Ahmad Yasav : in the work of Burhn al-Dn Qïlïch : the earliest reference to a famously obscure central asian sufi saint

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AḤMAD YASAVĪ IN THE WORK OF BURHĀN AL-DĪN QĪLĪCH: THE EARLIEST REFERENCE TO A FAMOUSLY OBSCURE CENTRAL ASIAN SUFI SAINT

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Abstract [1]

A recently published Persian Sufi work by a 13th-century Central Asian shaykh of the Farghāna valley known as Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch includes the earliest known reference to Khwāja Aḥmad Yasavī, a prominent Sufi who is associated especially with the Turks of Central Asia, but whose life and Sufi career were not widely recounted in extant sources until the 16th century; the brief account supports the supposition that despite the many different roles assigned to Aḥmad Yasavī in later tradition, it was chiefly as a Sufi shaykh that he was initially known. This article discusses this earliest mention of Yasavī, and its implications, following a survey of what is known of the author of the account, Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, and his multiple legacies in Central Asia.

1. Introduction

Despite the enormous reputation of Khwāja Aḥmad Yasavī as a pivotal figure in the religious history of the Turkic peoples, and as the eponym of a major Sufi tradition of Central Asia, there is remarkably little evidence about him from the first three centuries after the time in which he most likely lived.[2] This paucity of historical evidence might not seem unusual for a Sufi saint, and indeed the same point could be made regarding the 'Khwājagān', the early 'founding' figures of

1 This article is an expanded and revised version of a paper presented at a conference in Turkistan in October 2012; the earlier version was included in the volume of draft papers prepared for the conference as DeWeese, 2012.

2 The issue cannot be taken up here at length, but it may be noted that the date given in most 20th-century scholarship for the death of Aḥmad Yasavī (562/1166–1167) is first recorded only in the late 16th century and appears to have no serious historical basis; other dates are given in earlier sources, and the preponderance of evidence points toward the late 12th century or the early 13th as the most likely time for his death.

what became the Naqshbandī tradition, who are barely mentioned in any kind of source down to the 15th century. Yet if we consider the 12th- and 13th-century representatives of what came to be defined as the Kubravī Sufi tradition – beginning with the eponym, Najm al-Dīn Kubrā – who left a substantial 'paper trail' in the form of their own extensive writings and in the form of references to them in other sources from the period in which they lived, we would be compelled to conclude that the situation with both the Yasavī and Khwāja-gānī/Naqshbandī traditions is indeed unusual, and that tracking down and paying attention to the earliest references to the figures associated with these traditions is an important and worthwhile task.

In the case of the Yasavī tradition, it is not until the second half of the 16th century that we find substantial hagiographical narratives recorded *by* Yasavī shaykhs *about* the early Yasavī saints, including above all Aḥmad Yasavī himself. Before this period, the earliest written sources that attempt to give a 'biographical' account of Aḥmad Yasavī, and to record substantial narrative material focused on him, date only from the latter 15th century, and were produced outside the Sufi tradition linked with Yasavī. These sources – the Chaghatay Turkic *Nasā'im al-maḥabba* of Mīr 'Alī-shīr Navā'ī, in which the account of Yasavī appears among the entries on the "Turkic shaykhs," added by Navā'ī to the biographical structure of Jāmī's Persian *Nafaḥāt al-uns* (of which the *Nasā'im* is to a large extent a translation),[3] and the Persian *Rashaḥāt-i 'ayn al-ḥayāt*, a hagiography intended to frame the early history of the tradition just then becoming known as the Naqshbandīya, in which the account of Yasavī appears in a substantial 'prologue' to Naqshbandī history[4] – reflect Yasavī's renown as a miracle-worker, and the prominence of his shrine, in addition to his status as a Sufi shaykh, and (in the case of the *Rashaḥāt*) his place in a Sufi *silsila*. It is sobering, indeed, to recall that Yasavī's shrine itself attests, in brick and mortar, to his regional prominence a full century prior to the appearance of the accounts of Yasavī in these written sources; the classic 15th-century account of the shrine's construction by order of Timur, moreover, identifies Yasavī in terms of his natural descent, from Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya, not in terms of his Sufi affiliation,[5] and might seem to justify an argument that Yasavī's initial renown was based on his sacred descent, rather than on his prominence as a Sufi shaykh.

3 BROCKELMANN, 1952: 222; NAVĀ'Ī, 1996: 383; NAVĀ'Ī, 2011: 326–327.

4 ṢAFĪ, 1977: 17–19.

5 YAZDĪ, 2008: I, 861; cf. YAZDĪ, 1972: f. 294b, and the translation of the passage in THACKSTON, 1989: 87.

The relatively late and diverse character of the written references to Aḥmad Yasavī heightens the importance of the scattered sources in which his name is mentioned prior to the 15th century. Until recently, the earliest unequivocal and clearly datable reference to Aḥmad Yasavī[6] was found in a passage from the Persian *Chihil majlis*, a collection of sayings and discourses of the celebrated Sufi shaykh 'Alā' al-Dawla Simnānī (d. 736/1336), compiled around 1325. Simnānī belonged to an initiatic lineage typically identified as 'Kubravī,' and the account is thus of special importance, in terms of the dates of Aḥmad Yasavī's life, for portraying him as a contemporary of Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 618/1221) and of the latter's disciple Raẓī al-Dīn 'Alī Lālā (d. 642/1244); the account is also of significance for depicting Aḥmad Yasavī quite straightforwardly as a Sufi shaykh and *khānqāh*-keeper in Turkistān.[7] Works of comparable antiquity offer precisely the same depiction: the Khwājagānī *Maslak al-'ārifīn*, from the middle of the 14th century,[8] and the treatise of Isḥāq Khwāja b. Ismā'īl Ata,[9] from roughly the same period, portray Yasavī as a "working" Sufi master of Turkistān.

However, a recently published Persian source, previously unknown, allows us to push back our earliest historical mention of Aḥmad Yasavī into the 13th

6 There is a possible allusion to Aḥmad Yasavī, under the designation "Pīr-i Turkistān," in the *Manṭiq al-ṭayr* of the celebrated Persian poet Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār; the older dating of this work (573/1178, based on a note found in some manuscripts) would have complicated somewhat the later dating for Aḥmad Yasavī (i.e., placing his death in the late 12th or early 13th century), but it is now generally recognized that this early date is not correct. See DE BLOIS, 2004: 239–240; and see the most recent reevaluation of 'Aṭṭār's oeuvre, which places the *Manṭiq al-ṭayr*'s composition in the first decade of the 7th / 13th century, and re-dates 'Aṭṭār's death to 627/1230 (SHAFĪ'Ī KADKANĪ, 1999: 48–49, 81–83).

7 SĪSTĀNĪ, 1987: 230; SIMNĀNĪ, 1988: 218–219. On Simnānī, who traced his Sufi initiatic lineage to Raẓī al-Dīn 'Alī Lālā through just two intermediaries and was evidently well-informed about affairs in Central Asia – he counted a shaykh from "Turkistān" among his earliest spiritual influences, and later had a prominent disciple from Turkistān – see ELIAS, 1995: esp. 15–31.

8 See, on this work, my discussions in DEWEESE, 1996a, and in DEWEESE, 2011a; see also PAUL, 1998a.

9 On this Turkic work, see the preliminary discussion in DEWEESE, 2009, and my discussion of the Ismā'īl Atā'ī tradition in DEWEESE, 1996b. The work of Isḥāq Khwāja has been discussed, on the basis of a late manuscript, in TOSUN, 2011: 38–47; as noted there, a text edition based on the same late manuscript was prepared in 2010 by Eshabil Bozkurt as a thesis for Fatih University in Istanbul. A discussion of Isḥāq Khwāja's work, and of all known manuscripts containing it, appears, in connection with the publication of a shorter text attached to that work, in DEWEESE / MUMINOV, *et al.*, 2013: 55–82.

century, and indeed into the first half of that century, much closer to his lifetime than any other account that has been brought to light. The source in question bears the title *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn va zād al-sālikīn*, and survives in two manuscripts; the older of them identifies its author as Abū Manṣūr 'Uthmān b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ūzjandī al-'Ajamī, while the later manuscript makes it clear that this figure is none other than the famous 'patron saint' of the town of Ūzgand, in the eastern Farghāna valley, Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch (the identification is borne out by references within the text itself, in the older copy, to "Burhān-i Qïlïch"). The present study is intended to discuss the brief but important reference to Aḥmad Yasavī in the work of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch; situating the latter figure as a hitherto unappreciated 'authority' on Aḥmad Yasavī, however, requires some discussion of what may be known of this author and his legacy, and in fact reveals some parallels, and some differences, between these two figures and their images that are themselves instructive with regard to the religious history of Central Asia.

2. Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch and his Legacies

Compared with Aḥmad Yasavī, whose prominence today stands in such stark contrast to the paucity of evidence on him for several centuries after his lifetime, Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch is quite well-represented in early sources of various kinds, and he left significant legacies that were well-known not only within his native region, but throughout Central Asia. At present he is probably best known in connection with his shrine, in Uzgen (the classical Ūzgand, or Ūzjand, near present-day Osh, in the eastern portion of the Farghāna valley belonging now to Kyrgyzstan),[10] but Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch also inspired a substantial narrative tradition in local folklore; oral tradition recorded in the late 19th and 20th centuries portrays him as a hero who saved his native Ūzgand by slaying a dragon that was eating the children of the townspeople,[11] suggesting that his chief reputation was that of a legendary 'patron-saint' of this town. Still earlier, from the 16th

10 On the shrine of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in Ūzgand, see GORIATCHEVA, 2001: 105–106; earlier references to the shrine are noted below.

11 The version recounted in KARAFFA-KORBUT, 1897, is translated (in connection with the shrine of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch) in CASTAGNÉ, 1951: 80; see also BETGER, 1924: 141, as well as KIRGIZSKIE NARODNYE SKAZKI, 1981: 334–336, and BAIALIEVA, 1985: 195. Other early 20th-century recordings are discussed in ABASHIN, 2003.

century to the 19th, he was probably best known as one of the saintly ancestors of a widely dispersed familial Sufi lineage most prominently represented by the so-called Aq-taghlïq and Qara-taghlïq 'dynasties' of Naqshbandī *khwājas* active in Eastern Turkistan (as noted below). Such a combination of shrine-lore, tales of heroic miracle-working linked to particular towns or communities, and genealogical traditions is well known in the case of many Central Asian saints – including Aḥmad Yasavī – but in the case of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, we have much earlier attestation of several components of his saintly persona.

The most substantial discussion of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch to date appears in a recent article by the Russian ethnographer Sergei Abashin, who paid particular attention to the construction of his image, gathering and analyzing a wide range of historical, genealogical, and folkloric material;[12] Abashin's study adduced important evidence and offered a number of valuable correctives to earlier discussions of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, as well as some insightful arguments; but insofar as he missed some sources, and could not yet have known of the newly published Sufi work of Burhān al-Dīn,[13] it may be useful to review the evidence we have on this saint.

12 ABASHIN, 2003; see also ABASHIN, 2001.

13 Abashin's longer article focused chiefly on suggesting a pathway for the transformation of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch's image from that of a sober Ḥanafī jurist to that of a Sufi shaykh and miracle-working saint; to a large extent, the discovery of Burhān al-Dīn's Sufi work renders such a pathway unnecessary, and I would argue that it makes more sense to assume that his earliest reputation – like that of Aḥmad Yasavī, incidentally – was as a regionally prominent Sufi shaykh. Even without the evidence that work provides, we might object that there was no compelling reason to suppose that Burhān al-Dīn could not have been *both* a sober jurist and a Sufi teacher (his Ḥanafī affiliation, meanwhile, remains purely conjectural). Abashin discussed many of the written sources and epigraphic recordings noted below, and rightly argued against the 11th-century dating proposed for Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in some works (going back to Bartol'd; see ABASHIN, 2003: 216); at the same time, his discussion of certain aspects of Sufi history in Central Asia is somewhat confused (e.g., the discussion of 'Ishqī history, ABASHIN, 2003: 230, and his broader handling of the 'Uvaysī' notion), and the treatment of some written sources is incomplete (e.g., the discussion of sources produced in the lineage of Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam, ABASHIN, 2003: 231–234) or insufficiently critical. In the latter regard the nature of two works Abashin uses extensively is quite problematical. First, he accepts without comment that a certain "Aḥmad Uzgandī" was the author of the Persian hagiography (in which Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch appears) known as the *Tadhkira-yi Bughrā-khānī* or *Tadhkira-yi uvaysīya*, based evidently on the summary description of this work in BALDICK, 1993 (which he cites); as outlined already in my review article on Baldick's book (DEWEESE, 1996c: 94–96), the question of this work's authorship is much more complicated than Baldick's discussion suggests: "Aḥmad al-Uzghanī al-Namanghānī" is indeed men-

Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch was in all likelihood a contemporary of Aḥmad Yasavī, if a somewhat younger one, though there is no evidence that the two figures ever met; but where the dating of Aḥmad Yasavī remains conjectural and must be argued on the basis of indirect evidence, Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch may be situated chronologically on the basis of an account written at the beginning of the 14th century by someone who met at least two individuals directly acquainted with the saint. After his own Sufi work, discussed below, the key early source mentioning Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch is the historical work of Jamāl Qarshī, from the early 14th century, in which the author names several figures among the eminent men of the Farghāna valley whom he met;[14] first among them is the *imām* and *ṣadr* Nuṣrat al-Dīn, identified as the son of Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Qilīj al-Ūzjandī. Fourth in his list is Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Haravī al-Ilāmishī, whom he affirms he met, in Ilāmish (in the Farghāna valley), in 668/1269–1270; this Jamāl al-Dīn had recounted to him the story of his own meeting, as a young man, with "the shaykh of the *sharī'a* and the *ṭarīqa*," Burhān al-Dīn Qilīj. According to the account, Ilāmishī had traveled in his youth from Khurāsān to Mawarannahr with a group of companions, seeking the company of eminent Sufi shaykhs, and had heard of the reputation of Burhān al-Dīn; hoping to meet him, they had made their way to Khujand and on to Ūzgand, where, however, the

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tioned as the author of this work in some manuscripts, but by far not in all, and in any case we have far too little reliable evidence on the basis of which to speak of this figure as an authentic 16th- or 17th-century informant representing a local "Ūzgandī" tradition about Burhān al-Dīn. Second, Abashin accepts the Persian *Majmū' al-tavārīkh*, ascribed to one "Sayf al-Dīn Akhsīkandī", as an authentic source from 16th-century Farghāna; this work's 16th-century dating has been accepted by others, and more recently it has been enshrined by Qïrghïz scholars as a 16th-century record of narratives reflecting the epic tradition of Manas, but in fact this work is full of material that must have been compiled in the latter 18th or even 19th century, and while part if it might indeed go back to a 16th-century source, the work as we have it cannot be that old (see the brief discussion in PRIOR, 2013: 28–29, n. 79).

14 See the text of the account from Jamāl Qarshī's *Mulḥaqāt*, first published in BARTOL'D, 1898: 149–150; the Russian translation, based on Bartol'd's text, in SHARAFUTDINOVA, 1988: 123–124; and the new text edition and translation of VOKHIDOV / AMINOV, 2005: 150–152 (Russian translation), cci–cciv (edited text), ff. 32a–b (facsimile). The latter publication, based on the recently-discovered third known copy of the work, gives the *nisba* of Jamāl Qarshī's informant in the form "Lāmishī." The account of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in Jamāl Qarshī's work has often been cited, but a number of imprecisions have crept into the discussion, with some scholars implying that Jamāl Qarshī met Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch himself; already Bartol'd credited words to Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch that were in fact clearly ascribed to Ilāmishī by Jamāl Qarshī (see BARTOL'D, 1926: 151).

shaykh kept them waiting as he finished the lessons he was giving in a mosque. The account continues at length, with Ilāmishī acknowledging his initial irritation at the shaykh's delay, expecting that he would at least come out and tell them he was unable to meet with the group; Ilāmishī detailed for Jamāl Qarshī his mental preparations to reproach the shaykh, plans he couched in military metaphors of readying his "troops" for the attack and arranging his "right and left flanks." When Burhān al-Dīn did finally appear, however, Ilāmishī acknowledged that the shaykh at once "shot me" with the "arrow of his gaze," inducing "my 'troops'" to scatter; his thoughts thus vanished and he was left so dumbstruck that he forgot even to utter a greeting to the shaykh, whereupon Burhān al-Dīn, turning the tables, scolded his young visitor for failing even to greet him, much less launch his planned verbal assault: "where is your army, where are your right and left flanks?" Further examples of the shaykh's rough and quarrelsome nature followed before Ilāmishī finally fell at his feet, repented, and entered into discipleship (*irādat*) with him "heart and soul," enjoying abundant spiritual gifts as a result of his service to the shaykh.

The long narrative is of interest in several regards. It highlights Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch's substantial regional reputation, but also suggests that a prominent element in that reputation was the shaykh's contentiousness and quarrelsome nature; and indeed, a reputation for zealousness and harshness is evoked in most narrative accounts of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, both in specific examples of his interaction with other figures, and in the explanations given for his peculiar appellation, *qïlïch* (on which see below). Given the often formulaic evocation, in hagiographical narratives, of jealousy, contention, and outright struggle between saints, as well as the formulaic (but natural) narrative pattern in which a disciple acknowledges his initial suspicion, and subsequent powerlessness, in meeting his master for the first time, we might dismiss this account, despite its 'eyewitness' character, as a typical hagiographically-adjusted story with little actual substance. However, the remarkable consistency with which this contentious profile is ascribed to Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch suggests caution with regard to dismissing its importance, as does the general direction of later developments in his profile, which explicitly exculpate the saint himself for the consequences of contending with him (as outlined below); and in any case, the narrative context is ultimately all we have by way of understanding how the saint's memory was framed (certainly for Burhān al-Dīn, but often for other saintly figures as well), and it is thus more fruitful, usually, to delineate the features of his hagiographical profile, and to trace them, than to seek the chimera of his 'factual' life. Rarely, however, do we find such a distinct correspondence between the hagiographical profile

and an early, and at least semi-independent, characterization as the report of Jamāl Qarshī allows us to suggest for Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch.

At the same time, Jamāl Qarshī's account is obviously of chronological significance: he met both a son and an apparent disciple of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, in 668/1269–1270, and the generational difference suggests that Burhān al-Dīn must have been active, in the Farghāna valley, during the first half of the 13th century. The same era is suggested by the epitaph on a gravestone found in Ūzgand, identifying the deceased as Mawlānā Burhān al-Dīn, a descendant of "the most eminent and noble shaykh, the shadow of God on earth, the possessor of miracles and sainthood, the sovereign of the *sharī'a* and the religious community, our master and lord Burhān al-Ḥaqq wa'l-Dīn al-Qilij al-Ūzjandī;" this descendant of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch died on 17 Dhū'l-ḥijja 695/16 October 1296, and was thus likely a grandson or great-grandson of the saint, and possibly a son or grandson of the Nuṣrat al-Dīn met by Jamāl Qarshī.[15] Another epitaph from Ūzgand, from the grave-marker for a woman who died on 29 Jumādā II 775/16 December 1373, identifies her as a descendant of "Burhān al-Dīn al-Qilij al-Ūzjandī," the "*shaykh al-mashā'ikh*,"[16] suggesting considerable continuity in his reputation as a saintly ancestor whose descendants identified themselves in terms of his legacy; we will return to this issue shortly.

Likewise pointing to the first half of the 13th century for the saint's lifetime, finally, are hagiographical traditions about Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch linking him with a prominent saint of Samarqand, Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr, known as "the 14th Spiritual Axis" (*Quṭb-i chahār-dahum*); this saint's shrine was a prominent landmark in Samarqand before its destruction by the Russians in the late 19th

15 See GORIACHEVA / NASTICH, 1983: 174–175, for the text of this epitaph; another, later inscription on the same gravestone evidently calls this figure "Burhān Muḥammad" (pp. 75–77). See also DZHUMAGULOV, 1982: 124–130, and NASTICH, 1984: 167–168, 171–172. The epitaph is often cited as explicitly identifying the deceased as a "grandson" of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, but from the text it is clear only that he was a descendant (and not a son) of the saint; Abashin's discussion (ABASHIN, 2003: 231) is somewhat confused, and seems to assume that the two inscriptions refer to two different persons, a son and a grandson of the saint. Goriacheva and Nastich initially suggested that Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch belonged to, or established, a "branch" of the illustrious Āl-i Burhān – the family of Ḥanafī jurists, originally from Marv, who served in the post of *ṣadr* in Bukhārā during much of the 12th century – in the Farghāna valley (GORIACHEVA / NASTICH, 1983: 181); in Nastich's separate article, and in Goriatcheva's, the suggestion is assumed as established fact (NASTICH, 1984: 171–172; GORIATCHEVA, 2001: 110). Abashin rightly pointed out that there is no basis for this assumption (ABASHIN, 2003: 218–219).

16 GORIACHEVA / NASTICH, 1983: 177–179.

century,[17] and had served as a key point of orientation in the siting of the famous Gūr-i Amīr, the burial-place of Timur.[18] The latter point makes it clear that Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr and his shrine were well-known already by the end of the 14th century; the shrine's prominence also underlies the inclusion of a series of hagiographical tales about Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr in the Persian *Qandīya*, a 'cumulative' shrine-guide and sacred history for Samarqand that began to be compiled most likely during the 16th century,[19] but these tales overlap considerably with the content of independent copies of a work known simply as the *Manāqib* or *Maqāmāt* of Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr.[20] Among the stories found in both the *Qandīya* and in the independent *Manāqib* is an account that again highlights the contentious character of Burhān al-Dīn. The account involves Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr's son, Shaykh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad, who sought permission from his father to visit Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch; his father was reluctant, because of that shaykh's reputation for intense zealousness and impetuosity, but finally relented. When the *shaykh-zāda* came and Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn left to bring food, Shams al-Dīn took one of his host's books and began reading; noticing an error, he wrote a note in the margin of the book, and when Burhān al-Dīn returned and

17 No trace remains today of Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr's shrine; a photograph of it taken in 1897, before its destruction by the Russians, is printed in NAUMKIN, 1992: 80, Plate 56 (and see the brief description on pp. 76–77).

18 See the discussion in BARTOL'D, 1915, reprinted in BARTOL'D, 1963–1977: II/2, 423–454; cf. the English translation in ROGERS, 1974.

19 On the Persian *Qandīya*, see the discussion in PAUL, 1993. The Persian *Qandīya* was first made available through a Russian translation and commentary on the first part of the work, published by V. L. Viatkin (VIATKIN, 1906); Viatkin wrote that he used a 17th-century manuscript for his translation, but this publication is quite rare, and the *Qandīya* is thus perhaps best known through an edition prepared by Īraj Afshār and first published in Tehran in 1334/1955. Afshār's text was recently reprinted, together with that of a 19th-century work on Samarqand's shrines (with a less complicated textual history), the *Samarīya* of Abū Ṭāhir Khwāja (AFSHĀR, 1988). Afshār provided a list of manuscripts of the Persian *Qandīya*, but the text he published was based exclusively on a lithograph version, prepared by one Mullā 'Abd al-Ḥakīm and printed in Samarqand in 1327/1909 (already after Viatkin's translation appeared); these printed versions, however, differ considerably, both in the arrangement of materials and in content (reflecting both abbreviation and addition), from extant manuscript versions of the *Qandīya*. For the text of the "*Risāla-yi quṭb-i chahārdahum*" as it was incorporated into the *Qandīya*, see AFSHĀR, 1988: 84–128.

20 The independent *Manāqib* was noted in PAUL, 1993: 77–78, but was discussed in depth already by Bartol'd (BARTOL'D, 1915); Bartol'd had earlier noted the work's inclusion in the Persian *Qandīya* in his review of V. L. Viatkin's translation of part of the latter work (BARTOL'D, 1908: 0186–0187; BARTOL'D, 1963–1977: VIII, 259–260).

realized what he had done, he went out again and – as was his habit, we are told, when a person somehow offended him – brought back a piece of soap and four measures of cotton cloth (*karbās*) and placed them before Shams al-Dīn. These symbols of the washing of the young man's body and of his enshrouding, of course, portended his death, which happened at once. Shams al-Dīn's father, however, knew immediately of his son's death, and placed his head beneath his *khirqa* (i.e., to exert his spiritual power); when, after an hour, he raised his head again, Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr declared, "Now his business too has reached its end." The account concludes affirming that the funeral prayers for Shams al-Dīn and for Burhān al-Dīn were held the same day, and they were buried side by side.[21]

Beyond its hagiographical interest as an evocation of the motif of the "contest" of saints – it is a quite common motif, to be sure, though, as noted, accounts of Burhān al-Dīn seem unusually insistent on the severity of the consequences of contending with him – the story affirms that Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch died while Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr was still alive; the *Manāqib* affirms that Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr died in Dhū'l-Qa'da 646/February-March 1249, and further situates him chronologically by noting his association with the famous Sufi and jurist of Bukhārā, Sayf al-Dīn Bākharzī (d. 659/1261).[22] The date of the *Manāqib*'s composition is not precisely known, but its author, a certain Abū'l-Ḥasan, identifies himself as a descendant of Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn in the tenth generation (or ninth – the accessible copies give conflicting genealogical details), and portrays his grandfather, Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn, as a contemporary of Timur;[23] that these generational indications point to the middle of the 15th century as the time of the work's production is supported further by the mention, in the work, of figures such as Qāsim-i Anvār (d. 835/1431) and Mawlānā Ya'qūb Charkhī (who died most likely in the 1430s or 1440s).

21 *Manāqib* of Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr, MS Tashkent, IVRUz 3061/II (ff. 50b-76b, copied 1050/1640, apparently in Ura-tepe, described in *SVR,* III, pp. 203–204, No. 2236), ff. 67b-68a; MS St. Petersburg, Russian National Library, P.N.S. 330 (ff. 27a-58a, dated 1106/1694, described in KOSTYGOVA, 1973: 112–113, No. 331; cf. KOSTYGOVA, 1988: 212–213, No. 586), ff. 47a-b; MS St. Petersburg SPIVR, B4464/II (ff. 155a-205a, copied in 1277/1861 in Tashkent, described in MIKLUKHO-MAKLAI, 1961: 99–100, No. 153), ff. 185a-186a. Cf. the version in the *Qandīya*, in AFSHĀR, 1988: 96–98; this version elsewhere (p. 125) notes that Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch was the ancestor of the "*khwājagān-i Dahbīdī*" (i.e., descendants of Makhdūm-i A'ẓam, as discussed below).

22 On Bākharzī, see my discussion in DEWEESE, 1988: 47–49.

23 MS IVRUz 3061, f. 75a, MS RNB, f. 55a (MS SPIVR B4464 lacks this section).

Much the same story, moreover, culminating in the nearly simultaneous deaths of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch and the son of Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr (though without giving the son's name) is found independently in one of the biographies of the celebrated Naqshbandī shaykh of Samarqand, Khwāja Aḥrār (d. 895/1490), namely the work of Mawlānā Shaykh, known simply as the *Manāqib-i Aḥrār*. The account there explains that Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr had a learned son who sought his father's permission to visit Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch; the father warned that this shaykh was "an abrasive man" (*mardī tund*), but the son persisted, and he finally gave his permission. At Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch's home, when the shaykh went out to bring food, the son took one of his books and noticed an error or omission of some sort (*ghalaṭī yā sahvī*); he then drew a line at the spot "with his fingernail", and when the shaykh grew angry upon returning and seeing this mark, the son died instantly. Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr was aware of this at once, and his own saintly zeal went into action: "the blessed hairs on his arms stood up straight, and he said, 'My brother Burhān al-Dīn has done his work!'" Thereupon Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn died as well; and both bodies were carried out for burial at the same time.[24]

The hagiographical profile of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch that had emerged by the end of the 15th century highlights his specific reputation for zealous and contentious interactions; more broadly, it suggests that he may best be understood as the counterpart, for Ūzgand or the entire eastern Farghāna valley, of a series of locally prominent Central Asian saints, active in the early 13th century, who came to be regarded as 'patron-saints' of their towns, with shrines that became important local pilgrimage sites, and as ancestors of distinct family groups that were often privileged in their regions, but were never fully fitted into the initiatory transmission lines that were being formulated for Sufi communities during the 14th and 15th centuries (even though their ties to saints who *were* adopted into these lineages are often highlighted in extant sources). Such saints include the aforementioned Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr, linked with Samarqand; Zayn al-Dīn Kūy-i 'Ārifānī, linked with Tashkent; Maṣlaḥat al-Dīn Khujandī, linked with Khujand; and perhaps Pahlvān Maḥmūd, linked with Khwārazm, though he lived somewhat later. We might expand this list of saints by noting figures who were in all likelihood locally prominent Sufi figures around whom shrine complexes,

24 Mawlānā Shaykh, *Manāqib-i Aḥrār*, MS IVRUz 9730 (described in *SVR*, VIII, pp. 419–420, but wrongly called there a copy of Mawlānā Muḥammad Qāżī's biography of Khwāja Aḥrār; the correct identification was noted already in CHEKHOVICH, 1974: 17), ff. 81a-b; MS Patna, Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, H.L. 2480 (not described in a printed catalogue), f. 52b; KAWAMOTO, 2004: 111–112; NAWSHĀHĪ, 2001: 662.

miracle tales, and genealogical traditions developed within a century or two after their lifetimes, such as Ḥakīm Ata, Zangī Ata, Sayyid Ata, Ṣadr Ata, and Shaykh Khāvand-i Ṭahūr; however, these figures differ from the others, including Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, in having been implicated in Sufi *silsila*s constructed during the 15th century, and having been given thereby a more general initiatic importance, over and above their locally- or regionally-focused sanctity (which was, however, not forgotten).

This early phase in the development of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch's saintly profile is reflected in other sources as well, produced outside the Sufi environment; the earliest, no doubt, is the reference to Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in accounts of Timur's concern for his son Jahāngīr shortly before the latter's death in 777/1376. These accounts, appearing already in the *Ẓafar-nāma* of Niẓām al-Dīn Shāmī from the beginning of the 15th century, affirm that Timur saw Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in a dream and asked him to intercede with God on behalf of his son; the shaykh, however, gave a blessing to Timur himself but said nothing about Jahāngīr, leading Timur to grow even more concerned about his son's health.[25] The accounts make no explicit mention of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch's shrine, to be sure, but the context in which this dream-vision of the saint is said to have come to Timur is no doubt significant: it came in the midst of a campaign by Timur against the Dūghlāt *amīr* Qamar al-Dīn, prompted by the latter's attack on Andijān, and though the accounts do not mention Ūzgand specifically, it seems likely that a dream of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in this context reflects the localization of his saintly persona in the eastern part of the Farghāna valley, and thus indirectly points to Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch's shrine there. That his shrine was indeed prominent there already in the lifetime of Timur is suggested by another grave-marker found in Ūzgand, which appears to identify the Timurid-era chronicler known as Tāj al-Salmānī as the composer of an epitaph dated 807/1404; in it he identifies himself as "the least of the disciples" (*kamtarīn-i murīdān*) of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, a relationship that is clearly dubious in literal terms, but is no doubt understandable in the poetic environment of the epitaph.[26]

The presence of this saint's shrine in the Farghāna valley is also signaled, at least implicitly, in many of our references to descendants of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch. The phenomenon of familial groups claiming descent from prominent

25 SHĀMĪ, 1984: 72–73. The account was repeated later in Yazdī's *Ẓafar-nāma* (YAZDĪ, 208: I, 454–455), and became a standard element in Timurid historiography; see, for instance, SAMARQANDĪ, 2004: I/2, 495.

26 GORIACHEVA / NASTICH, 1983: 179–181; cf. NASTICH, 1984: 172. On Tāj al-Salmānī and his historical work, see ROEMER, 1956.

saints (often in connection with custody of their shrines) is widespread in Central Asia, and medieval sources are full of references to both individuals and groups identified in terms of such descent. There is undoubtedly a connection between such groups and the more recently prominent phenomenon of groups termed *khoja*s, identified also in terms of sacred descent, though the nature of the connection is not always clear, and in any case undoubtedly varies from group to group; it is likely that many such descent groups, at present and in the past, had some other origin (i.e., in Sufi communities affiliated with particular saints, in social groups tied to lands supporting particular saints' shrines, in sedentary or nomadic communities that came to be identified in terms of saints whose shrines were prominent in their vicinity, or with whose families the communities established some sort of communal bonds framed in terms of Sufi initiatic ties, etc.), but it is not immediately clear that claims of natural descent should be dismissed as improbable, despite the many possible avenues for 're-classifying' social groups that took shape in diverse circumstances in terms of the genealogical idiom of kinship with a saint.[27] What is remarkable in the case of Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch is the long-term continuity of the notion of descent from him: beginning already from the late 13th century, references to the saint's descendants may be found with some regularity down to the 18th century, at least – not, to be sure, with sufficient continuity to allow the tracing of actual lineages and genealogical structures, but frequently enough to suggest that claims of descent from Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch might not have been entirely fabricated – or at least to suggest the ongoing currency of the idea that his descendants might still retain, and indeed cultivate, an awareness of their link with him.

As noted, a son of Burhān al-Dīn is mentioned already by Jamāl Qarshī; a descendant, most likely a grandson or great-grandson, who died in 695/1296, and a female descendant who died in 775/1373, are known from epigraphic remains. Bābur, writing in the early 16th century, identifies one of his supporters,

27 Here it is claims of descent from medieval saints that are at issue, rather than the more problematical, but eventually nearly ubiquitous, claims of a given medieval saint's descent from a Caliph or some other figure, linked with the Prophet, from the earliest days of the Muslim community; the latter claims may be found relatively early – as with those, noted earlier, affirming Aḥmad Yasavī's descent from Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya, attested already since the 14th century – but they are in some respects less amenable to genealogical verification than the claims of kinship with the medieval saints, for which textual references may often be found. It may be at least partly for this reason that by the 18th or 19th century, and certainly at present, the group consciousness of the *khoja* communities typically bypasses the medieval saint and focuses on the hallowed figures from the early days of Islam.

Khwāja Mawlānā-yi Qāżī, who was killed in 903/1498, as a descendant, on his father's side, of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, and, on his mother's side, of Sulṭān Ilik Māżī (who in later sources is linked with Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in various ways).[28] According to the two major hagiographies devoted to the 16th-century Kubravī shaykh Ḥusayn Khwārazmī (d. 958/1551), the shaykh's ancestors were from the lineage of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, and dwelled near the latter's shrine, "in the *vilāyat* of Andījān," until the time of the Timurid prince Muḥammad Jūkī Mīrzā, when the saint's paternal grandfather came to Khwārazm.[29] Aḥmad Ṣādiq Tāshkandī, a disciple of both Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam and Muḥammad Islām Jūybārī who moved from Mawarannahr to the Ottoman realm in the late 16th century and established an important Naqshbandī lineage there, was descended from Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch through his maternal grandfather, according to an Arabic hagiography compiled by his disciple.[30] Maḥmūd b. Amīr Valī, author of the *Baḥr al-asrār*, compiled in Balkh around 1640, affirms that he himself was a descendant of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch through his father, and adds that Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch – whom he consistently calls a *sayyid* – was "one of the shaykhs of the author of the *Hidāya*,"[31] referring to the famous Ḥanafī jurist Burhān al-Dīn Marghīnānī (d. 593/1196–1197), a native of Rishdān in the Farghāna valley; his source for this claim is not clear, but given the two figures' overlapping dates and their activity in the Farghāna valley, it is not unlikely that they had some sort of connection. A document evidently survives, finally, issued by the Ashtarkhānid

28 BĀBUR, 1922: 29, 89; BĀBUR, 1995: I, 23, 80–81; BĀBUR, 1993: I, 31, 109–111; cf. the annotated and illustrated version of Thackston's translation, BĀBUR, 1996: 50, 92 (in this version, Thackston wrongly identifies Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch with Burhān al-Dīn ʿAlī al-Marghīnānī, author of the *Hidāya*).

29 Jānī-Maḥmūd b. Shaykh ʿAlī b. ʿImād al-Dīn Ghijduvānī, *Miftāḥ al-ṭālibīn*, MS Aligarh Subhanullah No. 297.7/13, f. 218a; Sharaf al-Dīn Ḥusayn Khwārazmī, *Jāddat al-ʿāshiqīn*, MS Aligarh Subhanullah No. 297.71/1, ff. 22b-23a (including a version of the story about how Burhān al-Dīn came to be known as "Qïlïch," noted below); on these two works, and on the career of Ḥusayn Khwārazmī, see DEWEESE, 1988: 69–74.

30 Muṣṭafā b. Ḥusayn al-Ṣādiqī, *al-Manhaj al-muwaṣṣil ilā'l-ṭarīq al-abhaj*, MS Princeton, Arabic Collection, New Series, No. 974, ff. 9b-10a; I am indebted to Dina LeGall for access to her copy of this manuscript. On Tāshkandī, who is also shown as a descendant of ʿUmar Bāghistānī, a shaykh of Tashkent active in the latter 13th century, see LEGALL, 2005: 22–23, 44–47, 88–97.

31 Maḥmūd b. Amīr Valī, *Baḥr al-asrār*, MS India Office, Ethé 575, f. 142 (noting also Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam's descent from Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch). The same points are made in another section of the work (without identifying Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch as a teacher of Marghīnānī); see AKHMEDOV, 1977: 71 (cf. p. 64, mentioning the shrine of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in Ūzgand).

ruler Imām Qulī Khān, in or after 1047/1637–1638, granting privileges to descendants of "*sayyid*" Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in Ūzgand.[32]

Much better-known, and with more widespread ramifications, is the descent of the Naqshbandī shaykh Aḥmad b. Jalāl al-Dīn Khwājagī Kāsānī, known as Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam (d. 949/1542), from Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch; the genealogical link between these two figures became widely known as a result of Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam's enormous renown in Central Asia. In addition to his status as a pivotal Sufi shaykh of the early 16th century, Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam is also known, on the basis of quite reliable sources, as the ancestor – both naturally and initiatically – of major hereditary Sufi lineages, including the Dahbīdī community that remained based near Samarqand, and the two two rival Naqshbandī *khwāja* lineages that vied for power in Eastern Turkistān from the 17th century to the 19th, known as the Isḥāqī (Qarā-taghlïq) and Āfāqī (Aq-taghlïq) groups;[33] all these lineages preserved, in their hagiographical and genealogical traditions, memory of their descent from Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, but his ancestry and further genealogical ramifications became especially important among the groups in Eastern Turkistān – which, in the aftermath of the Qing conquest of the region in the middle of the 18th century, spread further west as well, in the Farghāna valley, where the descendants of the Āfāqī lineage enjoyed the patronage and support of the khans of Khoqand. His centrality in the lineage is signaled by the fact that one of the Aq-taghlïq leaders who sought to resist the Qing conquest, a great-grandson of the founder of Āfāqī power, Khwāja Hidāyatullāh Āfāq, bore the name "Qïlïch Burhān al-Dīn".

The *khwāja*s of Eastern Turkistān also appear to have been responsible for circulating the "back-story" of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch himself, a genealogical tradition implicating Burhān al-Dīn in the dynastic structure of the Qarākhānid rulers based in Ūzgand – or, more precisely, the Qarākhānid elite as it was 'remembered' in Central Asia in the 16th century and afterwards. The basic story is that Burhān al-Dīn's father, called here Sayyid Kamāl al-Dīn, was a 16th-generation descendant of ʿAlī who came to Farghāna and was given in marriage the daughter of the local ruler, called "Ilik Māżī"; Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch was the son born from this union, and he eventually became the successor of his maternal grandfather, Ilik Māżī. Soon, however, as the story relates, he abandoned ruler-

32 The document is mentioned by A. A. Semenov in the preface to his translation of the *Tadhkira-yi Muqīm-khānī* from the early 18th century: SEMENOV, 1956: 9.

33 For the most recent study of the groups in Eastern Turkistān, see PAPAS, 2005; and see also the classic study of HARTMANN, 1905.

ship and became a disciple of "Shaykh Muṣliḥ al-Dīn Khujandī", a clear allusion to the Sufi figure known from earlier sources as Maṣlaḥat al-Dīn Khujandī, referred to above. As for the 'ruler' in the story, he bears a 'name', "Ilik Māżī", that combines an echo of Qarākhānid titulature with a generic allusion to the distant "past" (or simply to the ruler's "deceased" status); this appellation was applied already by Jamāl Qarshī to Naṣr b. 'Alī, an early Qarākhānid dynast who, he says, died in 402/1011–1012 and was buried in Ūzgand. In historical terms, he thus lived much too early to have been a grandfather of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, or simply a ruler contemporary with him; it may be that the two figures came to be linked because of the proximity of graves ascribed to them,[34] although it may also be noteworthy that Jamāl Qarshī cites two 13th-century informants for the account he relates about this figure, and one of them is the same informant from whom he heard the account of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch: Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ilāmishī.[35] That this figure was conversant with the lore surrounding both "Ilik Māżī" and Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch (with whom he was in all likelihood bound initiatically) suggests already a specific 'venue' for tales linking the two figures, especially given the subject of the story Jamāl Qarshī adds to his account of Ilik Māżī on Ilāmishī's authority: it recounts the ruler's encounter with an old man who turns out to be Khiżr, and thus seems already to reflect the 'extraction' of Ilik Māżī from a specific dynastic and historical framework, to serve as a narrative 'foil' in a religiously-framed morality tale. In any case, it is clear that Jamāl Qarshī understood "Ilik Māżī" to belong to the dynasty we recognize as the Qarākhānids (he identifies Naṣr b. 'Alī as a great-grandson of the famous Qarākhānid 'first convert', Satūq Bughrā Khān); by contrast, the Makhdūm-i A'ẓamī tradition says nothing of Sulṭān Ilik Māżī's historical place in the Qarākhānid dynasty, identifying him only as a descendant of the Caliph Abū Bakr.

The latter detail suggests caution regarding a seemingly obvious explanation for the motivation behind this genealogical elaboration involving Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch. The story, after all, supplies Burhān al-Dīn with genealogical links to

34 See ABASHIN, 2003: 223.

35 Jamāl Qarshī, *Mulḥaqāt*, in BARTOL'D, 1898: 133–135; SHARAFUTDINOVA, 1988: 107–109; VOKHIDOV / AMINOV, 2005: 105–108 (translation), cxlvii–cli (edited text), facsimile, ff. 22a–b. Here Jamāl Qarshī gives Ilāmishī's initial *nisba* as "al-Khurāsānī" instead of "al-Harawī," and says that he met with him in Ilāmish in 669/1270–1271 (instead of 668). The other informant mentioned in this long account is Kamāl al-Dīn al-Muẓaffarī, Jamāl Qarshī's mentor; on this figure's ties to a Sufi lineage going back to Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, see DEWEESE, 1994: 69–70, 94.

'Alī, on his father's side, and with ties, on his mother's side, to a figure recognized, more or less vaguely, as an important ruler of the pre-Mongol era, and it would seem reasonable to suggest that the story served the interests of the descendants of Makhdūm-i A'ẓam who combined claims to hereditary spiritual authority with political ambitions. The renunciation of rule by Burhān al-Dīn that concludes the story, however, already complicates such a supposition, as does the specific identification of Ilik Māżī as a descendant of Abū Bakr (suggesting an appeal to both spiritual and worldly authority, to be sure, but not on the basis of a Qarākhānid 'dynastic' link beyond the local context of Ūzgand). The motivation behind the story is also complicated by its appearance already well before the fully developed political claims of the Isḥāqī or Āfāqī lineage; the basic account evidently first appears in the *Jāmi' al-maqāmāt*, a widely influential hagiography devoted to Makhdūm-i A'ẓam compiled by a grandson of the shaykh in 1026/1617–1618.

The account in the *Jāmi' al-maqāmāt* appears to have served as the basis for versions of the genealogical elaboration found in a wide range of hagiographies produced by both *khwāja* lineages down to the 19th century, though some variations appear, especially in the genealogy shown for the father of Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch.[36] These genealogical discussions are typically combined with a brief narrative that adds a final key element to Burhān al-Dīn's hagiographical profile: the story explains the origins of the saint's unusual appellation, *qīlīch* ("sword"), which is taken as an allusion to his zealous and contentious character, and is explained through a vision of flies hurling themselves against the blade of a sword hanging by a thread: when the flies are split in half and fall dead to the ground, is it the sword's fault or the flies'? The point of the story, of course, is that the saint himself is not to blame if people who choose to challenge or oppose him or contend with him meet with disaster; their demise is merely the natural and inevitable result of, in effect, hurling themselves against the holy sword that is not simply wielded by the saint, but *is* the saint.

The story in fact appears to be older than the genealogical elaboration of Burhān al-Dīn's ancestry. Both the affirmation of Makhdūm-i A'ẓam's descent from Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch, and the story of the origin of his appellation – though without the genealogical back-story for Burhān al-Dīn himself – are

36 The lineages given in various works are presented for comparison in KIM 1996: 302–307; Kim's tables are based on original Isḥāqī and Āfāqī sources and are preferable to those given in ABASHIN, 2003: 232–233. See also the epitomized translation of accounts from the late *Tadhkira-yi 'azīzān* or *Tadhkira-yi khwājagān* in HARTMANN, 1905: 195–197, and in SHAW, 1897: 31–32.

found already in one of the earliest hagiographies focused on Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam, the *Silsilat al-ṣiddīqīn*, compiled in the mid-16th century, soon after Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam's death, by one of his disciples, Dūst Muḥammad b. Nawrūz Aḥmad al-Kīshī;[37] he cites the master himself for the affirmation that his father's ancestry went back through four generations to Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch (the chronological implications of this claim, with a generational distance that would point to the late 14th century, perhaps, for the lifetime of the notable ancestor, are immediately belied by the account's identification of Burhān al-Dīn as a contemporary of Shaykh Maṣlaḥat Khujandī and other figures, but such genealogical 'telescoping' is a familiar phenomenon in orally-transmitted lineages). The account continues with the story explaining the ancestor's name: Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, the story goes, used to cut off the head of anyone who committed an improper act (*bī-adabī*), and once he himself explained this seemingly severe habit with the image of flies hurling themselves against a swordblade, and then asking who was to blame, the sword or the flies. This version might seem stark enough in the image it conveys, but a variant of the story given in the slightly later *Jāddat al-ʿāshiqīn*, noted above as a hagiography devoted to Ḥusayn Khwārazmī written, probably, in the 1550s, is even more harrowing in its imagery, though it does not directly portray Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch as the killer of various offenders. Here we are told, rather, that in the time of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, everyone who rejected or slandered the Sufi path died

37 MS IVRUz 622 (uncatalogued), ff. 77a-b; another early account of Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam likewise mentions his descent from Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, according to BABAJANOV, 1999: 4. A treatise ascribed to Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam, and found among the two dozen or more treatises more clearly attributable to him, includes the author's own affirmation that his father had told him, "we are descended from Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch," through his son, "Qïlïch-lik Ata," whose grave is in the village near Samarqand called Shīrāz; see *Risāla-yi ʿilmīya*, MS Patna, Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, No. 2095 (described in ABDUL MUQTADIR, 1933: 75–91, No. 2095, copied in 1146/1733–1734), ff. 94b-95a; see also the sometimes confused Uzbek translation in MAKHDUMI Ä'ẒÄM, 1996: 35. The treatise cannot be clearly established as the work of Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam, but it does appear to have been produced within a familial lineage linked to him, possibly in the second half of the 16th century. Neither Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam's descent from Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch nor the latter's genealogy was restricted to works produced within the familial traditions stemming from Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam; as noted, the 17th-century *Baḥr al-asrār* affirmed the link between the two saints (MS India Office Ethé 575, f. 142a), and a full genealogy from Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam through Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, and on back to Ïlik Māżī, appears in the *Tuḥfat al-ansāb-i ʿalavī*, a compendium of mostly Central Asian genealogical traditions compiled in 1149/1736 by Khwāja ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Khwāja ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ḥiṣārī (MS IVRUz 1459 [described in *SVR*, III, pp. 340–341, No. 2638], ff. 183a, 185b–188b).

at once, and the reason became clear when the local ruler (unnamed) had a dream in which human beings struck themselves against a sword blade and were split in two (using the phrase "*har kas*" instead of the "*magas*" of the other accounts); when the ruler went in supplication to the shaykh, Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch told him, even before he could recount his dream, "You have seen that I had no choice or involvement in the matter."[38]

Further evocations, and elaborations, of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch's saintly persona may be traced in hagiographical and genealogical venues down to the present; in the latter regard, family groups in southern Kazakhstan defined in terms of descent from the saint have been discussed recently,[39] while among hagiographical sources two works in particular may be noted for their 'original' treatments of the saint. The earlier of these, in all likelihood, is the *Tadhkira-yi Bughrā-khānī*, known also as the *Tadhkira-yi uvaysīya*, a curious hagiographical compendium produced in Central Asia at some point during the 16th or 17th century; here Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch is classed among the saints representing the 'Uvaysī' style of sanctity, whose training and initiation come not from a living shaykh, but from the spirit of a deceased prophet or saint. The account of Burhān

38 *Jāddat al-'āshiqīn*, MS Aligarh, f. 23a (see above, note 29). The imagery evoked in these stories is in fact still older, as evidenced in the chief early hagiography focused on Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband, the *Anīs al-ṭālibīn*, from the very beginning of the 15th century. In the aftermath of an incident in which a dervish commits a *bī-adabī* toward Bahā' al-Dīn, is struck ill, recovers thanks to the saint's forbearance, and apologizes, this work shows Bahā' al-Dīn affirming that "The shaykhs are bared sword-blades. It is the people who strike themselves against that sword; the shaykhs do not strike themselves upon anyone" (*mashā'ikh tīgh-i barahna-and; khalq khūd-rā bar ān tīgh mīzanand va īshān khūd-rā bar kasī namīzanand*); see ṢALĀḤ, 1992: 348.

39 On the "Qïlïshtï *sayyid*s" of southern Kazakhstan, who claim descent from Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch (sometimes including Makhdūm-i A'ẓam in the lineage, but sometimes not), see MUMINOV, 1996: 366, and MUMINOV, 1998: 199. The impact of the local shrine environment on genealogical traditions is suggested by traditions identifying Makhdūm-i A'ẓam's father, "Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn," as a fifth-generation descendant of "Burkhan ad-din Qïlïsh," and his mother as the daughter of Aḥmad Yasavī (QŬRBANQOZHAEV, 1996: 141; cf. DÜYSENBAEV, 1991: 19–25). At the same time, the proliferation of shrines linked with Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch (to those noted by Abashin [ABASHIN, 2003: 225], from the Farghāna valley to Samarqand and Eastern Turkistān, may be added that of "Qïlïshlï Baba," in Karakalpakstan; see KHOJANIYĀZ ULÏ / JUMABAY ULÏ, 1994: 61, No. 3) is no doubt linked with the spread of descent groups claiming ties with him, either through Makhdūm-i A'ẓam or through some other genealogical framework.

ad-Dīn Qïlïch in this work[40] (which survives in a Persian original and in a number of Turkic renderings) stresses his enrapturement and zeal (beginning already in his childhood), which led him to slay anyone who strayed from religion or merely disrupted his mystical states; it includes echoes of motifs found in the recordings of folklore focused on Burhān ad-Dīn, including the element of two swords, hidden in a cave by an ancestor as a "legacy" (*amānat*) for the saint. The account also portrays Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch as a contemporary of Sulṭān Ilik Māżī, who is portrayed visiting the saint and bestowing gifts upon him following his presentation of his book (see below) to the ruler, but nothing is said there of the saint's kinship with the ruler, or his brief succession to rule, as highlighted in the Makhdūm-i Aʿẓamī traditions; indeed, a quite different genealogical structure is provided for Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in this work, with the further complication that the saint is said to have demurred when advised to include this genealogy in his book.

The later work is an even more unusual Persian compilation known as the *Majmūʿ al-tavārīkh*, which combines hagiographical tales linked, if loosely, with Sufi traditions and genealogical lore concentrated in the Farghāna valley, on the one hand, and extensive narrative material on the legendary history and 'folk ethnography' of Central and Inner Asia, on the other; this work purports to have been produced in the 16th century by one Sayf al-Dīn Akhsīkandī, and has been accepted as authentic by a host of scholars, but it is almost certainly a much later compilation, dating to the late 18th or 19th century (it probably reflects the late revision and garbling of traditions connected with the hereditary and initiatic Sufi lineages stemming from Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam). Here the standard historical and genealogical details about Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch recede still further from sight, as he is made a contemporary of Timur, for example, and is ascribed a son, called "Amīr Dīvāna," who is said to have died in 846/1442–1443.[41]

40 See the edited Persian text, ʿĀLAM, 1998: 290–298, and the English paraphrase in BALDICK, 1993: 131–134.

41 MS St. Petersburg, SPIVR, B667, ff. 84b-85b, 96a, 105b, 110a, 112b, 114a, 144a (on his 'son'); of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch's appearances in the work, only the first is included in the portions of the manuscript from St. Petersburg University that were published in facsimile in 1960 (TAGIRDZHANOV, 1960: 110–112, ff. 55b–56b). Abashin cited the 1996 publication, in Qïrghïz, based on a recently found third manuscript of the *Majmūʿ al-tavārīkh*. The work does seem to echo traditions placing Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in the lineage of a figure who resembles Makhdūm-i Aʿẓam, but the lineages and names (including those of various rulers linked to these saints) are thoroughly garbled (perhaps pointedly?); in all likelihood the work may bear comparison, in style and perhaps in substance, with the legendary narratives focused on Timur that were compiled in the 18th century, on which see SELA, 2011.

The treatment of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in both these atypical 'hagiographies' is of considerable interest for developments in the narrative lore focused on the saint, though tracing these developments is complicated by the lack of proper contextualization for both the *Tadhkira-yi Bughrā-khānī* and the *Majmū' al-tavārīkh* (both works are in need of closer and more serious study than they have received to date). However, it is doubtful that either work can offer significant material relevant to understanding the earlier phase in the development of traditions surrounding Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch (except for the reference to the saint's written work, as discussed below). The anonymous compilers of both works appear to have adopted a body of narrative lore established earlier, and to have adapted it to their own purposes; understanding those purposes will depend in part upon abandoning the assumption that these works were produced by and for the kind of Sufi communities that produced the majority of Central Asian hagiographical literature.

The review here of the sources mentioning Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch suggests that the development of his image may be divided into two phases, one from the 13th century down to the 16th, and one beginning in the 16th century and continuing down to the present. In the first phase, he is represented mostly as a Sufi shaykh with a particularly contentious saintly persona and a particular regional 'presence' in the eastern Farghāna valley; in the second, he is presented chiefly as an ancestor and / or as a figure of genealogical significance, with earlier narrative elements still attached to him, and with a shrine tradition no doubt continuing in his native region, but expanding beyond it in connection with the expansion of his genealogical legacies. What is missing in both phases is evidence of a substantial Sufi community linked to him in some way, whether hereditarily or initiatically; we may suppose that some of his natural descendants received also an initiatic transmission stemming from him, but this is never mentioned (as it was in the case of other saints of his era), and otherwise we have only Jamāl Qarshī's reference to a possible disciple a half-century after the likely lifetime of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch.

This profile, with its particulars in both phases, resembles in several respects the profile of Aḥmad Yasavī, though as noted Yasavī is far less-well represented in early sources than is Burhān al-Dīn; in the first phase, as suggested below, Yasavī appears as a Sufi shaykh, while in the second, we find Yasavī known for his descendants, and his shrine. In two regards, however, these two figures' profiles differ: first, Yasavī did have a substantial Sufi community claiming initiatic ties with him (in both phases, though the group for which we have evidence during that first phase is not the same as the group that

became prominent in the second phase); and second, unlike Yasavī (so far as is known at present), Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch left one major legacy that offers our earliest glimpse of him, namely the Sufi work he wrote, to which we may now turn.

3. The *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* and its Reference to Aḥmad Yasavī

The accounts of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch in the *Manāqib* of Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr and in the *Manāqib-i Aḫrār*, reviewed above, refer to the son of Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr perusing a book in the home of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch; it is not completely clear from the accounts that it was a work written *by* Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, though this seems to be the implication, and in any case the 'offense' for which the son had to die is certainly heightened if the story is taken as referring to the guest's discovery, and correction, of an error in one of his host's own writings (otherwise the offense is just that of rudely scribbling in a volume belonging to the host – serious enough, to be sure, but perhaps not warranting the young man's death, though it must be acknowledged that the topos of *bī-adab* behavior at work here is quite flexible, rhetorically). The story is told, of course, as an illustration of the shaykh's zealous power over anyone who crossed him, but it may also stand as an incidental allusion to the reputation of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch as the author of a written work; beyond these accounts, however, textual production seems not to be a major part of this shaykh's image, and indeed, neither the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* nor Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, as an author, appears to have been cited prominently in medieval Sufi literature from Central Asia (or elsewhere).

The lone reference to his work identified so far is found in the 'biography' of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch given in the *Tadhkira-yi Bughrā-khānī*, referred to above, which mentions the title, *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn*, and says that Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch completed the work in five years; the account specifies that the book was finished on the 20th day of Sha'bān – the year is not indicated – and was later presented to "Sulṭān Ilik-Māżī" when the latter came to visit the saint (there may even be an allusion to the structure of the work, which is divided into 55 sections, each termed a *faṣl*, in the account's claim that Burhān al-Dīn began the work at the age of 55).[42] The more or less accurate rendering of the title suggests

42 'ĀLAM, 1998: 296, giving the full name of the work as *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn va zubdat al-sālikīn* (instead of *"zād al-sālikīn,"* as given in the manuscripts of the work itself). Baldick read the

that the work indeed remained in circulation in Central Asia, where the *Tadhkira-yi Bughrā-khānī* was produced in the 16th or 17th century; but this work includes so much that is difficult or impossible to verify that Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch's authorship of a work entitled *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* could hardly be regarded as historically confirmed based on this mention alone.

In short, the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* was not known to have existed, let alone to have survived, until a text edition, based on two manuscript copies, was published in 2002 by Najīb Māyil Haravī,[43] whose discussion of the author, however, was limited to correctly identifying him as a native of Ūzjand or Ūzgand in the Farghāna valley (present-day Uzgen). Māyil Haravī evidently was unaware of the prominent reputation and legacy of Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch in Central Asia, and of the historical evidence on his lifetime; he thus assigned the work to the 6th century of the *hijra*, evidently on the basis of the figures known to him who are mentioned in the text. Māyil Haravī was likewise unaware of the reference to the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* in the *Tadhkira-yi Bughrā-khānī*. Despite the lack of appropriate contextualization for the author and his work, however, the publication was an extremely valuable contribution simply for making the work more easily accessible; the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* is indeed an interesting Sufi treatise in its own right, with its importance heightened by the time in which it was compiled. For present purposes, however, in order to turn to the passage of interest, we may refrain from further discussion of the work itself, and note only two remarks by the author near the beginning that bear on the work's historical context. One is the comment, at the end of the brief introduction that precedes the 55 *faṣl*s,[44] that he chose to write the work in Persian (*lafẓ-i pārsī*) so that everyone could profit

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title as "*Murabba' al-ṣāliḥīn*," and translated it as "The Square of the Devout" (BALDICK, 1993: 133); the text in some manuscripts indeed appears to read *Marba' al-ṣāliḥīn* ("the meadow of the pious"), a quite understandable orthographic error for *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* ("the pasture of the pious").

43 MĀYIL HARAVĪ, 2002, with the text of the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* on pp. 9–272, and the passage referring to Aḥmad Yasavī on p. 76. The volume containing the edition of this work was to be the first of a projected five-volume set including 20 works in all; this first volume includes, in addition to the work of Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch, an important Persian treatise by Zayn al-Dīn Khwāfī, a prominent Sufi of Herat in the early 15th century (pp. 475–579), and another larger work published under the title *Maqāṣid al-sālikīn* (pp. 275–471). The editor's identification of the latter work and its author is in fact incorrect, and the text published there is actually a version of the 14th-century Khwājagānī work noted earlier, the *Maslak al-'ārifīn*; see my discussion in DEWEESE, 2011a: 14–15.

44 MĀYIL HARAVĪ, 2002: 11–13.

from it, insofar as this language was "more common" (*'āmm-tar*). The other is the author's acknowledgment that he had had a son, named Manṣūr, who, he writes, had been entrusted with the 'post' of *khaṭīb*, i.e., "preacher" of sermons (*manṣab-i khaṭābat*) for all of Ūzjand; this son, however, had died before his father wrote the work. This comment – one of the few 'biographical' details provided in the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn*[45] – suggests that the son of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch met by Jamāl Qarshī must have been born later in the father's lifetime.

Judging from the available evidence on the lifetime of the author, Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* most likely was written in the second quarter of the 13th century, and thus stands as the earliest known source to refer to Khwāja Aḥmad Yasavī. Moreover, in the case of the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* we have also a very old manuscript copy of the work, preserved in the Süleymaniye library in Istanbul (MS Esad Efendi No. 1709).[46] On paleographic grounds, Māyil Haravī judged the manuscript, copied in a fine old *naskh*, to date from before 800 A.H., and noted that the codex contains two other works written in the same hand, one of which affirms that it was copied in Damascus, by Sulaymān b. al-Ḥusayn b. Ḥabīb al-Rūmī al-Qayṣarī, on Thursday, 16 Rabī' I 723/ 25 March 1323 (a Friday according to the standard conversion); we can thus be reasonably sure that the actual 'recording' of Aḥmad Yasavī's name in this manuscript predates even the compilation of the *Chihil majlis* (it also predates any extant epigraphic references to Aḥmad Yasavī at his shrine). The later manuscript, meanwhile, is preserved in the Nawshāhī collection in Lahore, and was copied on 26 Jumādā II 1328/5 July 1910;[47] Māyil Haravī described it as a poor copy, but noted its importance for having been made from a copy *other* than the very early Istanbul copy, thus confirming the work's wider circulation.

The *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* offers no biographical or hagiographical data on Aḥmad Yasavī, and unfortunately does not shed light directly on the question of

45 Another appears at the beginning of the first *faṣl* (MĀYIL HARAVĪ, 2002: 14), as Burhān al-Dīn introduces a *ḥadīth* with its full *isnād* down to himself; he unfortunately does not identify "our shaykh" by name – and there is no clear indication anywhere in the work who his teachers were, in Sufism or in other transmissions – but some of the *nisba*s borne by the latest figures in the lineage are of interest: our shaykh < *al-shaykh al-imām al-ustādh* Badr al-Dīn Abū Yaḥyā Zakariyā b. Yūsuf al-Safrānī [?] < *al-qāżī'l-imām al-ajall* 'Alā' al-Dīn Munīr b. Badr b. Ziyād al-Khujandī < *al-shaykh al-imām al-khaṭīb* Isḥāq b. Muḥammad al-Nasafī (the lineage continues back to Anas b. Mālik, with Abū'l-Layth Samarqandī among the transmitters).

46 On this manuscript, see Māyil Haravī's introduction, MĀYIL HARAVĪ, 2002: pp. *bīst-ū-yak–bīst-ū-sih.*

47 See Māyil Haravī's introduction, MĀYIL HARAVĪ, 2002: pp. *bīst-ū-sih–bīst-ū-panj.*

when he lived.[48] Its account is nevertheless important in several respects. Its mention of Aḥmad Yasavī appears in the context of a discussion of *dhikr* methods (at the end of the ninth *faṣl*), but what is at issue is not the familiar question from later times, i.e. the relative merits or legitimacy of the vocal or silent *dhikr*, but rather the verbal formula employed in the *dhikr*. After noting the "virtues" of the *dhikr* using the divine name "Allāh" alone, the author notes that

> Abū Sa'īd-i Bū'l-Khayr, and Khwāja Imām Ghazzālī, and, from Turkistān, Khwāja Aḥmad of Yāsī, and a substantial community (*va qawmī anbūh*) – may God have mercy upon them – have preferred the *dhikr* of "*Allāh*." On the other hand, Junayd and his pupils, and Khwāja Imām Yūsuf Hamadānī, and others – may God have mercy upon them – indeed many of the great [Sufis], have preferred the *dhikr* consisting of the words "*lā ilāha illā'llāh*," about whose virtues there are a great many *ḥadīth*s.

After some further discussion, the passage concludes with the author – "this miserable servant, Burhān-i Qīlīch" (*īn banda-yi ża'īf burhān-i qilij*) – offering his own opinion: as long as the performer of the *dhikr* must work to suppress his thoughts and to eradicate distractions, he should recite the *dhikr* consisting of the words *lā ilāha illā'llāh*; but once the *dhikr* is established in his heart, he should recite the *dhikr* using just the divine name *allāh*.[49]

48 The text adds a collective blessing for the dead after mentioning each group, and while such a formula might have been added by a copyist rather than the author, the work was probably written after even the latest likely death-date for Aḥmad Yasavī.

49 This approach of Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch, with different formulas identified as suitable for practitioners based on their level of advancement, echoes the formulations of other Sufis who prescribe the style of *dhikr* – i.e., vocal or silent – based on the adept's degree of spiritual attainment. For example, Burhān al-Dīn's contemporary, Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, affirmed that the vocal form of the *dhikr* was essential at the beginning, but that the higher goal was the interiorization of the *dhikr*, and its performance not by the tongue, but by the heart (and indeed, by the entire body); see RĀZĪ, 1973: 275–278, and the translation in RĀZĪ, 1982: 274–277. A similar approach is evident in works reflecting the early Khwājagānī tradition in Central Asia (see DEWEESE, 1999b: 503–504), and in the writings of the key Naqshbandī shaykh Khwāja Muḥammad Pārsā (see PAUL, 1998b). It is not clear whether the verbal formula employed in the *dhikr* may be correlated with the style of *dhikr*. In later times, the silent *dhikr* of the Naqshbandīya is often identified with the *dhikr* of "*lā ilāha illā'llāh*," with the Yasavī vocal *dhikr* understood to consist of the word "*allāh*," and Rāzī stresses the inaudibility of the *dhikr* of "*lā ilāha illā'llāh*;" it is doubtful, however, that we can infer this correlation in the case of Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch, whose formulation most closely matches that of Majd al-Dīn Baghdādī discussed below (though with a different evaluation).

The reference to Aḥmad Yasavī is quite brief, but the contents of the passage in which he is mentioned are of interest in several regards.

(1) First, in purely textual and technical terms, the passage is significant for the way in which the name of Aḥmad Yasavī's native town is written. The later manuscript of the work simply refers to "Khwāja Aḥmad Yasavī" (vowelled thus), but in the early copy, evidently dating from 723/1323, the text is most likely to be read "Khwāja Aḥmad-i Yāsī", i.e., "Khwāja Aḥmad of Yāsī"; it is possible that the latter form, "*yāsī*," might itself be intended as a *nisba* derived from the place-name with the same orthographic shape, "*yāsī*", but this seems less likely. In either case, the spelling of his native town's name, while perfectly reasonable as a rendering of the Turkic "*yasi*" (meaning "flat" or "level"), differs from the form that became most common in sources from the 14th century and after, i.e., "*y.sī*." It is of course not entirely certain that the form given in the older manuscript can be assumed to reflect the form intended by Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch himself a century earlier, but it is perhaps noteworthy in this regard that the place where the manuscript was copied – the overwhelmingly Arabic-speaking region of Damascus – and the time it was produced – in the early 14th century, well before the explicit writing of vowels in rendering Turkic words (typical of later Chaghatay orthography, and arguably influenced by patterns established in Uyghur-script orthography) became standard even in Central Asia – would lead us to expect the omission of the explicit medial vowel, i.e., "*y.sī*"; that this is not what we find suggests that the form "*yāsī*" was indeed used in the original text of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch. In any event, as a record of the place-name itself (regardless of its form), this passage from the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* is only slightly later than the appearance of "Yasï" (spelled *y.sī*) on coins minted there in the early 13th century.[50]

50 On the appearance of the town's name on undated silver coins struck during the reign of the last Khwārazmshāh, 'Alā' al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Tekesh (r. 1200–1220), see NASTICH, 1983: 144–145. Nastich suggests that the coins were issued around 607/1210 in connection with the Khwārazmshāh's occupation of the town of Otrār, and with it his control of the entire middle Syr Daryā valley, following success in battle against the Qarākhiṭāys, and argues that the minting of silver coins in Yasï, which he insists must have been a quite small settlement, was chiefly a political statement aimed at announcing the Khwārazmshāh's control over the frontier zone facing the steppe; this much is no doubt warranted, but Nastich goes too far in insisting that this political message had also a "religious-ideological character," a point he argues in part based on his acceptance of the date typically given for Aḥmad Yasavī's death (562/1166–1167): he cites "the recent missionary activity" in the region by "the Sufi preacher" Aḥmad Yasavī, as well as the Khwārazmshāh's interest in "the political aspects of

(2) Second, in terms of specific content, the reference to Aḥmad Yasavī here is of significance for its close resemblance to a passage from an Arabic work by the famous Sufi of Khwārazm, Majd al-Dīn Baghdādī, the *Tuḥfat al-barara fī'l-masā'il al-'ashara*, which must have been written at the very beginning of the 13th century,[51] somewhat earlier than the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* of Burhān al-Dīn Qīlīch; where the Persian work refers to Khwāja Aḥmad of Yāsī, however, this earlier work mentions only "the "*mashā'ikh al-turk*", without using Yasavī's name.[52] This account by Baghdādī – who is well-known both as a disciple of Najm al-Dīn Kubrā and as the master (by Kubrā's direction) of Raẓī al-Dīn 'Alī

Central Asian Islam," as indications that the issuing of coins reflected the ruler's "ambitions in the religio-political sphere" (the characterization here errs not only with regard to the likely date of Aḥmad Yasavī's death, but especially with regard to the religious stance of the Khwārazmshāh, whose realm, given his struggle against the Caliph al-Nāṣir, can hardly be termed, as Nastich calls it, a "Muslim state," and whose acquisition of the region entailed not its entry into the "world of Islam" – the area had been Muslim for at least two centuries – but the elimination of local Muslim dynasts [on their coinage, see KOCHNEV, 1983], and even the deportations of elements of the settled Muslim population). Nastich further suggests that the unusual absence of a date on these coins was itself part of the intended religio-political message, signaling that the addition of this "small but politically important" town into the "world of Islam, under the aegis of its real ruler in the person of the Khwārazmshāh," was an event of eternal significance and thus needed no specific indication of the date. Such argumentation is hardly the most egregious example, but it is remarkable how elaborate historical constructions may be built upon a widely accepted historical "fact," such as the date of Yasavī's death, that turns out to have little or no historical foundation; on balance it must be regarded as more likely that Aḥmad Yasavī *used* these coins than that they were minted to somehow evoke the memory of his "missionary activity" half a century earlier. In any case, the larger point made by Nastich, that these coins mark the earliest attestation of the name "Yasï," is in all likelihood correct, insofar as the coins clearly pre-date – though perhaps not by more than a decade or two – the composition of the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn*.

51 There is still no substantial study of the life and legacy of Majd al-Dīn Baghdādī; his death-date too is not yet firmly established. It clearly must be placed in the first two decades of the 13th century, based on the widely attested tradition that the shaykh was killed on order of the Khwārazmshāh Muḥammad, but whether it came soon before the Mongol invasion, as elaborated (and tendentious) accounts suggest, or earlier, is difficult to judge; his death-date is often given as 616/1219, but an 'autobiographical' account by Najm al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 654/1256), a disciple of Najm al-Dīn Kubrā who also counted Baghdādī among his teachers, gives instead 606/1209 (see SHPALL, 1981–1984: 72).

52 I have consulted a copy of the *Tuḥfat al-barara* from the Beinecke Rare Book Library at Yale University, MS Landberg 383 (described in NEMOY, 1956: 121, No. 1118; 79 ff., copied 17 Rabī' I 993/19 March 1585), in which this passage appears on f. 36b. On the

Lālā, and was famously a victim of the Khwārazmshāh Muḥammad – is certainly the earliest appearance of the phrase "*mashā'ikh al-turk*", which seems to be used in later times as a virtual synonym for affiliates of the Yasavī *silsila*; indeed, Majd ad-Dīn's use of it may already refer to the circle of disciples gathered around Aḥmad Yasavī, without identifying their shaykh by name, but it is nevertheless noteworthy that other references to the "shaykhs of the Turks", or the "shaykhs of Turkistān", appear later in the 13th century, still without mention of Aḥmad Yasavī by name.[53] In light of those later references, it would remain far from certain that Baghdādī had Aḥmad Yasavī or his Sufi circle specifically in mind when he spoke of the "*mashā'ikh-i turk*"; we might argue that Yasavī was linked with that group only in later tradition, or that Yasavī himself found

work, see *GAL*, I, 439, *GALS* , I, 785; the *Tuḥfat* was cited extensively in MEIER, 1957, and the passage in question was cited, in Persian translation, in the introduction to RIYĀḤĪ, 1983: 26. Unlike Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, incidentally, Baghdādī affirms that he and his companions prefer the formula "*lā ilāha illā'llāh.*" That formula is praised as the best *dhikr* in works by Baghdādī's master Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (see KUBRĀ, 1982: 31–34, and KUBRĀ, 1985: 22, as well as MEIER, 1957: text, p. 2), and by his disciple Najm al-Dīn Rāzī (RĀZĪ, 1982: 268 ff.); similar comments appear in the writings of later figures in the lineage stemming from Kubrā and Baghdādī, such as Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Isfarāyinī (see ISFARĀYINĪ, 1986: 125–128, 134, and especially Hermann LANDOLT's discussion, pp. 30, 38–50, 62) and 'Alā' al-Dawla Simnānī (see ELIAS, 1995: 126–132, noting that Simnānī's preference for the formula "*lā ilāha illā'llāh*" was accompanied by an insistence on the superiority of the silent *dhikr*). Like Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, however, Baghdādī does not explicitly tell us whether either formula was uttered audibly or not.

53 In an article that also refers to this comment by Majd al-Dīn Baghdādī, the Turkish scholar Mikâil Bayram calls attention to two other works, from the late 13th century, that mention "the shaykhs of Turkistān," again without mentioning Aḥmad Yasavī by name; see BAYRAM, 1996: 535–536 (reprinted in BAYRAM, 2003: 50–57 [specifically, pp. 51–52], and in Uzbek in BÄYRÄM, 2001: 281–287 [specifically, pp. 282–283]). Bayram (who consulted a manuscript from his private library and assigned Baghdādī's work a different title, "*Zubdat al-'awālī wa ḥilyat al-amālī*") gives no details about what Baghdādī says of the *mashā'ikh al-turk*, but insists that his words could refer only to "Yasavī and the Sufi movement he led." The other works to mention the "*mashā'ikh-i turkistān*" both appear to stem from the Sufi circles linked, in Anatolia, with the famous Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnavī (d. 673/1274): one, the *Minhāj al-'ibād*, was written by Qūnavī's pupil Sa'īd al-Dīn Farghānī (Bayram cites MS Bursa Eski Eserler Ktp. [Saraçoglu Kısmı] No. 825, f. 85a); the other is a small treatise by a certain Bahā' al-Dīn Togan [*sic*], possibly a pupil of Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī, who had consulted Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnavī about the *dhikr* method and principles of the "shaykhs of Turkistān" (Bayram cites MS Bursa Eski Eserler Ktp. (H. Çelebi Kısmı) No. 1183, ff. 74a–76a).

an existing tradition, or even a specific group, known as the "*mashā'ikh-i turk*", and gave his own imprint to their practice and subsequent communal development. The parallel between Baghdādī's passage and the brief account from the work of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, however, reinforces the connection between the phrase "*mashā'ikh al-turk*" and the Sufi career of Aḥmad Yasavī already in the 13th century.

(3) Third, the account from the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* is particularly noteworthy for distinguishing Aḥmad Yasavī's preferred *dhikr*-formula from that employed by Yūsuf Hamadānī: as is well known, sources produced within the Sufi tradition of the Khwājagān, and later the latter group's Naqshbandī successors, insist that Aḥmad Yasavī, like the 'founder' of the Khwājagān, Khwāja 'Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduvānī, was a disciple, in Sufism, of Yūsuf Hamadānī (d. 535/1140). This claim is extremely problematical on several fronts. Though later Yasavī sources tacitly accept it, they also continue what seem to be earlier accounts of Yasavī's spiritual training that emphasize Shihāb al-Dīn 'Umar Suhravardī (d. 632/1234) as his master.[54] The latter relationship has been doubted in modern scholarship on chronological grounds, based on the widespread acceptance of the date 562/1166–1167 given for Yasavī's death; it is in fact this date, however, that is problematical, and once it is recognized as baseless, it is the relationship between Yasavī and Yūsuf Hamadānī that becomes unsustainable on chronological grounds.

The old evidence from the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn*, that Aḥmad Yasavī differed from Yūsuf Hamadānī on a matter of Sufi practice as crucially important as the style of *dhikr* is not, in the end, entirely decisive evidence that the former could not have been the disciple of the latter; we must recognize the possibility, at least, that a disciple might not maintain the same practice as his master. Indeed,

54 The earliest 'internal' Yasavī source to affirm that Suhravardī was Yasavī's master is the *Jāmi' al-murshidīn*, a Persian hagiography completed in 972/1564–1565 by Ḥazīnī, himself a Yasavī shaykh originally from Ḥiṣār (in present-day Tajikistan) who established himself in Istanbul in the second half of the 16th century; MS Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, No. orient. Oct. 2847 (described in EILERS, 1968: 274–275, No. 352), ff. 54a, 62a–b. Suhravardī's role is also affirmed in the major Yasavī hagiography produced in Central Asia, the *Lamaḥāt min nafaḥāt al-quds* of 'Ālim Shaykh 'Alīyābādī, completed in 1035/1626 (on which see DEWEESE, 1999b). The *Manāqib* of Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr, discussed above, also identifies Suhravardī as Yasavī's master, assigning him a particular role and acknowledging other teachers as well; a similar presentation, finally, is found in brief notes attached to several manuscripts of one redaction of the work of Isḥāq Khwāja b. Ismā'īl Ata, mentioned above (see above, note 9).

many Sufi texts from the 13th–15th centuries, including several Khwājagānī works, feature specific discussions of why one disciple or another parted from his master with regard to the practice of the *dhikr*; such discussions, however, occur mostly in connection with cases of controversial succession (e.g., the succession to Ghijduvānī, Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband's succession to Amīr Kulāl), or involve 'permission' from Khiżr to part with the master's *dhikr* method, and on this basis we should keep in mind that as the question of the mode of *dhikr* became more important as a sign of legitimacy and communal affiliation, accounts of constancy in a master's style of *dhikr*, as well as accounts claiming deviation from a master's method, became more important as evidence of competitive discourses than as indications of actual practice and affiliation. In the work of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, however, there is no discussion of master-disciple relationships among the figures mentioned in connection with the *dhikr*, or of succession, and if the account reviewed here is not conclusive evidence against Yasavī's discipleship under Hamadānī, it certainly goes hand in hand with other evidence to undermine the credibility of what has become the 'standard' presentation of Aḥmad Yasavī's initiatory affiliation in Sufism.

In this regard it is of further note that the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* does link Yasavī, in his preferred *dhikr*-formula, with the famous Khurāsānī shaykh of the early 11th century, Abū Sa'īd b. Abī'l-Khayr (d. 440/1049), whose legacy in initiatic transmission and spiritual method is as obscure as his historical personality and putative literary productions are renowned.[55] The same 'internal' Yasavī sources that preserve mention of Aḥmad Yasavī's discipleship under Shihāb al-Dīn 'Umar Suhravardī also mention, among Yasavī's multiple Sufi masters, a certain Najm al-Dīn Ṭūsī, an utterly obscure figure who is nevertheless shown, in one of those accounts, as a disciple of the famous 10th-century Sufi of the region of Ṭūs, Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj;[56] in reconstructions of the initiatic chain of transmission for Abū Sa'īd b. Abī'l-Khayr, al-Sarrāj is also typically shown as the master of Abū Sa'īd's master, Abū'l-Faẓl Sarakhsī, and although the truncated lineage given for Yasavī through Najm al-Dīn Ṭūsī clearly cannot be taken at face value, it is not impossible that it does reflect some kind of relationship between Aḥmad Yasavī, or his spiritual influences, and the Sufi circles of Ṭūs with which Abū Sa'īd b. Abī'l-Khayr was also linked. Similarly, we can hardly

55 On this figure, see MEIER, 1976, and O'KANE, 1992.

56 Najm al-Dīn Ṭūsī is mentioned as Yasavī's master in Ḥazīnī's *Jāmi' al-murshidīn*, in the *Lamaḥāt*, and in the *Manāqib* of Nūr al-Dīn Baṣīr; only the addendum to the work of Isḥāq Khwāja b. Ismā'īl Ata shows this figure as a disciple of Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj.

take Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch's comment about the mode of *dhikr* shared by Yasavī and Abū Sa'īd as decisive evidence of Yasavī's initiatic relationship with a lineage, or with individuals, bearing some connection with Abū Sa'īd, but it is nevertheless significant as an additional indication that the 'standard' accounts of Yasavī's spiritual training and initiatic pedigree do not tell the full story.

Likewise of interest in this regard is the other significant difference between the account from the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn* and that given in the work of Majd al-Dīn Baghdādī (aside from the explicit mention of Aḥmad Yasavī in the former): like Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, Baghdādī mentions, as those who prefer the *dhikr* employing the word "*allāh*", "the group of Shaykh Abū Sa'īd b. Abī'l-Khayr and the shaykhs of the Turks, and others"; but Baghdādī identifies the upholders of the *dhikr* using the formula "*lā ilāha illā'llāh*" as "the group (*tabaqa*) of Shaykh Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf ibn Ayyūb al-Hamadhānī and Shaykh Abū'l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī and others". Unlike the *Marta' al-ṣāliḥīn*, Baghdādī's work links Yūsuf Hamadānī, in terms of the *dhikr*, with Abū'l-Najīb Suhravardī, the uncle and initiatic master of Shihāb al-Dīn 'Umar Suhravardī; Baghdādī thus implicitly distinguishes the style of *dhikr* employed among the "Turkic shaykhs" from the style of *dhikr* preferred by *both* the prominent shaykhs identified in our sources as Aḥmad Yasavī's masters, thereby further complicating the question of his spiritual training.[57]

In this regard, finally, Burhān al-Dīn's discussion of the *dhikr*-formula may remind us that the concerns of a Sufi writer in the 13th century should not be expected to coincide with those of later Sufi writers; this is certainly the case with regard to matters of the organization of Sufi communal life, which changed enormously between the 13th century and the 16th, but it also true with regard to matters of ritual and devotional practice. Differences in the formulas used in the *dhikr* that were important enough to Burhān al-Dīn to be highlighted in the

57 It may be of interest in this regard that Baghdādī elsewhere mentions a distinction between the practice of Hamadānī and that of Suhravardī (Yale MS, f. 37a; cited in RIYĀḤĪ, 1983: 26): one group of shaykhs, he writes, prefers the continuous practice of mystical seclusions (*al-khalwat 'alā'l-dawām*), such as "al-Shaykh Yūsuf al-Hamadānī," while others, such as "al-Shaykh Abū'l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī," prefer the practice of 40-day retreats, with "rest" between the seclusionary sessions (*al-arba'īnāt wa'l-istirāḥa fī mā-bayn al-khalwatayn*). This distinction is of some interest insofar as Yasavī practice employed 40-day retreats but also defined its preferred discipline as based in "continuous practice of the *dhikr* in *khalvat*" (a feature of the so-called "Path of Junayd"). The different alignments of practice remind us of the fluidity of the various components of Sufi communal life, from practice to multiple initiations, in the period before the coalescence of Sufi 'orders.'

passage under discussion lost their significance and fell out of later discussions, while the key difference stressed in the course of later duels both within the Khwājagānī community, and between some Khwājagānī (and later Naqshbandī) circles and Yasavī or ʿIshqī groups – namely, whether the *dhikr* was uttered silently or audibly (and indeed boisterously) – went unmentioned by Burhān al-Dīn (and by Majd al-Dīn, in the same era).

(4) Finally, the account reviewed here is significant, more broadly, simply for confirming Aḥmad Yasavī's reputation, in the first half of the 13th century and thus in all likelihood within a half century of his death, as a prominent Sufi shaykh. On the one hand, the company of illustrious figures with whom he is named and implicitly compared – such major figures as Abū Saʿīd b. Abī'l-Khayr, Imām Ghazzālī, Junayd, and Yūsuf Hamadānī – is in itself quite remarkable, all the more so considering the virtual silence of our sources about Yasavī for another two and a half centuries after this work's reference to him. On the other hand, the account is of interest for reminding us that the various elements of Yasavī's saintly profile must have developed in different historical eras. As noted, relatively early evidence highlights his sacred descent (from Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya), and his genealogical importance for various families of the region of Turkistān; similarly early evidence attests to his likely reputation as an Islamizing saint, an image that evidently developed during the Mongol era[58] (even if his depiction as "the Islamizer of the Turks" is, however, a late development); his shrine was likewise undoubtedly a focus of religious activity well before the building of the monumental structure ordered by Timur at the end of the 14th century. By all evidence, the best-known part of the Yasavī legacy today was no doubt the latest to develop: his reputation as a poet seems to have taken shape only during the 18th and 19th centuries, as his name came to be associated with the poetry of the so-called *Dīvān-i ḥikmat*, a collection of Chaghatay Turkic verse composed long after Yasavī's lifetime.[59]

Whenever and however, precisely, these elements of Yasavī's image developed, however, the earliest references to him, including the one in the 13th-century source discussed here, leave no doubt that the earliest component of his saintly persona was his reputation as a Sufi shaykh in a quite 'mainstream' current of Sufi thought and practice. In other words, our earliest historical references to Aḥmad Yasavī make it clear that he was first and foremost a Sufi

58 See the discussion of aspects of this reputation in DEWEESE, 2000.

59 On this issue, see the discussion in DEWEESE, 2006, and DEWEESE, 2011b.

shaykh, and offer compelling evidence for the supposition that whatever familial or hagiographical traditions came to surround his persona, it was his Sufi career that initially shaped his image and his popular reputation. A similar conclusion, we may suggest, may be drawn in the case of Burhān al-Dīn Qïlïch, even though the trajectories of these two figures' saintly images differed in as many ways as they overlapped; ironically, however, it is the latter figure's written work, which leaves his Sufi identity quite clear, that helps also to confirm the Sufi identity of Aḥmad Yasavī.

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