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JOURNAL OF SUFI STUDIES 15 (2026) 203–237

JOURNAL OF SUFI STUDIES

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A Khurasani Sufi *Ṭā'ifa* through Miraculous Formation, Female Succession, and Mongol Destruction

The Case of the Maqāmāt-i Shaykh Ẓiyāʾ al-Dīn Ḥātimī

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Received 14 September 2024 | Accepted 20 August 2026 | Published online 9 October 2026

Abstract

The *Maqāmāt-i Shaykh Ẓiyāʾ al-Dīn Ḥātimī* is a unique and little studied Persian Sufi hagiography, partially extant in two manuscripts in Istanbul and Rampur. The text describes both the life and deeds of its subject, a Sufi Sheikh based in a village in Khurasan in the lead up to the Mongol Conquests, and the difficulties faced by his followers when the death of their leader coincided with a deteriorating political situation. Touching on themes varying from property inheritance to female leadership and from symbiosis with Turkish groups to Alid marriage alliances, this article will reconcile the text with the wider situation of the period. It considers the *Maqāmāt* critically as a representative of the hagiographic genre, questioning the reliability of its transmission of historical information and exploring the circumstances of its authorship.

Keywords

Khurasan – Sufism – Mongols – Khwarazmshahs – women

Published with license by Koninklijke Brill BV | DOI:10.1163/22105956-BJA10051
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1 Introduction

In 2005, Devin DeWeese published an analysis of a Persian hagiography entitled *Maqāmāt-i Shaykh Ẓiyā' al-Dīn Ḥātimī* contained in a *majmūʿa* of texts connected to the Kubrāvī order held at the Raza Library in Rampur.[1] Though a short text amounting to 13 folios in total, DeWeese identified it as a unique monument to an otherwise unknown Sheikh Ẓiyā' al-Dīn Ḥātimī and his *ṭā'ifa*[2] of Juvayn in Khurasan and an early source for the lives of the founder of the Kubrāvī order Najm al-Dīn Kubrā and his prominent disciple Raẓī al-Dīn Lālā. He provided careful translations of the stories in his fragment, summarised a series of letters it contains which art attributed to the text's protagonist, and made some estimate of the period of his activity.

However, DeWeese was unaware of a significantly longer and more complete version of the text extant in the form of a manuscript held at the Rare Works Library of Istanbul University, totalling 187 folios in length. A photocopy of this MS is held at the Tehran University Library and on the basis of the photocopy Najīb Māyil Hiravī had previously published a Persian-language study of the text in 1991 in his miscellaneous volume *Dar shabistān-i ʿirfān*, a publication which seems to have received very little recognition from existing scholarship either inside or outside of Iran.[3] He provided summaries of the greater part of this much longer manuscript, explored the dating and sources of the text, and discussed various aspects of the *ṭā'ifa*'s practices. However, there were many sections of the Istanbul MS which he did not explore deeply. He was wholly unaware of the Rampur MS, and there remained much work

1 Devin DeWeese, "Two narratives on Najm al-Dīn Kubrā and Raḍī al-Dīn ʿAlī Lālā from a thirteenth-century source: notes on a manuscript in the Raza Library, Rampur", in *Studies on Sufism in Central Asia* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), n. XI. This manuscript is Rampur Raza Library Sulūk 764/30, fols. 348b–361b. DeWeese describes the contents and form of this *majmūʿa* with accuracy and detail, and his observations will not be repeated here. On the basis of a colophon at the end of one of the works in the *majmūʿa*, he dates the manuscript to roughly 929/1523.

2 In the Sufi context, *ṭā'ifa* refers either to a community or group of Sufis typically on a smaller scale than a *ṭarīqa*, or from at least the fourteenth century CE onward to a sub-branch of a larger Sufi order or *ṭarīqa*. From context, the meaning in the present text would fit the former usage. See E. Geoffroy, "Ṭā'ifa", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam Second Edition Online*, and Alexandre Papas, "Order, Ṣūfī", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three Online*.

3 Najīb Māyil Hiravī, *Dar shabistān-i ʿirfān: majmūʿa-yi rasā'il-i Fārsī az pīrān-i Īrān* (Tehran: Nashr-i Guftār, 1369/1991), 29–115. Istanbul University FY00800 and Tehran University 248F respectively. A pdf of the Istanbul MS is now freely available from the website of Istanbul University Library. I was not granted permission to inspect the original of the Istanbul University MS, and all my observations of it are consequently based on the pdf version. To date I have been unable to locate further copies of the text in Turkey, India, or elsewhere.

to do in integrating the text's narrative of *ṭāʾifa* with the wider history of the period. Additionally, when describing the text, he did not refer to page or folio numbers of the Istanbul MS nor engage with its disorders, making it a challenge to disentangle his own inferences from what is actually written.

While the Istanbul manuscript is untitled, both Māyil Hiravī and the Istanbul University Library catalogue refer to it as the *Manāqib-i Shaykh Ẓiyāʾ al-Dīn Ḥātimī*. In the more complete form which the text appears in the Istanbul MS we learn far more about its protagonist Sheikh Ẓiyāʾ al-Dīn Ḥātimī and his *ṭāʾifa*, allowing us both to more firmly situate them within the turbulent context of early 13th century Khurasan and to compare the *Manāqib* against other examples of the Sufi hagiographical genre from that region.[4] In doing so, we will necessarily explore the potentially extensive contributions which it offers to debates on the role of female leaders in Sufism and on the social impacts of the Mongol Conquests for the rural communities of Khurasan.[5]

2 The Text in Summary

Before proceeding to further discussion of the text, it would serve to summarise briefly the narrative and thematic structure of the *Manāqib* as preserved in the two MSS, as well as the picture of the Sheikh's biography and his *ṭāʾifa*'s story which it presents us.[6]

4 For the pre-Mongol period, these consist of the three hagiographies written for Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr (d. 1049) and two hagiographies written for Aḥmad-i Jām Zhanda Pīl (d. 1141). Abū Rawh Luṭfallāh ibn Abī Saʿīd, *Ḥālāt u Sukhanān-i Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr*, ed. Muḥammad Riżā Shafiʿī Kadkanī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Sukhan, 2005). Muḥammad ibn Munawwar, *Asrār al-Tawḥīd fī Maqāmāt al-Shaykh Abī Saʿīd*, ed. Valentin Zhukovski (St Petersburg: Dār al-Khalāfa-yi Piṭurbūrgh, 1899). Anon., *Chashīdan-i Ṭaʿm-i Vaqt*, ed. Muḥammad Riżā Shafiʿī Kadkanī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Sukhan, 2006). Muḥammad Ghaznawī, *Maqāmāt-i Zhanda Pīl*, ed. Hishmat Muʾayyad Sanandiji (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i ʿilmī va farhangī, 1961). This last publication includes two separate hagiographies on Aḥmad-i Jām, the *Maqāmāt-i Zhanda Pīl* and the *Risāla dar Iṣbāt-i Buzurgī-yi Aḥmad-i Jām*.

5 For discussions on female leadership in Sufism, see Nelly Amri, "Portrait d'un saint d'Ifrīqīya dans sa famille ou l'épouse comme source pour l'hagiographe d'après *al-Asrār al-jaliyya fī l-manāqib al-dahmāniyya d'al-Dabbāgh* (m. 699/1300)", in *Family Portraits with Saints. Hagiography, Sanctity, and Family in the Muslim World*, eds. Alexandre Papas and Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 343–93. Recent archaeological study is challenging existing ideas on the Mongol impact on urban settlements. See Katie Campbell, "The Impact of the Mongol Conquests on Earthen Cities in Central Asia", *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* 12.2 (2023): 393–414.

6 A detailed comparison between the two MSS and a reconstruction of the order of the Istanbul MS is made in sections 3 and 4.

Sheikh Ẓiyāʾ al-Dīn Abū Bakr Ḥātimī was born to Saʿd al-Dīn Abū ʿAlāʾ al-Ḥātimī, a descendent of the Sufi leader Ḥātim al-Aṣamm (d. 851–2). Both the Sheikh and his father were based in Khudashah, the chief village of the Juvayn district in Khurasan located about 150km north-west of Nishapur. The details of the Sheikh's initial spiritual education are unclear, but his earliest activity seems to have been conducted among Turkic groups named "Chāj-Khāniyān" and "Tilmishiyān" in the areas north of Tus near Ustuva, in defiance of his father's wishes.[7] Following his father's death, the Sheikh left for the Holy Land and spent several years in seclusion in a place referred to as "Tall al-Nuḥāṣ", six farsangs from Khalīl-Allāh.[8] After experiencing transformative visions here, he returned to Khudashah and a diverse group of wise men quickly arrived to follow him.[9]

The timeline of the development of the *ṭāʾifa* which formed around him is unclear, but the many miraculous tales give some idea of their practices, many of which resemble those of other Khurasani Sufis.[10] *Samāʿ* was conducted in the evenings three days a week, and the Sheikh would sometimes take part in the dancing. The Sheikh would take new initiates by the hair and either shave it himself or order for it to be shaved.[11] He would deliver sermons three days a week alongside eloquent reciters and speech-makers.[12] Both fasting and the avoidance of sleep were encouraged of his followers, and the Sheikh did both to a miraculous extent.[13] The Sheikh had a dedicated building in which he spent periods of seclusion, an activity which was also widespread among his followers.[14] These practices place the Ḥātimī *ṭāʾifa* within a distinctive Khurasani tradition of antinomian Sufism, a tradition on the point of developing its

7 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 33a–35a. David Durand-Guédy has argued this area served as summer pasture for the Turkmen nomads of the era. David Durand-Guédy, "The Türkmen-Saljūq relationship in twelfth-century Iran: New elements based on a contrastive analysis of three *inshāʾ* documents", *Eurasian Studies* 9.1–2 (2011): 17. Later cooperation with local Turkmen is also mentioned. Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 2b, 7a, 80a–83b, 161a.

8 Possibly Hebron in Palestine. Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 35a–37a.

9 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 37a–38b.

10 Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr likewise danced during *samāʿ*, was capable of miraculous fasts, and practiced seclusion in a dedicated cell. Muḥammad ibn Munawwar, *Asrār al-Tawḥīd*, 110, 160–2.

11 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 41b–42a. The shaving of the head was widely practiced in Medieval Sufism. Lloyd Ridgeon, "Shaggy or Shaved? The Symbolism of Hair among Persian Qalandar Sufis", *Iran and the Caucasus* 14.2 (2010): 236–8.

12 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 41a.

13 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 79b, 90a.

14 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 39a, 163b–164a.

extreme Qalandari form and which had grown out of local conflicts between the Karrāmiyya and Malāmatiyya movements.[15] The Ḥātimīs would seem relatively moderate in their practices however, and there is no testimony for their use of intoxicants or other strongly socially-deviant behaviour.

The greater proportion of the text does not however deal with the Sheikh's doctrines or the customary practice of the *ṭāʾifa*, but is formed of miraculous tales related by his disciples. There are well over fifty of these stories in total and they range considerably in temporal and geographical scope—some examples occur on the Hajj pilgrimage while others conclude well after the Sheikh's own death. Their narrative structures are recognisable to anyone who has perused similar hagiographies like the *Maqāmāt-i Zhanda Pīl*—a disciple testifies to a feat of *firāsa* or *baraka* performed by the Sheikh and by this miracle the *ṭāʾifa* wins material sustenance, new members, or the good will of local people. A small number may have even been explicitly modelled on those in previous hagiographies.[16] Few connections are made between the Sheikh's following and the wider *ʿulamāʾ* of the *maẕāhib* of Khurasan, and certain stories would suggest that this relationship was an uneasy one. A tale by a Hanafi leader turned disciple of the Sheikh tells of a conspiracy by the Hanafi *ʿulamāʾ* of Abivard to issue a fatwa against him on a visit to that town. He successfully foils their plot to defeat him in a debate at a madrasa in the town, winning the narrator to his cause in the process by both afflicting him with blindness and curing him of it.[17]

The text concludes in the events surrounding the death of the Sheikh, with a variety of narrators detailing his farewell to his followers, his testament, the distribution of his inheritance, and his laying to rest.[18] While it is with these events that the *Manāqib* closes, previous chapters also make reference to occurrences subsequent to the Sheikh's death. We hear that the Sheikh's daughter ʿAzīza

15 On this tradition, see Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200–1550* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994), 30–1, 56–9. Alexandre Papas, "Antinomianism", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three Online*.

16 Compare the tale of the Sufi sent away on an errand who falls in love and whose desires for a young woman are foiled by the Sheikh, to a similar story about the desire of a disciple of Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr for a young man. Compare DeWeese, "Two narratives", 23–4, n. 60 with Muḥammad ibn Munawwar, *The secrets of God's mystical oneness: Asrār al-Tawḥīd fī Shaykh Abī Saʿīd*, trans. John O'Kane (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1992), 38.

17 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 159a–161a. Jealous *ʿulamāʾ* are likewise portrayed as the major enemies of Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr and Aḥmad-i Jām, and their major strategy was also to denounce the practice of the Sheikhs as non-Islamic. See Jürgen Paul, "Au début du genre hagiographique dans le Khorasan", in *Saints Orientaux*, ed. Denise Aigle, (Paris: De Boccard, 1995), 25–6.

18 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 182a–191b.

took over the running of the *ṭā'ifa*, and her son Mu'īn al-Dīn Muḥammad was its final spiritual leader, surviving his mother by but a few years. Before analysing the text further however, we must address the complexities of the text's manuscript tradition and venture dates for the life of the Sheikh and his successors, the activities of his *ṭā'ifa*, and the *Manāqib*'s own composition.

3 Reconstructing the Order of the Text

The single greatest deficiency of Māyil Hiravī's study is in its lack of engagement with the disordered and deficient nature of the Istanbul manuscript, disorders which the Rampur MS is of some assistance in resolving. In all probability, the manuscript was rebound at some point in its history, and the loss of certain folios and disordering of others occurred as part of this process.[19] While in broadly good condition and written in a clear and legible *naskh* by a single hand throughout, the Istanbul MS lacks original catchwords to ensure continuity between its folios. Damage and repair to the start and ends of several folios makes the task of resolving its disorders harder.[20] The manuscript has been foliated in a modern hand in pencil in the top-left hand corner of each a-side, but this foliation skips from fol. 110 to fol. 115. This would appear to be an error of foliation rather than an indication that folios have been lost, as the text on fol. 115a follows that of fol. 110b. 23 of the 187 folios of the Istanbul MS have some marginalia, which is in several hands and in both Arabic and Persian. Most of this would seem to be prayers and pious invocation, although there is some commentary on a line from the *Dīvān-i Shams* of Rūmī and a line from ʿAṭṭār.[21]

As the Rampur MS is an abbreviated extract of highlights from the original *Manāqib*, there is some degree of divergence in the order in which material is presented as compared to the Istanbul MS. The Rampur MS is therefore of some assistance in reconstructing individual narratives but must be used with greater caution when conceptualising the structure of the work as a whole. The Rampur MS is near identical when it comes to their respective reproductions of the Shaykh's letters and the longer stories, but there is a far greater degree

19 Some breaks are subtle while others are jarringly obvious, such as the Persian of fol. 2a interrupting the Arabic of fol. 1b midsentence.

20 E.g. Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 32a, 100a.

21 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 172a, 172b.

of divergence when it comes to the Shaykh's commands, with the Rampur MS leaving a number out or abbreviating them.[22]

Relying on the content of the text and comparison with the Rampur MS to identify discontinuous folios, I would suggest that the Istanbul MS contains a total of 34 breaks in continuity:

> 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11–16, 17–23, 24–31, 32–71, 72, 73, 74–79, 80–83, 84, 85–99, 100, 101–107, 108, 109, 110–120, 121–127, 128–142, 143–164, 165–172, 173–177, 178–80, 181–188, 189, 190, 191.

Carefully examining these breaks and making further comparisons with the Rampur MS, I would suggest that we can identify a total of 21 sections by reordering the MS. My suggestions are as follows, with the brackets marking reordered continuous sections:

> 1, (2, 80–83, 3), 6, 7, 9, 72, 73, 74–79, (85–99, 108), 100, 101–107, (109, 84), (110–20, 24–31, 181–188), (121–7, 11–16, 5), (128–142, 4), (143–164, 8, 10, 17–23, 32–71), 165–172, 173–177, 178–80, 190, (189, 191).

In addition, the manuscript in its current form preserves the chapter headings to three of the four chapters of the text, as well as its first and last folios. The heading for chapter two comes on f. 67b, that for chapter three comes on f. 77a, that for chapter four comes on f. 94a, and that for chapter 6 comes on f. 182a. These headings give us the contents of their chapters, and we can use the text preceding these headings to infer the contents of chapter one and five. We can thus reconstruct the contents of the text as follows:

> Chapter 1: Arabic opening to the text, beginning of the Sheikh's career, his constructions, his major servants, his family, Arabic biography of his ancestor Ḥātim al-Aṣamm.
>
> Chapter 2: On the Sheikh's spiritual stations, miracles, and narratives (*dar bayān-i maqāmāt u karāmāt u ravāyāt*)
>
> Chapter 3: On the Sheikh's devotional practices: acts of worship, litanies, invocations, and prescribed times for their performance (*dar waẓāyif-i ṭāʿāt u afrād u daʿavāt u awqāt*)
>
> Chapter 4: On the Sheikh's sayings in verse and prose (*dar kalamāt-i manẓūm u manṯūr-i Shaykh*)

22 For this divergence, compare Rampur Raza Library Sulūk 764/30, fol. 354a with Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 123b–124a.

Chapter 5: On the Sheikh's followers, deputies, and family

Chapter 6: On the Sheikh's illness, last testament, death and burial, and the miracles which occurred and the dreams which were seen after his passing (*dar maraż u vaṣāyā u vafāt u dafn-i Shaykh, salām Allah ʿalayhi, va karāmāt ki baʿd az Shaykh ẓāhir shud va khwāb-hā ki baʿd az-īshān dīdand*)[23]

Using this information, we can reorder our 21 suggested sections so that the headings follow each other sequentially and the contents of each section proceed in a logical order. My suggested reordering is as follows:

1, 6, 7, 9, (121–7, 11–16, 5), (143–164, 8, 10, 17–23, 32–71), 72, 73, 74–79, (2, 80–83, 3), (85–99, 108), 100, 101–107, (109, 84), (128–142, 4), 165–172, 173–177, 178–80, (110–20, 24–31, 181–188), 190, (189, 191).

4 A New Edition

The text was published for the first time in 2024 in Tehran by Muḥammad Riżā Shafīʿī Kadkanī under the title *Maqāmāt-i Ḥātimī*. It employs both the Rampur and Istanbul MSS, and will doubtless play an important role in making the text accessible to a wider scholarly audience. However, its introductory matter cites neither DeWeese nor Māyil Hiravī's previous studies of the text and it offers little discussion of the manuscripts or of how they have been used to produce the edition.[24]

Shafīʿī Kadkanī's edition is primarily based on the Istanbul MS, employing the Rampur MS only to supply sections missing from the former and for occasional corrections. In the main, he does not indicate where the MSS vary from one another textually for sections extant in both MSS. For example, on p. 266 he marks out where he has corrected *ṣuḥbat* in his base MS to *ṣiḥḥat*, but does not acknowledge that the Rampur MS also has *ṣuḥbat* written here.[25] His occasional footnotes to the Rampur MS refer to page numbers not folio numbers (both are marked in the original).

His edition uses interlinear brackets to refer to the folio number of the Istanbul MS from where the text is drawn. These interlinear brackets mark the end, not

23 This broadly chronological structure has much in common with that of the *Asrār al-Tawḥīd*. Compare Muḥammad ibn Munawwar, *Asrār al-Tawḥīd*, 8.

24 Anonymous, *Maqāmāt-i Ḥātimī*, ed. Muḥammad Riżā Shafīʿī Kadkanī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Sukhan, 2024), 9–66.

25 Rampur Raza Library Sulūk 764/30, fol. 353a.

the start, of his use of a particular folio. He does not refer to the folio numbers as written on the Istanbul MS, but rather the "true" folio numbers from fol. 1a to fol. 187b, disregarding the misfoliation between fol. 110 to fol. 115 which we have discussed. He identifies a total of 48 breaks in continuity in the Istanbul MS, identifying them not just between folios but between a-sides and b-sides and within passages of connected text. The edition is split into the reconstructed 6 chapters of the text, and scattered sections which he is unable to fit into his reconstruction. His reconstruction is built from the Istanbul MS as follows, using here the folio numbers as written in that manuscript to match my usage:

> 33–70, 72, 2, 80–83, 3a, 8, 10, 17, 149–150a, 73, 18–23, 7, 101–107, 100, 128–139a, 150b–151a, 173–180, 165–172, 151b–164, 141b–142, 4, 143–148, 74–79, 87–99, 108, (section exclusively in Rampur MS), 121–127, 109, 84, part of 79b, part of 11a, 14b–16, 5, part of 84b, 110–120, 24–31, 181–188, 9, 190, 189, 191

Scattered pages:

> 1, 3b, 85–86, 32b, 11–14b, 2, 71, 139b–140, 32a

There are reasons to recommend Shafīʿī Kadkanī's reconstruction, not least his willingness to place ambiguous sections separately at the end rather than shoehorn them into chapters. However, the number of breaks in the text means that a different editor might produce an equally plausible edition but whose stories pan out and are ordered quite differently. Under these circumstances, it is to be lamented that he does not discuss his critical method in greater depth in his introduction, nor make clearer where the Rampur and Istanbul MSS differ.

Furthermore, his decision to split up apparently complete pages in the Istanbul MS invites scepticism. For example, the last sentence on Istanbul fol. 79b is separated from the remainder of the folio in chapter 3 and transposed to chapter 5 where it neither completes the previous sentence nor begins the one which follows it.[26] In this case, it would appear that the editor has transposed the sentence because it is an incomplete command of the Sheikh and he therefore views it as belonging to chapter 5 on the Sheikh's commands, rather than because any manuscript evidence supports this decision. Over-engineering a text in this way without first defining one's critical method would seem inherently risky. Shafīʿī Kadkanī's efforts will bring the *Maqāmāt* to a wider audience, but his reconstruction must be treated with appropriate caution.

26 Anonymous, *Maqāmāt-i Ḥātimī*, 234, 278.

5 Dating the Life of Sheikh Ḥātimī

Establishing a rough range for the Sheikh's life span is essential, especially for relating the text to its wider historical context. The decline in the *ṭā'ifa*'s fortunes, ʿAzīza's assumption of control, and apparent instances of self-contradiction in the text may all become easier to understand if we can map its narrative against the timeline of the Mongol Invasions of Khurasan. However, the information for doing so is scattered across different stories from different informants, and information from one story is not always consistent with another. What is more, these stories are obviously the products of later hagiographical traditions, and some of the data they offer is manifestly implausible.

The immediate challenge to dating the *Manāqib* is the dearth of fixed dates in the text itself. Aside from the colophon of the Istanbul manuscript, which reads 725 AH, there are only two other dates in total. Instead, time is more often referred to in relative terms, most typically in relation to the number of years an event occurred before or after the death of the Sheikh.

On dating, our existing studies offer differing answers. Māyil Hiravī has a broad estimate of 590–610/1193–1214 for the date of the Sheikh's death, but this is calculated circumstantially through reference to contemporaries of the Sheikh who feature in the text like Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 618/1221), rather than through systematic calculation.[27] Shafīʿī Kadkanī argues that the Sheikh died before the first Mongol attack on Khurasan in 618/1221, but acknowledges that there are contradictions in the evidence in the text.[28] DeWeese, who had only the 13 folios of his Rampur MS to work from, implicitly offers a later date for the Sheikh's death. He suggests that a letter only preserved in the Rampur MS addressed by the Sheikh to an "Atābak Muẓaffar al-Dīn Atsīz b. Saʿd b. Zangī" was probably for the Salghurid ruler of Fars Abū Bakr Muẓaffar al-Dīn b. Saʿd (r. 623–658/1226–1260).[29] The question of accuracy here is of particular importance in that two scholars see the Sheikh as a pre-Mongol figure while the

27 Māyil Hiravī, *Dar shabistān-i ʿirfān*, 44.

28 Anonymous, *Maqāmāt-i Ḥātimī*, 30–4.

29 DeWeese, "Two narratives", 18–9. The Salghurids were a dynasty of Seljuq Atabegs based in Fars who subsequently became first the vassals of the Khwarazmshahs, and then the Mongols. It was in Abū Bakr Muẓaffar al-Dīn b. Saʿd's reign that their switch of allegiance to the Mongols took place. On the dynasty, see Erdoğan Merçil, *Fars Atabegleri Salgurlular* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1975). Stefan Kamola has recently argued that there is some uncertainty over Salghurid regnal dates in the early 13th century. Stefan Kamola, "Salghurid History in the *Jāmiʿ al-Tawārīkh*: a Preliminary Exploration of Its Composition and Transmission", in *New Approaches to Ilkhanid History*, eds. Timothy May, Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog, and Christopher P. Atwood (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 135–6.

other sees him as living through and reacting to the initial turmoil of Mongol penetration, their arrival in neighbouring Transoxiana occurring in 1219.

Of the two dated events in the text, the first is the year 682/1283–4 for the end of the life of the Sheikh's wife ʿĀʾisha, who predeceased him.[30] This date would place the end of the Sheikh's life well into the Ilkhanid period. The other is 523/1128–9 for the birth of a disciple of the Sheikh, a birth the Sheikh foresees through *firāsa* and a date which would place the Sheikh's life within the reign of the Seljuq Sultan Sanjar.[31] As it is noted elsewhere in the text that the Sheikh died at the age of 94,[32] basic logic tells us that the two dates cannot both be correct.

Another *firāsa* story has the Sheikh announcing the birth of Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥamuwayī in the *vilāyat* of Juvayn, this being revealed to him as he was returning from the Hajj.[33] We have a fair amount of information from other sources about this Saʿd al-Dīn as he was one of Najm al-Dīn Kubrā's most prominent disciples, and his al-Ḥamuwayī family of Sufis at Bahrabad has been previously studied by Jamal Elias.[34] The biographical literature gives Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥamuwayī's date of birth as 1190 or 1191 CE.[35]

The rest of our available data is relative. We learn that the Sheikh's daughter by ʿĀʾisha, called ʿAzīza, is born a year and half before her mother dies.[36] We are told that at the time of the Sheikh's death she had been married for 14 years.[37] Additionally, she herself dies either 4 or 7 years after the Sheikh's death.[38] She gives birth to her son Muʾīn al-Dīn Muḥammad after 6 years of marriage and he dies at the age of 21.[39]

If we make a few further assumptions, we might attempt to calculate from this relativised data a range for the death of the Sheikh and his successors. The date of 682/1283–4 for end of the life of the Sheikh's wife ʿĀʾisha is obviously far too late, as shown by the birth of Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥamuwayī, but if we assume it is a copyist's error for 582/1186–7 it would fit with our known chain of events rather well. All we then need do is make an estimate for the youngest age the

30 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 56b.
31 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 31a.
32 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 182b.
33 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 177a–177b.
34 Jamal J. Elias, "The Sufi Lords of Bahrabad: Sa'd al-Din and Sadr al-Din Hamuwayi", *Iranian Studies* 27.1/4 (1994): 53–75.
35 Ibid., 58.
36 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 57b.
37 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 50b.
38 For the contrary dates, see Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 50b, 90b.
39 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 50a, 58b.

Sheikh could have predicted a birth, and the youngest age ʿAzīza could have married. I would suggest 7 hijri years in both cases.

If we use this assumption to establish a *terminus ante quem* for the Sheikh's death, then the latest he could have been born in order to make the prediction of a future disciple's birth is 516/1122–3. If he died at the age of 94 hijri years, then the latest possible date for his death would be 610/1213–4.

$$(94 - 7) + 523 = 610 \text{ AH}/1213–4 \text{ CE}$$

Establishing a *terminus post quem* for the Sheikh's death, if ʿAzīza was born a year and a half before her mother's death in 582/1186–7, then the earliest date she could have been born was midway through 580/1184–5. If the youngest she could have married was at the age of seven, and the Sheikh died fourteen years after her marriage, then the earliest possible date for the Sheikh's death would be midway through 601/1205.

$$(582 - 1.5) + 7 + 14 = 601.5 \text{ AH}/1205 \text{ CE}$$

With a range thus established for the Sheikh's death of 601.5–610/1205–1214, ʿAzīza's own death can be estimated at 605.5–617/1209–1221, acknowledging the text's uncertainty as to whether it occurred four or seven years after the Sheikh's own. Muʾīn al-Dīn Muḥammad was eight years old when the Sheikh died, based on the information that ʿAzīza had been married for 14 years at the time of the Sheikh's death and that she gave birth to Muʾīn al-Dīn Muḥammad after 6 years of marriage. As Muʾīn al-Dīn Muḥammad died at the age of 21, his death must have occurred 13 years after the Sheikh's own, giving us a date range for this event of 614.5–623/1217–1226.

The advantages of this dating for the life of the Sheikh are multiple. Firstly, and as both DeWeese and Māyil Hiravī recognised, it would mean that the dates for the Sheikh's life are roughly similar to those of that of Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, who is portrayed in stories in both MSS as the Sheikh's contemporary and equal.[40] Secondly, it would place the death of the Sheikh shortly before the first appearance of the Mongols in the wider region. This would accord well with a story in which the Sheikh foresees the coming of the "Tatār", a word of which his companions are unable to understand the meaning until after the Sheikh's death when Mongols appear in the village. These Mongols are

40 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 169a–169b, 184a. Rampur Raza Library Sulūk 764/30, fols. 356a–357b. The latter story is not in the Istanbul MS and is translated in DeWeese, "Two narratives", 25–7.

identified as both of the tribe of "Jinghis-Khān" and "Āb-gūẕariyān" i.e. those who cross the water, presumably meaning the Oxus in this case.[41] This story would only make logical sense if the Sheikh died before the first Mongol appearance in the region in 1219.

However, there are also multiple reasons to question such a narrowly calculated dating. Most simply, even if one accepts the assumptions we have made as plausible, one might question the reliability of the *Manāqib*'s author as a recorder and a reporter of the passage of time. Quite apart from the aforesaid discrepancy and variations in the dates of ʿĀ'isha and ʿAzīza's deaths, there are possible indicators of numerological considerations at work in the text's use of time and number. For example, the text is replete with events which occurred after 7 years or days,[42] and the number 14 has a similar prominence when referring to the passage of time.[43] In such a context, it can hardly surprise that ʿAzīza is noted as her father's seventh child, and that she recited the Qur'an 7000 times over the course of her life.[44] The text's further claim that she lived a long life (*ʿumr-i dirāz*)[45] when by our calculations she cannot have lived longer than 36.5 hijri years points to a basic tension between its accurate recording of historical events and its storytelling and hagiographical elements, a tension which may come at the price of internal consistency on dating.

What is more, another story explicitly contradicts the idea of the Sheikh as a pre-Mongol figure. In this narrative a group of "Āb-gūẕariyān" arrives in Khudashah while he is still alive, in this case his *karāmat* ensures that they behave peaceably.[46] We might suppose that "Āb-gūẕariyān" or "Those who cross the water" here refers to a different group of marauders from the wrong side of the Oxus, perhaps Ghuzz or Khitans, but in general the impression is unavoidable that we are dealing with a broad hagiographical tradition in which individual stories may contradict one another.[47]

41 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 105b–106a.

42 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 29b, 82b, 90b, 146b, 153b, 154b, 160b, 166a, 175b, 183b, 185a.

43 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 31b, 42a, 50b, 61a, 106b, 120a, 137a, 138b, 189b, 190a.

44 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 88b, 89b.

45 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 88b.

46 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 169b–170b.

47 The text also terms them the "Dākhilān". Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 17a. The Khwarazmshahi bureaucrat Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nasawī (d. 647/1249–50) also refers to the Mongols as those who pass over the water. Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nasawī, *Nafthat al-Maṣdūr*, ed. Amīr Ḥasan Yazdegerdī (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1965), 10. Another story describes a disciple having a vision of a person who had the appearance of the "Mughūlān-i Khiṭāyī" because of his large Mongol hat. Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 76a.

The dating picture is complicated further when we look at references to named political figures who are easily distinguished by such titles as Ṣāḥib, ʿAmid, ʿAmīl, and Sulṭān. Many of these appear in the *Manāqib*'s letter section, the full version of which is only found in the Rampur MS and which was thoroughly analysed and summarised by DeWeese. However, even these offer a troublesome guide due to the ambiguous or variant terms used to describe individuals, even in the case of rulers whom we might hope to find in other sources.

For example, can the Sulṭāns Ghiyās al-Dīn and Jalāl al-Dīn named in the text be identified with the Ṣāḥibs who also feature and bear the same names?[48] Should we reckon the former to be the Khwarazmshahi Sultan Ghiyās al-Dīn Pīrshāh (d. 1230), the Ghuri Sultan Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 1203), or someone else entirely? Should we follow DeWeese's suggestion for example in identifying an individual named only as ʿAmīd Shams al-Dīn with Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī, the grandfather of the historian Aṭa-Malik Juvaynī, given the possibility that many other officials may have borne a similar title?[49] What is more, certain figures of apparent prominence, such as Amīr-i Kabīr Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ṭughril named as the ruler of Quhistan, appear wholly unattested in other sources.[50]

The complexity of the Khwarazmshahi state within which the Sheikh likely lived the majority of his life is part of the issue here. To take the Sheikh's correspondent the Salghurid ruler Atābak Muẓaffar al-Dīn Atsīz b. Saʿd b. Zangī as an example, he alternately opposed and aided his suzerain the Khwarazmshah Jalāl al-Dīn before finally pledging allegiance to the Mongols.[51] Such turmoil in vassal-lord relations likely caused confusion among common subjects about the status and identity of their lords. As well as encompassing vassal dynasties, the Khwarazmshahi state also delegated significant regional authority to family members who could govern their territories with a high degree of independence. Finally, and in addition to the viziers of the court in the capital at Gurganj, the Khwarazmshahs also had a distinct policy of appointing regional and district viziers to administrate certain territories.[52] Sitting beneath such

48 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 8b, 88a, 132b, 154b, 163a. Rampur Raza Library Sulūk 764/30, fols. 350b–352a, 353a–354a.

49 Rampur Raza Library Sulūk 764/30, fols. 349a–350b. DeWeese, "Two narratives", 17.

50 Rampur Raza Library Sulūk 764/30, fols. 348b–349a. The name does not seem to match the limited data we have for rulers of either Quhistan or Sistan in this period. See Maryam Moezzi, "Bāznigarī dar rawābiṭ-i Ismāʿīliyān wa mulūk-i Nīmrūz bar pāya-yi matnī-yi naw-yāfta", *Muṭāliʿāt-i taʾrīkh-i Islām* 2 (2010): 107–12.

51 Merçil, *Fars Atabegleri Salgurlular*, 85–98.

52 Z. M. Buniyatov, *A History of the Khorezmian State under the Anushteginids, 1097–1231* (Samarkand: International Institute for Central Asian Studies, 2005), 75–81.

an ever-changing panoply of officialdom, it is unsurprising that the *Manāqib* lacks clarity when discussing figures of secular authority.

Such difficulties are compounded by the challenge of assessing how closely the *ṭāʾifa* and the author of the *Manāqib* related to these temporal authorities, and were therefore in a position to identify individuals accurately. In one notable story, a vizier named as Zayn al-Dīn Mākhānī approaches the Sheikh and tries to make him accept his patronage. Not only does the Sheikh refuse his patronage, he criticises all wealth derived from kings and the vizier himself for serving the Sultan.[53] This apparent hostility to temporal power is in contrast to the many letters written to major political figures, the members of the Sheikh's following like Ẓāhir al-Dīn ʿUmar Shihāb Baḥrābādī who serve in the Dīvān of Khurasan, and indeed the sheer number of political figures mentioned in total. In this, the *Manāqib*'s portrayal of the Sheikh's relationship with temporal authorities parallels the *Maqāmāt-i Zhanda Pīl*'s depiction of Aḥmad-i Jām—namely a willingness to maintain a critical correspondence with leading political figures, Sultan Sanjar in the latter case, amidst a broader disengagement from major factions of *ʿulamāʾ* and ideological resistance to wealth not obtained through miracles of *firāsa* or *baraka*.[54]

Nevertheless, the identities of named political figures would seem a firmer basis for dating the *Manāqib* than trying to calculate from relativised dates designed to serve storytelling functions. There would thus little compelling reason to dispute DeWeese in dating the Sheikh's death to post-1226 with the former method, or to regarding him as a figure whose life overlapped the first Mongol invasions.

This dating could also match the Sheikh with a previously unidentified "Sheikh Ḥātimī" who is mentioned in the *Miftāḥ al-ʿUlūm* by the magician and grammarian Sirāj al-Dīn al-Sakkākī (1160–1229) as his teacher in Arabic grammar and rhetoric. Al-Sakkākī gives very limited information about his teacher, but calls him a magician in the occult art of interrelating words with the same root letters.[55] Our Sheikh Ḥātimī practises exactly this art in his discussion of Jinn-related etymology, and magical knowledge certainly

53 The story ends with Zayn al-Dīn Mākhānī miraculously providing funds to the *ṭāʾifa* years after the Sheikh's death. Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 129a–131b.

54 E.g. Muḥammad Ghaznawī, *Maqāmāt-i Zhanda Pīl*, 55–6.

55 Ahmad Matlub, *Al-Balāgha ʿind al-Sakkākī* (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Nahḍah, 1964), 53–4. Emily Selove and Mohammed Sanad, "The Sorcerer Scholar: Sirāj al-Dīn al-Sakkākī between Grammar and Grimoire", in *Knowledge and Power in Muslim Societies: Approaches in Intellectual History*, eds. Kazuo Morimoto and Sajjad Rizvi (Berlin: Gerlach Press, 2023), 99, 104.

circulated in Khurasani Sufi circles.[56] While this identification remains provisional, the argument that Sufi groups of the era offered Arabic educational training is certainly plausible, and Elias notes that several members of the Sufi Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥamuwayī's wider family served in the administration of the Khwarazmshahs.[57]

6 The Author of the Text and His Circumstances

A firmer dating for the Sheikh's life might be possible if we could establish the anonymous author of the *Manāqib*'s relationship to the new Mongol temporal authorities, the motive for its composition, and the transmission process of the text's contents. From its own testimony the *Manāqib* does not seem to have been compiled for at least 25 years after the Sheikh's death, leaving significant room for stories about the Sheikh to evolve. The instability of this period may have quickly rendered the last generation of elites unrecognisable to a story's intended audience, requiring it to be updated in an anachronistic form to fit changed circumstances. All stories, whether concerning periods earlier in the Sheikh's life or after his death, are related from a single transmitter with no *isnād* using general formulas like "*rivāyat ast/kard*", "*shinīdam*" or "*ḥikāyat kard*". Indeed, one may legitimately question the extent to which these statements record real processes of direct transmission between the informants and the author at all.[58] *Isnād* analysis is thus not an available approach.

In the colophon of the Istanbul MS, the scribe names himself as Muḥammad, and gives himself two *nisbas*, one probably best read as "*al-Panjshīrī maḥtidan*", describing his place of ancestral origin, and the other "*al-Bukhārī mawlidan*" describing his place of birth. The manuscript is given the date 5th Rabīʿ al-Awwal 725/19th February 1325 which gives us a firm *terminus ante quem* for the *Manāqib*'s composition.[59] When discussing the surviving poetry attributed to the Sheikh, the author refers to a single *bayt* which from among the multiple transmitters of the Sheikh's verses only they recalled.[60] This passage would imply that the original author knew the Sheikh personally, and, unless we suppose that the *Manāqib* is copying verbatim here from another source,

56 See section 6 for a discussion of Jinn and the Sheikh.

57 Jamal J. Elias, "The Sufi Lords of Bahrabad", 75.

58 Similar issues of transmission touch our hagiographies of Aḥmad-i Jām and Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr, which both likely relied on oral traditions. Paul, "Au début du genre hagiographique", 19–20.

59 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 191b.

60 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 96b–97a.

our previously suggested dating for the Sheikh's life would make it improbable that the scribe Muḥammad al-Panjshīrī al-Bukhārī was composing the text in 725/1325.

Using relativised data in the text, we can also attempt a *terminus post quem* for its composition. Of events dated in relation to the Sheikh's own death, the latest are for the death of a follower and the conclusion of a story, occurring 18 years and four months and 25 years and four months after the Sheikh's death respectively.[61] Using our previous ranges for the Sheikh's death, this gives us a range for our *terminus post quem* for the *Manāqib*'s composition of approximately 627 to 638/1230 to 1240. If we were to instead follow DeWeese's argument to its logical conclusion that the letter from the Sheikh to the Salghurid ruler of Fars Abū Bakr Muẓaffar al-Dīn b. Saʿd means the Sheikh must have been alive at the time of his accession in 1226, then we could move forward the *terminus post quem* to 1251.

More important perhaps than the precise dates for the text's composition, specifics which the text may record but poorly as previously discussed, is the manner in which the author memorialises the *ṭāʾifa*'s collective experience after the Sheikh's death. These are insightful for the circumstances of the *Manāqib*'s composition, the most detailed example of which comes immediately prior to the colophon. Here it is stated that much more information about the Sheikh's life, followers, and teachings, as well as *akhbār* relating to his *farzandān* and *murīdān* had been gathered together in the Sheikh's own books and in those composed by his followers and descendants. However, all these works contained in the *kutubkhāna* of the Sheikh were destroyed as part of an event elusively referred to as the "*fatrat-i avval-i Āb-gūẕariyān*". Fortunately, however much the Āb-gūẕariyān searched for this material, they were unable to locate certain manuscripts relating to the life of the Sheikh and these were preserved by his followers and descendants. It is implied that the present work is a summary of this surviving material.[62]

The statement that this cataclysmic event was the first *fatrat* could imply that the author was writing after a subsequent *fatrat* of similar magnitude.

61 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 26a, 174b–176b.

62 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 191b. The historian Juzjānī uses a similar term for the first appearance of Chingiz Khan, *avval-i ẓuhūr-i Chinghīz Khān*. Juzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, ed. Habibi (Kabul: Anjūman-i Tārīkhī-yi Afghānistān), 2:158. This ending has parallel to that of the *Asrār al-Tawḥīd*. This was composed in the aftermath of the despoilation of the Ghuzz, and describes the dilapidated state and institutional weakness of that *ṭāʾifa*'s base at Mayhana. Paul sees the search for a new patron for Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr's tomb as Muḥammad ibn Munawwar's primary motive for authorship. Paul, "Au début du genre hagiographique", 484. Muḥammad ibn Munawwar, *Asrār al-Tawḥīd*, 4–5.

Given the text's previously discussed references to Mongols in Khudashah, we might logically link the first *fatrat* with the first Mongol campaign against Khurasan beginning in 1219, and the second *fatrat* perhaps to the subsequent campaign of Hülegü beginning in 1255. The idea of the Mongols as destroyers of scholarship certainly fits with a number of accounts of both these campaigns.[63]

This theory receives further support if we examine a reference in the *Manāqib* to previous hagiographical writing on the *ṭā'ifa*. It is stated that a student of the Sheikh, Imām Ṣafī al-Dīn Ṭūsī, wrote a work named the *Sawā' al-Sabīl* on the virtues of the Sheikh's family and clan. However, many of his writings were destroyed on an occasion when the Sheikh's books were being transported from Balkh to Juvayn, and much of what remained was destroyed by the Āb-gūẓariyān in turn. Yet dispersed remnants are said to survive, large parts of which were written in the hand of the daughter of one al-Saʿīd al-Juvaynī, an example of the prominence of female figures in preserving the *ṭā'ifa* and its history.[64] We are left with the impression of the *Manāqib* as the culmination of a long struggle by surviving members of the *ṭā'ifa* to maintain a collective memory in the face of ongoing destruction, a struggle which the absence of other surviving Ḥātimī materials would imply was ultimately unsuccessful.

7 The Ḥātimī *Ṭā'ifa* in Comparison

The Ḥātimī *ṭā'ifa* demonstrates a number of features which contrast it with the groups of Aḥmad-i Jām and Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr. There is an emphasis on pilgrimage and travel as a consistent theme in the *Manāqib*, the Sheikh's love of travelling with members of his *ṭā'ifa* and *ḥaram* (household) is specifically noted, and this serves to reinforce the idea that his influence extended far beyond Khudashah and Juvayn.[65] Taking just those settlements in which different stories place him and whose modern coordinates can be found, we can gain a clear impression of his movements. As one might expect, there is a natural focus on Khurasan, and the valley of the *vilāyat* of Juvayn in particular. But there are also trips as far east as Samarqand and Balkh, as far south as Kirman, and visits to Isfahan, Hamadan, Baghdad, and Palestine to the west. Taken in addition to his many pilgrimages to Mecca, these travels paint a picture of a worldly leader with good knowledge of major trade routes.

63 Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 175–6.

64 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 89b.

65 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 87a.

This picture is replicated when we look at the Sheikh's disciples. A very large number of the disciples are named, either as transmitters of stories, in the biography section, or in other lists. While the vast majority of these disciples are not identifiable in other Sufi prosographical sources,[66] a total of 71 have distinctive *nisbas* or are otherwise connected with certain areas. *Nisbas* do not always indicate an actual association with an area, and the *nisbas* have been known to originate with the trading habits of distant ancestors.[67] Nevertheless, the general trend across a large collection of *nisbas* is still potentially instructive. Unsurprisingly, this pattern closely resembles that of the Sheikh's travels, with the greatest concentration of *nisbas* originating in Khurasan and the Juvayn valley in particular. Southern and Western Iran, Iraq, and Azerbaijan feature slightly more prominently than in the Sheikh's travels, again reinforcing the impression of a movement whose pan-regional links were in addition to its localised stronghold of support.

Unlike, for example, the situation expressed in the *Kitāb-i Firdaws* on Abū Ishāq Kāzarūnī where an affiliated network of *khānaqāhs* is discussed, there is no indication in the text that the *khānaqāhs* or *ribāṭs* which are mentioned in the text and outside Khudashah formed part of a Ḥātimī-led network.[68] Instead, the only permanent physical presence of the *ṭāʾifa* described outside of Khudashah are burials of the Sheikh's disciples. The nature of these burials is typically not described, there is no indication that these were elaborate *turbas*, the intention likely either being to suggest sites for pilgrimage or to communicate the breadth of the Sheikh's influence. While only 15 locations are mentioned, the impression is similar of a core cluster in the Juvayn valley and isolated outposts in Kirman, Hamadan, Tabriz, Baghdad, and the Hijaz.

By comparison, the activity of Aḥmad-i Jām never extends beyond a localised base within the Khurasan region. He visits major regional cities like Marw, Herat, and Nishapur, and there is similarly much useful topographical data to be gleaned from the *nisbas* of his followers and the small villages he visits proximate to Jam.[69] Yet there is nothing to compare with Sheikh Ḥātimī's

66 DeWeese makes tentative suggestions as to the identity of a couple of them. DeWeese, "Two narratives", 21–2.

67 Shelomo Dov Goitein, "Changes in the Middle East (950–1150) as Illustrated by the Documents of the Cairo Geniza", in *Islamic Civilisation, 950–1150*, ed. Donald Sidney Richards (Oxford: Cassirer, 1973), 23.

68 Maḥmūd ibn ʿUthmān, *Die Vita des Scheich Abū Isḥāq al-Kāzarūnī in der persischen Bearbeitung*, ed. Fritz Meier (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1948), 65, 67, 182, 353, 259, 430–40. The partial exception to this rule is the *zāvi̇ya* in Kerak built by Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn.

69 His areas of activity are discussed well in Muḥammad Ghaznawī, *The Colossal Elephant and his spiritual feats*, trans. Hishmat Muʾayyad Sanandiji and Franklin Lewis (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 2004), introduction, 11–15.

connections to the lands west of the Dasht-i Kavir, especially with Mecca and Palestine. While Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr did once attempt the pilgrimage to Mecca, he ultimately went no farther than Bistam. One of his disciples did subsequently establish a *khānaqāh* in Shirvan, but here too the influence of this *ṭāʾifa* does not otherwise pass beyond the urban and rural areas of Khurasan.

That said, if we look at the traditions of the early Anatolian Sufism with its Iranian influences, the 13th century appears as an era of growing mobility. To take the example of Awḥad al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, his *Manāqib* shows him possessing a similar peripateticism to Sheikh Ḥātimī with travels to the Hijaz, Syria, Azerbaijan, and Egypt as well as within Anatolia.[70] The life story of Rūmī is centred around the idea of emigration from Balkh to Konya, and, although the exact itineraries of his other journeys are harder to define, his *Maṯnavī* evidences a wide geographical knowledge.[71] Sheikh Ḥātimī's predilection for extensive travel only appears unique in the narrower Khurasani context.

In a like manner, the depiction of his relationship with Jinns has a resemblance to that of our comparator hagiographies while developing its own unique aspects. Jinns inhabit the Sheikh's *turba* after his death, just as they inhabit the *turba* of Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr after his.[72] The idea of Jinns being attracted to particular locations recurs several times in the *Manāqib*, and the Sheikh's father comments on a tree in a garden in Khudashah which served as a meeting point for Jinns and men of religion.[73] The Sheikh discusses his relationship with Jinns while in a state of spiritual ecstasy, stating that he has 6000 Jinn followers who act as his servants and companions. He states that the terms jinn and *parī* are equivalent, and that all words which contain the letter *jīm* and two *nuns* relate to covering or hiding things e.g. a *junna* is a shield which covers the face in battle.[74] In this vein, these Jinns are invisible to other observers and the Sheikh alone can interact with them, even to the extent of them completing his kitchen housework in one narrative![75]

While control and power over the Jinns are important evidence of the Sheikh's *karāmāt*, for ordinary people Jinns are presented as potentially dangerous. One father visits the Sheikh after his son is apparently possessed by Jinns.

70 Lloyd Ridgeon, *Awhad al-Dīn Kirmānī and the Controversy of the Sufi Gaze* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2017), 54–5.

71 Mehdi Ebadi-Zahmatkesh and Johnny Cheung, "Jalal Ad-Din Muhammad Rumi: A Historical Geographer and Poet", *Iran & the Caucasus* 16.2 (2012): 169–84.

72 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 106a, 189a. Muḥammad ibn Munawwar, *Asrār al-Tawḥīd*, 446, 471–2.

73 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 140b.

74 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 59b–60a, 138b.

75 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 23b, 139b.

In response, the Sheikh writes a charm invoking King Solomon in saffron on some paper and gives it to the family. When they follow his instructions, their son is cured.[76] Though not referred to in our other hagiographies, this use of charms invoking Solomon involving paper and saffron mirrors what little we know of magical practice in the Khurasan in this period, and has strong parallels to the charms described in *al-Shāmil min al-Baḥr al-Kāmil* of Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad al-Ṭabasī (d. *c.* 1088).[77] In the case of Jinns therefore, the *Manāqib* develops a theme already present in the Sufi hagiographical tradition embellishing it with additional and unique elements.

8 Female Leadership and Family Succession: ʿAzīza Khāṭūn

However, against the background of other similar Persian Sufi hagiographies of the period probably the *Manāqib*'s most outstanding characteristic is its consistent highlighting and celebration of the participation of women in the *ṭāʾifa*'s activities. Admittedly most occurrences of this phenomenon relate to the Sheikh's immediate family, a circumstance which can be better understood if we examine further comments which the author makes about the current state of the *ṭāʾifa*. When discussing the Sheikh's daughter ʿAzīza, the author names her as the revivifier (*Muḥyī*) of the family. For as long as she was alive the dervishes were not dispersed, *ẕikr* and *samāʿ* were still conducted, and "the sultans, viziers, amirs, notables, and eminent dignitaries" (*salāṭīn va vuzarāʾ va umarāʾ va akābir va amājid*) would do the *ṭāʾifa* honour and kiss its threshold. After her death by contrast, the author is clear that the community of dervishes went into "decline and decay" (*tarājuʿ va inḥiṭāṭ*), and his hope is that the prosperity and community at this threshold would in future increase.[78] No comment is made about the identity of the current leader of the *ṭāʾifa*, if indeed one still existed.

It is against this background of a vacuum in current leadership that the *Manāqib* dedicates several sections to detailed discussion of the Sheikh's

76 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 19b–20a.

77 E.g. Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad al-Ṭabasī, *al-Shāmil min al-Baḥr al-Kāmil*, MS Princeton University Library, New 160, fols. 89b–90a. On the charm recipes in this text see Travis Zadeh, "Commanding Demons and Jinn: The Sorcerer in Early Islamic Thought", in *No Tapping around Philology. A Festschrift in Honor of Wheeler McIntosh Thackston Jr.'s 70th Birthday*, eds. Alireza Korangy and Dan Sheffield (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014), 147. The relationship between Solomon and Jinn is established in Qurʾan 27:17.

78 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 88b–89a.

wider family, sections which are largely excluded from the Rampur MS.[79] The importance of these discussions lies firstly in establishing the legitimacy of the Sheikh by connecting him to illustrious predecessors, and secondly in legitimising his daughter and her family. Female succession and inheritance were not unknown in the Islamic World particularly in later periods, but this situation would have been novel for the *ṭā'ifas* of Khurasan.[80] Ideas of female Sufi piety were however well developed by this juncture, from Rabīʿa al-ʿAdawiyya (fl. 8–9th centuries CE) and the wife of Ḥakīm al-Tirmiẕī (d. *c.*869) to the biographies recorded by al-Sulamī (d. 1021).[81]

Indeed, scholarly awareness of the leadership roles held by female Sufis has grown substantially in recent years. A 13th century local history of nearby Balkh, the *Faḍā'il-i Balkh*, immortalises two local female mystics from the 9th century—the famous Rabīʿa al-ʿAdawiyya and the comparatively little known Umm ʿAlī. In the latter case, Umm ʿAlī is characterised by noble descent, wealth, and learning but also a willingness to unveil herself in certain male-dominated environments in earlier accounts.[82] On the basis of examples of the *Manāqib* genre from the 13th and 14th centuries CE, Bruno De Nicola has argued that women in Anatolian Sufi orders could sometimes participate in group religious practices like *samāʿ*, had a role in spreading practices and ideas among other women, and made important legitimatory marriage alliances with both Sufi and secular elites.[83] Aziza Shanazarova has made the compelling argument that older women avoided many of the typical Islamic impediments to full communal participation. She points to a 16th century hagiography from Central Asia's praise of an older female Sufi leader and its

79 ʿAzīza is mentioned in passing once in Rampur Raza Library Sulūk 764/30, fol. 357b.

80 Alyssa Gabbay has studied the phenomenon and highlighted the legitimising model of Fātīma, but most of her example relate to a later period. Alyssa Gabbay, *Gender and Succession in Medieval and Early Modern Islam: Bilateral Descent and the Legacy of Fatima* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

81 For these and other examples see Michel Chodkiewicz, "La sainteté féminine dans l'hagiographie islamique", in *Saints orientaux*, ed. Denise Aigle (Paris: De Boccard, 1995), 99–115. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī, *Early Sufi women: Dhikr al-niswa al-muta'abbidāt as-ṣūfiyyāt*, trans. and ed. Rkia Cornell (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 1999). A diverse set of case studies of the relationship between Sufis and their organisations with family life are discussed in Alexandre Papas and Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, eds., *Family Portraits with Saints: Hagiography, Sanctity, and Family in the Muslim World*.

82 Arezou Azad, "Female Mystics in Mediaeval Islam: The Quiet Legacy", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 56.1 (2013): 53–88.

83 Bruno De Nicola, "The Ladies of Rūm: A Hagiographic View of Women in Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Anatolia", *Journal of Sufi Studies* 3 (2014): 132–56.

lack of concern with her gender as evidence for these permissive attitudes to participation in Sufi contexts.[84]

Furthermore, the leadership role of ʿAzīza within the *ṭāʾifa* comes in the context of an era where we see significant female leadership at the state level. Thanks to scholars like Carole Hillenbrand and Anne Broadbridge, the level of power and independence which women enjoyed in the Seljuq and Mongol Empires is now well acknowledged.[85] For the period of the Mongol transition itself we have less dedicated study, but the example of Terken Khatun and the effective subordination of her own son the Khwarazmshahi Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad speaks to broad continuity in the political activity of women.[86] Indeed, De Nicola has shown that there was an ongoing tradition of empowered women from ruling dynasties supporting Sufis and religious establishments from the Seljuq through to the Mongol period, although the activity of Mongol women was likely restricted prior to their widespread conversion from the 1290s onward.[87] With such examples prevalent in the wider society from which the *ṭāʾifa* drew its funding, ʿAzīza's rise to leadership may have attracted less controversy than we might suppose.

Nevertheless, female Sufi leadership was still a concept with limited local precedent at the time of the Sheikh's life. The text must therefore justify why it should have been the Sheikh's daughter ʿAzīza Khāṭūn who took over the running of the *ṭāʾifa*, as opposed to one of his other children. It therefore focuses both on the superior character of ʿAzīza's mother ʿĀʾisha Khāṭūn, and on ʿAzīza's marriage to the Sheikh's nephew Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn as bringing unity to the Ḥātimī clan, taking pains to highlight the particular esteem in which each was held by the Sheikh. Furthermore, the text justifies the succession of ʿAzīza's son Muʾīn al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad, placing him as a unifier of both branches of the family.

Starting off with ʿĀʾisha, she is identified as inheriting substantial property from her father and brother, the latter of whom was the local *naqīb* and served an unidentified Sultan. This wealth consisted of property in the *vilāyāt* of Juvayn and Isfarayin. She put this at the disposal of her husband, who after selling it off to "kings and viziers" (*mulūk va vuzarāʾ*) put the resultant funds

84 Aziza Shanazarova, *Female Religiosity in Central Asia: Sufi Leaders in the Persianate World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024).

85 Carole Hillenbrand, "Women in the Seljuq Period", in *The Medieval Turks: Collected Essays* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022), 182–201. Anne F. Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

86 Buniyatov, *A history of the Khorezmian State*, 105.

87 Bruno De Nicola, "Patrons or Murīds? Mongol Women and Shaykhs in Ilkhanid Iran and Anatolia", *Iran* 52.1 (2014): 143–56.

to use on god's path, activities which included supporting Sufis, freeing slaves, assisting the poor, and constructing religious buildings.[88]

Thanks to the information the *Manāqib* provides, we can even make some estimation of the family which ʿĀ'isha belonged to. It names her brothers as Jalāl al-Dīn and the *naqīb* Asīr al-Dīn, and her father as the *sayyīd* Ṣafī al-Milla va al-Dīn ʿAzīz b. Zayd b. ʿĀlī b. ʿAzīz al-ʿAlavī al-Ḥusaynī.[89] With the knowledge that her family were *sayyids*, owned property in Juvayn and Isfarayin, and would have been active in the mid-12th century we can turn to the *Lubāb al-Ansāb* and *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq* of Ibn Funduq (d. *c.*1169) which provide some coverage of *sayyids* and other prominent families in and around the Bayhaq district. These texts link one family of *sayyids* to the Faryumad area of Juvayn which was the Sheikh's primary base of operations, and the suggested link between ʿĀ'isha and this family is shown in the below diagram (Figure 1):

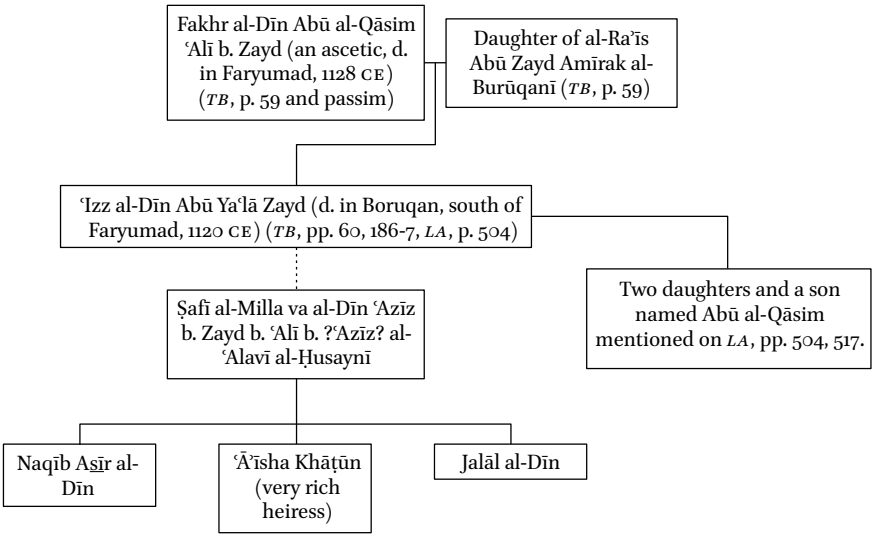


FIGURE 1 A suggested family tree connecting ʿĀ'isha to the family of ʿIzz al-Dīn. *TB* and *LA* refer to the *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq* and *Lubāb al-Ansāb* respectively

This family of *sayyids* comprise two major individuals as covered in Ibn Funduq's works, ʿIzz al-Dīn Abū Yaʿlā Zayd and his father Fakhr al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. Zayd. In the case of ʿIzz al-Dīn Abū Yaʿlā Zayd, Ibn Funduq specifically notes that he had extensive property holdings in his village of Faryumad in

88 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 55b–56b.

89 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 55a–56a.

the Juvayn district i.e. the Sheikh's main base and district in which ʿĀ'isha herself inherited property.[90] However, while the balance of evidence thus favours identifying ʿIzz al-Dīn as ʿĀ'isha's grandfather, there are a couple of issues with this suggestion which should be acknowledged. Firstly, the *Manāqib* suggests that the *ism* of ʿĀ'isha's great-great-grandfather is ʿAzīz, whereas Ibn Funduq is clear that it was Zayd. Secondly, Ibn Funduq fails to list a Ṣafī al-Milla va al-Dīn ʿAzīz as among ʿIzz al-Dīn's children, naming the only son of the latter as Abū al-Qāsim alone.[91]

The parallels between the character of this Fakhr al-Dīn, ʿĀ'isha's suggested great-grandfather, and the local leadership role attributed to the Sheikh by the *Manāqib* are numerous. In addition to being described as an ascetic, Fakhr al-Dīn is said to have protected his local area from "brigands and troublemakers" (*ʿayyārān va mufsidān*) during a period of *fatrat* which occurred after the death of Malikshāh (d. 1092). The *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq* also preserves an Arabic letter written by Fakhr al-Dīn to a vizier of Sanjar which celebrates Fakhr al-Dīn's actions on a pilgrimage to Mecca and Kufa. He thus exhibits the same zeal for pilgrimage and epistolary relationship with senior officials which the *Manāqib* ascribes to the Sheikh.[92] The idea that local Sufi leaders like Sheikh Ḥātimī may have adopted roles and responsibilities previously held by non-Sufi elites like *naqībs*, an adoption facilitated in Sheikh Ḥātimī's case by intermarriage and inheritance, is an aspect of *ṭā'ifa* history which would merit further exploration.[93]

ʿĀ'isha is however credited with far more than just linking the Sheikh to the wealth and prestige of a local family of *sayyids*. She seems to have retained control over a portion of her inherited wealth even after marriage and is credited with several beneficent acts, the most intriguing of which is translated below:

> In the year 682 (1283–4),[94] which was the end of her (i.e. ʿĀ'isha's) life, an auxiliary levy (*charīk*) was sought from the souls of the Juvayn district. Three hundred men of the district were given written summons to go to

90 Ibn Funduq, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq*, ed. Ahmad Bahmanyar (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī-yi Furūghī, 1966), 58–9.

91 Ibn Funduq, *Lubāb al-Ansāb wa-l-alqāb wa-l-aʿqāb*, ed. Mahdi Rajaʾi (Qum: Maktabat Āyatallāh al-Marʿashī, 1989), 2:504, 517.

92 Ibn Funduq, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq*, 58–9.

93 Paul notes that the citizens of Bayhaq preferred a local ascetic as their negotiator with the besieging army of Ay Aba in 1160 to any of the Alid leaders of the town. Paul, "Au début du genre hagiographique", 30–1.

94 This is the aforementioned date which appears erroneous.

> Quhistan. Each one [could] arrange for another to be sent in his place or by making payment of thirty dinars of gold. They excused the *ṭā'ifa* and conferred favours [on it] and from the ranks of the Avaqān and the Khayl-Tilmash[95] they sought thirty dinars for a man to be sent in their place. This Lady ʿĀ'isha paid [the amount] in gold for this group of three hundred men of the district who had been given written summons and so released them all from this burden.[96]

The social history of this event is fascinating, not least in that this would represent one of our earliest examples for the institution of *charīk* or a system of auxiliary infantry levies in Iran. The imposition of this obligation on subject populations is often identified with the Mongol Conquest, but if our projection for the life of ʿĀ'isha is accurate and this does not represent a further case of the *Manāqib* falling into anachronism then we may have an example of *charīk* which predates the Mongol arrival.[97] The nature of the conflict in Quhistan which required the imposition of levies on Juvayn is difficult to identify, but it may relate to Khwarazmshahi battles with the restive Ismailis of that region, or to conflicts with the Ghurids.[98] ʿĀ'isha is also credited with ransoming back one hundred people from the districts of Ustuva and Isfarayin who had been captured in an unspecified raid, the text skirting around the specifics of this event in its customary manner.[99]

The focus on family descent and selfless munificence as the first plank of female legitimatory piety becomes necessary in the context of the second plank, seclusion from the world of men, as it restricts the ability of women to participate in activities with the wider community of dervishes. For ʿĀ'isha, this seclusion is taken to hyperbolic lengths, secluding herself even from those legally permitted to look upon her. Thus, if she intended to wash, she would first enter a litter (*hawdij*) set down in the women's quarter (*andarūn*)

95 The identity of these two groups is unclear. Māyil Hiravī suggests that the use of *Avaqān* is a very early reference to Afghans, but offers little to support this contention. Najīb Māyil Hiravī, *Dar shabistān-i ʿirfān*, 72, 259. Steingass has *khayltāsh* as meaning fellow soldier or comrade. Francis Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English dictionary, including the Arabic words and phrases to be met with in Persian literature* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), 493.

96 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 56b–57a.

97 On *charīk* see Willem Floor, "ČERĪK", in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, online. The term appears Turkic, see Hendrik Boeschoten, *A Dictionary of Early Middle Turkic* (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 112.

98 The service of local men in this conflict is alluded to on two other occasions in the *Manāqib*. Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 151b, 179b.

99 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 57a.

of the harem. This would be carried to that hammam by two *ghulāms* where her Abyssinian maidservant (*kanīzak-i ḥabashiyya*) would be ready to help her wash, before re-entering the *hawdij* to return to the harem. She would never leave the harem without wearing a niqab. Thanks to such precautions, between the ages of 16 and her death at 86 neither man nor woman saw her face apart from two female slaves, not even her brother the *naqīb* Asīr al-Dīn who would regularly visit to distribute alms to the dervishes.[100]

The tactics used to praise ʿAzīza are akin to those used to celebrate her mother and Sufi women more generally, but they also have some interesting innovations. While ʿĀʾisha is described as a *ḥāfiẓa-yi kalām Allāh*, ʿAzīza is said not just to have memorised the Qurʾan, but was also educated in *fiqh*, wrote forty copies of the Qurʾan by her own hand, and recited it around 7000 times.[101] Likewise it is stated that no "unrelated man" (*nāmaḥram*) saw her face or heard her voice in her entire life, a contention which is slightly difficult to square with two occasions in the *Manāqib* in which ʿAzīza personally transmits a story.[102] This may be another example of the contradictions of the text, or evidence of transmission through a woman, slave, or close family member permitted to enter the harem. ʿĀʾisha is said to have lived to the age of 86 and become pregnant with ʿAzīza at 54, whereas elsewhere ʿAzīza is said to have lived to 71 and the Sheikh to 94.[103] Leaving aside the discrepancies between these numbers and other data in the text as previously discussed, near miraculously long life plainly serves as a marker of divine favour, as well as a possible necessary criterion for female communal participation in line with Shanazarova's theories.

Inheritance is an area of particular interest for ʿAzīza in so far that it helps her draw legitimacy from both her mother and father. She is specifically described as inheriting property from her mother and spending this wealth in the path of god in the same manner. This included the purchase, education, conversion, and manumission of numerous slaves.[104] As for the Sheikh's own property, in a passage on the buildings in Khudashah we are told that two buildings were given to each of ʿAzīza's sons, and that on the Sheikh's death some property was deeded away (*vaqf kard*) and some was settled on his daughter ʿAzīza in accordance with Islamic law. The author also suggests that soon after the Sheikh died unidentified people claimed that he had not written a proper *vaqf-nāma* for his property, and that the tale of the Sheikh's last illness and testament

100 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 55b–56a.
101 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 46a, 55b, 57b, 89b.
102 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 89b.
103 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 55b, 57a, 58a, 182b.
104 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 3a, 89b, 128a.

(*vaṣāyā*) has therefore been included in the *Manāqib*.[105] This testament states that the Sheikh gave ʿAzīza copious books of hadith, *tafsīr* and *fiqh* written in Kufic script, a prayer mat of Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, his own copy of the Qurʾan, and a scrap of the Prophet's cloak, gifts far greater in their legitimatory significance than those he granted to others.[106]

Elsewhere we are informed that ʿAzīza sold over 50,000 dinars worth of the property which she had inherited from her mother and father in order to support the dervishes and the poor. As an example, we are told that the Sheikh owned a productive village near Isfahan and within seven days of his death ʿAzīza had endowed this to the harem by means of a *vaqf-nāma*.[107] She used the same device to endow a *khānaqāh* she founded in her own house, thus giving it the means to support 60 or 70 members of her wider family who were resident there while presumably reducing her own tax liabilities in the process.[108] The location of the harem appears to have become the focal area of the *ṭāʾifa* under ʿAzīza's leadership, as we are told that it was there that she had the body of the Sheikh moved and buried after his death, committing all the area surrounding the harem to *vaqf*.[109]

The real area of divergence in the portrayals of ʿAzīza and ʿĀʾisha relates directly to the need to justify ʿAzīza's greater role in the leadership of the *ṭāʾifa*. Looking at terms of address, in one instance the text even uses the term *shaykh* as a title for ʿAzīza, not the female equivalent *shaykha*, implicitly defeminising her and comparing her status to that of the Sheikh.[110] As well as being referred to by more general titles for a woman of status such as "*mastūra*", "*khātūn*", and "*sitā*", ʿAzīza receives the specific titles of "*sitt maʿṣūma sharaf al-ʿaqāyil*", "*iftikhār al-ʿaqāyil*", "*ʿiṣmat al-dīn*" and "*sitā muḥtarama maʿṣūma*".[111] ʿĀʾisha enjoys the even more elaborate title of "Lady, the Secluded One, Pride of Noble Women, Ornament of the Pure Lineage, Lady ʿĀʾisha" (*sitt mukhaddara iftikhār al-ḥarāyir jamāl al-ʿitra al-ṭāhira sitā ʿĀʾisha*) which carries greater emphasis on

105 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 51a. The Sheikh's attitude to property ownership resembles more that of Aḥmad-i Jām than Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr, the former constructing buildings and new irrigation channels in a like manner. Paul, "Au début du genre hagiographique", 32–3.

106 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 187b–188a.

107 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 90b.

108 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 91a. Another story highlights her role in caring for a boy a rich man had entrusted to the Sheikh's care, the *ṭāʾifa* benefiting from endowments made by the boy on his reaching adulthood. Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 128b–129a.

109 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 91b. He was buried next to a favoured daughter of his who had died as a child, Sitāra.

110 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 22b.

111 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 3a, 46a, 55a, 88b.

her femininity, seclusion, and affiliation with the Prophet's family than those of her daughter.[112] ʿĀʾisha is named the Mary of her age (*maryam-i ʿaṣr-i khud*) whereas ʿAzīza is similarly praised as the accomplished and unique woman of her age (*fāẓila-yi ʿaṣr va yigāna-yi dahr-i khud*).[113] ʿAzīza is also termed the "*mutakaffil-i amr-i ū*" of the Sheikh or "the one charged with his affairs", a title presumably alluding to her management of the *ṭāʾifa*'s assets and *waqfs* after his death.[114]

Whereas her mother was merely a pious woman, ʿAzīza's greater status requires that she be connected to active miracles. For the first, we are briefly told that it became known that ʿAzīza's milk and saliva were capable of curing eye pain in women if applied to the affected area, people coming from foreign lands to her for this cure.[115] In the second, the Sheikh predicts ʿAzīza's birth even though he is far away in Baghdad. He states that on the day of judgment she will be worth more than one thousand upstanding men and provides the exact time of her birth. He dispatches a merchant from Baghdad with a large quantity of Egyptian cloth, and this merchant arrives in Khudashah to witnesses her birth take place at the appointed time.[116] Her labour is said to be the equivalent of that of one thousand men, on the morning of the day of judgement god would absolve one thousand men on account of her devotion, and she is among a select group of the Sheikh's disciples listed as attaining a high spiritual rank.[117]

It is worth taking a moment here to reflect on other portrayals of women in the hagiographic genre to which the *Manāqib* belongs. The *Asrār al-Tawḥīd* has a remarkably similar story of a wealthy Nishapuri woman named Īshī Nīlī, who practiced asceticism and seclusion to the degree that she never left her house for forty years. On hearing of Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr's arrival in Nishapur, she sent her servant to investigate but, due to a miscommunication, was initially dismissive of Abū Saʿīd's status. However, that night she began to experience great pain in her eyes as a result of a medication she customarily prepared and used herself. The pain did not improve until a voice recommended Abū Saʿīd's guidance to her in a dream, and she ultimately gifted all her wealth to his *ṭāʾifa* and cared for its women, was awarded a *khirqa* by him, and became a leader (*pishvā*) of the Sufis of Nishapur.[118] Thematically, there is

112 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 55a.
113 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 110a, 114b.
114 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 57b.
115 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 57b.
116 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 91b–92a.
117 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 73b, 90b.
118 Muḥammad ibn Munawwar, *Asrār al-Tawḥīd*, 91–3. While no female character is developed to the same extent in the *Maqāmāt-i Zhanda Pīl*, that text does feature several stories

obviously much in common here with the character of ʿAzīza, but Īshī Nīlī is not further developed by the *Asrār al-Tawḥīd* and appears otherwise peripheral to its account.

Another comparable portrayal of a female Sufi figure comes in the Persian *Manāqib* of Awḥad al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. *c.*635/1238). While focussed on an Anatolian context, the parallels with our *Manāqib* are striking. Two daughters of Awḥad al-Dīn al-Kirmānī are mentioned in the narrative. The first is named Aymana and her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother are all the daughters of male Sufi leaders. Awḥad al-Dīn al-Kirmānī dotes on the child Aymana and at a young age sends her away to a fellow Sufi leader in Baghdad for her education. There Aymana memorises the Qurʾan and other religious texts, and attends spiritual discussions from behind a curtain. After her return to Anatolia, Awḥad al-Dīn al-Kirmānī ultimately arranges Aymana's marriage to an Anatolian government official whom they meet on a pilgrimage to the Hijaz. The couple prove incompatible however, and ultimately divorce after the official fails to stop beating Aymana despite Awḥad al-Dīn al-Kirmānī's entreaties. Aymana returns to her father's fold, rises high in spiritual rank, and becomes a major leader of *khānāqāhs* in Damascus in her own right after her father's death with the title *sitt al-ʿulamāʾ*.[119] By contrast, the example of Awḥad al-Dīn al-Kirmānī's other daughter Fāṭima aptly illustrates the undesirable qualities in a Sufi woman. Born the daughter of a malevolent, disruptive, and disobedient slave girl, Fāṭima is incapable of understanding the Qurʾan, incapable of learning the normal skills of women such as embroidery, and spends much of her time idle. After her behaviour disrupts Awḥad al-Dīn's study one day, he angrily wishes that infidels take her away. She is subsequently captured by the Mongols, but returns through her family's intercession and marries a Sufi friend of her brother.[120] These characterisations are likewise more limited than that of ʿAzīza, but similar core themes of descent, obedience, seclusion, and learning as the keys to female Sufi status are promoted.

To understand why the *Manāqib* of Shaykh Ḥātimī develops these pre-existing themes of female Sufi piety in the case of ʿAzīza requires us to consider her place within the Sheikh's wider family, and her strategic marriage to the Sheikh's nephew Jamāl al-Dīn (Figure 2). The Ḥātimīs traced their descent from the famous 9th century Sufi Ḥātim al-Aṣamm of Balkh. This figure is well-known, receiving a biography in al-Qushayrī, al-Sulamī, and other

with female transmitters or relating to his female followers. E.g. Muḥammad Ghaznawī, *Maqāmāt-i Zhanda Pīl*, 159–60.

119 Ridgeon, *Awhad al-Dīn Kirmānī and the Controversy of the Sufi Gaze*, 134–40.

120 Ibid., 141–3. These accounts are also considered in De Nicola, "The Ladies of Rūm", 132–56.

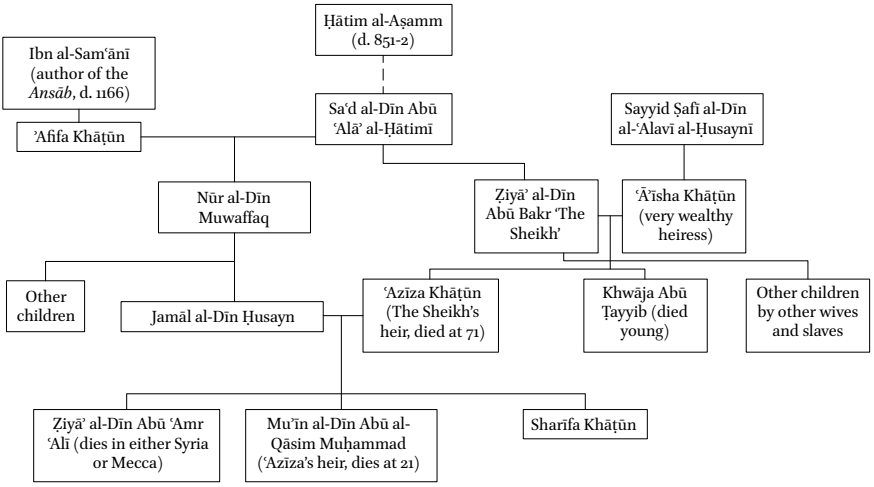


FIGURE 2 A simplified family tree of the Ḥātimīs of Khudashah

prosographical sources on early Sufis, and the *Manāqib* deems this descent to be of sufficient importance to dedicate a 6-folio long Arabic biography to him which draws on these sources.[121]

The only other predecessor of the Sheikh mentioned in the text is his father Saʿd al-Dīn. He is not explicitly identified as a Sufi, but it is clear he was some kind of religious leader, issued fatwas, practiced asceticism, wore Sufi clothes, and had followers. He lived in Khudashah, and one story highlights the poverty in which he raised his family, noting that his limited property produced grapes and wheat from the sale of which he sustained his family. Despite this claimed relative poverty he married ʿAfīfa Khāṭūn, a daughter of the famous Shafiʿī author and historian Ibn al-Samʿānī (d. 1166), who became the mother of the Sheikh's older brother Nūr al-Dīn.[122] Nūr al-Dīn was to have a son, Jamāl

121 Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī, *Al-Risāla al-Qushayriyya*, eds. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and Maḥmūd ibn al-Sharīf (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, 1966), 2:111–2. Translated in Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī, *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, trans. Alexander Knysh (Reading: Garnet, 2007), 36–7. Al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣufiyya*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn Shuraybah (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1953), 91–7. For a French translation of al-Sulamī's biography of Ḥātim al-Aṣamm and references to further sources on his life, see Jean-Jacques Thibon, *Les générations des Soufis* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 93–7. Abū Bakr ʿAbdallāh al-Wāʿiz al-Balkhī and ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥusaynī, *Faḍāʾil-i Balkh, or The Merits of Balkh*, trans. Arezou Azad, Edmund Herzig, with Ali Mir-Ansari (Cambridge: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2021), 108–113, 225. Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 61a–67b.

122 On Saʿd al-Dīn, see Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 33a–34b, 36a, 47a, 53b, 108b, 138b–139a, 144b–146b. Rampur Raza Library Sulūk 764/30, fol. 348b.

al-Dīn, who is said to have spent much time in seclusion with his grandfather Saʿd al-Dīn prior to the latter's death.[123]

After Saʿd al-Dīn's death, Nūr al-Dīn moved with his young son Jamāl al-Dīn to Syria,[124] whereas the Sheikh whose Sufi career had already begun appears to have moved to Palestine for four years for a period of seclusion. The Sheikh is then said to return triumphantly to Khudashah and Khurasan and builds a substantial following there.[125] Notably no Sufi teacher of the Sheikh is noted in any of this, implicitly presenting the Sheikh's legitimation as deriving from his familial descent from Ḥātim al-Aṣamm and his own meditation, rather than a separate *silsila* of knowledge transmission.

Nūr al-Dīn's son Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn built a *zāviya* in Kerak, Syria and became a commander (*sālar*) in the caravans that met there from Egypt and Syria. Over a period of over 11 years, he grew wealthy from leading caravans and completed the Hajj 14 times.[126] Having returned to Khudashah and established his *ṭāʾifa*, the Sheikh then wrote to Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn, the latter subsequently visiting him in Khudashah accompanied by great wealth.[127] After paying his respects, Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn established himself in Khurasan in a village called Dadiyān to facilitate his trading activities. Seven and a half months later, the Sheikh emerged from a period of seclusion to announce that his daughter ʿAzīza was to marry Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn. The union was concluded after a message was sent to the groom, and the couple go on to live and raise their children close to the Sheikh in Khudashah.[128] After his marriage, the focus of the narrative switches from Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn to his wife and children.

The *Manāqib* thus takes pains to identify Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn as a suitable husband for ʿAzīza and a proper father of ʿAzīza's son Muʿīn al-Dīn, but does not ascribe to him any role in the leadership of the *ṭāʾifa* even after the death of his wife and the Sheikh. The qualities which make him suitable to be ʿAzīza's husband include his obedience to his father and the Sheikh, his many completed Hajjes, and the divine favour shown by the wealth he gained from leading caravans, wealth which his marriage ensures will be used in support of the *ṭāʾifa*.[129] But most crucial is his connection to the Sheikh's father Saʿd al-Dīn

123 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 48a.
124 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 48a.
125 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 36a–40b.
126 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 48a–48b, 115b–116a.
127 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 48b.
128 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 46a–46b, 49a–50a.
129 In fact, Jamāl al-Dīn's father Nūr al-Dīn is presented as having superior spiritual qualities to his son, seeing the Prophet 400 times in dreams for example. Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 115a–115b.

and the time he spent in seclusion with him as a child, thus reinforcing the link between his own progeny and their illustrious Sufi ancestry.

The case of his son Muʿīn al-Dīn exemplifies the importance of familial connection between generations. We are told that he was personally educated by the Sheikh from the age of four in much the manner his father had been educated by Saʿd al-Dīn. Muʿīn al-Dīn was also taken on Hajj repeatedly by his father, a pilgrimage which the text values especially highly.[130] As befits a future leader of the *ṭāʾifa*, Muʿīn al-Dīn is singled out for greater praise and miracle than that which the *Manāqib* accords to his father. At his birth he is said to have borne the signs of good fortune and felicity (*āsār-i dawlat va saʿādat*).[131] The Sheikh's particular love for his grandson is expressed in a story in which he revives him after the young boy almost drowns in a pool of water.[132] As part of this devotion to his grandson, the Sheikh summons him and ʿAzīza to his deathbed and designates him for future leadership, although the exact nature and phrasing of this designation is obscured by damage to the MS.[133] Muʿīn al-Dīn receives four books of *tafsīr* and a ring in inheritance from the Sheikh and along with his brother subsequently receives ʿAzīza's remaining property on her death.[134]

Whereas his older brother fell insane and died after leaving for Syria, Muʿīn al-Dīn is said to have remained in Khudashah, led Sufi gatherings (*jamʿīyat-i dāʾir dāsht*), and followed his ancestors in knowledge, chivalry, righteous deeds, and piety (*ʿilm va futuvva va ʿamal va taqvā*) until the *ṭāʾifa* was parted from him by his death at the age of 21.[135] Nevertheless, overall the text takes far less effort to advocate his status than it does that of his mother. To the extent which we can understand its portrayal of events therefore, leadership of the *ṭāʾifa* was shared between Muʿīn al-Dīn and his mother during her lifetime, with ʿAzīza controlling practical matters and the adolescent Muʿīn al-Dīn presumably serving as a spiritual figurehead. Though he likely took full control after her

130 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 50b. We are given hyperbolic figures for the number of pilgrimages completed by members of the family. Nūr al-Dīn completes 74 Hajjes and 440 *ʿumras*, Jamāl al-Dīn completes 47 Hajjes, while the Sheikh completes 1040 umras and walked to Mecca alone 9 times. Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 115a, 116b.

131 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 50a.

132 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 101b–102b.

133 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 93a–93b. Among the legible elements of this speech, the Sheikh states that Muʿīn al-Dīn's speech is to be treated like that of the prophets of the *Banī Isrāyil*, that he would soon reach to a very high station in the ranks of religion (*marātib va darajāt-i dīn*), and that something said to him would be as if the Sheikh himself had heard it.

134 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 58b, 188a.

135 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 58b.

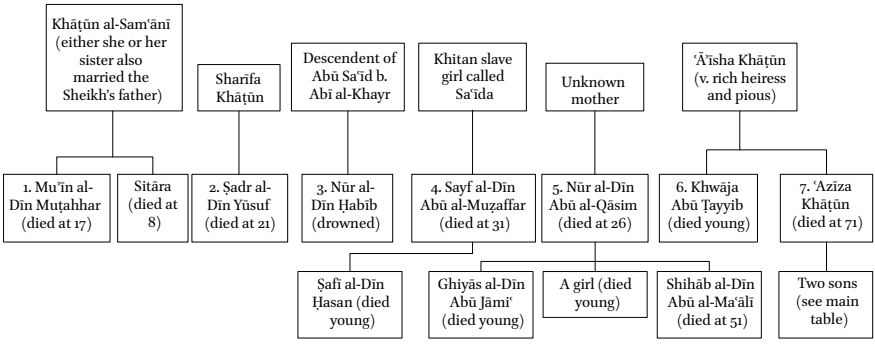


FIGURE 3 A diagram of the Sheikh's wives, children, and descendants

death, his youth and his own death soon afterwards may have contributed to his relatively sparse characterisation.

While the *Manāqib* is unambivalent in devoting its primary attention to the Ḥātimī family members intrinsic to the *ṭāʾifa*'s leadership, it also provides far more summary information on members of the wider clan, perhaps in order to disregard their claims to leadership by unattractive comparison. We are briefly introduced to the mothers of the Sheikh's other children, and summary accounts of the lives of each of his offspring and grandchildren (Figure 3).[136] There is even a brief account of the other sons of the Sheikh's brother Nūr al-Dīn and their issue, though the narrator explains that for the sake of brevity he only details those relatives who were actually involved with the *ṭāʾifa*.[137] Though the question of what activities in which those uninvolved relatives were active is largely unexplored, we do have the example of a nephew of the Sheikh named Qażī al-Qużāt ʿImād al-Dīn Mawdūd who served as a *qażī* to sultans before repenting and joining the *ṭāʾifa* in later life.[138] Whereas the Sheikh's brand of Sufism is implicitly presented as distinct from the hierarchies of the *ʿulamaʾ*, the education of his wider family may suggest that there was more overlap with that class then the *Manāqib* is willing to acknowledge.

9 Conclusion

This article has sought to provide a firmer basis for scholarship on the *Manāqib-i Shaykh Ẓiyāʾ al-Dīn Ḥātimī*, while suggesting possible avenues in which the text

136 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 87a–88b, 91a.
137 Istanbul University FY00800, fols. 87b, 117b–118a.
138 Istanbul University FY00800, fol. 118a.

may contribute to established debates on the development of *ṭāʾifa* Sufism, the hagiographical genre in Persian, and the social history of the transition to Mongol rule in Iran. Though the Ḥātimīs' expansive approach to travel and their particular brand of Jinn magic are points of difference from other Khurasani *ṭāʾifas*, the highly developed concept of female Sufi leadership which the *Manāqib* advances has relatively little parallel in our other hagiographies or in pre-Mongol Sufi history more broadly. As we can infer implicitly from the lack of surviving information on the Ḥātimīs in other sources, theirs was a *ṭāʾifa* under pressure from the disorders of the Mongol Conquest, from the attractions of rival Sufi movements, and from the need to build an enduring cult around the figure and teachings of their deceased founder. It was under these circumstances, and with an eye to the financial resources needed to continue the *ṭāʾifa*'s activities, that ʿAzīza became the disposer of Sheikh Ḥātimī's affairs and the *ṭāʾifa*'s leading figure, in spite of the lack of wider precedent for such a move. From the perspective of the *Manāqib*'s author her period of leadership was a success, but with her death and that of her son Muʿīn al-Dīn soon afterwards the *ṭāʾifa* was left rudderless. It is telling that our author fails to suggest any possible successor. Under such circumstances, it is easy to imagine a battle for the allegiances of the Ḥātimīs' surviving adherents, for the *ṭāʾifa*'s remaining property holdings, and for a new political patron to maintain the shrine. With its focuses on *vaqf* grants, legitimacy, and connections to the emerging Kubrāvī *ṭarīqa*, the *Manāqib* thus attempts to safeguard the future of a fast-vanishing community of Sufis. It is a unique member of our small corpus of extant Persian hagiographies of the Mongol and pre-Mongol eras.

Acknowledgements

An initial draft of this paper was presented at a conference on Sufi Manucripts at Boğaziçi University in June 2023. I would like to thank Devin DeWeese, whose correspondence helped me to refine this draft. Acknowledgment is due to my PhD funders, the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Doctoral Training Partnership studentship administered by the Scottish Graduate School of Arts and Humanities (SGSAH). Further support was provided by a Covid-19 Exceptional Scholarship from The Honeyman Foundation, the A. H. Morton Scholarship from the Gibb Memorial Trust, The Forty-Nine Thirteen Foundation, and a Junior Fellowship from the Koç University Research Centre for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED).