose of such Sufī commentaries was likely to diffuse Sufī teachings among Dervishes in the loges, as part of the *tekke* curriculum. For example, Farīd al-Dīn Aṭṭār’s potentially spurious work, *Pand-nāmeḥ*, was commented upon by Ismā‘īl Ḥakkī Būrsevī (d. 1724-5) and published in Istanbul by Maṭba‘a-i Āmire in 1834.
- 2) The heavy promotion of Book Seven and its commentary by Mevlevīs.
- 3) The commentary’s possible usage in the curriculum of Sufi loges for the purpose of teaching.
- 4) Possible promotion of the teachings of Ibn ‘Arabī and his theory of *wilāya*, which subsequently would validate the authority of the Ottoman Sultāns as caliphs and representations of the Prophet Muḥammad.
- 5) The issue of authority and struggle for power among Sufis. This meant social and political turbulence, as well as religious disputes and confrontations (religious/political) among both Mevlevīs and non-Mevlevīs on the one hand, and among Sufis and Orthodox ‘*ulamā*’ on the other.

6) The social and religious status of Anqarawī, who exercised his social power, while benefiting enormously from the Sulṭān's patronage and political support.

Through a close study of the manuscripts, new data has emerged concerning Anqarawī's life as the head of Gālātā Mevlevī and as an authoritative Sufi in the Ottoman court. The information extracted from the commentary he wrote, as well as the marginal notes the copyists left in glosses, reveal significant social, political and religious conflicts between him and other Sufis as well as between him and orthodox Muslim groups such as the Qāḍizādeh, who accused him of *bid'a*.

New information about the rivalry between *Mathnawī* commentators such as Shem'ī Efendī and Anqarawī has also been brought to light. After close examination of numerous Ottoman manuscripts of his *sharḥ*, I argue that the debate Anqarawī was engaged in is twofold: (a) first, the *sharḥ* encountered heavy criticism within Mevlevī circles for its falsification and spurious nature, and (b) second, the subjects discussed in the *sharḥ* caused strong opposition from the orthodox '*ulamā*' on the grounds that it promoted *bid'a*. Through examining Anqarawī's introduction, which presents a detailed account of his debate with Mevlevī Sufis and Shem'ī in particular, I argue that Anqarawī claimed his authority as the ultimate commentator and *Mathnawī-khān* among the Mevlevī Sufis, which was bolstered by his closeness to Sulṭān Murād IV.

A close reading of the manuscripts also reveals Anqarawī's elaborate and *ad hominem* style of response when dealing with theological matters. Anqarawī takes a theological approach, offers his rebuttal and refutes all critiques, claiming that there is no solid ground for his opponents' wrong assessments, all of which come as a result of their ignorance and lack of understanding Rūmī's Sufi doctrines and spirituality. No doubt,

Anqarawī's elaborate responses demonstrate his serious promotion of the authenticity of Book Seven among the Sufis and Mevlevī Shaykhs of his time. However, in so doing, he was also attempting to demonstrate his supremacy over other *Mathnawī* commentators on the subject of Rūmī's Sufi doctrine and his superior ability to comment on the *Mathnawī*.

All of the above suggests that Anqarawī saw himself as an authority and a formidable scholar of Rūmī, who would give the last word on the *Mathnawī* as the ultimate expert and most reliable commentator in Mevlevī circles. Indeed, there is no question that he had a full command of Persian and Arabic in addition to a profound knowledge of exegeses, theology, philosophy and jurisprudence, all of which contributed to his high status in Ottoman society. It also placed him among the elite scholars who benefited from the Sulṭān's patronage, which, in turn, contributed to his power and superiority over other Mevlevī Shaykhs. It can also be suggested that, by writing a separate commentary on Book Seven ignoring other Mevlevī Shaykhs' disapproval and criticizing other scholars for not being able to understand Rūmī's Sufism, Anqarawī claimed his authority as the ultimate commentator and *Mathnawī-khān*. His scholarly, spiritual and social status served to increase his popularity and made his *Sharḥ* one of the most consulted Ottoman commentaries, and, to this day, it remains the only source used for teaching among Mevlevīs.

I have examined the introduction of the commentary along with some selected passages from Book Seven to highlight the social and religious conflicts among Ottoman '*ulamā*'. However, a full examination of Anqarawī's commentary on the entire *Mathnawī* is necessary in order to study his style and theological approach to reading a Sufi text. His heavy reliance on Ibn 'Arabī's doctrine, which reflects his own views and theological

approach, is yet another important subject for further investigation and analysis. His entire commentary is based on Ibn ‘Arabī’s teachings and it is often hard for the reader to distinguish Rūmī’s own words from those of Ibn ‘Arabī in Anqarawī’s explanations. Such future research will shed light on his motives and approach towards Rūmī’s teachings and will help us to understand better Anqarawī’s teaching methodology within the Mevlevī School.

I would like to conclude that the study of Anqarawī’s *sharḥ* on Book Seven contributes to scholarship on Rūmī and Persian Sufi literature on the one hand, and, on the other hand, also sheds light on the various facets of the social and religious debates among religious scholars (*‘ulamā’*) and Sufis in the seventeenth century. It highlights the importance of the reception of the *Mathnawī* in Ottoman society, shows how *‘ulamā’* were engaged in teaching and promoting Rūmī’s doctrines and proves the popularity of the school of Ibn ‘Arabī among Sufis and *‘ulamā’* of the time. It also helps us to better understand the intellectual milieu of the Ottoman Empire as well as the social status and political affiliations of its scholars, and also helps us to analyze the dominant power given to religious institutions and their affiliated scholars, which led to social turmoil in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman society.

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<sup>413</sup> As discussed in the Chapter One of this dissertation, Anqarawī’s commentary on the sixth volume of the *Mathnawī* is divided into two parts and some libraries list the second part as volume seven in their collections.

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## Appendix 1

The following are the list of manuscripts, lithographs and printed edition of Book Seven that I was able to acquire from different libraries in Iran, Turkey, Denmark and Bosnia Herzegovina. I have also referenced the following three manuscripts in Chapter Two:

- 1) *Mathnawī-i Sab‘a Mathānī* written by Shaykh Najīb al-Dīn Riḍā Tabrīzī. The manuscript is examined and mentioned in Davūd Chūgāniān’s book entitled, *Sab‘a Mathānī: Tamām-i Nātamām-i Mathnawī*.
- 2) Tehran: MS Majlis Library, No. 359428 – *Mathnawī-i Shūr-i ‘Ishq* written by Shaykh Muḥammad Tahānavī.
- 3) Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No. 2033 – *Mawlānā’ya Izāfe Edilen Yedinci cilt* written by Badī‘-i Tabrīzī Muḥtadan va al-Qūnawī, known as Manūchahr al-Tājiriyya al-Munshī.

I have categorized all the manuscripts of Book Seven based on the geographical distribution. In the first category, I examine the manuscripts preserved in various libraries in Iran in addition to published editions and, in the second group, I examine manuscripts from Denmark, Sarajevo and Turkey.

Manuscripts of Book Seven from Iran, India, Denmark and Bosnia Herzegovina

Catalogue information	Scribe	Date of copy (AH)	Place	Note
Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍavī Library, No 28660		Thursday, sometime in 10 <sup>th</sup> century AH	Mashhad	
	Shaykh Najīb al-Dīn Riḍā Tabrīzī	1094	Tehran	Discussed in Dāvūd Chugāniān's article <i>Sab'a Mathānī: (2008)</i>
Royal Library of Copenhagen, Cod_Pers_AC 135	Muḥammad Bāqir nicknamed as Nājī b. 'Alī, b Ibrāhīm Qazvīnī	Monday, 3 <sup>rd</sup> of Rajab, 1275 AH	Denmark	
Majlis Library, No.17163	Mīrzā Muḥammad Malik al-Kuttāb-ī Shīrāzī	1301 AH	Tehran – copied from the Mumbai manuscript	
Majlis Library, No. 359428.	Shaykh Muḥammad Tahānavī	1301 AH	Copied in Mumbai	According to Tahānavī the actual author is 'Alī Naqī Iṣṭahbānī (d.1717).
	Hassan b. 'Alī Nassābah Shīrāzī	1349 AH	Mumbai, India	Lithograph. Book Seven appears as part of the <i>Mathnawī</i> , not an addendum
	Muḥammad Ramiḍānī	1360 AH	Tehran, Iran	Printed Mathnawī-i Kulālah-i Khāvar
	Manūchahr Dānish-pajūh	142 AH	Tehran, Iran	Printed edition based on Mumbai manuscript (1931)
Ghazi Husrev Beg Library, No. 9824	Meḥmed Mujezinovic		Sarajevo	

## Ottoman/Turkish Manuscripts of Book Seven

Catalogue information	Scribe	Date of copy	Place	Note
Konya MS, No.2033	Badī‘-i Tabrīzī Muḥtadan va al-Qūnawī known as Manūchahr al-Tājiriyya al-Munshī	Monday, Dhul Ḥajja, 844	Konya, Mevlānā Müzesi	The oldest manuscript of the Book Seven, entitled <i>Mawlānā’ya Izāfe Edilen Yedinci cilt</i> , consulted by Anqarawī
Ḥāçī Maḥmūd Efendī, No. 3727	Akhlārī	15 <sup>th</sup> of Rajab, 1035	Istanbul, Süleymaniye	
Nuruosmāniye, No. 2570	Faḍlī	1040	Istanbul, Süleymaniye	From Dervish Ismā‘īl Vāhid’s collection,
‘Āşir Efendī collection, No. 443	Muḥammad b. ‘Uthmān	Rajb, 1169	Istanbul, Süleymaniye	The manuscript is part of a Sufi collection ( <i>majmū‘a</i> )
Lāla Ismā‘īl, No. 203	Dervīsh Muḥammad	Wednesday, 12 <sup>th</sup> of Rajab, 1180	Istanbul, Süleymaniye	
Ḥāçī Maḥmūd Efendī, No. 2203-1	Suleimān Fahīm Efendī Karjajī Bashī-zādeh	1234	Istanbul, Süleymaniye	Translated into Modern Turkish by Farrukh Efendī and published as a lithograph in 1853.
Dārulmesnevī, No. 251			Istanbul, Süleymaniye	In the <i>waqf</i> of Seyyed Hāfiẓ Muḥammad Murād, the Shaykh of Murād Mullā Sufi lodge

## Manuscripts in Iran

- **Tehran – MS Majlis Library, No.17163**

This manuscript is 35 ff, in length and has 15 lines on each page occupying a space of 18 x 11 cm. Copied in 1884 (1301) by the hand of Mīrzā Muḥammad Malik al-Kuttābī Shīrāzī (d. circa 1888). It is written in Persian *Nastī ‘alīq* script and is based on the Mumbai manuscript except for the fact that the preamble comes at the end. The colophon provides us with some information extracted from a Mumbai manuscript maintaining that Book Seven was indeed written by Rūmī after he had recovered from his illness and that he did so with the aim of completing the *Mathnawī*.

The copyist states “some claim that Book Seven is not written by Rūmī, but according to one of his biographers the book is not an addendum and was written by Rūmī himself after he recovered from his illness. It was well known in the regions of Egypt and Shām and accepted by scholars as an authentic part of the *Mathnawī*.”<sup>414</sup> The manuscript is without gloss or explanatory notes by the author. The copyist begins with a supplication to the prophet, and offers his respect to Imāms ‘Alī, Ḥussein and Fātimah followed by poems from ‘Allāmah Majlisī<sup>415</sup> (d.1698).<sup>416</sup> Since no Mumbai manuscript has yet been traced, this may possibly be an isolated case of Book Seven copied in Mumbai and later on recopied in Iran as part of a collection of Sufī manuals.

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<sup>414</sup> MS Majlis, No.17163, f.67a.

<sup>415</sup> Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī b. Muḥammad-Taqī b. Maqṣūd-‘Alī Eṣfahānī, (b. 1627; d. 1699 or 1700), an eminent Twelver Shī‘ite jurist in Ṣafavīd Iran (1501-1722) and one of the most important Ḥadīth scholars of Twelver Shī‘ism, known as ‘Allāmah Majlesi or Majlisi-i Thānī (Majlisī the Second), and the author of *Biḥār al-Anvār*. See Rainer Brunner, “Majlesī, Moḥammad-Bāqer” *Encyclopedia Iranica*: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/majlesi-mohammad-baqer>

<sup>416</sup> MS Majlis, No.17163, ff.3b-7b.

- **Mashhad – MS Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī Library, No 28660**

The manuscript is comprised of 22 ff, with 23 lines on each page and has the dimensions 26 x 18 cm. It originally formed part of Aḥmad Shāhid’s private collection, which was gifted as an endowment to Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī Library. The manuscript is written in Persian *Nast‘alīq* and all the titles and headings are written in red ink. Several corrections are made by the copyist in the margin, but the work itself lacks any marginal gloss or explanatory notes. The colophon states the time of copying as Thursday, but gives no specific date.<sup>417</sup> However, the index entry for the manuscript indicates that the manuscript was copied in the tenth century AH, i.e., some 300 years after Rūmī’s death, even though the name of the copyist is unknown.<sup>418</sup> This could be among the earliest manuscripts and was used for further reproduced editions.

### Published editions in Iran

- **Tehran: *Mathnawī-i Kulālah-i Khāvar***

We find Book Seven published as part of the *Mathnawī* for the first time in Iran in 1942 (1360), issued as part of a Rūmī collection entitled *Kulālah-i Khāvar* edited by Muḥammad Ramaḍānī (d.1967). The edition includes the entire *Mathnawī*, Rūmī’s *Majālis-i Sab‘a* “seven sermons,” *Maktūbāt* “letters” and a sample of his Ghazals from *Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīzī*. The six books of the *Mathnawī* come with annotated footnotes, explanations and clarification. However, the pages containing Book Seven (pp. 426-448) do not include any gloss or explanation and there is no indication upon which manuscripts

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<sup>417</sup> MS Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī Library, No 28660, f.22a.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid., f. Index.

it was based. Ramaḍānī merely explains that his reason for publishing this book was so that “those narrow-minded ones who claim the *Mathnawī* is not a masterpiece realize that the difference between fabricated poems such as the forged Book Seven and other *Mathnawīs* in comparison with Rūmī’s work.”<sup>419</sup> Thus, the aim of the editor is to offer a comparison between Rūmī’s authentic poetry and the various forged works and addendums.

- **Tehran: Manūchahr Dānishpajūh: *Daftar-i haftum-i Mathnawī: surūdah-i shā‘arī nā shinākhtah, taḥrīr bi sāl- published in 1411***

Some years later, Book Seven was separately edited by Manūchahr Dānish-pajūh and published under the title *Daftar-i haftum-i Mathnawī: surūdah-i shā‘arī nā shinākhtah, taḥrīr bi sāl-i 1411(814)* by Intishārāt-i Ṭahūrī in Tehran, 2001 (1421). The edition is based on the Mumbai lithograph, which was published in 1931 (1349) and, when compared to the Ottoman editions, which were printed at an earlier period, features many grammatical errors. It seems however that Dānish-pajūh based his edition solely on the Mumbai lithograph and failed to consult earlier Ottoman Turkish versions in print or manuscript. Indeed, in some of his footnotes he points out the unclear language of the verses or words that must have been omitted.<sup>420</sup> Dānish-pajūh provides a full introduction in which he introduces the Mumbai lithograph, and identifies some of the grammatical errors already noted by some Rūmī scholars. His edition lacks the preamble in prose that appears at the

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<sup>419</sup> Muḥammad Ramaḍānī, *Mathnawī-i Ma‘nawī-i Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad-i Balkhī-i Rūmī ba haft kitāb-i nafīs-i digar* (Tehran: Kulālah-i Khāvar, 1375/1996), 11.

<sup>420</sup> For example, see footnote 43 on page 34 in which two words *ghadū* and *shahr* “city” are connected and appear to be a compound meaningless word, whereas in Ottoman sources the two are written separately. In footnote 44, page 34 the word *narāsh* (there is no meaning for this word in the Persian dictionaries) appears as *tarāsh* “to sharpen” in the Ottoman manuscript MS Ḥāḩī Maḥmūd Efendī, No.3727, f. 10b, verse 12. In footnote 164, p. 76, an adjective before the word *bingar* “look” is missing, but, according to Ottoman manuscripts, the omitted word is *nīkū* “nice, good” and completes the hemistich as “He said look nicely,” MS Ḥāḩī Maḥmūd Efendī, No.3727, f. 34a, verse 7.

beginning of most manuscripts. However, he provides useful commentary and explanation for difficult or unclear verses or vocabulary, as well as lists of Qur’ānic verses, Ḥadīth quotations, Sufi phrases, and a full bibliography, which all appear at the end.

### Various manuscript collections in the world

As mentioned earlier, Book Seven of the *Mathnawī*, as it was known to Anqarawī, is preserved in the following manuscript collections as a poetical text alone, without commentary or other identifying text. They are all generally recorded under the title *Daftar-i Haftum-i Mathnawī*. The following list contains some of the copies that I have been able to consult and that are preserved in the libraries of the Indian subcontinent, Turkey, Sarajevo, and Denmark. My aim is to demonstrate the wide circulation of the book in various parts of the world and elicit clues as to its authorship.

- **Mumbai lithograph, published in 1931.**

Among early witnesses of the text, mention should be made of the Mumbai lithograph, published in Mumbai in 1931 (1349), which offers the entire text of the *Mathnawī* in addition to Book Seven. Dānish-pajūh also points out that it was “... copied by Ḥassan b. ‘Alī Nassābah Shīrāzī (d.circa 1935) and includes Sulṭān Valad’s closing verses, which appear at the end of Book Seven. It is followed by a full biography of Rūmī written by the Qājār poet Viqār-i Shīrāzī (d.1880).”<sup>421</sup> In the Mumbai edition, Book Seven is published as an addendum and consists of 1766 verses, arranged under 56 headings. In the colophon, the copyist rejects the idea of Book Seven being a later accretion and explains, “since Rūmī

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<sup>421</sup> Manūchahr Dānishpajūh, *Daftar-i Haftum-i Mathnawī: Surūdah-i Shā‘arī Nāshinākhtah, Taḥrīr bi Sāl-i 1411* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Ṭahūrī, 2001), 10.

had suffered from a sudden illness, he most likely began to write Book Seven after he recovered from his illness,” while also drawing support from the fact that “the Turkish commentator Shaykh Ismā‘īl Anqarawī has written a gloss on this book in 1591.”<sup>422</sup> In the introduction, he explains further, “Book Seven is not an addendum, since it was published immediately after Book Six but was only well-known in Shām and Rūm. Anqarawī maintains that the book remained unknown until he found out about it by accident and decided to write a commentary on it.”<sup>423</sup> This edition had some influence on Rūmī scholarship: Bahrām Behīzād, the author of *Nuskah-yi Gumshudah-i Mathnawī*, points out that “[i]n his book *Bustān al-Sīyahah*, under the section Ismā‘īlism, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn Shīrvānī refers to the opening verses of Book Seven as copied in the Mumbai manuscript, in order to justify the importance of the number seven and demonstrate how the order of matters ends in seven.”<sup>424</sup>

- **Denmark – MS Royal Library of Copenhagen, Cod\_Pers\_AC 135**

This manuscript includes 27 ff, with 22 lines per page, with the page size 26 x 18 cm. The date of the copy is 1858 (1275) and the copyist’s name is Muḥammad Bāqir nicknamed as Nājī b. ‘Alī, b Ibrāhīm Qazvīnī. The manuscript begins with a *Basmala*, written in Persian *Nastī‘alīq* script and includes the introduction and the entire collection of verses traditionally associated with Book Seven. Titles and subtitles are written in red ink so that

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<sup>422</sup> Ibid. The date cannot be correct since we are informed by Anqarawī that he became aware of the existence of the Book Seven while he was writing the commentary on the Book Five in 1625 (1035). See the examination of his introduction to the commentary on Book Seven as discussed in Chapter Five of this dissertation.

<sup>423</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>424</sup> Bahrām Behīzād, *Risāla-Manḥūl-i Sipahsālār: Nuskah Gomshudah-i Mathnawī* (Tehran: Mu‘assisah-i Khadamāt-i Farhangi-i Rasā, 1997), 186.



it makes it easy to locate different stories. The copyist does not provide any gloss or explanatory notes, nor does he provide any table of contents. The colophon includes a seal indicating the copyist's name.<sup>425</sup> There is another seal on the opening page indicating a date of 1274 [1857], i.e., a year before the completion of the manuscript. The seal reads as *al-Mutivakkil 'ala-allāh 'an Allāh-yār* المـتـوكل على الله عن الله يار (gifted by Allāh-yār to the well-mannered king hoping he will remember it in his mind).<sup>426</sup> It is not clear who this Allāh-yār is, but the date could suggest that copying the manuscript began a year before its completion. Due to the handwriting, it can be assumed that the book was copied as part of a collection and later on purchased, perhaps by an orientalist scholar or a merchant, and transferred to Denmark's Royal Library.

- **Sarajevo – MS Ghazi Husrev Beg Library, No. 9824**

This incomplete manuscript is a copy of an older manuscript of an uncertain date. As indicated by the library's database, it is written by Mehmed Mujezinovic (d.?). It begins with a *Basmala* and each folio contains 24 lines per page. This version of the work only covers the first 40 ff of the text, which includes the preamble, preface and the first 20 stories. The colophon does not indicate the copyist's name or date of the copy, nor does the manuscript include any gloss or notes. This manuscript is one of many *Mathnawī* manuscripts preserved in Ghazi Husrev Library, so it is possible that a Mevlevī Dervish copied Book Seven, since Sufis of Mevlevī lodges copy most of Book Seven, as we have discussed. In another note, it can be suggested that the existence of the manuscript is an indication of its promotion and perhaps usage in the Mevlevī lodges in the Balkans.

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<sup>425</sup> MS, The Royal Library of Copenhagen Cod\_Pers\_AC 135, f. 26b.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid., f.3a.

## Ottoman-produced/Turkish Manuscripts

The following manuscripts also appear without commentaries. The common feature of these manuscripts is the geographic location as well as the ideology of the copyists. They were all copied somewhere in the Ottoman lands by Sufis and dervīshes of the Mevlevī order. This suggests that Mevlevī Sufis were the main proponents of Book Seven, at least at first glance. In some cases, a manuscript will indicate the patronage of or endowment by the Sultān of the time or the Khāniqāh in which it was copied or to which it was gifted, so that it could be used as a teaching/learning tool by the dervīshes. The manuscripts can be divided into two categories: a) the manuscripts with additional notes and comments, which provide us with some information about those Sufis and ‘*ulamā*’ who engaged in religious dispute with Anqarawī; b) the manuscripts with no or few comments in the margin.

### A: Manuscripts with marginal notes:

Four manuscripts are examined in this category: Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No. 2033, Hāçī Maḥmūd Efendī, No. 3727, Hāçī Maḥmūd Efendī, No. 2203-1, 2203-3 and ‘Āşir Efendī, No. 443. Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No. 2033 dated in 1440, is considered to be the oldest and most important manuscript among the Ottoman manuscripts, which was possibly used as a base for reproduction of the later manuscripts. It is the manuscript seen by Anqarawī upon which he based his commentary. Hāçī Maḥmūd Efendī, No. 2203-1, 2203-3 is, on the other hand, an important document since it contains the only Turkish translation of the Book Seven into Modern Turkish by Farrukh Efendī. Aḥmad Cevdet Efendī’s signature and affirming poetry, which appears on the colophon, adds to its legitimacy and significance.

- **Istanbul – MS Süleymaniye Library, Hācī Maḥmūd Efendī, No. 3727**

This is amongst the oldest manuscripts of the work, written by a copyist named Akhlarī in 1625 (1035), the year in which Anqarawī completed his commentary on Book Seven. The handwriting is clear, its papers are of high quality, and the script is clear to read. The manuscript bears the earliest date of copying; in fact, all references to the text of Book Seven herein are made on its basis. The cover pages indicate the total number of the verses as 1780. The manuscript consists of 48 ff and bears a seal stamped on the last page right beside the colophon, but unfortunately it is discolored and unreadable. It contains a few correctional notes in the margin. The cover page is slightly damaged and some of the lines in the preamble are unreadable. Akhlarī ends his transcription by stating in the colophon that “it is copied from the original edition.”<sup>427</sup> However, he provides us with no information about the original manuscript or where he obtained it. It is not clear whether he copied it from Anqarawī’s work – considering it to be the “original” – or from the manuscript of Book Seven used by the latter, or from another manuscript entirely. It is interesting to note that Akhlarī quotes a few lines from Ghazal 882 from Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīzī at the end of the preface, just prior to beginning Book Seven proper. It reads as follows:

طبل بقا کوفتند ملک مخلص رسید	جامه سیه کرد کفر نور محمد رسید
بار دگر مه شکافت روح مجرد رسید	روی زمین سبز شد جیب درید آسمان
خیز که بار دگر آن قمرین خد رسید	گشت جهان پرشکر بست سعادت کمر
شرح دل احمدی هفت مجلد رسید	دل چو سطرلاب شد آیت هفت آسمان
گفت به اقبال تو نفس مقید رسید	عقل معقل شبی شد بر سلطان عشق

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<sup>427</sup> MS Hācī Maḥmūd Efendī, No 3727, f. 48a.

The light of Muḥammad (faith) arrived, infidelity donned a dark cloth; the Eternal kingdom arrived, the endless drum was beaten.  
 The earth's face turned green (was renewed), the sky tore its bosom (poured forth rain); Once again the moon is broken, the disengaged-soul has arrived.  
 The world became full of sugar, tied its belly to offer the fortune; get up! Once again that moonlike face arrived!  
 Like an astrolabe, the heart became the sign of seven heavens, the seven-volume Book (Qur'ān) arrived to explain the state of Muḥammad's heart. One night the rational intellect came to visit the king of love, told him to your fortune the restricted 'nafs' (ego) arrived.<sup>428</sup>

The poetic expression “seven-volume book” mentioned in the above verse could be a reference to the well-known Ḥadīth transmitted through Ibn Mas'ūd (d. 650) and frequently cited by Sufis in their manuals or exegeses, which reads:

The Qur'ān was sent down according to seven 'lections' (*aḥruf*). Each Qur'ānic verse has an exterior (*ẓāhir*) and an interior (*bāṭin*). Each lection (*ḥarf*) has a limit (*ḥadd*) and a point of a transcendency (*maṭla'*).<sup>429</sup>

This Ḥadīth is traditionally the foundation upon which exegetes based their esoteric commentaries of fourfold or sevenfold, separating the elite's interpretation of the Qur'ān from that of ordinary people. For example, the well-known Sufi Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 896) states in his commentary *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*: “Each verse of the Qur'ān has four senses, a literal sense (*ẓāhir*), a hidden sense (*bāṭin*), a limited sense (*ḥadd*) and a point of transcendence (*maṭla'*). The theory is also a reference to J'afar Ṣādiq's defining four levels of meaning in the Qur'ān: in four levels: the explicit, the allusive, subtleties and realities,

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<sup>428</sup> MS Ḥāḥī Maḥmūd Efendī, No 3727, f. 3b. The translation is mine.

<sup>429</sup> Annabel Keeler, *The Sufi Hermeneutics: The Qur'ān Commentary of Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī* (London: Oxford University Press, 2006), 70.

intended for the ordinary people, the elite, the saints and the prophets respectively.”<sup>430</sup> As pointed out by Böwering, Sufis considered “the seven *aḥruf* or *dargāhs* of the Qur’ān to be a reference to the seven seas (stations) which must be crossed (attained) before entering the alley (station) of *tawḥīd*.”<sup>431</sup>

It seems that Rūmī alludes to the above mentioned Sufi Ḥadīth by modifying and offering his own interpretation to the effect that “the seven-volume” represents the spiritual state of the Prophet’s heart, which is also consistent with his view of placing the Prophet at the highest level of creation, the honor of heaven and earth. The understanding was that, if it was not for him, creation would not have taken place.<sup>432</sup> According to the copyist’s note, this authenticates the fact that Book Seven was written by Rūmī. Perhaps the note indicates that Akhlarī was a follower or student of Anqarawī and for that reason committed to declaring Book Seven to have been composed by Rūmī rather than by a forger or someone else.

- **Istanbul – MS Süleymaniye Library, Ḥāçī Maḥmūd Efendī, No. 2203-1, 2203-3**

The second important manuscript in this group is a lithograph. This is the only document I have come across which contains a translation of Book Seven into Ottoman Turkish and it is actually a lithographic copy. MS 2203-1 includes a table of contents, while 2203-3

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<sup>430</sup> Ibid.

<sup>431</sup> Ibid., 96, note 6.

<sup>432</sup> Referring to the famous Ḥadīth, *la lāka lama khalaqtu ‘l aḥlāk*, “If it wasn’t for you (Muḥammad), I would not have created the heavens,” Rūmī discusses the subject of Muḥammad being the most beloved of human beings and regards him in the highest stage in creation in Books Two and Five of his *Mathnawī*, V:2737 and II:974.

contains Book Seven itself. The poetry collection consists of 68 pages. It was copied by Suleimān Fahīm Efendī Karjājī Bashī-zādeh in 1818 (1234).<sup>433</sup> The colophon includes several certificatory notes confirming the name of the copyist, the translator and the publisher. According to the first note, the work was translated into Turkish by Farrukh Efendī, who offered a Turkish (Ottoman) translation for both the introduction and the poetry in its entirety.<sup>434</sup> Seyyed Ibrāhīm Efendī, one of Vālī-zādah Efendī’s copyists, also wrote a poem in an addendum praising the work of Farrukh Efendī, which appears in seven verses at the end of the collection.<sup>435</sup>

Another affirmation is made by Aḥmad Cevdet Efendī who wrote a poem in nine verses explaining that all six books of the *Mathnawī* had been translated earlier into Ottoman Turkish and that Farrukh Efendī completed the unfinished work by offering his translation of Book Seven as well.<sup>436</sup> There is yet another note by Cevdet Efendī confirming the date of publication and offering his gratitude to Maṭba‘a ‘Āmira for publishing the translation of Book Seven.<sup>437</sup> This is followed by the poet and scholar Shaykh Shahāb Efendī’s complementary note confirming the date of publication.<sup>438</sup> The poems themselves are printed in two columns; the column on the left is the Turkish

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<sup>433</sup> MS Ḥāqī Maḥmūd Efendī, No 2203-3, 67.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid.

<sup>435</sup> Ibid.

<sup>436</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>437</sup> Ibid.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid.

translation of the poems, corresponding to the original Persian text presented on the right column. There are no explanatory comments or marginal glosses.<sup>439</sup>

And finally, the closing note explains that the piece in question was published in 1851 (1268) under the supervision of Seyyed ‘Alī Cevdet at the Maṭba‘a ‘Āmira (‘Āmira publishing house), while the Turkish translation was edited by Muṣṭafā Vahabī.<sup>440</sup> All of this testifies to its official nature and confirms the importance assigned to publishing and translating Book Seven into Turkish for the first time; it also indicates the official support it received from various authorities. Although Book Seven was published and translated into Modern Turkish in 1844 (1260), it is not included in the *Mathnawī* collection published by Maṭba‘a ‘Āmira, nor did it appear as part of Anqarawī’s commentary on the entire *Mathnawī* published in 1872. However, it is important to mention that the lithograph was published during the Tanzimat period, which was a period of reformation. The reforms encouraged Ottomanism among the diverse ethnic groups of the Empire, allowing more religious freedom to all groups. The publication of different religious texts, which were banned before due to political and religious conflicts, was allowed. This explains why a lithograph of the Book Seven was permitted to be published.

- **Istanbul – MS Süleymaniye Library, ‘Āşir Efendī collection, No. 443**

This manuscript is a collection of 26 Sufi treatises (*Risālas*) that formerly belonged to Muṣṭafā b. ‘Āşir Muṣṭafā and it is dated 1748 (1162). The collection includes the following Sufi manuals: *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, *Maslak-i ‘Ushshāq*, *Marmuzāt-i Aḥmadī*, *Risāla-i Digar*

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<sup>439</sup> Ibid.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

*Min Ba‘d al-Naṣāyih va Bayān-i Samā’-i Mawlavī va Ghayra, Vaṣīyat-i al-Shaykh Shahāb al-Dīn Suhraṣardī, Risāla-i Mawlānā Niẓām al-Dīn Khāmūsh, Risāla Khawjah Ghujdavānī, Kitāb-i Ayyuh-al-Valad li-‘l Ghazālī, Vaṣāyā al-Qudsiyya, Hidāyat al-Hidāyah li-‘l Ghazālī, Ḥayāt al-Arvāḥ-i Maḥmūd Efendī al-Uskudārī, Risāla al-Gharīq fī Jam‘ va ‘l Tafrīq-i Maḥmūd Efendī al-Uskudārī, Sirāj al-Qulūb fī Dhikr-i Maqāmāt al-Khavāṣṣ va Akhaṣṣ al-Khavāṣṣ, Risāla-i Digar fī ‘l Sulūk, Risāla-i Miṣrī Efendī fī Kalimat al-Tawḥīd, Risāla Asvalah va Ajvabah fī Ḥaqq al-Ṣufiyya, Tarjumah Miṣrī Efendī-i Yūnus Emre, Ba‘dī Kalimāt-i Miṣrī Efendī ma‘a Ilāhīyāt-i Yūnus Emre, Naṣīḥat-nāmah-i ‘Azmī Efendī, Mujallad-i Haftum az Kitāb-i Mathnawī ‘alā Qawl Shaykh Ismā‘īl Shāriḥ-i Mathnawī, Risāla Nuqtavī-i Shifā‘ al-Qulūb, Niṣāb-i Mawlavī Ṭarīqat-nāmah-i Mawlavī, Mi‘rājīyya li-‘Ārif Efendī, Ḥall-i Rumūz al-Aḥmad b. al-Shaykh Ghānim al-Muqaddas, Risālat al-Shifā li-Advā‘ al-Vabā li-Ṭāshkīrī-zādah, Natā‘ij al-Funūn li-Naw‘ī Efendī.<sup>441</sup>*

Book Seven appears as the 17th work on pp. 244-265, having 25 lines per page and measuring 21.8 x 13.3 (text dimensions 15.5x7.5) cm. It was copied in 1755 (1169) by Muḥammad b. ‘Uthmān. The head title ascribed in red states that this text was copied from Ismā‘īl Anqarawī’s manuscript. It contains the prose preface and the entire book. There are no spaces between the verses with the result that they are all written consecutively, separated only by punctuation marks and title headings, which appear in red. There are some notes that appear on the margins, and among the more important of these is one in which the copyist identifies the one verse in the collection referring to the date of composition of Book Seven.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> MS ‘Āṣir Efendī, No.443, f.1b, cover page.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibīd.*, f. 247b.



The seventh book of the *Mathnawī*, which appeared from the hidden world, its date (of composition) is 670/1271.

The marginal note reads that this is the year in which Rūmī wrote Book Seven. Rūmī passed away in 1273 and those who believe in the authenticity of Book Seven, including Anqarawī, argue that Rūmī wrote the book two years before his death. Another important note is the copyist's comment on a controversial verse in which the author of Book Seven allegedly attempts to criticize Ibn 'Arabī's celebrated work *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī's (d. 1274) commentary on it.

در نصوص وحی صدق آر از خلوص      دل تهی کن از فصوص و از نصوص

Have faith in the script of the divine revelation with sincerity; detach your heart from *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and the *Nuṣūṣ*.

The marginal note reads: " lam yatashabath al-nuṣūṣ va al-fuṣūṣ, lam yatashabath bi naṣṣ al-vaḥy" (لم يتشبهت النصوص والفصوص – لم يتشبهت بنص الوحي)<sup>443</sup> *He (Anqarawī) did not adhere / cling to the word or the text of revelation and Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, suggesting that the verse in question indicates a certain coolness towards Ibn 'Arabī's celebrated work the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. As mentioned earlier, there had been a dispute between Anqarawī and the Qāḍīzādeh family over theological and doctrinal matters. In an article, Bilal Kuşpınar

<sup>443</sup> Ibid., f. 249b.

explains that “in response to the *Mathnawī* commentator ‘Ābedīn Pāšā (d. 1907), the Ottoman historian Cevdet Pāšā (d. 1893) states that Book Seven was forged by someone named Ḥusāmuddīn in an attempt to dispute Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrine. The content is incompatible with the rest of the *Mathnawī* but, due to his reconciliation with Qāḍīzādeh family, Anqarawī decided to write a commentary on this book in order to demonstrate his detachment from the teachings of Ibn ‘Arabī to whom Qāḍīzādeh was hostile and in disagreement.”<sup>444</sup> However, as we discussed in Chapter Five, contrary to Cevdet Pāšā’s statement, Anqarawī remains a determined follower of Ibn ‘Arabī and bases the entire commentary on the latter’s teaching.

The marginal note suggests that the copyist was aware of the original dispute between Qāḍīzādeh and Anqarawī, since he alludes to it by adding his own note on the margin and highlighting the latter’s anti-Ibn ‘Arabī statement. The verse is, however, taken out of context and cannot be related to such an hypothetical dispute. In fact, a close reading of the previous verses suggests that the composer of Book Seven emphasizes unity (*tawḥīd*) and Islamic religious law (*sharī‘at*), for it concludes by saying “cling on the path of divine revelation and detach yourself from other secondary sources.”<sup>445</sup>

The copy itself forms part of a collection (*majmū‘a*) of Sufi manuals that includes the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and three manuals on *samā’* or other principles of Mevlevī Sufism. The copyist has added a few lines from the *Mathnawī* on the cover page (from Book Five: 4136-4145), all of which suggests that the collection was probably copied by a Mevlevī dervīsh in the Mevlevī Sufi center (*khāniqāh*) for the purpose of teaching and reading it

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<sup>444</sup> See Kuşpınar, “İsmā‘īl Ankaravī and the significance of his commentary in the Mevlevī literature,” 71-72.

<sup>445</sup> MS ‘Āşir Efendī, No.443, f.247b.

among the dervishes as part of a curriculum related to the promotion of the doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī.

### B: Manuscripts without marginal notes

Two of the three manuscripts in this group demonstrate the royal patronage that their copyist received, which subsequently indicates their promotion in the Sufi lodges.

- **Istanbul – MS Süleymaniye Library, Lāla Ismā‘īl, No. 203**

The manuscript was copied in 1766 (1180) by a certain Dervīsh Muḥammad. It is 46 ff in length with 21 lines per page and has page dimensions of 210 x 145-140 x 085 mm. The only correction note appears in the gloss on f. 14b. The cover page contains a seal indicating that Lāla Ismā‘īl Efendī dedicated the manuscript as an endowment to Sulṭān ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd khān’s (d.1789) library.<sup>446</sup> The verses are written in two columns, while the titles, punctuation marks and division marks appear in color.

- **Istanbul – MS Süleymaniye Library Nūruosmānīye, No. 2570**

This manuscript was copied in 1630 (1040), but the colophon does not indicate the copyist’s name. It is 75 ff in length, with the verses written in two columns per page, 13 lines in each column. Grammatical punctuations, titles and headings are written in red. There are only a few correctional notes and these appear in the margins of ff. 2b, 4a, and 17b. Three seals can be found in the opening pages indicating that the book came from the

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<sup>446</sup> MS Lāla Ismā‘īl, No. 203, f. 1b. Furūzānfar provides the reference to this Ḥadīth in his *Aḥādīth-i Mathnawī*, (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1991), 172, No. 546. According to Furūzānfar, the Ḥadīth is mentioned in *Sharḥ-i Ta‘arruf*, v.2, 46 and *al-Lu‘lu’ al-Marṣū‘*, 66

collection of the dervīsh Ismā‘īl Vāḥīd and was dedicated as an endowment to the Ottoman Sulṭān Abū Najīb ‘Uthmān Khān b. Sulṭān Muṣṭafā Khān (d. 1757) and his dā‘ī, Hājj Ibrāhīm Ḥanīf.<sup>447</sup> The copyist ends his transcription by signing his name as Faḍlī and dedicating the copy to the chief minister of the time (*vazīr*).<sup>448</sup>

- **Istanbul – MS Süleymaniye Library, Dārulmesnevī, No. 251**

The name of the copyist and the date of execution of this manuscript are unknown. It consists of 40 ff with 25 lines per page and dimensions of 237 x 144 – 176 x 88 mm. According to the seal on the opening folio, Seyyed Hāfiẓ Muḥammad Murād, the Shaykh of Murād Mullā Sufi lodge, dedicated the manuscript as an endowment.<sup>449</sup> It includes some correctional notes on the margin. The titles of poems as well as Arabic terms, Qur’ānic verses and Ḥadīth quotations are written in red to make them easily recognizable. The copyist does not provide us with any information on the possible royal patronage the book might have received. There is also no information on the matter of dispute between Anqarawī and his opponents on the apocryphal text of Book Seven.

### **Concluding Notes**

The lithograph published in Mumbai makes reference to Anqarawī as the only scholar who wrote a commentary on Book Seven. Another important piece of information extracted from the lithograph is that the author states that Book Seven is not an addendum; rather, it

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<sup>447</sup> MS Nūruosmāniye, No. 2570, f. 1b.

<sup>448</sup> Ibid., f. 76a.

<sup>449</sup> MS Dārulmesnevī, No. 251, f.1a.

is part of the *Mathnawī* and it should be treated as a collection. All of the Ottoman-era manuscripts of Book Seven discussed here were copied between 1625 (1030) and 1818 (1234). Circulation of numerous manuscripts and its several copies could suggest that the work was frequently copied as a result of the interest and patronage of successive Ottoman Sultāns for a period of 187 years from the time of Anqarawī (d. 1631) until 1818. The copyists were usually Mevlevī dervishes who dedicated their work either to the Sultān (MS Nūruosmāniye No. 257 to Sultān ‘Uthmān khān, and MS Lāla Ismā‘īl No.203 to Abd al-Ḥamīd Khān I), to the chief minister of the day or, in the case of MS Dārulmesnevī No.251, to the Mevlevī *tekke*. This may point to some motivation behind copying Book Seven up until the publication of a lithograph version in 1818, after which it lost popularity almost to the point of being suppressed. Further discussion of the possible reasons for this, particularly in view of the Ottoman cultural and intellectual milieu in Anqarawī’s lifetime, is offered at the end of Chapter Five.

## Appendix II

Manuscripts of Anqarawī's commentary in the Süleymaniye Library

Catalogue Information	Variant Title	Date of copy	Scribe	Note
Yāzmā Bāgişlar, No. 6574	Mesnevīnīn Yedīnçī Cildīnīn Şerhī	Thursday, Dhul Hājja, 1035 AH	Per catalogue's note Anqarawī	
Dārulmesnevī No.245	Şerh-i Cild-i Sābi'-i Mesnevī	Thursday, Dhul Hājja 1035 AH	Hāfiẓ Khalīl al-Mudarris, and Dervish Maḥmūd al-Mawlavī	<i>waqf</i> of Sayyed Hāfiẓ Muḥammad Murād, and dedicated to Sultān Murād IV
Ayāşofya, No.1929	Fātiḥu'l- Ebyāt	Thursday, Dhul Hājja 1035 AH	Per catalogue's note Ismā'īl Haqqī (Hakkī) b. Muştafā al-Jalvatī al-Bursevī	<i>waqf</i> of Hājj Muḥammad Pāşā, dedicated to Sultān al-Ghāzī Maḥmūd Khān
Mihrişāh Sultān, No. 240	Mesnevī Şerhī	Thursday, Dhul Hājja, 1035 AH	Dervish Muḥammad al-Mawlavī b. Aḥmad (Kātip Dede)	<i>waqf</i> of Hājj Muḥammad 'Atā'allāh Efendī
Nūruosmāniye, No. 2473	Fātiḥu'l- Ebyāt	1036 AH	Presumably Dervish Ghanim	<i>waqf</i> of Sultān Abū al-Najīb 'Uthmān Khān III
Lāla Ismā'īl, No. 171	Mesnevī Şerhī	Shawwāl, 1036 AH	Yusuf Nakdavī	<i>waqf</i> of 'Abdu'l Ḥamīd I
Ḥamīdiye, No. 675	Şerh-i Mesnevī	Rabī'ul Awwal, 1038 AH	Ismā'īl b. Baktash	<i>waqf</i> of Sultān 'Abdul Ḥamīd Khān b. Sultān Aḥmad Khān
'Āṭif Efendī No.1451	Fātiḥu'l- Ebyāt	19 <sup>th</sup> of Dhul Qi'dah, 1049 AH	'Umar Ḥusām al-Dīn	<i>waqf</i> of 'Āṭif Efendī collection
Hālet Efendī EK, No. 29	Kit'a Min Şerh-i Mathnawī al-Mawlavī l'il Ismā'īl Anqarawī	1202 AH	Aḥmad Efendī Imāmī-zādah, Nā'ib of Quds al-Aharīf	<i>waqf</i> of Gālātā Mevlevihāne

Hālet Efendī, No.178	Şerḥ-i Cildī's- Sābi'-i Mine'l Mesnevī	23 <sup>rd</sup> of Ramaḍān, 1208 AH	Shahrī Muştafā b. Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm	Dedicated to Sultān Selim III
Hālet Efendī Ek, No. 32	Şerḥ-i Mesnevī-i Anqarawī, Cild-i Sābi'	1211 AH	Seyyed Muḥammad Asrār al-Mawlawī	<i>waqf</i> of Gālātā Mevlevihāne
Hālet Efendī Ek, No. 30	Şerḥ-i Cildī's- Sābi'-i Mine'l Mesnevī	11 <sup>th</sup> of Muḥarram, 1234 AH	Seyyed Muḥammad Munis b. Ibrāhīm (Munis Dede)	<i>waqf</i> of Gālātā Mevlevihāne
Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No.2067	Şerḥ-i Mesnevī: Mawlāna'ya Isnād Edilan Yedinci Cild- in Şerḥi	1240 AH	Dervish Idrīs Sar Khalīfa-i Qalam-i Muqābalah-i Sawārī	<i>waqf</i> of Partev Pāşā Suggested title by the copyist: Vahab-i ghaybī
H Hayri-'Abd Efendī, No. 174	Şerḥ-i Mesnevī	27 <sup>th</sup> of Rajab, 1256 AH	Seyyed al-Ḥājj Muḥammad Nūrī al-Ḥuseinī al- Mawlavī	
Esed Efendī, No.1563	Şerḥu'l- Cild-i Sābi'-i Mesnevī	7 <sup>th</sup> of Muḥarram, 1256 AH	Suleimān Fahīm	<i>waqf</i> of Aḥmad Esed khān Efendī

Manuscripts of Anqarawī's commentary in various libraries in Turkey

Catalogue Information	Variant Title	Date of copy	Scribe	Note
Istanbul Üniversitesi Merkez Kütüphanesi, No. 9578	al-Çild-i Sābi', li Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī Ma'a Şerḥi-hi al- Anqarawī	1035 AH		
Istanbul, Atatürk Kütüphanesi OE- Y2, No. 36	Şerḥ-i Mesnevī Suggested title by the copyist: vahab-i ghaybī	Dhul Ḥajja, 1035 AH	Muḥammad b. Ḥasan (Şeydā)	<i>waqf</i> Ja'far Pāşā-zādah

Ankara, Melli Kütüphanesi – Afyon Gedik Ahmet Pâşâ İl Halk Kütüphanesi, No. 03 Gedik 1820	Şerh-i Mesnevî	1042 AH	Celâl Çelebîzade Seyyid Cebel	Part of the Ayfon collection; waqf of Shaykh Aḥmad Kamāl al-Dīn Çelebi
Istanbul Üniversitesi Merkez Kütüphanesi, No. 2137	Şerh-i Mesnevî-i Şerîf, Cild-i Sâbi‘	Dhul Qi‘dah, 1208 AH	Muḥammad al-‘Irâqî al-Naḥîf	
Konya, Mevlânâ Müzesi, No.2065	Şerh-i Mesnevî: Mawlânâ’ya Isnâd Edilan Yedinci Cild-in Şerhî	1229 AH	Seyyed Muḥammad Mūnis al-Mawlavî (Mūnis Dede)	<i>waqf</i> of Mūnis Dede
Konya, Mevlânâ Müzesi, No.2066	Şerh-i Mesnevî	1244 AH	Muḥammad ‘Ālim al-Dīya’i al-Qayşiravî	
Bursa, İnebey Yāzmâ Eser Kütüphanesi, No. GE 4433	Şerh-i Mesnevî			
Istanbul Atatürk Kütüphanesi OE-Y2, No. 128	Şerh-i Mesnevî	Sha‘bân, 1311 AH	Meḥmed Şemseddīn al-Mevlevî	

### Manuscripts of the commentary on Book Seven with subsequent ownership

As discussed in Chapter Four, I have divided all the manuscripts of Anqarawî’s commentary on Book Seven which I was able to gather into two categories: manuscripts with first ownership, which include: Yāzmâ Bâğişlar 6574 (1035), Nūruosmāniye 2473 (1036), Dārulmesnevî No.245 (1035), Ayāşofya 1929, Ḥamīdiye 675 (1038), and Konya MS 2067. All of which are discussed in Chapter Four; with the exception of the last one,



which is located in the Mevlānā Müzesi in Konya, the rest are preserved in the Süleymaniye Library. The remaining manuscripts are of secondary importance since they were copied at a later time and were most likely copied from one another. None of them provides any substantial information on the controversial verses or the dispute between Anqarawī and his opponents. Here are a summary of the manuscripts I categorized under secondary ownership.

- **Süleymaniye MS Mihrişāh Sulţān, No. 240**

Variant title: *Mesnevī Şerhī*. It was copied in 1626 (1035) by Dervish Muḥammad al-Mawlawī b. Aḥmad known as Kātip Dede. It has 206 ff, and 31 lines per page, measuring 285 x 200 – 215 x 135 mm. This is among the few manuscripts in which the copyist provided a table of contents for different sections of the book. The inverted commas in red ink are used as text dividers and paragraph marks. On the colophon, we read that, after praising Sulţān Murād, the copyist dedicates his copy to his Shaykh, his spiritual master and mentor Ismā‘īl Anqarawī.<sup>450</sup> In other words, Kātip Dede is among Anqarawī’s pupils who prepared his copy at the time of his master. This could suggest that the copy was approved of by Anqarawī from the grammatical point of view and its contents. The last leaf provides us with some information on the *waqf* of the manuscript: it was gifted as a *waqf* by Hājj Muḥammad ‘Atā’allāh Efendī, who had an administrative position in the Ayyūb Mosque, to Mihrişāh Sulţān.<sup>451</sup> There is a seal on the protective leaf also indicating the ownership of the manuscript and its *waqf* status.<sup>452</sup> There are few marginal correcting

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<sup>450</sup> MS Mihrişāh Sulţān, No. 240, f. 206a.

<sup>451</sup> Ibid., f. 206b.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid., f. 1a and f. 2a.

notes, which appear on some pages. There is a complete list for table of contents and subject headings with corresponding page numbers; they appear on the protecting leaf and the verso of the front cover.<sup>453</sup>

- **Süleymaniye MS Lāla Ismā‘īl, No. 171**

Variant title: *Mesnevī Şerhī*. The manuscript was copied in 1627 (1036) by Dervish Yūsuf Nakdavī. It has 510 ff, and 21 lines per page, measuring 205 x 135 – 145 x 80 mm. It was copied at the time of Sulṭān Murād IV<sup>454</sup> and, as indicated by the seal appearing on the protective leaf, it is part of the Lāla Ismā‘īl Efendī collection, which was given as a *waqf* to Sulṭān ‘Abdu’l Ḥamīd Khān, known as ‘Abdu’l Ḥamīd I (d. 1789).<sup>455</sup> There are few marginal correcting notes and remarks appear on the gloss. The manuscript is beautifully decorated and the opening page contains colorful medallions, motifs and a head-crown in gold and red, while the inverted commas and dots, which are used as separating marks, appear in red. The text appears within a framed borderline drawn in red. Like many Ottoman manuscripts composed in the seventeenth century, the illumination represents rumis superimposed over scrolling branches and hatayis (stylized composite blossoms). Rumis are usually used in conjunction with palmettos and lotus blossoms. The main text is executed in an elegant *naskh* script.

- **Süleymaniye MS ‘Āṭif Efendī No.1451**

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<sup>453</sup> Ibid., ff. 1a, and front cover.

<sup>454</sup> MS Lāla Ismā‘īl, No. 171, f. 501b.

<sup>455</sup> Ibid., f. 1a.

Variant title: *Fātiḥu'l- Ebyāt*. The manuscript was copied in 1639 (1049) possibly by ‘Umar Ḥusām al-Dīn.<sup>456</sup> It contains 218 ff, and 25 lines per page, measuring 212 x 148 – 165 x 110 mm. There are some notes, corrections, and explanatory remarks, which appear on the margin written by the copyist himself. According to the seal appearing on the recto of the protective leaf and on the verso of the last leaf on the right side of the colophon, the manuscript is in the *waqf* of the Hājj Muṣṭafā ‘Āṭif Efendī collection, which was donated as an endowment.<sup>457</sup> The ‘Āṭif Muṣṭafā Efendī Library was established in Istanbul in 1741 by ‘Āṭif Efendī, a court (*divan*) poet who worked as Chief Registrar during Sulṭān Maḥmūd I’s (d. 1754) rule. The note on the recto of the protective leaf reads that it was copied at the time of Anqarawī, where also the name of Muḥammad Jalāl al-Dīn ‘Āṭif zādah al-Muddars appears.<sup>458</sup> There is a seal on the protective leaf, which reads the manuscript is in the *waqf* of ‘Āṭif Efendī. All the titles are written in red as well as the word “*Mathnawī*,” which marks the beginning of each verse. All the Qur’ānic verses and Ḥadīth mentioned in the commentary are underlined in red. This is among the earliest manuscripts dating from close to the time of Anqarawī.

- **Süleymaniye MS Ḥālet Efendī EK, No. 29**

Variant title: *Kit’a Min Şerḥ-i Mathnawī al-Mawlavī l’il Ismā’il Anqarawī*. The manuscript was copied in 1788 (1202) and has 56 ff, with 23 lines per page, measuring 195 x 147 - 160 x 100 mm. The information on the recto of the protective leaf reads that it is part of

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<sup>456</sup> MS ‘Āṭif Efendī No.1451, f. 1a.

<sup>457</sup> Ibid., f.1a and 217b.

<sup>458</sup> Ibid.

the (*maktūbāt*) “writings” of Aḥmad Efendī Imāmī-zādah, Nā’ib of Quds al-Aharīf and the seal on the same folio indicates that it is part of the collection of ‘Abdullāh Salaam al-Mudarris and in 1791 came under his possession.<sup>459</sup> The second seal on the recto of the second folio makes a clear mark that it is in the *waqf* of Gālātā Mevlevīhāne, where Anqarawī used to live and teach.<sup>460</sup> There are few marginal correcting notes. There is a change of handwriting in ff. 5, 12, 13, and 14. The manuscript is incomplete and ends at folio 18, but, according to the Süleymaniye catalogue, it contains 56 ff. Qur’ānic verses, Ḥadīth, and titles are underlined in red ink.

- **Süleymaniye MS Ḥālet Efendī, No.178**

Variant title: *Şerḥ-i Cildī’s- Sābi’-i Mine’l Mesnevī*. It has 289 ff, and 31 lines per page measuring 315 x 175 – 250 x 115 mm and was copied in 1793 (1208) by Dervish Shahrī Muştafā b. Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm, who was a resident of Qāsim Pāşā Mevlevīhāne.<sup>461</sup> There are three seals on the first and last folios indicating the manuscript is part of the Ḥālet Efendī collection.<sup>462</sup> The manuscript ends with a long prayer and with an indication that it was copied at the time of Sultān Selīm III b. Sultān Muştafā khān III b. Sultān Aḥmad III (d.1808). The copyist provided some marginal corrections and explanatory remarks. All the Qur’ānic verses, Ḥadīth and titles are underlined in red ink.

- **Süleymaniye MS Ḥālet Efendī Ek, No. 32**

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<sup>459</sup> MS Ḥālet Efendī EK, No 29, f. 1a.

<sup>460</sup> Ibid., f. 2a.

<sup>461</sup> MS Ḥālet Efendī, No.178, f. 289b.

<sup>462</sup> Ibid., f. 1a - f. 289b.

Variant title: *Şerh-i Mesnevî-i Anqarawî, Cild-i Sâbi‘*. The manuscript was copied by Seyyed Muḥammad Asrār al-Mawlawî in 1796 (1211). It has 28 ff, and 31 lines per page, measuring 205 x 137 - 147 x 90 mm. As per the information appearing on the protective leaf, it went to the *waqf* of Gālātā Mevlevîhâne by the copyist in 1796.<sup>463</sup> This is an incomplete manuscript and only ff. 28 folios remain intact; however, unlike most manuscripts, it includes an abridged table of contents in which the highlights and main subjects of each anecdote with corresponding page numbers are mentioned.<sup>464</sup> There are abundant marginal comments and explanatory notes appearing on the gloss of each folio. The manuscript includes separating marks, underlined verses and titles, all of which appear in red.

- **Süleymaniye MS Hâlet Efendî Ek, No. 30**

Variant title: *Şerh-i Cildî’s- Sâbi‘-i Mine’l Mesnevî*. The manuscript was copied by Seyyed Muḥammad Munis b. Ibrâhîm known as Munis Dede, a resident of Gālātā Mevlevîhâne, who dedicated his copy to Gālātā.<sup>465</sup> It was copied in 1818 (1234) and has 261 ff, with 30 lines per page, measuring 250 x 175 - 210 x 105 mm. An earlier copy of the manuscript penned in 1813 (1229) is dedicated as a *waqf* to Konya’s Mevlânâ Müzesi by the copyist.<sup>466</sup> The manuscript includes some marginal notes, corrections and comments. It is highly decorated and the writing part is kept in a framed borderline using red ink. Various key words, terms, Qur’ānic verses and names and all the titles are highlighted in red. All the

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<sup>463</sup> MS Hâlet Efendî Ek, No. 32, f. 1a.

<sup>464</sup> Ibid., f. 1b.

<sup>465</sup> MS Hâlet Efendî Ek, No. 30, f. 1a.

<sup>466</sup> See Konya MS Mevlânâ Müzesi, No. 2065.

verses are underlined with red ink so that the poetry section is separated from Anqarawī's commentary. The ending colophon provides us with full information on Mūnis Dede: "He entered Gālātā Mevlevihāne in 1789 and became initiated to the Mevlevī order by the Shaykh of Gālātā named As'ad Ghālib Efendī. He died in 1831 and was buried in Gālātā Mevlevī near the grave of Anqarawī."<sup>467</sup> A cross examination of the manuscript under study with Konya manuscript no.2065 sheds some light on how some manuscripts were recopied by the same scribe and preserved in different collections. It suggests that Mevlevī dervishes produced numerous copies of Book Seven and spread them in Mevlevihānes as they traveled for the purpose of promoting and teaching them among dervishes.

- **Süleymaniye MS H Hayri-'Abd Efendī, No. 174**

Variant title: *Şerh-i Mesnevī*. As appears on the colophon, the manuscript was copied in 1840 (1256) by Seyyed al-Hājj Muḥammad Nūrī al-Ḥuseinī al-Mawlavī b. al-Seyyed Muḥammad Ṭabīb b. Khawjah Seyyed Nu'mān Fāḍil b. al-Seyyed al-Hājj Khawjah Muḥamad Jalāl al-Dīn from the descendent of Amīr Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Najjārī.<sup>468</sup> It has 197 ff and 34 lines per page, measuring 330 x 220 - 270 x 150 mm. The copyist ends the manuscript with a prayer and a poem expressing his gratitude that he was able to complete his composition.<sup>469</sup> This is one of the few manuscripts where the copyist provides a table of contents with chapter titles and their page numbers (ff. ib-vb). The chapter headings as well as the word *Mathnawī*, which separates the verses are written in red and

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<sup>467</sup> Ibid., f. 260b.

<sup>468</sup> MS H Hayri-'Abd Efendī, No. 174, f. 200b.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid.

all the titles, Qur'ānic verses, Ḥadīth, significant words and Sufi terms are underlined. There are some marginal corrections and explanatory notes. The notes include some explanations about the terms or Ḥadīth mentioned in the commentary; however, the copyist does not provide us with any extra information on the subject of Anqarawī's conflict with his opponents or the nature of his commentary. There is no seal indicating the *waqf* or Sultān patronage, so it is not clear to us whether the manuscript was copied in a Mevlevī *tekke* or in a *madrasa*.

- **Süleymaniye MS Esed Efendī, No.1563**

Variant title: *Şerḥu'l- Cild-i Sābi'-i Mesnevī*. The manuscript was copied by Suleimān Fahīm in 1840 (1256). It has 307 ff and 29 lines per page, measuring 270 x 185 - 196 x 103 mm. It contains no gloss or explanatory notes. There is a seal on the opening leaf indicating the manuscript is in the *waqf* of Aḥmad Esed khān Efendī.<sup>470</sup> The manuscript does not provide us with any extra gloss or information, or any information about Sultān patronage or to which *madrasa* or Sufi it belonged.

### Istanbul Üniversitesi Merkez Kütüphanesi

There are several Islamic manuscripts written in Persian, Arabic and Ottoman, which are preserved in the “rare books” (*nādir eserler*) section of the Istanbul University library. “The library was built in 1912 by Şeyhulislām Hayri Efendī and called the School for Religious Judges [*Medreset'ul Quḍat*]. In 1924 -1925, during the presidency of Ismā'īl Ḥakkī Bāltācioglu, books from the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Literature, the

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<sup>470</sup> MS Esed Efendī, No. 1563, f. 1a.

collection of Sultān ‘Abdulḥamīd from Yıldız Palace, and the collections of Hālis Efendī, Şāhip Mullā, and Riḍā Pāşā were added. With these it became known as the Darülfünun Library.”<sup>471</sup> This is one of the active and important manuscript libraries in Istanbul after the Süleymaniye. Two manuscripts of Book Seven are preserved in the library as follows:

- **MS Istanbul Üniversitesi Merkez Kütüphanesi, No. 2137**

Variant title: *Şerḥ-i Mesnevī-i Şerīf, Cild-i Sābi*’. The illuminated manuscript was copied in 1863 (1280) by Muḥammad al-‘Irāqī al-Naḥīf.<sup>472</sup> It has 270 ff and 23 lines per page. It contains minor marginal notes and corrections. The text is within a framed borderline drawn in gold. Motifs in the opening head-crown are designed in gold. Terms, names, Qur’ānic verses and Ḥadīth as well as titles are underlined in red. The manuscript does not provide us with any particular information on the ownership or *waqf* situation.

- **MS Istanbul Üniversitesi Merkez Kütüphanesi, No. 9578**

Variant title: *al-Çild-i Sābi*’, *li Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī Ma‘a Şerḥi-hi al-Anqarawī*. It was copied in 1625 (1035) at the time of Sultān Murād IV and ends with a special supplication to the Sultān.<sup>473</sup> It comes in 289 ff and 39 lines per page. The name of the copyists is unknown and the manuscript does not come with any marginal notes; thus, it does not provide us with any extra information.

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<sup>471</sup> Gunay Kunt, “Manuscript libraries in Istanbul,” in *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin (MESA)* 16, no. 1 (July 1982): 33.

<sup>472</sup> MS Istanbul Üniversitesi Merkez Kütüphanesi, No. 2137, f. 270a.

<sup>473</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 9578, f. 289b.



## Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Halk Kütüphanesi

This is a public library, which is run by the municipality of Belediye. Anqarawī's manuscripts are listed as part of the Osman Ergin collection of "municipal library of Belediye, which was later on moved to Atatürk Public Library in 1981. Thus all the information relating to collections are listed under Atatürk Library. The library consists of six basic collections: 1) Muallim Cevdet, 2) Talat Bayrakçı, 3) Ziya Emiroğlu, 4) Osman Ergin, 5) Yahya Recai Yok, and 6) Municipality."<sup>474</sup> The following two manuscripts of Book Seven are preserved in the library.

- **MS Istanbul Atatürk Kütüphanesi OE-Y2, No. 36**

Variant title: *Şerh-i Mesnevī*. It was copied in 1625 (1035) by Dervish Muḥammad b. Ḥasan known as Şeydā at the time of Sulṭān Murād IV.<sup>475</sup> It has 185 ff and 31 lines per page, measuring 290 x 200 – 215 x 135 mm. The manuscript includes a table of contents (ff. 1a-2a) and is part of the collection that belonged to Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ja‘far, known as Ja‘far Pāṣā-zādah al-Khatīb al-Ayyūbī.<sup>476</sup> There are three seals appearing on the protective leaf; the first one located on top is unreadable. The second seal reads “*min kutub al-faqīr khayr al-dīn,*” namely that it is part of Khayr al-Dīn’s private collection. And the third seal, the largest one located at the bottom of the previous ones, gives the name of the *waqf* owner, Ja‘far Pāṣā-zādah.<sup>477</sup> The leaves are partially damaged due to mold and

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<sup>474</sup> Gunay Kunt, “Manuscript libraries in Istanbul,” 36.

<sup>475</sup> MS Atatürk kütüphanesi OE-Y2, No. 36. f. 185b.

<sup>476</sup> Ibid., f. 1a.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid.

humidity. The copyist highlights the expression “divine (invisible) gift” (*vahab-i ghaybī*) and provides the reference page number (f.47 of the manuscript) referring to the title of the book, which is drawn from one of the verses in Book Seven.<sup>478</sup> It points out that the contents of the book are a divine gift bestowed upon Rūmī. There are only minor corrections in the margins.

- **MS Istanbul Atatürk Kütüphanesi OE-Y2, No. 128**

Variant title: *Şerh-i Mesnevī*. This is amongst the latest manuscript of Book Seven copied in 1893 (1311) by Meḥmed Şemseddīn al-Mevlevī. It has 296 ff, and 26 lines per page measuring 265 x 180 – 220 x 115 mm. Despite being copied in the late nineteenth century, the handwriting is poor. Among the problems of this manuscript, I should mention the lack of titles for the poems so that it is difficult to distinguish the stories from one another. The composer does not provide us with any gloss and the manuscript itself does not give us information on authorship and its *waqf* status.

### Konya manuscripts

Konya’s Mevlānā Museum has a rich library where manuscripts of Rūmī and his family members, including son Sultān Valad and father’s Bahā’-i Valad, are preserved. The library is an important source since it preserves the oldest manuscripts of Rūmī’s writings and commentaries on his works. Abdūlbāki Gölpınarlı has provided a catalogue for all the materials and manuscripts kept in the library.<sup>479</sup> The library is located in the complex of Mevlānā Müzesi (Mevlānā museum) and was built in 1926 holding 2000

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<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

<sup>479</sup> Abdūlbāki Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā Müzesi Yazmalar Kataloğu*, 4 vols (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1967-1994).

manuscripts. It is a public library affiliated with the Ministry of the Tourism and Culture. There are three manuscripts of Book Seven available under the recording numbers: 2065, 2066, and 2067. As indicated in the catalogue, MS 2066 is exactly copied from MS 2065. MS 2065 and MS 2067 were reproduced by Mūnis Dede and dervīsh Idrīs respectively. I have examined MS 2067 in chapter Four under the manuscript with “first ownership”, where I have listed manuscripts with ample marginal notes copied at the time of Anqarawī.

- **Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No.2065**

Variant title: *Şerh-i Mesnevī: Mawlānā'ya Isnād Edilan Yedinci Cild-in Şerhī* “commentary on the alleged Book Seven attributed to Rūmī.” Among other late copies of Book Seven is that of the manuscript copied by Seyyed Muḥammad Mūnis al-Mawlavī known as Mūnis Dede in 1813 (1229). It has 284 folia and 25 lines per page, measuring 23.3 x 16 - 19.2 x 10.2. As discussed earlier, Mūnis Dede reproduced another copy of the manuscript in 1818 (1234), which is now preserved in the Süleymaniye library, Hālet Efendī Ek collection, No. 30. This illuminated manuscript is beautifully decorated in the Ottoman style, with motifs and frame line around the text on the first page in gold. The frame lines for the rest of the manuscript appear in red ink. The titles and the separating marks are also in red. The manuscript includes few marginal notes and corrections. There is a note by Mūnis Dede on the first leaf above the illuminated head-crown, where he signs his name and dedicates the copy to his spiritual guide and master, Rūmī.<sup>480</sup> In the colophon, Mūnis Dede ended his composition with a prayer and a poem in six verses, where he mentions that he completed and dedicated the manuscript as a *waqf* to the Mevlānā

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<sup>480</sup> MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No.2065, f. 1b.

Museum in 1813.<sup>481</sup> According to the several seals appearing on the first and last leaves, the manuscript remained in the *waqf* of Mūnis Dede before it was moved to Mevlānā Müzesi.<sup>482</sup>

- **Konya MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No.2066**

Variant title: *Şerh-i Mesnevī*. The manuscript was reproduced based on MS No. 2065<sup>483</sup> and, as indicated in the colophon, it was copied by Muḥammad ‘Ālim al-Dīya’i al-Qayşiravī in 1828.<sup>484</sup> It has 267 ff and 27 lines per page, measuring 23 x 16 – 17 x 9.

### Bursa’s İnebey Yāzmā Eser Kütüphanesi

Following the 1948 reorganization of dervish convents and foundation libraries in Bursa, the İnebey *madrassa* was restored to host Ottoman manuscripts (over 8,000) and old printed books in Arabic script, including Turkish incunabula and volumes printed abroad. It is the third biggest library of its kind in Turkey. The manuscript collection of the library holds one copy of Anqarawī’s commentary on Book Seven.

- **Bursa MS İnebey Yāzmā Eser Kütüphanesi, No. GE 4433**

Variant title: *Şerh-i Mesnevī*. This is an incomplete manuscript of Book Seven, which has 159 ff and 33 lines per page, measuring 333 x 203 - 254 x 145 mm. Although there is no information about the copyist and the date of the copy, the *Naskh* handwriting indicates that it might have been copied at a time close to Anqarawī’s lifetime. However, there are

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<sup>481</sup> Ibid., f. 288b.

<sup>482</sup> Ibid., ff. 288b, 1a, 2<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>483</sup> Gölpınarlı, *Mevlānā Müzesi Yazmalar Kataloğu*, v. 2, 128.

<sup>484</sup> MS Mevlānā Müzesi, No.2066, f. 267a.

several grammatical and compositional errors indicating that the copyist was not familiar with Persian and Arabic literature and perhaps imitated other copies.

- **Ankara Mellî Kütüphanesi – MS Afyon Gedik Ahmet Pāşā ʾl Halk Kütüphanesi, No. 03 Gedik 18201**

Variant title: *Şerh-i Mesnevî*. The manuscript is from the Afyon collection, which was transferred to Ankara's "national" (*Melli*) library and is currently preserved there. It was written by Celâl Çelebîzade Seyyid Cebel and has 440 ff, and 19 lines per pages, measuring 235 x 165 - 170 x 115 mm. It was copied in 1632 (1042) and became part of the *waqf* of Shaykh Aḥmad Kamāl al-Dīn Çelebî in 1872 (1289).<sup>485</sup> It has some marginal notes and corrections, which appear in the gloss.

### **Concluding notes**

We may divide the copyists into two main categories. The first group of copyists are the ones who had knowledge of Persian and Arabic as well as familiarity with the subject matter. The comments they left in the margins indicate their close engagement with the text and the stand they took in the political dispute over the controversy over Book Seven. The manuscripts I examined under the category of 'the first ownership' belong to this group of copyists. The second group of copyists is those who were pupils of Anqarawî, such as Ghanim Dede, and who felt a duty to promote their Shaykh's teachings, even though their copy does not provide us with any explanatory notes. The copy appears as part of Anqarawî's commentary collection, which can be suggested as a proof of validity of the

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<sup>485</sup> Ankara Mellî Kütüphanesi, MS 03 Gedik, No. 18201, f. 1a.

text. These copyists also fall under the ‘manuscript with first ownership’ category. The third group includes those who were mere transmitters of the text even at later dates since they were Mevlevi dervishes or were possibly asked to promote the text by the Sulṭān. For example, Bursa MS No. GE 4433 contains numerous grammatical errors, which confirms my argument. It was possibly copied closely by the copyist, who followed the text. However, in places, he was not able to read the text and he referred to his Turkish knowledge and vocalized or ascribed words in error. All of the copyists in this group belong to the category of ‘the subsequent ownership.’

It can be suggested that some early manuscripts were written by some Sufis or pupils of Anqarawī merely for the purpose of demonstrating their support to their Shaykh by strongly promoting his works, as though they were making a public statement on a religious matter through heavy promotion of the commentary. Most of the copyists are Mevlevī dervishes or somehow affiliated with the Mevlevī order, which make us conclude that the commentary was heavily promoted by the Mevlevī order. None of the copyists gave a reference to the original source from which they copied their manuscript, which leaves us to assume that perhaps they had access to Anqarawī’s original commentary. In most cases, they copied from one another, but there is no manuscript that can be identified as the oldest and the original one.

None of the later copyists also referred to their source, which raises some serious questions and doubts about the authenticity of the copies. Did they copy from one another’s manuscripts? The issue of authorship can cause uncertainty about the validity of the manuscripts. Which ones are the closest to the one originally composed by Anqarawī? Did the copyists in Bursa and Ankara have access to the early copies? Did they borrow or had

access to the manuscripts, which were kept in Istanbul's *madrāsas* or Sufi *tekkes* such as Gālātā Mevlevīhāne? Did they base their copy on the earliest manuscripts, such as those composed by Anqarawī's pupils Ghanim Dede and Kātip Dede? We may not know the answers to all these questions. However, based on the information in the gloss, we may conclude that the manuscripts copied at the time of Anqarawī provide us with the most useful and important information in the gloss about the conflicts between the author and his opponents.

Other than Gālātā Mevlevīhāne, which was the place Anqarawī used to teach and train other Sufis and where he also completed his commentary on the *Mathnawī*, we know of at least two other Sufi centers, Murād Mullā *tekke*, whose Shaykh kept a copy of the manuscript as a *waqf*, and Qāsim Pāṣā Mevlevīhāne where one of its residents, dervish Shahrī Muṣṭafā, wrote out a copy of the manuscript (Hālet Efendi, No.178). This could suggest that the popularity and promotion of Book Seven was extended beyond Anqarawī's own circle of pupils and students and the center where he was in charge of its Sufi training and educational curriculum.

And, finally, I would like to emphasize the interrelationship between different copies and manuscripts. For example, Konya 2067 (copied by Dervish Idrīs in 1630/1040) and Istanbul Atatürk OE-Y2, 36 (copied by Dervish Şeydā in 1625/1035), highlight the term "unseen (divine) gift" (*vahab-i ghaybī*) on the protecting leaves, referring to one of the verses in the book, signifying that the term was possibly used as a suggested title for Book Seven. Since there is no mention of *vahab-i ghaybī* in any other manuscripts, this could suggest a possible connection between the two copyists; meaning that Şeydā based his copy on Idrīs' copy.

Among other examples demonstrating the connection between manuscripts, mention should be made of Konya 2065. It demonstrates how two manuscripts were copied by the same author (Mūnis Dede) at two different times (1818/1234, 1813/1229) and preserved in different places (Konya's Mevlānā Müzesi and Istanbul's Hālet Efendi Ek 30). This could suggest that the copyist might have traveled and was asked by the Shaykh of the *tekke* or another authority to prepare extra copies of the same manuscript. Another example for copying the exact manuscript by a different copyist would be the case of Konya 2066, which was copied by Muḥammad 'Ālim al-Ḍīyā'ī al-Qeyṣaravī from Konya 2065, penned by Mūnis Dede.<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>486</sup> Ibid., 128.