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► **To cite this version:**

Marc Toutant. Imitational Poetry as Pious Hermeneutics? Jami and Nava'i/Fani's Rewritings of Hafez's Opening Ghazal. Charles Melville. The Timurid Century, 9, I.B. Tauris, 2020, The Idea of Iran, 9781838606886. hal-02906016

HAL Id: hal-02906016

<https://hal.science/hal-02906016>

Submitted on 23 Jul 2020

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Imitational Poetry as Pious Hermeneutics?

Jami and Nava'i/Fani's Rewritings of Hafez's Opening Ghazal

Marc Toutant (CNRS Paris)

He was the unique of the age (*nadera-ye zaman*) and a prodigy of the world (*o'juba-ye jahan*). These are the first words with which Dowlatshah Samarqandi begins the notice he devotes to Hafez in his *Tazkerat al-sho'ara* in 1486. Then he adds: 'His excellence (*fazilat*) and his perfection (*kamal*) are endless and the art of poetry is unworthy of his rank. He is incomparable in the science of Qur'an and he is illustrious in the sciences of the exoteric (*zaher*) and the esoteric (*baten*).'¹

Although Hafez died in 1389, his poetry was widely celebrated one century later, as shown by Dowlatshah's eulogy. Reflective of the poet's importance in later Timurid culture were the many sumptuous court objects, such as the several types of drinking vessels that were inscribed with his verses.² In the final years of the dynasty, one of Soltan-Hoseyn's sons, Faridun Hoseyn Mirza, even commissioned a 'revised edition' of his *Divan*.³ Undoubtedly, Hafez's verses contributed to shaping the poetry of this era. In a period that has been described as the pinnacle of imitational poetry,⁴ Hafez's ghazals were among the most imitated. Specifically, his poetry influenced two of the major poets of the Timurid Empire: Nur al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman Jami (1414–1492) and Mir 'Ali-Shir Nava'i (1441–1501). Famous for his achievements in Central Asian Turkish poetry, Nava'i also versified in Persian under the pen name Fani. In one of his last works, Nava'i wrote that he composed his Persian *Divan* in imitation of the great poet of Shiraz.⁵

Hafez's influence on these two poets has been the subject of several studies. In his book about Jami's lyrical output, A'lakhan Afsahzad devoted a short section to this issue of imitation.⁶ After examining how Jami talked about his famous predecessor, the Tajik scholar discussed Jami's rewritings of a few *beyts* in order to illustrate how he approached this type of exercise. Paul Losensky also analysed the way Jami responded to the great poets of the past, including Hafez. He observed that Jami's rewritings, especially compared with the imitations composed by others, were representative of the Timurid efforts towards codification and systematization of the Persian literary tradition.⁷ As for Nava'i, Tajik and Uzbek scholars have

published short articles in which they generally compared several parent ghazals of Hafez with later rewritings by the Timurid poet.⁸ However, these articles rarely go beyond the specific analysis of the examined ghazals, except their argument that Nava'i did not restrict himself to writing a pale copy of the model but rather that he produced something fundamentally original and new. Riccardo Zipoli has studied two 'replies' (*javab*) of Nava'i which were composed in response to Hafez and Jami respectively, and this work stands out for its precision.⁹ One of Zipoli's conclusions is that the connections between the poems of Nava'i and Jami are much more direct than those between Nava'i and Hafez's ghazals, indicating that Nava'i was careful not to use the same approach when he responded to either poet.¹⁰ Finally, Benedek Péri recently published a study on Nava'i's imitation of Hafez's first ghazal. One of Péri's most important findings is that Nava'i's rewriting is part of a paraphrase network of poems that were linked 'not only to the base poem but through an intricate network of intertextual allusions to each other as well'.¹¹

Several of these aforementioned investigations have opened new avenues for research and remain critical to our understanding of the intellectual life in this period. However, since they focused on poetical aspects and mostly approached these rewritings as practices of literary emulation, none of these studies have taken into consideration the importance of the religious dimension.¹² But did Jami and Nava'i regard their imitations of Hafez's poetry as mere poetic exercises? Were they only driven by a literary impetus when they emulated their model? Did their religious concerns play no role in this process? These are by no means meaningless questions, especially when one considers the two poets' roles and commitments to the Naqshbandiya Sufi order. Jami was the most prominent Naqshbandi-Sufi thinker in Herat in the late Timurid empire. His poetry bears the trace of this mystical commitment and was itself a vehicle for spreading his mystical thoughts. Similarly, Nava'i, who was initiated into the order by Jami and who remained extremely close to his spiritual master throughout his life, also used his poetry in order to spread Sufi conceptions. Recently, Chad Lingwood has shown that Jami's rewriting of Salaman and Absal's story could be read as a Naqshbandi Mirror for Princes for Ya'qub Beg, the Aq Qoyunlu ruler, to whom the book was dedicated.¹³ Likewise, I have advocated that the *Khamsa* that Nava'i composed in imitation of Nezami's 'Pentalogy' (or 'Quintet') could also be seen as a Naqshbandi Mirror for Princes for Soltan-Hoseyn, to whom this work was dedicated.¹⁴ These two examples are related to the *masnavi* genre, which given its narrative form seems particularly suited to delivering homiletic messages. However, we know that Sufi poets also borrowed from the secular tradition of the ghazal, which originally belonged to Persian court literature, in order to convey their mystical ideas.¹⁵

Superseding those approaches that consider the writing of *naziras* (poetic emulation) more as an exhibition of artistic mastery, I will therefore examine the extent to which religious concerns influenced Jami and Nava'i in their crafting of imitational verses. This will be achieved first by a quick survey of the texts in which Jami and Nava'i talked about Hafez and his poetry as a whole. I will then focus on their rewritings of the first ghazal of Hafez's *Divan*. The choice of this ghazal as a case study is not solely on account of the fact that both Jami and Nava'i rewrote it. The sheer number of rewritings of this opening ghazal, from the early fifteenth to the early sixteenth century, by numerous poets suggests that Hafez imitation was a phenomenon that extended beyond the exclusive connoisseurs of Hafez.

Hafez's Ghazals: An Unparalleled Poetry for Sufis

Our knowledge about how Timurid literati in Soltan-Hoseyn's court considered Hafez, especially as compared with other important poets, has benefited from their impulse to codify and chronicle the Persian poetic tradition. In 1486, Dowlatshah Samarqandi dedicated his *Tazkerat al-sho'ara* to Nava'i. A year later, Jami composed the *Baharestan* for his son, in the seventh chapter of which he includes a *tazkera* of Persian poets which begins with Rudaki. Besides these examples, in 1490, Nava'i began to work on the *Majales al-nafayes*, the first *tazkera* that dealt almost exclusively with contemporary poets who composed both in Persian and Central Asian Turkish (hereafter referred to simply as Turkish), while a few years later, he translated into Turkish and expanded Jami's *Nafahat al-ons*, a compendium of Sufi biographies, as *Nasa'em al-mahabba men shama'em al-fotowwa*.

Dowlatshah's statement about Hafez's poetry (see *supra*) is representative of the privileged status given to the poet in all these biographical compendiums. In the mini-*tazkera* offered by Jami in the *Baharestan*, his notice begins with these words:

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| <p><i>Hāfez Shirāzi – rahmat-allāh ta'ālā- aksar-e ash'ār-e vey latif va matbu' ast va ba'zi qarib beh sarhadd-e e'jāz</i>¹⁶</p> | <p>Hafez Shirazi – upon whom be the mercy of God – most of his poems are pleasant and laudable and some of them are almost border upon the miracle (<i>e'jaz</i>)</p> |
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Jami significantly uses the term *e'jaz* to characterize Hafez's poetry. As already observed by previous scholars, this word serves as a hyperbolic compliment, for it was traditionally employed in reference to the miraculous nature of the Qur'an, which made it impossible to imitate.¹⁷ Stating that Hafez's poetry was inimitable amounted to awarding it the highest marks,

especially during a period when many poets tried to prove their virtuosity by rewriting pieces that were considered *momtan 'al-javab* ('impossible to imitate').¹⁸

In his *tazkera* entitled *Majales al-nafayes* (1490–91), Nava'i also pays tribute to Hafez's poetry. Actually, Nava'i did not provide a notice to the Persian poet since his *tazkera* did not include entries about people who were already dead during his lifetime. However, Nava'i makes several references to Hafez while highlighting the merits of other poets. In the few lines that he allots to each notice, he consistently mentions how such-and-such a poet imitated Hafez's verses; most of the time, he quotes the verses that were composed in response to Hafez, and sometimes these verses are the only ones he quotes. This is the case with a man named *Mo'ayyad-e Divana*:

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| <p><i>Khāja Mo'ayyad-e Dīwāna</i> <i>Hazrat sheykh ewlādīdīndur. Özi āshufta-</i> <i>dimāgh kishi erdi ammā nazmī rawān o salīs</i> <i>wāqi' bolur erdi. Anga saltanat da'wāsi bar</i> <i>erdi. Hamol ish üstigä anī zā'i' qıldılar. Bu</i> <i>matla' khāja Hāfiz jawābīda aning dur kim:</i></p> | <p>Khvaja Mo'ayyad-e Divana He is a descendant of the venerated sheykh [Abu Sa'id Abu'l-Kheyr]. He was a disturbed person, but his poetry was fluid and easy. He had claim to power. Because of that they eliminated him. This <i>matla'</i> in response of Khvaja Hafez is his own:</p> |
| <p>Cheshm dārim az ān sham'-e sa'ādat partow Keh jahān-rā bedehad rowshani az sar-e now</p> | <p><i>We hope for a ray from that lamp of felicity</i> <i>That gives light to the world again</i></p> |
| <p><i>Gūyā anī talaf qılghanda söngäkin</i> <i>tapmadılar ki bir yerdä qoyghaylar</i>¹⁹</p> | <p>It seems that when they killed him they could not find his bones to bury him.</p> |

Hafez's poetry is so important for Nava'i that an accomplished imitation by a poet can be highlighted as one of the most significant events in the latter's life.

In one of his last works, *Mohakamat al-loghateyn*, Nava'i claims that 'of the *Divans* [of Persian poetry] to be read there were few that [he] did not study'.²⁰ He further adds that three of them particularly impressed him: the *Divan* of Amir Khosrow Dehlavi, whose poetry was especially appreciated during the Timurid era; the *Divan* of his spiritual master Jami and the *Divan* of Hafez, whom he describes as 'the general and commander of the lovers of truth, [who] produced works with originalities and profundities that were adorned by the breath of the Holy Spirit of God'.²¹ The celebration of Hafez's poetry actually permeates Nava'i's works. In *Mahbub al-qolub* (ca. 1500), Hafez is referred as *ma'ani adasigha lafez*, that is 'the one who produces the expression of the [invisible] meaning'.²² And in the preface to his Turkish *Divan*,

he reiterates his admiration for ‘the confidant of the keepers of the mysteries of love and passion’.²³ It is as if the figure of Hafez outshines all other great Persian poets, such as Sa‘di Shirazi or Rumi, with the two notable exceptions being Amir Khosrow and Jami.

In other works, Jami and Nava‘i acknowledge the importance of Hafez on the basis of the mystical significance of his poetry. In his compendium of biographies of Sufis, *Nafahat al-ons* (ca. 1475), Jami portrays Hafez as follows:

*Vey lesān al-gheyb va tarjomān al-asrār ast. Basā asrār-e gheybiya va ma‘āni-ye haqiqiya keh dar kesvat-e surat va lebās-e majāz bāz namuda ast. Har chand ma‘lum nist keh vey dast-e erādat-e piri gerefta va dar tasavvof beh yeki az in tā‘efa nesbat dorost karda, ammā sokhanān-e vey chonān bar mashrab-e in tā‘efa vāqe‘ shoda ast keh hich kas-rā ān ettefāq nayoftāda. Yeki az ‘azizān-e selsela-ye khājagān qaddasa allāh ta‘ālā asrārahom farmuda ast keh: hich divān beh az divān-e Hāfez nist agar mard sufi bāshad*²⁴

He is the tongue of the invisible and the translator of secrets. He has shown many secrets of the unknown and meanings of the reality with the help of metaphors and allegories. Although it is not clear whether he ever stretched out the hand of discipleship to an elder and affiliated with a Sufi brotherhood, his words correspond to those of the Sufis to the degree that no other poet’s work does. One of the dear ones of the Khvajagan, may God sanctify their secrets, has said that: no *Divan* is better than the *Divan* of Hafez, if the man is a Sufi.

Jami was not sure if Hafez had studied with a Sufi, but he agreed that his *Divan* was one of the best works that a Sufi could read. In his translation-adaptation of this work (*Nasa‘em al-mahabba men shama‘em al-fotowwa*, ca. 1495–96), Nava‘i, after repeating the words of Jami, quotes Qasem al-Anvar (d. 1433), who went as far as labelling the *Divan* of Hafez ‘The Persian Qur’an’:

*Khājalar qudds allahu ta‘ālā asrārahom silsilasidin ‘azīzi debdur ki: ‘hīch dīwān Hāfīz dīwānīdīn yakhshīraq emās agar kishi sūfi bolsa.’ Bu faqīrgha andaq ma‘lūm bolubtur wa mashhūr mundaqdur ki hazrat Mīr Qāsim qudds allāhu sirrahu alarnīng dīwānī ‘Qur‘ān-i fārsī’ der ermishlār.*²⁵

A Khvaja, may his secrets be sanctified, who is a dear one of the chain said: ‘No *Divan* is better than Hafez’s *Divan* if the man is a Sufi.’ It became so certain to your servant and so famous that his excellence Mir Qasem, may his secrets be blessed, called his *Divan* the Persian Qur’an.

While Jami and Nava'i were unsure whether Hafez had been initiated formally into a mystical order, they nonetheless agreed that his poetry was full of mystical significance. The question thus arises as to what extent this mystical dimension was reflected in their own rewritings of Hafez.

Rewriting Hafez's First Ghazal: A Matter of Consistency

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, they say.²⁶ This may explain why Jami wrote so many of his poems in imitation of Hafez's ghazals despite explicitly acknowledging their 'inimitability' (see *supra*). Within only the first one hundred or so poems of his *Divan* (those rhyming in the letter *alef*), there are some ten imitations of Hafez, seven of these replying to just the first poem of his *Divan*.²⁷ As far as Nava'i is concerned, the mid sixteenth-century historian Mirza Heydar Dughlat tellingly frames Nava'i's Persian poetry as 'reply to the *divan* of Khwaja Hafiz of Shiraz'.²⁸ In the *Mohakamat al- loghateyn*, Nava'i himself states that he wrote his Persian collection of lyrical poetry in the style of Hafez.²⁹ Of the 485 ghazals in the *Divan* of Fani,³⁰ compiled at the end of the 1490s, there are no less than 227 ghazals emulating Hafez, a little less than half of the Persian ghazals of Nava'i. Furthermore, the structure of his *Divan* itself reveals Nava'i's desire to have his collection of Persian poems understood with reference to the great Shirazi poet. While Nava'i begins his *Divan* with two devotional ghazals – the first one being devoted to God (*hamd*) and the second one to his Prophet (*na't*) – it is significant that the third is a rewriting of the poem that introduces Hafez's *Divan* itself.³¹ The imitation of Hafez's first ghazal thus opens Fani's *Divan*, if we set aside the religious prolegomena that Nava'i regarded as a requirement for any collection of ghazals, according to the preface he composed for his Turkish *Divan*.³²

Hafez's opening ghazal is a programmatic poem. The poet himself may have placed it or instructed that it be placed at the beginning of his *Divan*.³³ Its importance was well understood for the poem became the starting point of a series of imitations in the early fifteenth century. Before Jami and Nava'i, poets such as Katebi Torshizi (d. 1434–36), Fattahi Nishapuri (d. 1448) and Amir Shahi Sabzavari (d. 1453) all composed responses to it. When they rewrote it, our two Timurid poets thus consciously immersed themselves in a real imitation network.³⁴ But before we discuss the way they approached this type of exercise, here is the text and a translation of Hafez's first ghazal:

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| 1.A-lā yā ayyuhā as-sāqī ader ka'san | O cupbearer proffer the cup and pass it |
| wa-nāwelhā | around |

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| <i>Keh 'eshq āsān namud avval vali oftād</i> <i>moshkel-hā</i> | For love at first appeared easy, but difficulties have occurred |
| <i>2.Beh bu-ye nāfa'i k-ākher sabā z-ān torra</i> <i>bo-gshāyad</i> | In the hope of [smelling] the perfume of the musk-pod that in the end the breeze looses from that forelock |
| <i>Z-e tāb-e ja'd-e moshkinash cheh khun oftād</i> <i>dar del-hā</i> | From the shining twist of his black curl, what blood befell the hearts |
| <i>3.Beh mey sajjāda rangin kon gar-at pir-e</i> <i>moghān guyad</i> | Colour the prayer-mat with wine, if the Magian elder bid you to |
| <i>Keh sālek bi-khabar nabvad z-e rāh-o rasm-</i> <i>e manzel-hā</i> | For the traveller is not ignorant of the way and customs of the stages |
| <i>4.Ma-rā dar manzel-e janān cheh</i> <i>amn-e 'eysh chun har dam</i> | In the stage of the beloved what security of enjoyment have I When at every moment the |
| <i>Jaras faryād mi-dārad keh bar bandid</i> <i>mahmel-hā</i> | bell gives voice saying: 'Bind on the camel- litters'? |
| <i>5.Shab-e tārik-o bim-e mowj-o</i> <i>gerdābi chonin hā'el</i> | The dark night, the fear of the wave, and the whirlpool so dreadful |
| <i>Kojā dānand hāl-e mā sabokbārān- e sāhel-</i> <i>hā</i> | How do they know of our state, the light- burdened ones of the shore? |
| <i>6.Hama kār-am z-e khod-kāmi beh badnāmi</i> <i>keshid ākher</i> | All my work, because of my own fancy, has led at last to bad repute |
| <i>Nehān key mānad ān rāzi k-az u sāzand</i> <i>mahfel-hā</i> | How can that secret remain concealed about which they make gatherings? |
| <i>7.Hozuri gar hami khāhi az-u ghā'eb ma-</i> <i>show Hāfez</i> | If you desire presence, Hafez, do not hide from him |
| <i>Matā mā taleq man tahwā da' ed- dunyā wa-</i> <i>ahmelhā³⁵</i> | When you have found the one you desire, abandon the world and ignore it |

The structure of the ghazal may disconcert the modern reader who is looking for a clear progression of narrative. Even in the fourteenth century, Hafez's poems were being criticized for their 'incoherence', to use Meisami's words.³⁶ Hafez's patron Shah-e Shoja' himself is reported to have critiqued the poet for his poems' incongruity, saying:

The beyts ... in your ghazals ... do not happen to be of one kind, instead in each ghazal there are three or four beyts about wine and two or three beyts about Sufism and one or two beyts about the characteristics of the beloved. The changeableness of each ghazal is contrary to the way of the eloquent.³⁷

Whether apocryphal or not, this statement is consistent with those of many critics, including modern scholars, who speak of ‘lines deprived of a true and proper “dramatic” succession of events and united more by a common inspiration than by precise and direct links of a semantic kind’.³⁸ As stated by de Bruijn, ‘several studies have focused on the question of whether or not it is possible to find the rules of composition leading unity to the seemingly random sequence of images and lyrical motives in a typical Hāfizean poem’.³⁹ Admittedly, a first reading of this ghazal might give the impression of a paratactic juxtaposition of different ideas and a series of vaguely related couplets. This feeling of disunity is probably due to the absence of ‘transitional devices,’ as Michael Hillman suggested.⁴⁰ What word or image links the first couplet to the second one? And what about the third and the fourth one?

Nonetheless, this kind of issue did not prevent Jami from composing no fewer than seven imitations of this poem. Interestingly, he was careful to introduce the kind of transitional devices that were lacking in his model. By way of example, here is a translation of one of Jami’s rewritings:

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| <p>1. <i>Nasīm es-subhi zor menni robā Najdīn wa qabbelhā</i> <i>Ke bu-ye dust mi-āyad az ān farsuda manzel-hā</i></p> | <p>Ah, morning breeze, visit the hills of Najd and kiss them For the perfume of the Friend comes from those decayed stages</p> |
| <p>2. <i>Chu gardad showq-e vasl afzun cheh jā-ye ta ‘n agar Majnun</i> <i>Be-bu-ye howdaj-e Leyli fotad donbāl-e mahmel-hā</i></p> | <p>When longing for union grows why blame Majnun if He follows camel-litters because of the perfume of Leyli’s litter</p> |
| <p>3. <i>Del-e man por z-e mehr-e yār va u fāregh nabud-ast ān</i> <i>Keh mi-guyand rāhi hast del-hā- rā su-ye del-hā</i></p> | <p>My heart is filled with love for the Friend and He is not unaware of it For they say ‘Hearts have a path to hearts’</p> |
| <p>4. <i>Rasid inak z-e rah Salmā-va man az za‘f-e tan z-in sān</i></p> | <p>Here is Salma who has arrived from the road yet I am like this because of the weakness of my body</p> |

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| <i>Fakhoz yā sāhi ruhi tohfatan menni wa aqbelhā</i> | So, my Friend, take my spirit as a gift from me and accept it |
| <i>5.Ma-riz ey abr-e dida āb-e hasrat bar sar-e rāhesh</i> | O cloud-like eye, do not shed regret's rain on her path |
| <i>Keh dur owlā som-e asbesh z-e āsib-e chonin gel-hā</i> | Best that her horse's hoof be far from the calamity of such mires |
| <i>6.Ma-rā az hejr-e u dar del gereh mi-bud sad moshkel</i> | In my heart a hundred difficulties were knotted by separation from that One |
| <i>Chu didam shekl-e u fi 'l-hāl hall shod jomla-ye moshkel-hā</i> | When I saw that One's form all difficulties were solved instantly |
| <i>7.Z-e jur-e dur-e gham-farjām Jāmi qossa-hā dārad</i> | Jami suffers sorrows from the harshness of this painful cycle |
| <i>Wa-laken khowf emlāl en- nodāmā lam yotawwelhā⁴¹</i> | But fearing the annoyance of penitents he did not prolong them |

The first and the second beyts are linked by the idea of 'the perfume of the Friend'. In beyt 3, 'love for the Friend' (*mehr-e yar*) continues to dwell on the theme of the longing for the beloved, while the word 'path' in the second hemistich connects this couplet with beyts 4 and 5. The last phrase of this hemistich, 'the calamity of such mires,' sets up the last linking device, which is provided by a series of terms referring to pain and suffering. In this way, Jami creates a narrative whose progression is simpler to grasp than that of his model. At the outset, the poem depicts a lover, who (like Majnun) is longing for union with Leyli, the archetype of all beloveds. Suddenly the beloved appears in the form of Salma, another archetype of the beloved in Arabic poetry. However, the lover is already too weak because of his tormented condition. Nonetheless, the coming of the beloved allows for an immediate resolution of all difficulties. The moral could be summed up like this: although the condition of the lover is a difficult one, he has no reason to complain about it, for sorrow and pain are inseparable from love, and thus should be accepted with joy and gratefulness.

As already noted by Afsahzad, there are fewer themes in Jami's rewritings. He makes no mention of wine, nor does he evoke the debauchee's (*rend*) way of life. In his imitation, he only focuses on the painful condition of the lover. While Hafez's ghazal is polythematic, Jami's rewriting is firmly monothematic. His imitation, therefore, lacks those layers of meaning that

make Hafez's ghazal so much more complex and open to various kinds of interpretations. However what Jami's verses lose in complexity, they gain in clarity.⁴²

In Nava'i's rewriting, we also find these logical links that connect one verse to the next:

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| <p>1. <i>Romuz ol- 'eshq kānat moshkelān be 'l-kā 'si hallehā</i> <i>Keh ān yāqut-e mahlul-at</i> <i>namāyad hall-e moshkel-hā</i></p> | <p>The enigmas of love were difficult. Solve them by way of a cup For that dissolved ruby of yours shows the solution of difficulties.</p> |
| <p>2. <i>Su-ye deyr-e moghān beh-khrām tā bini du sad mahfel</i> <i>Sar-ā-sar z-āftāb-e mey foruzān sham 'e mahfel-hā</i></p> | <p>March to the convent of the magi to see two hundred gatherings All the candles of the gatherings are brightened by the sun of the wine.</p> |
| <p>3. <i>Del-o mey har du rowshan shod nemi-dānam keh tāb-e mey</i> <i>Zad ātesh-hā beh del yā tāb-e mey shod z-ātesh-e del-hā</i></p> | <p>Heart and wine, both shone brightly and I do not know whether the heat of the wine Lit the fire of the heart or the fire of the heart heated up the wine.</p> |
| <p>4. <i>Beh maqsad garcheh rah dur ast agar ātesh resad az 'eshq</i> <i>Chu barq-āsā tavān kardan beh gāmi qat 'e manzel-hā</i></p> | <p>Even if it is a long way until we reach our goal, if the fire comes from love We can traverse all the stages with one step like a lightning</p> |
| <p>5. <i>Man-o bi-hāseli k-az 'elm-o zohd- am āncheh hāsel shod</i> <i>Yek-ā-yek dar serr-e ma 'shuq-o mey shod jomla hāsel-hā</i></p> | <p>The fruitless harvest I gained from science and asceticism became entirely fruitful through the secrets of wine and the beloved</p> |
| <p>6. <i>Bovad chun abr seyr-e nāqa-ye Leyli keh dar vādi</i> <i>Feghān az chāk-e del Majnun keshad ni zang-e mahmel-hā</i></p> | <p>The coming of Leyli's she-camel is like a cloud, for in the valley [there is] [the sound] of Majnun's lamentation because of his broken heart, not [that of] the bell of the camel litters</p> |
| <p>7. <i>Chu dar dasht-e fanā manzel koni yek ruz ey Fāni</i> <i>Z-e man ān jānfezā atlāl-rā f-asjad wa qabbel-hā</i>⁴³</p> | <p>If you stop even just one day in the desert of annihilation, o Fani Prostrate before those soul- enlightening ruins and kiss them for me</p> |

The poet links the first three beyts by focusing on wine (*mey*). The logical link between the third and the fourth couplet is provided by the word *atesh* ('fire'). Beyts four and five are linked by terms denoting a result, an output, such as *maqsad* ('goal', 'destination') or *hasel* ('harvest'). The link connecting the fifth to the sixth couplet is the beloved, here embodied by the archetypal figure of Leyli. Finally, the closing couplet is linked to the previous one by the phrase *dasht-e fana* ('desert of annihilation'), which is the mystical metaphor of the valley, in which Majnun is waiting for Leyli.

As with Jami's poem, this succession of couplets provides the reader with a clear order of narrative: after stating that wine helps solve the difficulties of love, the poet invites his reader to 'march to the convent', so that his heart will be lit by the heat of the wine. Thanks to the fire produced by this heart, he will be able to traverse all stages with only one step. The poet is all the more confident in his assertions since his own experience (see the personal pronoun *man* as an emphatic 'I' in beyt 5) proved that nothing was more important in this journey than wine and the love for his beloved. Afflicted by the pain of love, just as Majnun longed for his Leyli, the lover can expect to reach his ultimate goal – the proximity of God through the annihilation (*fana*) of himself. Like Jami, Nava'i's imitation follows a simplified pattern, and does not take up 'the polythematic structure' of its model.

Actually, Nava'i seems to have been particularly attached to this poetic consistency. In the preface he wrote for his Turkish *Divan*, which appears to be a kind of *Ars Poetica*, the Timurid poet criticizes those who are not coherent in the writing of their ghazals:

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| <p><i>Yana bukim, sā'ir dīwānīnda rasmī ghazal uslubīdīnkim, shā'i' durur, tajāwuz qīlib, makhsūs naw'larda söz 'arūsīning jilwasīgha namāyish wa jamālīgha ārāyish bermäydürürlär. Wa agar ahyānan matla'ī makhsūs naw'da wāqi' bolsa, hamol matla' uslubī bilā itmām-i khil'atin wa anjām-i kiswatin kiydürmäydürürlär, balki tuganhuncha agar bir beyt mazmūni wisāl bahārīda gul- ārāyliq qīlsa, yana biri firāq khazānīda khār-namāyliq qīlibdurur. Bu surat daghī munāsabatdīn yīraq wa mulāyamatdīn qīraq köründi. Ol jihatdīn sa'y</i></p> | <p>Moreover, in other <i>Divans</i> they blatantly transgress the conventional arrangement, and in specific genres they do not show the splendour⁴⁵ of the bride of speech and they do not provide ornament to her beauty. And if sometimes an opening verse is [written] in a specific genre, they do not finish dressing her in her garments in accordance with the arrangement of this opening verse. All too often, if the content of a couplet grows roses during the springtime of union, the next couplet brings out thorns during the autumn of separation. Such form appears to be far</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

qıldimkim, har mazmūnda matla'i wāqi' from consistent and showing no delicacy. For
bolsa, andaq bolghaykim, maqta'ghacha this reason, I have endeavoured that whatever
surat heysiyatidin muwāfiq wa ma'nī the content of an opening verse, it should be
*jānibidin mutābiq tūshkay*⁴⁴ like this: until the last verse [the content]
should be congruous with the quality of the
form and consonant with the sense of the
meaning.

According to Nava'i's conception, a poem should be consistent both in form and meaning from the first line until the last. It is not surprising, then, that his rewriting of Hafez's ghazal should follow these rules.

Nava'i's and Jami's use of imagery is strictly linked to the theme in question. Rarely do they digress or introduce additional elements 'which in the ghazal of Hafiz create a more detailed context but make it seem – at least at first sight – to be more rambling and disjointed'.⁴⁶ The two Timurid poets 'have a single theme organized, line by line, into distinct semantic fields'.⁴⁷ As a result, what Losensky wrote about Jami's response poems also applies to Nava'i's imitation: 'his responses stick close to the theme of their model, regularize its structure, and elaborate on its images and topoi'.⁴⁸ The elusive structure of Hafez's ghazal is thus simplified and regularized in the Timurid responses. To sum up, and to use the expression coined by Losensky, Jami and Nava'i 'standardized' the way they responded to the first ghazal of the Shirazi poet.⁴⁹

Hermeneutic Reorientations

Imitations are a form of metatextual poetry in that they reflect upon the text of the model. Poets such as Jami and Nava'i used poetry to talk about poetry. They used imitational poetry to analyse Hafez and to convey this analysis to the reader. The more they standardized their 'replies', the more they clarified the way they wanted Hafez's poetry to be approached by other readers.

Losensky noticed that Jami's imitations of Hafez's poetry often took the form of explicit commentary. Jami did not refrain from using words which explicitly referred to the practice of commentary. We find one of these terms in another of Jami's imitations of Hafez's opening ghazal. Here are the first (*matla'*) and the last couplets (*maqta'*) of this response poem:

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>A-lā yā ayyohā as-sāqī mey āmad hall-e moshkel-hā</i> | <i>O cupbearer wine is the solution to all problems</i> |
| <i>Z-e mey moshkel bud towba adir ka 'san wa-nāwelhā</i> | <i>It is hard to repent of wine, [so] proffer the cup and pass it around</i> |
| | [...] |
| <i>Beh khāb az sho 'la-hā-ye nur gardad gerd-e tu Jāmi</i> | <i>If in a dream the flames of light engulf you, o Jami</i> |
| <i>Be-shams el-rāhi 'abber-hā wa dowr el-ka 'si awwalo-hā⁵⁰</i> | <i>Interpret⁵¹ them as the sun of wine after the cup has passed from hand to hand</i> |

The use of a term like *'abber* ('interpret') leaves no other option for Jami's reader but to see wine in Hafez's poem as a mystical intoxication rather than a prosaic drunkenness.

In his various rewritings of Hafez's opening ghazals, Jami often exhibits the paraphrastic dimension of his imitational practices. First, as sometimes happens in this kind of exercise, he repeats one verse of the parent-ghazal. What is less usual, however, is that he does not refrain from commenting on it in another verse. For instance, here is the beginning of another response poem by Jami:

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Sharāb-e la'l bāshad qovvat-e jān- hā qovvat-e del-hā</i> | <i>Ruby wine is the strength of souls and the strength of hearts</i> |
| <i>A-lā yā ayyohā as-sāqī adir ka 'san wa-nāwelhā</i> | <i>O cupbearer proffer the cup and pass it around</i> |
| <i>Chu z-e avval 'eshq moshkel bud ākher ham cherā guyam</i> | <i>Since at first love was difficult, why in the end would I say</i> |
| <i>Keh 'eshq āsān namud avval vali ofiād moshkel-hā⁵²</i> | <i>'For love at first appeared easy, but difficulties have occurred'?</i> |

The insertion of rhetorical questions reveals Jami's intention to establish a dialogue with the tradition that had been built thus far on Hafez's opening ghazal. Jami questions Hafez's ghazal and the way one can interpret it, thus formulating new answers to old problems. One may imagine that, according to Jami, it was misleading to say that 'love at first appeared easy'. Love, according to his mystical conception, is never easy, and thus Jami uses Hafez's verse to reassess the nature of love. This idea that the difficulties of the lover remain because of the nature of love itself is expressed in another of his seven rewritings of Hafez's opening ghazal. Evoking

one more time the difficulties of the lover (*moshkel-e 'asheq*), Jami writes that there is no point in trying to solve these difficulties with the help of the intellect (*'aql*),

Keh sad moshkel-e degar pish āyad- ash az For a hundred other difficulties befall him
*hall-e moshkel-hā*⁵³ from the solving of [these] difficulties

Jami then quotes Hafez's first verse, but at the end of his imitation, to say that only (mystical) wine can help the lover:

Chu oftad moshkeli Jāmi beh sāqi guyi chu When a difficulty has occurred, Jami, tell the
Hāfez cupbearer like Hafez
A-lā yā ayyuhā as-sāqī adir ka'san wa- *O cupbearer proffer the cup and pass it*
*nāwelhā*⁵⁴ *around*

In this way, Hafez's first verse becomes the last verse in Jami's rewriting, and in doing so Jami reconfigures elements of the parent ghazal in order to give them a new significance. While Hafez asked for wine in order to bear the difficulties of love when they had come to pass, in his rewriting, Jami makes (spiritual) intoxication a permanent feature of the lover's condition.

However, it could be argued that Jami's dialogue with Hafez was conducted in a secular fashion, and that his rewriting does not entail any mystical reorientation; indeed, often the esoteric and the exoteric dimensions are intertwined in Persian classical poetry. As stated by de Bruijn,

since poets have made more frequent uses of ghazals for the expression of mystical love [...], the fusion between the secular and the mystical in Persian ghazals has become such an essential characteristic that, in most instances, it is extremely difficult to make a proper distinction between the two, the secular and the mystical.⁵⁵

In the case of Hafez's first ghazal, Meisami identifies three major thematic concerns: the trials of love, the celebration of love and the defence of poetry.⁵⁶ The mystical dimension is not included in this list. Accordingly, Meisami translated *rah-o rasm* (beyt 3) as customs, but she suggests that they could be identified more precisely as the traces of a ruined encampment. Following the same line of thinking, she invites the reader to interpret the 'stages' (*manzel*, beyts 3 and 4) as 'taverns' rather than as the traditional stations through which the Sufi has to pass before he reaches his final destination.⁵⁷

If we turn to Jami's rewriting, we can see that he introduced the characters of Leyli and Majnun. This is a significant addition, since the poet was criticized at the time for introducing a narrative element not originally found in Hafez's ghazal.⁵⁸ By focusing on the condition of the lover, Jami eschewed other themes developed in the model. The introduction of Majnun, who is the archetypal intoxicated lover, might be seen as a way for Jami to illustrate the condition of all true lovers from a mystical perspective. In this way, Jami's beyt can be regarded as a paraphrase of the corresponding beyt in Hafez's poem. The elusive mention of the lovers' suffering ('what blood befell the hearts') receives here a concrete illustration, as well as a kind of commentary. If we cannot 'blame' the archetypal mystic lover even if he keeps pursuing an impossible love, it is because Majnun's longing for union (*showq-e vasl*) is precisely what animates his lifelong quest. His ever-growing ardent desire (*showq*) is what compels the Sufi traveller to go forwards along his mystical path. In the following beyt, Jami reassures his reader, by telling him that the beloved is aware of the lover's affection and longing, though she or he might not show it. It is difficult not to see the all-knowing God behind this characterization. This beyt may be regarded as an answer to the fourth beyt of the parent ghazal. There is no 'security of enjoyment', as Hafez says, but it does not mean that this is a desperate situation. In the fourth beyt, the arrival of Salma, another traditional figure of the beloved who is always about to leave, is proving the poet right. However, Salma's arrival does not change the lover's situation radically. On the contrary, the poet focuses not on the joy caused by the arrival of his beloved but on his ever-tormenting condition. Love, according to a Sufi conception, is only affliction (*bala*) and feeds on the oppression (*jafa*) of the lover, as explained by Ahmad Ghazali in his *Savaneh*, a Sufi work that Nava'i had studied with the help of Jami.⁵⁹ The mystic lover is, above all, a being who suffers; he is in constant pain and his body is always weak. The sixth beyt takes up Hafez's famous opening about the difficulties of love ('For love at first appeared easy but difficulties have occurred'). Here, again, the rewriting is more explicit, since Jami specifies the effective cause of these difficulties: separation (*hejr*) from the beloved which can be instantly solved by union. The last couplet evokes this painful cycle (*dowr-e gham-farjam*) of separation and union. Jami's trepidation about wearing out his reader with such tales is – again – a lesson of mystical love. The mystical lover cannot imagine that this sorrow is annoying, and he endeavours to accept it as a gift of the Friend. The mystic poet Sana'i wrote that no joy should be allowed to us in this world if we regard sorrow inflicted by God as a calamity.⁶⁰ Because Jami chose to focus only on one theme developed by Hafez's poem, his rewriting only answered to selected beyts of the ghazal model (beyts 1, 2 and 4). In this fashion, Jami was able to make up a poetic narrative that could also work as a didactic presentation of

the mystical lover's condition. After all, in his third compilation of poems, *Khatemat al-hayat*, he proclaimed that his *Divan* consisted 'mostly of the ghazals of lovers distraught'.⁶¹

Nava'i's imitation appears even more explicitly to be a mystical commentary on Hafez's poem. Right from the first couplet, Nava'i gives an explanatory paraphrase: 'for the dissolved ruby of yours (i.e. wine) shows the way towards the solution of difficulties'. In terms of its wording, it is very close to the first hemistich of another of Jami's imitations that I have already quoted (*Alā yā ayyuhā s-sāqi mey āmad hall-i moshkel-hā*: 'Come o cupbearer for wine is the solution to all problems').⁶² Nava'i's decision to write 'the enigma of love' (*romuz al-'eshq*) instead of simply 'love', as Hafez did in his poem, shows that he brought the discussion to a mystical level without any ambiguity, especially since the word *ramz* (plu. *romuz*) also means 'allegory'. He would not talk about carnal love, but rather of spiritual love (*'eshq-e haqiqi*), for which worldly love is only a metaphor (*'eshq-e majazi*). Wine becomes then the symbol of divine love that impregnates all things with ardent desire and spiritual intoxication (*sokr*). In the second beyt, the poet makes clear the meaning he attaches to the term *mahfel* ('gathering', beyt 6 in Hafez's poem).⁶³ The *mahfels* are places where Sufis come in order to experience this spiritual intoxication that turns them from 'intellectual Sufi' (*sufiyan-e 'aql*) into 'spiritual Sufis' (*sufiyan-e ruh*). In the third beyt, Nava'i's interrogation ('I do not know whether the heat of the wine lit the fire of the heart or the fire of the heart heated up the wine') reminds the reader that the propriety of mystical wine is to strengthen love: it fills the heart with passion and ardent desire (*showq*). The following couplet (beyt 4) focuses on the rhyme word *manzel* ('stage'). By telling his reader that he 'can traverse all the stages with one step like a lightning', Nava'i clearly opts for a meaning closer to 'mystical stations' than to the 'taverns', which Meisami suggested regarding Hafez's poem. These stages are the traditional steps through which the Sufi has to pass before he reaches his final destination (*maqсад*), which is of course proximity to God. Moreover, the context in which Jami uses this rhyming phrase in one of his imitations of Hafez's first ghazal seems to confirm this reading:

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <i>Chu har manzel keh Leyli karda jā Ka'ba ast</i> | For each stop that Leyli makes is a Ka'ba for |
| <i>Majnun-rā</i> | Majnun |
| <i>Beh qasd-e Ka'ba Majnun-rā cheh hājat</i> | When Majnun tries to seek the Ka'ba there is |
| <i>qat'-e manzel-hā⁶⁴</i> | no need [for him] to traverse all the stages |

Beyt number 5 may also be regarded as a commentary on the corresponding beyt in Hafez's poem. Before he transformed his fruitless knowledge (*'elm*) and his exoteric devotion (*zohd*)

into a craving for the mystical quest, Nava'i was like these 'light-burdened ones of the shore' (*sabokbaran* in Hafez's ghazal) who know nothing about the condition of the real lover. The quest of the Sufi can only be successful if it is fuelled by wine and guided by love. The knowledge of the traveller cannot be confused with '*elm*', for Sufis know, at least since Ahmad Ghazali's *Savaneh*, that '*elm*' entails the duality of an object and a subject. This duality deprives people who have this type of knowledge of union with the object of their quest.

The sixth couplet is an explicit answer to the fourth couplet of Hafez's poem. The verses of both Nava'i and Hafez talk about the sound of Leyli's camel litter (*mahmel-ha*). The Shirazi poet evokes the bell that signals the departure of the camel-litters. However, Nava'i answers that the valley is filled by the lamentations of Majnun rather than the bells of the litters. Nava'i insists on the pain of love (*chak-e del*), and he uses the archetypal figure of Majnun, as Jami did in three of his imitations of Hafez's first ghazal.⁶⁵ As already noted above, Majnun is absent from Hafez's poem but his presence in Jami and Nava'i's rewritings enabled the two Timurid poets to give a concrete picture of the pure mystical lover in the same way that Leyli and Salma (in Jami's imitations) embodied the epiphany of the divine beauty. In two of his rewritings of Hafez's first ghazal, Jami significantly associates Leyli with the Ka'ba.⁶⁶ The fact that we do not find this association in Hafez's *Divan* reveals Jami's emphasis on 'Leyli's function'; she is first of all an epiphany of the divine beauty rather than just a mere literary figure. The romance of Leyli and Majnun is integrated into Jami's ghazal insofar as their love represents a bridge towards the love for God ('*eshq-e haqiqi*).

In the last couplet, Nava'i links the valley that hears Majnun's outcries for his beloved with the desert of annihilation (*dasht-e fana*). Here the poet alludes to the penultimate spiritual station, the stage of annihilation (*maqamat* or *manzel-e fana*), which is the end of the mystical journey. According to Islamic mysticism, *fana* refers to the extinction of the self, which in the words of a Sufi like Ahmad Ghazali allows the lover to escape separation. The lover achieves his real state of being in God, his beloved. Non-being (*fana*) leads to union, whereas the state of being only leads to separation. As long as the lover does not enter this enlightened state, he cannot obtain awareness of the intrinsic unity. Until then, he is subjected to a painful cycle of separations and unions, the same kind of which Jami speaks in his own imitation.

Unquestionably, Nava'i read the poem of Hafez as a mystical ghazal and his paraphrase should be interpreted as such. Zipoli noticed in his study that Nava'i made different uses of the rhyme words of his models.⁶⁷ In view of what has been said above, it is possible to characterize this as Nava'i's hermeneutical reorientation of the model, in which each rhyme word of the parent ghazal (*moshkel*, *mahfel*, *del*, *manzel*, etc.) becomes a key word that is glossed

unambiguously according to a clear mystical framework. Even though Jami's way of proceeding is different, his focus on one theme of Hafez's ghazal, namely the hardship of the lover's condition and his didactic developments about it, show that, just like Nava'i's rewriting, the *nazira* constitutes a 'clarifying filter' of the model, to use Zipoli's words.⁶⁸ This filter helps select particular types of information of the parent ghazal according to a Sufi framework that considers worldly love only as a bridge towards 'real love' (*'eshq-e haqiqi*).

De Bruijn remarked that

the decision whether a given poem should be called a Sufi ghazal or a profane love song very often does not depend so much on the poem itself, but on what we know about its writer, that is the answer to the question: does the life of the poet provide us with clues of a mystical affiliation, or is the poet only known as a court poet?⁶⁹

Admittedly, the fact that we know little about Hafez's commitment into Sufism does not help us solve the question of the religious dimension of his ghazals. The matter is nonetheless simpler with respect to Jami and Nava'i, since there is no ambiguity concerning the mystical affiliations of Jami, who was the most prominent Naqshbandi-Sufi thinker in Herat. His efforts to integrate the theosophy of mystical love of Ebn 'Arabi within the Persian literary tradition could explain his desire to frame his imitations of Hafez's ghazal according to a mystical perspective. The contents of Jami's ghazals are love lyrics that express Sufi mysticism, and there is understandably very little room for secular love in his *Divan*, as expressed in these verses:

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|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <i>Hast divān-e she'r-e man-e aksar Ghazal-e</i> | My collection of poetry for the most part |
| <i>'āsheqān-e sheydā'i</i> | Consists of ghazals of intoxicated lovers |
| [...] | [...] |
| <i>Zekr-e downān nayābi andar vey</i> | You will not find traces of contemptible ones |
| <i>K-ān bovad naqd-e 'omr-e farsā'i</i> ⁷⁰ | For that would be a lifetime spent in vain |

As for Nava'i, the preface of his Turkish *Divan* shows that he does not have much consideration for poems that do not have a religious dimension:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Yana bir bukim, gūyā ba'zī el ash'ār</i> | Another problem is that some people, after |
| <i>tahsīlīdin wa dīwān takmīlīdin gharaz-i</i> | gathering poems and completing a <i>Divan</i> , |
| <i>majāzī husn-u jamāl tawsīfī wa maqsūd-i</i> | show nothing but a strong inclination to |
| <i>zāhirī khatt u khāl ta'rīfīdin özgä nemä</i> | describe metaphorical beauty and elegance |

*anglamay dururlar. Dīwān tapilghaykim, anda ma'rifat-āmīz ghazal tapilmaghay wa ghazal bolghaykim, anda maw'izat-angīz bir beyt bolmaghay. Mundaq dīwān bitilsä, khud asru bīhūda zahmat wa zā'i' mashaqqat tartilghan bolghay.*⁷¹ with the purpose of extolling the down of the cheek and the mole. We find *Divans* in which we find not one gnostic ghazal and there are ghazals in which there is not a single homiletic verse. When such a *Divan* is composed, it caused too much pain in vain and bothersome trouble.

For this reason, he tells his reader that the latter will not find a single ghazal in his *Divan* that does not include at least one or two verses adorned with the help of advice and homily (*nasihat-ara va mow'ezat-asa*).⁷² Nava'i, therefore, espouses his Sufi master's conceptions. There are several ghazals in his Persian *Divan* in which he admits that Jami guided him in writing pieces that incorporated Hafez's poetry:

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Beh rāh-e 'eshq agar moshkeli fetad Fāni</i> | Fani, if difficulties arise in the path of love |
| <i>Z-e ruh-e Hāfez-o ma'ni-e Jāmi-esh juyam</i> ⁷³ | I will seek for help from the spirit of Hafez and the meaning of Jami |
| or | |
| <i>Rasad chu masti Fāni beh Hāfez-e Shirāz</i> | When Fani's drunkenness reaches Hafez of Shiraz |
| <i>Z-e jāmi-e Jāmi u az bād-e rahbari dānad</i> ⁷⁴ | He considers it derived from Jami's cup and the wind's guidance |

Conclusion

Jami and Nava'i's imitations of Hafez's first ghazal help us identify the manner through which they preserved the poet's legacy. Their commentary-like imitations reveal that these Timurid poets contributed to the development of an evaluative and interpretive corpus surrounding the legacy of Hafez's poetry. Their metatextual poems provided a meaning that situated this heritage within a specifically Islamic context. They wanted to frame the reading of Hafez's ghazals so that his poetry could be understood as a guide to spiritual love in accordance with Ebn 'Arabi's theosophy.

We may assume that Jami and Nava'i's deep commitment to imitational poetry was to a great extent guided by their mystical agenda. One of Jami's most important intellectual

contributions to the Naqshbandi order was his effort to include Ebn ‘Arabi’s teachings within its doctrinal corpus.⁷⁵ His rewritings of Hafez’s poetry gave him another opportunity to bring the reader to an experiential level of understanding the Akbarian ideas. In *Khamsat al-motahayyerin*, a work written after Jami’s death (in 1492) and dedicated to his memory, Nava’i reported that it was Jami who initiated him into the reading of the Sheykh al-Akbar.⁷⁶ Nothing then prevented him from spreading the ethos of mystical love through his imitations in the same way that his *pir* did. Consequently, Jami and Nava’i invited their reader to contemplate Hafez’s poetry and the esoteric meaning they attached to it unequivocally.

This religious dimension of their imitational poetry invites us to reconsider our idea of Persian literature at that time. While this era has long been characterized by modern scholarship as one ‘marked by a cultivation of hollow rhetoric and slavish imitation’,⁷⁷ it is time to approach it from a different perspective, by considering for instance the development of Sufi orders like the Naqshbandiya brotherhood and the role poetics were called on to play in the dissemination of their ideas. After all, if we regard all imitations of this period as more or less refined academic exercises, we may not grasp the real significance of some of them, which operated outside the sphere of rhetoric.

Notes:

1. Dowlatshāh Samarqandī, *Tazkerat al-sho‘arā*, pp. 302–3.
2. Priscilla Soucek, ‘Hafez xii. Hafez and the visual arts’, pp. 501–5.
3. Paul Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, p. 145.
4. Maria-Eva Subtelny, ‘A taste for the intricate’, pp. 56–79.
5. See Robert Devereux’s translation of *Mohakamat al-loghateyn*, ‘Judgment of Two Languages’, *The Muslim World* 55, no. 1, p. 37.
6. A’lākhān Afsahzād, *Lirika Abd ar-Rakhmama Dzhami*, pp. 145–52.
7. Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, pp. 175–79.
8. See Abdulg‘ani Mirzoev, ‘Foniy va Hofiz’, pp. 8–15; idem, ‘Alisher Navoiyning fors-tojik tilidagi meros haqida’, pp. 13–21; Rahim Vohidov, ‘Xoja Hofiz Sheroziy va Alisher Navoiy’, pp. 25–32.
9. Riccardo Zipoli, *The Technique of the Ğawāb*.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 61. Presumably due to the brevity of his book and its limited scope, the Italian scholar did not attempt to give any explanation. The question thus remains as to what prompted Navā’i’s change of approach in his rewritings of Hāfez and Jāmi’s ghazals.
11. Benedek Péri, ‘Mīr ‘Alī-Šīr Navāyī and the first ghazal of Hāfiz’, p. 177.
12. Although some have acknowledged that Nava’i could have read Hafiz’s first ghazal as a mystical poem and oriented his imitation in that direction (see Péri, ‘Mīr ‘Alī- Šīr Navāyī’, p. 181).
13. Chad Lingwood, *Politics, Poetry, and Sufism in Medieval Iran*.
14. Marc Toutant, *Un empire de mots. Pouvoir, culture et soufisme à l’époque des derniers Timourides au miroir de la Khamsa de Mīr ‘Alī Shīr Nawā’ī*.
15. See, for instance, Johannes T.P. de Bruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, pp. 51–83.
16. Jāmi, *Bahārestān*, ed. Afsahzād, p. 148.
17. Subtelny, ‘A taste for the intricate’, p. 69.
18. Dowlatshāh uses this expression to qualify Kamāl Esmā’il’s verses. See E. Bertel’s, ‘Literatura na persidskom jazyke v Srednej Azii’, p. 211.
19. Navā’i, *Majāles al-nafāyes*, Ms. Supplément turc 965, fols. 25r–26v.
20. Devereux, ‘Judgment of Two Languages’, pp. 33–34.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Navā’i, *Mahbub al-qolub*, p. 28.
23. See the folio 3v of the manuscript that is kept at the Bibliothèque nationale de France under the name Supplément turc 316–317, which is a *Kolliyāt-e Navā’i* that includes this *Dibācha* among other pieces. W.M. Thackston translated this preface but he used a version based on another manuscript that seems to have lacunae; see *A Century of Princes*, pp. 363–72.
24. Jāmi, *Nafahāt al-ons*, p. 612.
25. Navā’i, *Nasā’em al-mahabba*, Ms. Supplément turc 316–317, fol. 149r. Dowlatshāh Samarqandī also speaks about the veneration of Qāsem al-Anvār for Hāfez’s *Divān*; see *Tazkerat al-sho‘arā*, pp. 302–3.
26. This proverb is taken from Charles Caleb Colton, *Lacon: or, Many Things in Few Words*, p. 113.
27. For the seven ghazals replying to just the first poem of Hāfez, see Jāmi, *Divān*, ed. Afsahzād, vol. I, *Fātehat al-shabāb*, ghazals No. 17 (p. 194) and No. 18 (p. 195); vol. II, *Vāsetat al-‘eqd*, ghazals No. 11 (pp. 79–80), No. 12 (p. 80), No. 13 (p. 81), and *Khātemat al-hayāt*, ghazals No. 6 (p. 468) and No. 7 (p. 469). In its final recension, prepared at the request of Navā’i, Jāmi’s *Divān* is actually divided into three sections: *Fātehat al-shabāb* (‘The Opening of Youth’), *Vāsetat al-‘eqd* (‘The Middle of the Necklace’) and *Khātemat al-hayāt* (‘The End of Life’).

28. Mirza Haydar Dughlat, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, trans. Wheeler M. Thackston, vol. II, p. 126.
29. Devereux, 'Judgment of Two Languages', p. 37.
30. Here I refer to Rokn al-Din Homāyun Farrokh's edition, *Divān-e Amir 'Ali-Shir Navā'i 'Fāni'*.
31. Fāni, *Divān*, p. 48.
32. Ms. Supplément turc 316–317, fol. 2v.
33. Julie Scott Meisami regards this poem as a poetic credo containing the poet's own view on his poetic output within the literary tradition. See Meisami, 'A life in poetry', p. 179.
34. Péri, 'Mīr 'Alī-Šīr Navāyī', p. 177.
35. Hāfez, *Divān*, vol. I, p. 91.
36. Julie S. Meisami, *Structure and Meaning in Medieval Arabic and Persian Lyric Poetry*, p. 46.
37. Quoted by Meisami, *Structure and Meaning*, p. 46.
38. Zipoli, *The Technique of the Ġawāb*, p. 24; see also Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, p. 167.
39. De Bruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, p. 77.
40. Michael Hillman, 'Hafez's "Turk of Shiraz" again', p. 177.
41. Jāmi, *Divān, Fātehat al-shabāb*, ghazal No. 18 (p. 195).
42. On the clarity of Jami's verses in general see Hamid Algar, *Jami*, p. 66, and for what follows.
43. Fāni, *Divān*, p. 48.
44. Navā'i, Ms. Supplément turc 316–317, fol. 5r.
45. I translated *jilwa/jelva* as 'splendour' but the term also means 'Presenting a bride to her husband adorned and unveiled' according to Steingass' *Persian-English Dictionary*.
46. Zipoli, *The Technique of the Ġawāb*, p. 62.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
48. Paul Losensky, 'Jāmi i. Life and Works', pp. 469–75.
49. Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*.
50. Jāmi, *Divān, Khātemat al-hayāt*, ghazal No. 7 (p. 469). My emphasis.
51. My emphasis.
52. Jāmi, *Divān, Vāsetat al-'eqd*, ghazal No. 12 (p. 80).
53. Jāmi, *Divān, Khātemat al-hayāt*, ghazal No. 6 (p. 468).
54. *Ibid.*
55. De Bruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, p. 55.
56. Meisami, 'A life in poetry', p. 176. 57.
57. *Ibid.*, pp. 169–71.
58. Algar, *Jami*, p. 69.
59. See Toutant, *Un empire de mots*, p. 491.
60. Hakim Abu'l-Majd Majdud Sanā'i, *Divān*, p. 954.
61. See A'lākhān Afsahzād, *Naqd o bar-rasi-ye āsār va shahr-e ahvāl-e Jāmi*, p. 327.
62. Jāmi, *Divān, Khātemat al-hayāt*, ghazal No. 7 (p. 469). Péri noticed that Navā'i's *mesra'* (hemistich) was also very close to the paraphrases of Kātebi and Fattāhi. According to him, the phrase *hall-e moshkel-hā* ('solution of the difficulties') had 'become an inseparable part of the *mundus significans* of the Hāfiz first ghazal network'. See Péri, 'Navāyī and the first ghazal', p. 179.
63. According to Péri, 'Navāyī and the first ghazal', p. 180, *sham'-e mahfel-hā* had also become an integral part of Hāfez's first ghazal paraphrase network.
64. Jāmi, *Divān, Khātemat al-hayāt*, ghazal No. 6 (p. 468).
65. See Jāmi, *Divān, Fātehat al-shabāb*, ghazal No. 18 (p. 195); *Khātemat al-hayāt*, ghazals No. 6 (p. 468) and No. 7 (p. 469).

66. Jāmi, *Divān, Khātemat al-hayāt*, ghazals No. 6 (p. 468) and No. 7 (p. 469).
67. Zipoli, *The Technique of the Ġawāb*, p. 48.
68. *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.
69. De Bruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, p. 55.
70. These verses are quoted by Afsahzād, *Naqd o bar-rasi-ye āsār*, p. 327.
71. Navā’i, Ms. Supplément turc 316–317, fol. 5r.
72. *Ibid.*
73. Fāni, *Divān*, p. 253. 74.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
75. See Hamid Algar, ‘Reflections of Ibn ‘Arabi in early Naqshbandī tradition’, pp. 45–57; idem, ‘Jāmī and Ibn ‘Arabī: Khātam al-shu’arā’ and Khātam al-Awliyā’, pp. 138–58.
76. Alisher Navoiy, *Mukammal asarlar to ‘plami*, vol. XV, p. 56.
77. Mohammad Rezā Shāfi‘i-Kadkani, ‘Persian literature (Belles-Lettres) from the time of Jāmi to the present day’, quoted by Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*, p. 134.

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