

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276083833>

# The Geographies of Ajam

Article in *The Medieval History Journal* · April 2015

DOI: 10.1177/0971945814565729

---

CITATIONS

2

READS

187

1 author:



**Rebecca Ruth Gould**  
University of Birmingham

232 PUBLICATIONS 194 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:



Academic Freedom & the Palestine Exception [View project](#)



Islamic Concepts of Freedom [View project](#)

# The Geographies of ‘Ajām: The Circulation of Persian Poetry from South Asia to the Caucasus

Rebecca Gould<sup>1</sup>

---

*With the consolidation of Persian literary culture across the eastern Islamic ecumene, Persian poets gained confidence in the power of their craft to shape their world. Alongside other genres, the medieval Persian prison poem (ḥabsīyyāt) strikingly illustrates how shifts in the geography of Persian extended the scope of Persian literature, aesthetically, politically and spatially. This article turns to the dissemination of the prison poem to shed light on the extensive contacts between South Asia and the Caucasus that Persian poetry facilitated. Examining the scope of medieval Persian literary culture from two peripheries of the Islamic world, I concentrate on how Persianate culture’s capacious geographical imagination enables us to rethink received assumptions concerning the circulation of power, cultural exchange, and the role played by literary form in stimulating political change.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Yale-NUS College, Singapore.

---

**Acknowledgements:** This article is dedicated to Moshe Gammer (1950–2013), who organised the conference where this work was first presented: in Tel Aviv University’s Department of Middle Eastern and African History. I am grateful to Professor Gammer for our brief acquaintance and to the conference participants for their comments. I would also like to thank the three excellent referees for this journal and the editor, as well as Muzaffar Alam, Pranav Prakash, Pei Yun Chia, Hiva Shekoofa, and Sheldon Pollock for their inputs.

**Corresponding author:**

Rebecca Gould, Division of Humanities, Yale-NUS College, Singapore.

E-mail: rebecca.gould@yale-nus.edu.sg

---

*The Medieval History Journal*, 18,1 (2015): 87–119

SAGE Publications ♦ Los Angeles/London/New Delhi/Singapore/Washington DC

DOI: 10.1177/0971945814565729

Persian literary history is often narrated as the story of progress of Iranian civilization.<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding the triumphalist narrative, the geography of classical Persian literature is not reducible to the present-day nation-state of Iran. To the contrary, its parameters extend across South, West, and Central Asia. The keyword for this literature is *‘ajam* (عجم), a term derived from the Arabic root referencing muteness, but which came, with the consolidation of Arabo-Islamic culture, to signify ‘foreign’, most often with negative connotations.<sup>3</sup> In the same way that *varvaros* referred to speakers of languages unfamiliar to the Greeks, so did *‘ajam* originally reference speakers of languages unfamiliar to the Arabs, in particular speakers of Persian. The tendency to label people according to the foreignness of their speech as barbarians was by no means limited to Arab or Greek culture. Herodotus noted with bemusement that Egyptians called anyone who did not speak their language a barbarian; and the word *varvaros* itself is thought to be ultimately derived not from Greek, but from Babylonian–Sumerian.<sup>4</sup> But whereas *varvaros* gave us the pejorative word ‘barbarian’, once Persians applied the label *‘ajam* to themselves, the negative connotations of this term were subverted from within.

When *‘ajam* entered Persian literature, it became a badge of distinction, a positive identity-marker pointing to what Arabs lacked and what Persians possessed. This attitude is evident already in Nizāmī’s account of the education of the Sasanian king Bahrām Gūr (r. 421–38), when the poet declares that Bahram was honoured to be the king of *‘ajam*, and celebrates his status as ruler of *‘ajam* rather than of the Arab world. The inversion in the valuation of *‘ajam* says less about differences among Greek, Arabic and Egyptian attitudes to cultural otherness than it does about what happens when a culture marginal within one context begins to cultivate a distinctive identity within the framework of the dominant culture.

Islamic culture had already expanded to Daghestan by the seventh century. In subsequent centuries, writing systems in local languages were labelled *‘ajam*, and thereby distinguished from Arabic, the unifying

<sup>2</sup> This generalisation holds true for at least two standard histories: Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* and Rypka’s *History of Iranian Literature*. It ironically holds true, even for masterpieces of Indo-Persian scholarship such as Shibli Nu‘mānī’s *Shīr al-‘ajam*, which devotes scant attention to pre-Mughal non-Iranian poets.

<sup>3</sup> For a recapitulation of this etymology, see Aliev, ‘Iranian Identity Boundaries: 11–12.

<sup>4</sup> Herodotus, *Histories*, 2: 155, 161. For the Babylonian–Sumerian etymology of *varvaros*, see Boletsi, *Barbarism and Its Discontents*: 69.

language of culture, religion and science.<sup>5</sup> In these contexts, ‘*ajam*’ came to refer in the early modern period to the system of diacritical notation developed for Caucasus and African vernaculars, such as Avar, Dargi, Chechen, Swahili, Hausa and Kanuri written in Arabic script.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, across South Asia, ‘*ajam*’ referenced a language, Persian, that originated in another geography, but which was undergoing a thorough localisation. In Arabic, ‘*ajam*’ referenced an alphabet; in Persian, ‘*ajam*’ evoked a capacious geography that was specific, although not territorially circumscribed.

This article engages with the geography of ‘*ajam*’, a cultural formation that, in the words of Richard Eaton, constitutes an ‘aesthetic and literary sensibility, together with an integrated theory of moral and social order, that was informed... by the ideas and values that spread through the circulation of canonical Persian texts and the Persian language’.<sup>7</sup> More visible in pre-modern literary culture than in contemporary scholarship, ‘*ajam*’ defined the eastern Islamic world for the better part of a millennium, laying the groundwork for uniquely Persianate variants on Islamic literary cultures. Writing in 1934 Wahid Mirza, the scholar of Indo-Persian literature, classically analysed this geography:

Whatever one may say... about the poetry of later times, it is fallacious to assume that there could be any essential difference in the language or spirit of the early poetry produced in Ganja, Shiraz or Nishapur on the one hand and Lahore or Delhi on the other, for ever since the Ghaznavid conquest of northern India all these places formed a united whole and the geographical distinctions of the present day did not exist at all.<sup>8</sup>

In Persianate modernity, the analytical paradigms developed by modern scholars such as Muḥammad Taqī Bahār (1885–1951) have contributed to the current constriction of the scope of Persian literature to Iran.<sup>9</sup> Bahār,

<sup>5</sup> For a further discussion of ‘*ajam*’ within a Daghestani context, see Gould, ‘Why Daghestan is Good to Think’.

<sup>6</sup> Barabanov, ‘Poiasnitelnie znachki v arabskikh’. There is, of course, a rich scholarly literature on the meanings of ‘*ajam/aljamiado*’ in Africa and al-Andalus, respectively, which I cannot engage here due to space constraints.

<sup>7</sup> Eaton, ‘Comparing the Persian Cosmopolis’.

<sup>8</sup> Mirza, *The Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*: 2.

<sup>9</sup> For Bahār’s biography, see Smith, ‘Literary Courage.’ For Bahār’s scholarly legacy, see Ahmadi, ‘The Institution of Persian Literature’.

the poet-laureate (*malik al-shuʿarāʾ*) of the Imam Reza Mausoleum at Mashhad until the Constitutional Revolution (1906–11), is best known to students of literature for applying regional stylistics (*sabkshināsī*) to the study of classical Persian literary form, a project he inaugurated in the early 1940s.<sup>10</sup> One unfortunate effect of Bahār’s *sabk* (style) system, adumbrated in three volumes of meticulous textual analysis, was the encouragement it gave to subsequent generations to conceive the geography of Persian literature in primarily regional terms, as well as to rank these geographies hierarchically. Within *sabkshināsī*, poetry written in the Indian style (*sabk-i hindī*) was characterised by a predilection for abstruse metaphors and was ultimately regarded as inferior for this reason. Meanwhile, poetry written in Khurasan, closer to the Iranian heartland, was praised for cultivating a classical, simpler diction, *sabk-i khurāsānī*.<sup>11</sup>

Bahār considered place to be the most pertinent rubric for classifying Persian poetry. A decade earlier, Wahid Mirza had already argued that the poetry of Lahore, Delhi, Ganja, Shiraz and Nishapur ‘formed a united whole’. In Mirza’s eyes, the kinships among poetry occupying different ends of the globe were so intimate that a regional stylistics that grouped texts according to their geographic provenance would have seemed nonsensical to him. Ethnic nationalism factored more strongly into Bahār’s than in Mirza’s thinking, and it should not be surprising to see current scholarship shaped by contemporary prejudices. While the reasons why this path was taken are beyond this essay’s scope, this antimony within the historiography of Persian literature instructively contrasts with the geography that the pages that follow unfold. This is a geography, the geography of ‘*ajam*, that encompassed West, Central and South Asia before modernity.

In practice, *sabkshināsī* has exacerbated the tendency in the historiography of Persian literature to focus on Iranian metropolises, such as Shiraz and Isfahan, at the expense of the outer lying geographies, such as, Shirvan, Delhi and Lahore, all sites of some of the most daring experiments in Persian literary genres.<sup>12</sup> Some Indo-Persianists have

<sup>10</sup> Bahār, *Sabk shināsī: yā, tāʾrīkh-i taṭavvur-i nasr-i fārsī*.

<sup>11</sup> For the most lucid account of these distinctions available in English, see Faruqi, ‘A Stranger in the City’.

<sup>12</sup> Šafā’s magisterial history of Persian literature, *Tārīkh-i adabīyāt dar Īrān*, exemplifies this spatialised typology. On the other hand, Korangy makes effective use of *sabkshināsī* in his *Development of the Ghazal and Khāqānī’s Contribution*.

addressed this bias by substituting Bahār's typology of place with a typology of time.<sup>13</sup> Regardless of whether the trajectory of literary form is grasped temporally or spatially, it is evident that received models of regional stylistics obscure what is arguably the most striking dimension of the geography of Persian literature: its propensity to confound boundaries of ethnicity, culture and religion.

### The Circulation of 'Ajam Culture

Half a century ago, the eminent Indian historian Mohammad Habib (1895–1971) noted that due to the Mongol conquests of Central and West Asia, by the thirteenth century, India had acquired a unique position in the Islamic world, to the extent that it had become 'the only country where Ajam culture could flourish'.<sup>14</sup> After Mirza, Habib was one of the first modern Indian scholars to concentrate on 'ajam as an historical, cultural and political force. In terms of this twentieth-century Indo-Persianist framework, 'ajam is foreign wherever it appears. Although its localisation was infused with cosmopolitan ambitions, Persian circulated as a language and a literature without reference to its indigenous origins. Historically, Habib noted, Persian literature appealed most to, and was developed most by, poets for whom Persian was a non-native language.

Building on the contributions of Habib and his teacher Khaliq Ahmad Nizami (1925–97), Muzaffar Alam has traced the South Asian trajectory of 'ajam in a series of important works that have appeared during the past two decades.<sup>15</sup> Alam argues that 'in the thirteenth century there was a certain degree of cultural integration with a coherent Perso-Islamic (and non-Arab) identity that is identified with the term 'cAjam' and that 'Persian speaking residents of Delhi and Lahore considered themselves a part of this world'. One of the masterpieces in the literature of 'ajam is *Lubāb al-albāb*, the first Persian *tazkira*, a genre that combines literary history with selections of specific poems. Writing from north of Delhi in the early thirteenth century, the author, Muḥammad 'Awfī (1171–1242), called his *tazkira* 'an anthology [*ṭabaqāt*] of the poets of 'ajam'. His

<sup>13</sup> Kinra, 'Fresh Words for a Fresh World', esp. 134.

<sup>14</sup> Habib, *Politics and Society during the Early Medieval Period: Vol. 1*: 59.

<sup>15</sup> Alam, 'The Culture and Politics of Persian' (all citations in this paragraph are from p. 134) and more generally *The Languages of Political Islam*. Nizami's most important work on this subject is *Some Aspects of Religion*.

conception of *‘ajam* included Abū’l Faraj Rūnī and Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān who wrote from Lahore, and Nizāmī of Ganja and Khāqānī of Shirvan, both writing from Azerbaijan.<sup>16</sup> Through such trans-regional taxonomies, *‘Awfī* helped to link South Asia and the Caucasus in a relationship of debt and influence that stands at the centre rather than the periphery of Persian literary history.

Mirza, Habib, Nizami and Alam have documented in detail how, by the thirteenth century CE, *‘ajam* as a geographical designation encompassed Bukhara, Samarqand, Nishapur, Tus, Herat, Lahore, Delhi, Shirvan and Ganja. For medieval writers in the eastern Islamic world, *‘ajam* was the most cohesive social, political and cultural configuration within their horizons. But what was *‘ajam* in the interlude between Rūdakī (d. 941) and Amīr Khusrow (d. 1325), major epochs in two poets whose names are synonymous? During this interlude, from the second half of the eleventh to the first half of the thirteenth century, Persian spread from the Caucasus to South Asia as well as from South Asia to the Caucasus. By comparison with the inaugurations of New Persian (through Rudakī) and Indo-Persian (through Amīr Khusrow) literature, this trans-regional dimension of Persian literary history has received less scrutiny.

In tracing the advent of *‘ajam* literary culture in pre-Mughal South Asia, it should be noted that, contrary to the dominant narrative, the main artery for the circulation of Persian manuscripts was not directly from Bukhara to Lahore and from Lahore to Delhi. Although *‘Awfī* himself was born in Bukhara, the poets whose work had the greatest impact on subsequent Indo-Persian culture, including Nizāmī and Khāqānī, came primarily from Azerbaijan rather than Transoxiana. Khāqānī wrote from Shirvan in northern Azerbaijan, near Daghestan, while Nizāmī wrote from Ganja, closer to Georgia. Both poets were patronised by the Shirvanshahs, a vassal dynasty of the Saljuqs that exercised sovereignty in parts of the Caucasus from 799 to 1607. Albeit in different ways and through different genres, both poets from the Caucasus influenced Indian poets ranging from Sirāj al-Dīn Khurāsānī, Amīr Khusrow, Ḥasan Sijzī Dihlavī in the medieval period to Urdu poets such as Zauq, Ghālīb and Faiz in the late Mughal and post-colonial age.

<sup>16</sup> For an excellent introduction to *‘Awfī*’s life and work, see Vohidov, *Zhizn’ i tvorcheskoe nasledie*.

We cannot discover why or how Persian entered South Asia without taking serious account of the poetry written under the Shirvanshahs from the middle of the eleventh to middle of the thirteenth century. Alongside engaging with the poetry of Nizāmī, Khāqānī and other lesser known poets who were active in Shirvan, including Mujīr al-Dīn Baylaqānī and Falakī, the afterlives of this literary corpus in the *dīvāns* (poetry collections) of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth century Persian poets should be meticulously traced. The trail of such research leads to South Asia, and primarily to courts spanning the subcontinent, from Lahore to Delhi to Gulbarga.<sup>17</sup>

As clear as it is that the eastern Islamic world’s turn to ‘*ajam* marked a new historical horizon, it is also evident that the Persianisation of South Asia was a gradual process. The task is to determine more precisely than we now know the nuances of this transformation that have largely escaped documentation. How did ‘*ajam* inflect the Persian literary imagination? While these are literary–historical questions, they are resonant in political implications. A study in literary influence between the Caucasus and South Asia should go beyond documenting the recurrence of motifs across a textual canon; it should also explore how these disparate geographies overlapped with each other, while tracking the birth of Persian literary forms and their attendant conceptual worlds.

The reception of Persian texts is commonly tracked in terms of their relation to dynasties and courts, but the fact that Persian poetry travelled so far beyond the boundaries of the dynasties where it was conceived calls for a revision to the dominant understanding of the relation between culture and power in this pre-modern literary culture. Poetry patronised by the Shirvanshahs was avidly read from Delhi to Bahmani-ruled Gulbarga, and poetry patronised by the Ghaznavids was avidly read in Shirvan.<sup>18</sup> Even as they paid homage to the Shirvanshahs, Nizāmī and Khāqānī also addressed a posterity that they configured in non-territorial but nonetheless spatial terms, as a series of overlapping geographies onto which they mapped their vision of ‘*ajam*. When ‘*ajam* was promoted it was in order to increase the temporal range of a poetic utterance and not

<sup>17</sup> One of the most important works of pre-Mughal Indo-Persian literature attesting to influence from the poets on the other end of ‘*ajam* is by ‘Iṣāmī (fl. c. 1350) *Fuūih al-Salāṭīn*. This work was written from the Bahmani court of Gulbarga.

<sup>18</sup> For some of these trans-regional reading practices, see notes 64 and 65.



only to broaden the geography of readership. The successful transmission of these temporal to succeeding generations is attested inter alia by Amīr Khusrow's imitations of Nizāmī's *masnavīs*.<sup>19</sup> These ambitions are also reflected in Khāqānī's stylistic influence on early modern *sabk-i hindī* and subsequently on Urdu poetics.<sup>20</sup>

## From Arabic Captivity to Persian Incarceration

Among the many genres of Persian literary culture that have shed light on the ways in which Persian poets subverted power, prison poems (*ḥabsīyyāt*) uniquely elucidate the relations between culture and power in the global circulation of literary culture.<sup>21</sup> I have elsewhere engaged with the prison poem genre as a literary corpus and as an argument with sovereign power.<sup>22</sup> This article shifts the focus away from constitution of the prison poem as a genre to its circulation. To support my theses concerning the trans-regional dissemination of Persian literary culture, and the political implications the literary geography that was forged by this Persianisation.

Poems of imprisonment and captivity flourished on the peripheries of the Ghaznavid, Shirvanshah and °Abbasid empires, often when their political infrastructures were in the process of deteriorating. Whereas many Persian literary genres have formal beginnings, there is no definitive account of how the prison poem entered literary history. The first known author of captivity poems in the Islamic period was Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī (d. 968), a poet of half-Greek lineage, and cousin of the famous °Abbasid ruler Sayf al-Dawla al-Ḥamdānī.<sup>23</sup> Sayf al-Dawla also happened to be the patron of

<sup>19</sup> For the debt of Khusrow's *masnavīs* to Nizāmī's *masnavīs*, see Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance*: 41–65.

<sup>20</sup> Khāqānī's influence is attested by the fact that the Urdu poet Zauq (1789–1854) was granted the title 'Khāqānī-i Hind' (Khāqānī of India). See Shackle, 'The Secular Qasida': 225. For an Iranian response to an Indian critique of Khāqānī's influence by the famous philologist Ārzū (1689–1756), see the letter by Lāhījī (1692–1766), recently published as the Appendix to Tajaldini's 'Iranian perceptions of India and Indian shiism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries': 229–31.

<sup>21</sup> Major studies of this genre include Akimushkina, *Zhanr Habsīyyat*; Yūsufī, *Zindān nāmah 'hā-yi Fārsī*; Zafarī, *Ḥabsīyah dar adab-i Fārsī*. For my work on the subject, see note 22.

<sup>22</sup> See Gould, *The Political Aesthetic* and 'Prisons before Modernity' and the works in notes 38 and 87.

<sup>23</sup> For Abū Firās and his place in Arabic literary history, see el-Tayīb, 'Abu Firas al-Hamdani'.

Abū Firās’s rival al-Mutanabbī.<sup>24</sup> A lover of battles, Abū Firās was taken captive by the Byzantines during one of these battles. He languished in captivity for many years, waiting for liberation to come through a ransom from his cousin. Much to the poet’s chagrin, Sayf al-Dawla al-Ḥamdānī refused to ransom his cousin, perhaps because he preferred to wait for the release of all his subjects taken captive by the Byzantines.

Four years of waiting produced much frustration in Abū Firās and exacerbated his outrage and despair, but these difficulties also stimulated the creation of his greatest literary work and thus contributed to the enrichment of Arabic literature. Abū Firās’ poem cycle is known as the *rūmīyyāt* (‘poems of *rūm*’) due to the fact that his poems were written during his captivity in Byzantium (*rūm*). Described as ‘a poetic diary of the poet’s life’ a century ago by the German Orientalist Alfred von Kremer, this denomination points to the ways in which Abū Firās anticipated the Persian prison poem’s emphasis on lyric subjectivity.<sup>25</sup> Thanks to Abū Firās’ infusion of the panegyric *qaṣīda* (ode) with affect, Persian prison poems became major vehicles for the expression of poetic subjectivity in Persian literature.<sup>26</sup>

Equally important for its subsequent impact on Persian literature is the self-praise (*fakhr*) that suffuses Abū Firās’s *rūmīyyāt* and which was to become a defining quality of the Persian *ḥabsīyyāt*.<sup>27</sup> Related to *fakhr* are *shikāyyat* (complaints), a rhetorical trope dominant within many *ḥabsīyyāt* poems. Abū Firās set the standard with poems that contrasted the poet’s high merits with his miserable surroundings, and suggested that the poet deserved a better fate than imprisonment. Thanks in part to Abū Firās, affect became a thematic obsession of the *ḥabsīyyāt*, although the Arabic poet was concerned only with captivity because he never knew imprisonment directly, and did not address his Byzantine captors in his poems.

<sup>24</sup> On the rivalry between Abū Firās and al-Mutanabbī, see *Ibn Khallikan’s Biographical Dictionary*: 366–69.

<sup>25</sup> Von Kremer, *Culturgeschichte des Orients* 2: 382. (Kremer’s phrase is ‘ein poetisches Tagebuch seines Leben.’)

<sup>26</sup> I use ‘affect’ in this article to denote an intensity of feeling that fluctuates dramatically according to circumstance, and which the prison poem uniquely sought to capture (for this understanding of the term, see Thrift, ‘*Intensities of Feeling*’). On prison poems as vehicles of affect, see Gould, *The Political Aesthetic*: 82–146.

<sup>27</sup> For *fakhr* in the poetry of Abū Firās and Khāqānī, see Ghanim, *Fann al-ḥabsīyyāt bayn Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī wa al-Khāqānī*: 32–43. For *fakhr* in Arabic literature, see Hamori, *On the Art of Medieval Arabic Literature*: 3–30.

A few remaining parallels between the biography of Abū Firās and Persian poets who were influenced by him should be noted in order to clarify the circulation of prison poetry across the eastern Islamic ecumene. Abū Firās's background underscores his distinctive position in Arabic literary history. His mother was Greek, and, given his milieu, it is likely that he understood the Greek language. Like Khāqānī, Abū Firās composed his captivity poems in a language other than his mother tongue. Due to his mother's background, Abū Firās also shared with Khāqānī a first-hand knowledge of Christianity that went beyond what was available from Islamic sources.

Abū Firās openly attacked the Umayyads and ʿAbbasids in his poetry, claiming that they were not the legitimate successors to the prophet. In one *qaṣīda*, he calls Salmān al-Fārsī ('Salman the Persian') a more legitimate successor to the Prophet than the Arab caliphs.<sup>28</sup> Abū Firās's admiration for the first Persian convert to Islam must have appealed to Masʿūd Saʿd and Khāqānī, both of whom were widely read in Arabic, even though they confined most of their literary contributions to Persian.<sup>29</sup> The abundance of Persian words, such as, *marzubān* (border guard), *dībāj* (fine silk or brocade), *bahār* (spring) and *dastbān* (glove), in Abū Firās's Arabic poems provides yet one more reason why Persian prison poets might have been drawn to this Arabic harbinger of prison poem poetics.<sup>30</sup>

Abū Firās's influence notwithstanding, *ḥabsīyyāt* are a uniquely (although not exclusively) Persian expression of the relationship between culture and power. The lexical contrast between *rūmīyyāt*, which are associated with a specific place (*rūm*), and *ḥabsīyyāt*, which take their name from the 'condition' of incarceration, indexes these genres' internal content: whereas the Arabic genre is associated with a place, the Persian genre refers to a psychic condition. From a political perspective, the claims made by a poem that originates in the experience of incarceration differ sharply from the claims made by a poem that originates in the experience of captivity. Poetry lamenting captivity features widely in pre-modern world literature. Meanwhile, poetry that takes on the theme

<sup>28</sup> Abū Firās' *qaṣīda* begins 'al-ḥaqq madazam wa al-dīn mukhteram wa fī' al-rasūl Allah mustaqim'. Khāqānī makes frequent reference to Salmān al-Fārsī in his *masnavī Tuhfat al-ʿIrāqayn*: 16, 34, 192.

<sup>29</sup> For Masʿūd Saʿd's Arabic literary influences and writings in Arabic, see Mardoni, *Masʿūd Saʿd Salman i arabskaia poeziia*.

<sup>30</sup> See *Di vān al-Amīr Abī Firās al-Ḥamdānī*: 130, 158, 189, 329.

of imprisonment, particularly from the vantage point of political critique and in contexts wherein the poet brought about his own incarceration, is much rarer. With a few important exceptions in Arabic, the *ḥabsīyyāt* is a uniquely Persian contribution to world literature. As for *ḥabsīyyāt* as a technical term to describe a literary genre, this word does not appear in any extant Arabic or Persian work of literary criticism until 1156, with the appearance of Nizāmī ‘Aruḏī of Samarqand’s *Four Discourses* (*Chahār maqāla*). As is well known, Nizāmī ‘Aruḏī composed this work, one of the first in what was to become an extensive corpus of Persian mirrors-for-princes, to instruct his reader in the art of being a scribe (*dabīr*), poet (*shā‘ir*), astrologer (*monajjem*) and physician (*ṭabīb*). In this text, Nizāmī ‘Aruḏī praises Mas‘ūd Sa‘d’s *ḥabsīyyāt*, without referencing Abū Firās or any other precedent in Arabic or Persian literature.<sup>31</sup>

According to both the classical Persian and the modern scholarly consensus, Mas‘ūd Sa‘d was the creator of the first Persian poems to thematise the experience of incarceration.<sup>32</sup> But the *ḥabsīyyāt* attained its fullest significance in the *qaṣīdas* of Khāqānī, whose political and theological boldness pushed the genre in a new direction. In transforming the *ḥabsīyyāt* into a genre defined by its critical relation to the ruler, and for whom the patron was both the antagonist object of affection, Khāqānī activated the capacity of Islamic literary forms, and particularly of the *qaṣīda*, to function as instruments of critique.<sup>33</sup> He also helped to fashion a genre for which the poet’s imagined audience was not (solely) the ruler or patron. At the same time, the contradictions that inform the poet’s relation to his patron are part of the genius of Khāqānī’s poems, for even as the patron-ruler is typecast as a tyrant and agent of the poet’s suffering, he is also figured as a beloved, and at times as the sun, who rules the poet’s life and determines the course of his days.<sup>34</sup>

The history of the Persian prison poem is a history of poetry’s increasingly critical relationship to power. Poets were imprisoned under the Ghaznavids

<sup>31</sup> Al-‘Aruḏī, *Chahār maqāla*: 65.

<sup>32</sup> The definitive study of Mas‘ūd Sa‘d’s prison poetry is Sharma, *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier*, which should also be credited with being the first scholar to point to the substantial convergences between early Indo-Persian culture and the Persianate culture of the Caucasus (p. 142).

<sup>33</sup> For further on this theme, see Gould, ‘The Much-Maligned Panegyric’.

<sup>34</sup> For the motif of the patron as the sun in Khāqānī’s *Tuhfat*, see Beelaert, *Cure for the Grieving*: 36–50.

and the Shirvanshahs with more frequency than in prior eras.<sup>35</sup> The critique of power self-evidently presumes the existence of oppression, so we have the sufferings of these poets to thank for their incendiary verse. In the hands of Khāqānī and even Masʿūd Saʿd, *ḥabsīyyāt* go beyond merely lamenting the poet's suffering, which was the primary function of the Arabic poetry of captivity. For the first time, now in Persian rather than Arabic, the poet's suffering becomes a stimulus to political critique and to a poetics premised not on the subordination of poetry to power, but rather on an intense competition between the language of sovereignty and the language of poetry. This transformation is reflected in the title that was conferred on Khāqānī already in the medieval period: 'sovereign of the kingdom of speech [*tājdār-i mamlikat-i sukhan*]'.<sup>36</sup> It is also in evidence in a *rubāʿī* (quatrain) of Masʿūd Saʿd's that had a long afterlife in Persian poetry:

ای شاه بترس از آنکه پرسند از تو  
جایی که تو دانی که نترسند از تو  
خرسند نه ای به پادشاهی ز خدای  
پس چون باشم به بند خرسند از تو<sup>37</sup>

Shāh, you should fear those who question you  
in a place where you know no one fears you.  
You take no delight in your sacred sovereignty.  
Chained as I am [by you], why should I be pleased with you?

In this *rubāʿī*, the poet parallels his captivity and the king's divinely vested sovereignty. Although it was a commonplace of monarchical political thought to assume that the king's actions were divinely sanctioned, here the poet configures his oppression as political, not divinely ordained. Even if the king receives his imprimatur from God, he, not God, is still responsible for the poet's imprisonment. The parallelism of the second and final lines, which, by concluding with *az to* ('from you'), suggest that both fear (*tars*) and shackles (*band*) derive from the king, is indicative of the poet's critical

<sup>35</sup> The increase in punishment during this period is the focus of Lange, *Justice, Punishment and the Medieval Muslim Imagination*.

<sup>36</sup> Ṣafā, *Tārīkh-i Adabīyāt dar Irān*<sup>2</sup>, 2: 774.

<sup>37</sup> *Dīvān-i ashʿār-i Masʿūd-i Saʿd-i Salmān*, 2:1055, rubʿā 342; compare the different syntax in *Dīvān-i Mascūd-i Saʿd-i*: 718. For further examples of the subversive capacities of the *rubāʿī* as a genre critical of the court, see Davidson, 'Genre and Occasion in the *Rubāʿīyyāt* of ʿUmar Khayyām': 133–48.

relationship to his patron and ruler. Through such literary devices, this *rubāʿī* underscores the role played by fear in governance, and implicitly critiques a system so structured, while gesturing towards the more robust and systematic critiques that animated the prison poetry of Shirvan.<sup>38</sup>

Implicit in Masʿūd Saʿd’s prison *rubāʿī* is also a conception of the political subject’s enslavement to the institution of kingship, which entails a vision of the political that is cognate with Abū Firās’ vision of the poet in captivity. Imprisonment, which the king gives to the poet, is structurally related to the sovereignty that God grants the king. Thus there can be no freedom, the poet implies, within a political system governed by an unjust king. In light of this analysis, it is significant that Masʿūd Saʿd’s *rubāʿī* was rephrased and repeated by the poet and author of the Persian prose version of *Kalīla wa Dimna*, Naṣrullāh Munshī, during his imprisonment by Khusraw Malek (r. 1117–57), the last Ghaznavid sultan, and that Naṣrullāh Munshī’s version was quoted in Persian literature’s first *tazkira*, by Muḥammad ʿAwfī.<sup>39</sup>

## Beyond Arabic versus Persian

What was the relation between the Arabic conception of ‘*ajām* and its Persian counterpart? Niẓāmī clearly regarded Daghestan, the Arabophone region with which I opened, as a kindred cultural sphere. Nearly all occurrences of ‘*ajām* in Niẓāmī’s oeuvre testify to his understanding of the term as applicable to any non-Arab part of the Islamic world. While little is known at present about the impact of Persian on Daghestani literary culture, Daghestan’s role in disseminating Persian throughout the eastern Islamic world is much in evidence.<sup>40</sup> During the years that the prison poetry of Shirvan acquired its central location in the Persianate literary imagination, the geography of Persian literature encompassed the entire Caucasus and beyond.

Looking forward several centuries, the argument for the importance of Persian (as well as of Turkic) in the Arabic preface to the trilingual (Persian–Arabic–Turkish) dictionary compiled by the Daghestani scholar Dibīr Qāḍī of Khunzakh (b. 1792) for the Avar ruler Umma Khan (1774–1801) is just one of the major texts to incorporate Daghestan into

<sup>38</sup> See Gould “‘I Bind Myself in the Belt of Oppression’”.

<sup>39</sup> Awfī, *Lubāb al-albāb*, 1: 307–08; Zafarī, *Habsīyah*: 64–66.

<sup>40</sup> For recent scholarship on this subject, see Gasanov, *Dagestan i iranskii mir*. A useful if incomplete catalogue of Persian manuscripts held in Daghestan is Alibekova, *Katalog persidskikh rukopisei v institute istorii, arkheologii i etnografii DNTs RAN*.

the Persian world. ‘After Arabic,’ declares Dibīr Qāḏī, ‘Persian is the most eloquent [*aḡṣaḡ*], renowned, and the language most revered by the eminent and generous people [*al-karām wa-al-kabār*].’<sup>41</sup>

The homage that Dibīr Qāḏī paid to Persian from the mountains of Arabophone northern Daghestan was reinforced by the status of Persian in southern Daghestan, particularly in Darband, an ancient city built by the Sasanian rulers, which abuts the Caspian Sea and is located near Shirvan, on the other side of the Caucasus mountains.<sup>42</sup> Darband constituted something of an exception to the rule of an Arabic-dominant Daghestan. Nizāmī dedicated his first romance (*masnavī*), *Makhsan al-asrār* (*Treasury of Mysteries*, 1176), to the ruler of Darband, Fakhr al-Dīn Bahrāmshāh (1155–1218). Khāqānī addressed several of his *qaṣīdas* to this same ruler. Noting the profuse comparisons between Fakhr al-Dīn Bahrāmshāh and his Ghaznavid namesake from Panjab, art historian Barry Finbar Flood argues that ‘frontier elites’ cultivated the cross-cultural connections that were most likely to increase their regime’s prestige.<sup>43</sup> Flood’s hypothesis concerning the cultural capital wielded by cultural difference within the Persian ecumene helps to clarify the circulation of culture within this geography. Bahrāmshāh’s very name reflects the Persianisation of the Caucasus, for, as Nizāmī knew well, the Sassanian king Bahrām Gūr had been enshrined in Persian literary history for preferring Persian to Arab literary culture.<sup>44</sup> In gratitude for being the dedicatee of Nizāmī’s masterpiece, Fakhr al-Dīn Bahrāmshāh sent the poet a Qipchaq (Turkic) slave named ‘Aḡāq, meaning ‘heaven’. Not wishing to use her as a slave, Nizāmī married her, and she became the poet’s muse. The pathos that inflects Nizāmī’s later *masnavīs* *Khusrow va Shīrīn* and *Laylī va Majnūn*, written after his wife’s death, and in mourning for her cannot be understood without taking into account the poet’s deep love for this Daghestani woman.

Various lineages of the Shirvanshah dynasty ruled over Daghestan as well as Azerbaijan.<sup>45</sup> While the Shirvanshahs as a whole affiliated

<sup>41</sup> For the Arabic text with Russian translation, see Saidov, *Katalog arabskikh rukopisei*: 37–40.

<sup>42</sup> For the history and geography of Darband, see the still-valuable study of Kozubskii, *Istoriia goroda Derbenta*. In English, see Kettenhofen, ‘Darband’: 13–19.

<sup>43</sup> Flood, *Objects of Translation*: 264.

<sup>44</sup> See Awfī, *Lubāb al-albāb*: 20–21, which draws on older Persian and Arabic traditions, some of which are discussed in Gould, ‘Inimitability versus Translatability’: 81–104.

<sup>45</sup> For the Shirvanshahs of Daghestan, see Kemper, *Herrschaft, Recht und Islam*: 71, 74, 115–16.

themselves with pre-Islamic Iran, they also, at least in Darband, were believed to have descended from Arab settlers who had arrived centuries earlier.<sup>46</sup> Somewhat exceptionally, Daghestan witnessed a synthesis of <sup>ʿ</sup>arab and <sup>ʿ</sup>ajam, or, otherwise understood, between the Arabic and the Persian conception of <sup>ʿ</sup>ajam. Southern Daghestan was an important stronghold of Sasanian rule, and the walls of Darband, which the famed Sasanian king Anushirvan is credited with having built, marked the northernmost outpost of Persian power in the pre-Islamic world.<sup>47</sup> When combined with Daghestan's early precedence in Arabic scholarship, and the contributions made by Daghestani scholars to the fields of *ḥadīth* (sayings of the Prophet and his companions), *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *taṣawwuf* (Sufism), the dichotomy between <sup>ʿ</sup>arab and <sup>ʿ</sup>ajam that structured cultural relations elsewhere in the Islamic world was inconceivable in Daghestan.<sup>48</sup> It therefore does not seem accidental that the very region that imparted a new inflection to <sup>ʿ</sup>ajam also undid the dichotomy between Arabic and Persian.

Daghestan's synthesis of <sup>ʿ</sup>arab and <sup>ʿ</sup>ajam (and of the Arabic and Persian conceptions of <sup>ʿ</sup>ajam) affected Khāqānī. Steeped in Arabic learning, Khāqānī composed poetry in Arabic as well as Persian, but he ultimately gravitated exclusively to Persian, because that language gave him greater access to his patrons in Shirvan as well as readers to the east. For Khāqānī as for Mas'ūd Sa'd, writing in Persian was a strategic decision, dictated in part by the linguistic preferences of their patrons, but also with an eye to advancing the cultural capital of specific literary genres in a linguistic medium that enabled an unprecedentedly broad temporal as well as spatial range.

The twelfth-century Persianate world was crafted from the imaginations of the poets who created this literary canon. This genealogy—as figurative as the ancient Iranian lineage that the Shirvanshahs claimed for themselves—is one measure of the misleading implications of *sabkshināsī* with respect to the pre-modern Persian imagination. There are of course limits to a literary culture that consistently opts for the global at the expense of the local; one will not find in such a poetic corpus a detailed engagement with local conditions. Although both Mas'ūd Sa'd

<sup>46</sup> On the complex role played by Sasanian traditions in the legitimation of the Shirvanshah dynasty, see Ashurbeli, *Gosudarstvo Shirvanshakhov*: esp. 144.

<sup>47</sup> For Daghestan's place in the pre-Islamic Persian world, see Gadzhiev and Kasumova, *Srednepersidskie nadpisi Derbenta VI veka*.

<sup>48</sup> On Daghestan's contribution to these aspects of Islamic thought, particularly Sufism, see the monumental study of Alikberov, *Epokha klassicheskogo Islama na Kavkaze*.



and Khāqānī invoked Lahore and Shirvan respectively in their poetry, their aims were not documentary. Rather, these prison poets addressed a global audience that was defined imaginatively, culturally, textually and linguistically, rather than territorially.

Both Mas'ūd Sa'd and Khāqānī composed poetry in an idiom heavily vested in trans-regional categories. Persuaded of the uniqueness of their contributions to Persian literature, they challenged sectarian identities, in part by suffusing their texts with Christian imagery. Take Khāqānī's *masnavī*, *The Gift from Two Iraqs*. In this travel narrative in verse, Khāqānī references his birthplace countless times, proudly declaring that he was born in Shirvan, while also referring to the city of his birth as a prison cell.<sup>49</sup> The same trope of imprisonment is evident in Nizāmī's statements concerning the city of his birth; perhaps taking his cue from Khāqānī, Nizāmī called himself the 'prisoner of Ganja'.

Before either Caucasus poet employed the motif of imprisonment in their verse, Mas'ūd Sa'd had already called himself a prisoner of Lahore. Addressing the city of his birth in the second person, speaking to it as a lover to his beloved, he asks, 'how are you without me?' (*ai lāhor o yek bī man chegūna ī*).<sup>50</sup> Not long afterwards, Ḥasan Sijzī Dihlavī (b. 1258), one of the earliest imitators of Khāqānī and Nizāmī and best remembered as the author of a compilation (*mal'ūzāt*) of stories about his *sheykh* Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā', borrowed Khāqānī's words to create a *qasīda* that engaged with his local Indian environment.<sup>51</sup> In this text, Ḥasan compares himself to the poet from Shirvan. This verse puns on Khāqānī's way of referring to himself as Ḥassān-i 'Ajam, an allusion to the Prophet's companion Ḥassān ibn Sābit Anṣārī (b. 563), who was known as the most eminent and pious poet of his age:

چون محمود پادشاه در عصمت عن خداست  
این حسن ثنای خسان شد ثنا شاه را<sup>52</sup>

When Shah Maḥmūd received the Lord's assistance,  
this second Ḥasan [Sijzī] became the Shah's second Ḥassān [that is, Khāqānī].

<sup>49</sup> *Tuhfat al-Irāqayn*: 42, also see pp. 18, 29, 30, 108. The former three references present being born in Shirvān as oppressive rather than liberating.

<sup>50</sup> Husain, *The Early Persian Poets of India*: 78; Alam, 'The Culture and Politics of Persian': 137.

<sup>51</sup> Ḥasan Sijzī Dihlavī, *Fawā'id al-fu'ād*.

<sup>52</sup> Ḥasan Sijzī Dihlavī, *Dīvān-i Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī Dihlavī*: 611.

Although Shirvan for Khāqānī, Ganja for Niẓāmī, and Lahore for Mas'ūd Sa'd were sites of affliction and oppression (*zulm*), these poets nonetheless enshrined the places of their birth in their verse. The poets of Shirvan, Ganja and Lahore used their position on the peripheries of the Islamic ecumene to craft a new poetics of the periphery, a frontier poetics in verse.

Allusions to Khāqānī's *ḥabsīyyāt* have also been found in the *divān* of 'Amīd al-Dīn Lovikī (b. 601/1204) of Sunnam in present-day Punjab. 'Amīd al-Dīn held the post of *mawstaft al-mamālik* (royal accountant) within the Delhi Sultanate.<sup>53</sup> Imprisoned by his patron–ruler Sultan Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad (r. 1246–65), the son of Balban, 'Amīd al-Dīn drew heavily on Khāqānī's imagery in the following verses from one of his prison poems:

در گریبان سر فرو برد ازدهای هفت سر  
تا من این مار دوسر در زیر دامن کرده ام<sup>54</sup>

In my travails I lunge towards the seven-headed dragon  
since this two-headed serpent [these chains] has clung to me.

Khāqānī's prison poems combine dragon and serpent imagery, as in the following verses from a prison poem *qaṣīda*, which elaborates a series of hallucinatory images generated by the stupefaction induced by the experience of incarceration:

مار دیدی در گیا پیچان؟ کنون در غار غم  
مار بین پیچیده بر ساق گیا آسای من  
ازدما بین حلقه گشته خفته زیر دامنم  
ز آن نجنیم ترسم آگه گردد ازدهای من<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Badā'ūnī, *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*, 1: 99.

<sup>54</sup> Cited in Ahmad, 'Amīd Loiki-A Seventh Century Poet': 15. On 'Amīd al-Dīn's biography, see Aliev, *Persoiazychnaia literatura Indii*: 41–46, and Husain, *The Early Persian Poets of India*: 192–220. His *divān* has been edited by Nazir Ahmad and published as Faḍl Allāh 'Amīd Lūyakī, *Dīvān-i 'Amīd*.

<sup>55</sup> *Dīvān-i Afzal al-Dīn Bedlī b. 'Alī Najjār Khāqānī Shīrvānī*: 321 (*qaṣīda* beginning 'ṣubḥ-dam chūn kalla bandad āh-i dūd-āsā-yi man'). This poem is discussed in Gould, *Political Aesthetic*: 108.

Did you see the serpent slithering in the grass? Now, in the cave of sorrow,  
 the snake of sadness wraps around the grass's calves and my staff.  
 The dragon sleeps beneath my clothes.  
 I do not stir, fearing my dragon will wake.

In a second prison poem in praise of Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad, the patron–ruler who had him imprisoned, °Amīd al-Dīn also followed Khāqānī—and anticipated Amīr Khusrow, the so-called ‘parrot of Hindustan’—by elevating his own poetic genius above that of his ruler, patron, and jailor. Although its themes derive from Khāqānī, °Amīd al-Dīn’s diction is in the tradition of Mas‘ūd Sa‘d, who frequently described his imprisonment metonymically as *band*, meaning chain<sup>56</sup>:

من طوطی سخنورم آخر نه جره باز  
 در پای طوطیان غلط آمد شکار بند  
 چندین مداوم از پی تخلص منتظر  
 خونم چو آب کرد در این انتظار بند<sup>57</sup>

I am an eloquent parrot. I am not after all a falcon.  
 With other parrots, I faltered and was captured in a hunt.  
 I have circulated widely in search of release.  
 My blood became like water while waiting [in prison].

## Geographies of Circulation

The Persian cosmopolis was driven by literature, but it was nonetheless a polis, a political space within which identity and power were negotiated and refined. This cultural–political formation extended its influence through poetic form. As Sheldon Pollock has famously claimed for the Sanskrit literary culture that preceded but also overlapped with the Persianate ecumene for roughly four centuries, the uniqueness of this cultural–political formation consisted in the fact that ‘one could clearly be in the Sanskrit cosmopolis and simultaneously remain at home’.<sup>58</sup> In Eaton’s reformulation of Pollock’s model to suit the specificities of pre-modern Persian, both the Sanskrit and the Persian cosmopolises shared in

<sup>56</sup> See, for example, Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān, *Dīvān-i ash‘ār*, 2: 829.

<sup>57</sup> This poem is cited by Badā‘ūnī, *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*, 1: 109–13.

<sup>58</sup> Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men*: 274.

common a ‘lack of a geographic center’ just as an ‘astonishing portability’ characterised ‘their respective bodies of literature’.<sup>59</sup>

Without travelling away from their homes, Mas‘ūd Sa‘d, Khāqānī, Nizāmī and ‘Amīd al-Dīn Lovikī could draw on the affective resources of Persian poetics to realise visions of literature that confounded regional divides. Their task was to craft a literary genre that would resonate across Central, South and West Asia by touching on experiences that poets from across the eastern Islamic world shared in common. That the Persian cosmopolis, like its Sanskrit counterpart, was constituted through literature in part explains its resistance to territorialisation. Persian literary texts were disseminated across networks of exchange that had been set in place by the Silk Road.<sup>60</sup> Even when patrons commissioned Persian texts and networks of exchange helped to insure their movement across the Persian ecumene, neither group could exert final control over the materials or conditions of circulation.

The non-Islamic environments in which poets from the Caucasus and South Asia worked figured centrally into the political capacities of their poetry. In Lahore, Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Persianised the Indic *bārahmāsā*, a literary genre involving cycles of poems about the seasons.<sup>61</sup> Writing from Christian Abkhazia, Khāqānī punned on Georgian words in his quatrains (*rubā‘īyyat*).<sup>62</sup> Another lesser-studied prison poet, Mujīr al-Dīn Baylaqānī, states that his mother was of Armenian descent.<sup>63</sup> Although Khāqānī was on more intimate terms with Christianity than the Lahore poet, his predecessor’s diversification of the Persian canon surely provided him with an important precedent for conceiving Persian outside an Islamic framework. With even greater nuance than Mas‘ūd Sa‘d, Khāqānī incorporated Christian imagery, including the controversial crucifixion of Jesus, into his prison poetry’s political aesthetic.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Eaton, ‘Comparing the Persian Cosmopolis’.

<sup>60</sup> For a preliminary discussion of these networks, see Ashurbeili, *Ekonomicheskie i kulturnye sviazi Azerbaidzhana s Indiei v srednie veka*.

<sup>61</sup> See Sharma, *Persian Poetry*: 116ff, 153.

<sup>62</sup> For Khāqānī’s use of Georgian, see Marr, *Khaqani, Nizami, Rustaveli*: 11–12, and Minorsky, ‘Khāqānī and Andronicus Comenenus’: 566.

<sup>63</sup> Baylaqānī, *Dīvān-i Mujīr al-Dīn Baylaqānī*: 140 (=qaṣīda 57). Although Mujīr al-Dīn is not known to have been imprisoned, his *shikāyat* affiliate him with the Persianate literature of incarceration (see his *Dīvān*: 252–82).

<sup>64</sup> Parallels between Mas‘ūd Sa‘d’s and Khāqānī’s Christian *qaṣīdas* are discussed in Mu‘īn, ‘Khāqānī o ā‘īn-i masīh’: 32, and Sharma, *Persian Poetry*: 143.

In thirteenth-century Delhi, Ḥasan Dihlavī and Amīr Khusrow conscientiously imitated the *qaṣīdas*, *masnavīs* and *ghazals* of the poets of Shirvan and Ganja. While Ḥasan Dihlavī was known as the Sa<sup>ʿ</sup>dī of Hindustan, Amīr Khusrow's reputation was in part based on his imitations of Niẓāmī's *masnavīs*, and on his adaptation of this genre for an Indian environment. Ziyā' al-Dīn Baranī (c. 1285–1357), a historian who wrote under the Delhi Sultanate, reports that Khāqānī's *divān* and Niẓāmī's *khamsa* (quintet) were read aloud during gatherings (*majālīs*) that were attended both by Delhi's political notables and practicing Sufis.<sup>65</sup> That Baranī mentions Khāqānī and Niẓāmī in unison is indicative of how closely these two poets were associated with each other in Persianate Delhi.

Khāqānī and Niẓāmī were also cited as a pair by Indian poets who introduced Shirvanshah literary culture to thirteenth-century Delhi, and thereby inaugurated the literary tradition now referred to as 'Indo-Persian' but which was not conceived in such local terms during the thirteenth century. That these two Caucasus poets constituted a requisite canon for the early Persian poets of Hindustan is evident in the *divān* of the émigré Indian poet Sirāj al-Dīn Khurāsānī (d. 1273), known as Sirājī to his contemporaries. Sirājī invokes Niẓāmī and Khāqānī together as his poetic masters at the conclusion to a *qaṣīda* written less than half a century after the former's death. 'Sirājī is a slave in the system [*nizām*] descriptions,' the poet writes, 'You may say that he is [enslaved to] the regime of Khāqānī.'<sup>66</sup> The key word here, *nizām* (system, regime) also related to the word for verse (*nazm*), in contrast with prose (*nathr*). Finally, *nizām* evokes the name of Niẓāmī Ganjevī, whose *masnavīs* were foundational for subsequent Indo-Persian literature. Hence, this verse could be read to say that Sirājī is a slave (*bande*) of Niẓāmī and Khāqānī through his devotion to Persian poetry.

Compared to their profuse deployment in the Persian literature of the Delhi Sultanate, and notwithstanding their greater geographic proximity, the poets of Shirvan and Ganja feature less widely in the *divāns* of the prominent Iranian poets of the thirteenth and fourteenth century such as Sa<sup>ʿ</sup>dī or Ḥāfiẓ. When Persian poetry circulated away from the Caucasus and Central Asia it circulated to and then within South Asia, thereby creating a Persianate world distinct from Iran in any of its historical articulations. This eastward trajectory taken by the literature of *ʿajam* cannot easily be grasped so long as the Iranian nation remains the basic unit of analysis in

<sup>65</sup> Baranī, *Tarikh-i Ferozshāhī*: 66–68.

<sup>66</sup> Khurāsānī, *Divān-i Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Khurāsānī ma'rūf bah Sirājī*: 299.

Persian literary history, or, to state the matter in terms of socio-linguistics, so long as 'Persian' is reduced to 'Farsi'.

As Sunil Sharma has noted, already in the nineteenth century *tazkira* of Rezā Qulī Khān Hedāyat (1800–71), 'almost a complete lack interest in Persian poetry being produced outside Iran' could be discerned.<sup>67</sup> This modern turn away from eastern Persian was accelerated by *sabkshināsī*'s spatialising poetics. Although Hedāyat's anthology included early Indian poets such as Mas'ūd Sa'd, Badr-i Chach, Amīr Khusrow and Ḥasan Dihlavī, these authors progressively fell by the wayside as the nation-state paradigm became normative for literary history. Khāqānī and Nizāmī did not fall into quite the same obscurity, but their marginalisation within the contemporary study of Persian in South Asia may have to do with the territorialisation of Persian literary pasts.<sup>68</sup> Concerning this nationalist historical refashioning that was associated earlier with Bahār, Wali Ahmadi argues persuasively that 'the contemporaneous emergence of Persian literature as an essential component of an elaborate national order and as an institution of a seemingly autonomous realm of shared cultural identity characterizes poetic modernity through the cultural geography of the Persian language'.<sup>69</sup> In the modern period, the transference of models of Persian literary history from Iran to the subcontinent contributed to the erasure of non-Iranian poetic lineages. Ironically, the Indo-Persian effort to move beyond Iranian nationalist historiography was stalled by its internalisation of Iranian nationalist paradigms, which prevented this scholarship from adequately recognising the influence of non-Iranian Persianate culture, more notably from Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Although Persianate literary culture was clearly internal to the rise of Persianate empires (and vice versa), no Persianate empire, including the Ghaznavids, Ghorids and Seljuqs, could unify 'ajam, which included the Caucasus, Khurasan, the land beyond the Oxus (*mā warā' al-nahr*), and Hindustan within its ambit, into a single political entity. Within such a comparatively dispersed geography, no regime could function with the same governmental precision that characterises the modern nation-state. As

<sup>67</sup> Sharma, 'Redrawing the Boundaries of 'Ajam': 54.

<sup>68</sup> My understanding of the role of territorialisation in Iranian nationalism is indebted to Kia, 'Imagining Iran'. There are of course some recent studies of Caucasus/South Asian literary connections, such as Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance*; my point is that this research remains marginal to the field as a whole.

<sup>69</sup> Ahmadi, 'Intertextual Influences and Intracultural': 224.

a literary language, Persian did the work that rule by force could not do, while enabling a cultural circulation across vast domains that had little to do with external force, religious belief or ethnic loyalties. The trans-regional circulation of the prison poem, like the comparable circulation of the *masnavī* from the Caucasus to South Asia a few decades later, served as the foundation for this new geography.<sup>70</sup>

Over the course of the eleventh to the twelfth century, the prison poets of Lahore and Shirvan, along with the *masnavī* writers of Ganja and Delhi, collectively a Persianate ecumene on the basis of literary texts. How do we account for the capacity of certain cosmopolitan literatures to transform and in some cases even generate local cultures? How did the literary networks that extended from Darband to Delhi and from Ganja to Gulbarga, and which followers' itineraries more circuitous than direct, constitute a global cultural identity? Tracing these literary networks would generate a new history, relevant not only to the study of Indo-Persian literature and Persian literature in the Caucasus, but also to the global circulation of literature before modernity.

### Technologies of Dissemination

I opened by tracing the geography of literary circulation across the world of *ʿajam*. Now I want to inquire into the modalities and technologies of this circulation. At the centre of this inquiry is the question of technology. How did Persian culture circulate across the world of *ʿajam*? One answer from a necessarily plural account is the madrasa system that was the primary means through which Islamic learning (including much Persian poetry) circulated beginning in the twelfth century.<sup>71</sup> The Indo-Persian historian Minhāj Sirāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī (b. 1193) headed two institutions of learning, first in Uchch (in Panjab) and then in Delhi. Madrasas flourished in Delhi as early as 1206, simultaneously with the efflorescence of Persian poetry in Shirvan and Ganja.<sup>72</sup> The Hauz Khas building complex, for which the foundation was

<sup>70</sup> The trans-regional circulation of the Persian *masnavī* is the subject of my current project, 'Persianate Literatures Compared: Narrating Difference from South Asia to the Caucasus', funded by the Institute for Advanced Studies at Central European University, Budapest (2014–15).

<sup>71</sup> Ephrat, *A Learned Society in a Period of Transition*: 27, and Vishanoff, *The Formation of Islamic Hermeneutics*: 252, 271.

<sup>72</sup> Siddiqui, 'Muslim Intellectual Life in India': 82.

laid by the Khilji Sultans (1290–1320) and later developed by the Tughluqs (1320–1413), is just one of many madrasa structures that included buildings, still preserved in ruins, where teachers gathered to impart their knowledge of the Islamic sciences (including poetry) to their students.<sup>73</sup>

That Persian poetry bulked large in the South Asian madrasa curriculum is indicated by the proliferation of commentaries on Persian literary texts. The Indo-Persian commentarial tradition on Khāqānī is particularly rich. Arguably, its culmination is the commentary on Khāqānī's *Gift from Two Iraqs* by the eighteenth-century South Indian poet Abjadī.<sup>74</sup> While many manuscripts from the earliest periods of the Delhi Sultanate have been lost, that which remains suggests continuity between the madrasa curriculum of the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>75</sup> Still in an age when the composition and recitation of poetry figured centrally into every basic education, the curriculum developed by Mullah Nizām al-Dīn (d. 1748), referred to as *dars-i nizāmī* ('the lesson of Nizām'), included the *khamsa* (quintet) of Nizāmī Ganjevī among its requisite texts. No other work of Persian literature could compete in importance to the *masnavīs* of the poet from far-away Ganja.<sup>76</sup>

Meanwhile, in the medieval Arab world, according to George Makdisi, 'the literary arts continued to live under the shadow of the religious sciences, drawing their legitimacy in institutions of learning from the benefit they brought to the study of sacred scripture'.<sup>77</sup> The formation of the Persianate ecumene at a literary level coincided with the consolidation of the madrasa system throughout the eastern Islamic world. The increasingly broad reach of education in turn affected poets' linguistic choices, including the reliance on Persian as the main language of literary culture and the subsequent development of uniquely Persian genres, such as, the

<sup>73</sup> On this complex and the madrasa found within, see Welch, 'A Medieval Center of Learning in India'.

<sup>74</sup> See the introduction to Abjadī's commentary on *Tuḥfat in Kulliyāt-i-Abjadī*, Vol. 4. For partial lists of other commentaries on Khāqānī's work, see Minorsky, 'Khāqānī and Andronicus Comenenus': 550–51, and Khāqānī commentaries and manuscripts in Storey and de Blois, *Persian Literature*: 331–33. Notably, these commentaries were written in seemingly peripheral locations, such as, Madras (by Abjadī) and Malwa (by Shādiābādī), as well as in the more traditional centres of Persian scholarship such as Delhi and Lahore.

<sup>75</sup> Berkey, 'Madrasas Medieval and Modern': 40–60.

<sup>76</sup> Desai, *Centres of Islamic Learning*: 14.

<sup>77</sup> Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges*: 76–77. Makdisi's chapter on this subject is tellingly entitled 'The Subordination of the Literary Arts'.



prison poem and the *qalandariyyāt* (antinomian mystical poetry).<sup>78</sup> It also affected the status of Persian in the Islamic world, for Persian was institutionalised in India as a literary culture thanks in large part to the madrasa system, as well as the spread of Sufi religious practices that placed a heavy emphasis on Persian poetry. To an even greater extent than in the Sufi lodges, it was in the madrasas that Persian became a lingua franca for those who aspired to participate in global literary culture.

Most importantly, it was in madrasas that students encountered Persian literature for the first time. Without these religious institutions, Khāqānī and Nizāmī would not have become household names to the educated Muslim population of India. Persian literary culture benefited directly from the economic policies of the madrasa system, which made education more widely available to a broader cross-section of society, and not only the elite, than ever before. Many madrasas provided stipends and other forms of support for students with no source of financing.<sup>79</sup> The madrasa of the Bahmani vizier Mahmud Gawan (r. 1466–81) in the Deccan was particularly outstanding with respect to its social welfare programme, and was known for extending charity to poor students.<sup>80</sup> Although the eastern Islamic madrasa system's commitment to social welfare was matched by its Arab counterparts, the Arab world lacked a trans-regional infrastructure to support the circulation of Arabic poetry across regional and political borders comparable to the one that existed for theological, jurisprudential, philosophical and scientific knowledge in Arabic. Arabic poetry circulated widely, needless to say, including throughout the Persianate world, but to a lesser extent than other forms of Arabic learning, and without the institutional backing that was extended to Persian literary form.

Persian texts arrived from Shirvan to Delhi along with merchants, traders, teachers and students, who were travelling in search of wisdom, and fleeing the Mongol invasions, as the rhetorical manual of Shams-i Qays famously chronicles and as 'Awfī's biography exemplifies.<sup>81</sup> Amīr Khusrow has also recorded his brief experience of captivity with the Mongols.<sup>82</sup> That Persian

<sup>78</sup> On the latter, see Miller, *A Persian Poetics of Transgression*.

<sup>79</sup> Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo*: 17–19, 90–91.

<sup>80</sup> For this madrasa, which was also known as the Bidar College, see Sherwani, *Mahmūd Gāwān*: 143–46.

<sup>81</sup> See Shams-i Qays al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-mu'jam*: 23. For the impact of the Mongol invasions on 'Awfī, see Keshavmurthy, 'Finitude and the Authorship of Fiction': 95, 102, 105.

<sup>82</sup> Dihlavī, *Duvalrānī Khazir Khān*: 36.

texts had circulated for centuries prior to these social upheavals accounts for why Indian authors were able to continue contributing to Persian literature even when Persian poetry ceased to circulate from Ganja to Delhi around the time of the Mongol invasions.<sup>83</sup>

That the poets of twelfth and thirteenth centuries Shirvan and Ganja had such a profound effect on the development of Indo-Persian literature while later poets from the Caucasus remained obscure to South Asian poets can partially be explained with reference to the ruptures Mongol violence introduced into the long-established networks of literary circulation. From the perspective of literary history, however, the effect of these invasions was not entirely negative. These ruptures provided the impetus for a new literary interest in local detail, which ultimately replaced the portable cosmopolitanism of early Indo-Persian literature with a new emphasis on the vernacular. Literary networks extending from Shirvan to Delhi gave way to composition in the vernacular. For Azerbaijan and elsewhere in the Caucasus, this meant Azeri, which became a major language of literary production during the early modern period, and a competitor to, if never a replacement for, Persian. For much of South Asia, particularly in the north, this meant various forms of Hindustani, alongside other Indian vernaculars that were less susceptible to Persian influence but which were nonetheless inflected by Persianisation. Even amidst these vernacular turns, however, early modern vernacularisation was shaped by an earlier Persianisation, as ‘vernacularised forms of the Persian cosmopolis’ spread throughout Southeast Asia.<sup>84</sup>

### **ʿAjam’s Political Possibilities**

Having focused so far on the channels of the prison poem’s circulation, it is worth returning by way of a conclusion to the literary and political specificities of these texts. In the year 1188, Khāqānī refused to surrender a ring he had obtained during his sojourn in Baghdad from the sultan’s *wazir*, an event that was later connected to his imprisonment. Believing

<sup>83</sup> As can be seen in Ḥasan’s *ʿIshq-nāma*, for which see *Dīvān-i Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī Dihlavī*: 776–804.

<sup>84</sup> Eaton, ‘Comparing the Persian Cosmopolis’. For the translation of Persian works into Bengali for the kings of Burma’s Arakan coast, see D’Hubert, ‘La réception d’un succès littéraire persan’.

that a poet should not be subordinate to his ruler, Khāqānī then composed a series of poems from prison protesting his imprisonment.<sup>85</sup> Whatever the immediate causes of this new genre of lament, the poems Khāqānī produced based on his own suffering, pioneered new forms of political critique. These poems differed from the genre of complaint (*shikāyyat*) and from the poetry of exile (*ghurbat*) that had long filled the *dīvāns* of his Persian and Arabic predecessors.

Tonally as well as thematically, Khāqānī's *habsīyyāt* struck a note that had not been struck before. Beyond protesting his imprisonment, Khāqānī made this protest the foundation for a political aesthetic that insisted on the supremacy of poetic over political power. As noted earlier in connection with Abū Firās, this rarefied conception of his vocation was expressed inter alia through *fakhr*, the trope of boasting through which the prison poet make ambitious claims for the power of his verse.<sup>86</sup> Far from merely flattering his ego, Khāqānī's *fakhr* vindicated the vatic utterance. Khāqānī's *fakhr* was shaped by the earlier poetry of Mas'ūd Sa'ḍ, whose *fakhr* was inspired by Abū Firās. Collectively, these poets' *fakhr* was conditioned by the geographies traversed by *‘ajam*. Each new generation of prison poets built on the accomplishments of those from prior generations. *Habsīyyāt* increased in boldness with every decade, until this form of literary critique was forgotten, poetry as a social institution declined, and the genre lost its political force. The prison poem was generated by poetry's power, rather than by the poet's incarceration. This genre could not be sustained in an era of poetry's weakness.

Prison poets did not agitate for revolution when they critiqued the social order, as for example when Khāqānī elaborated a poetics of incarceration to confront Muslim discrimination against non-Muslims in his 'Christian Ode'.<sup>87</sup> Modern approaches to politics concentrate on revolution as a means of bringing about social justice. While this line of reasoning makes sense in light of the history of modern power, its temporal horizons constrain it to the modern period. A serious implementation of the postcolonial mandate of provincialising Europe will look beyond the presentist norms

<sup>85</sup> The ring episode is described in the first *maqāla* (chapter) of *Tuhfat*. For the relation between this event and Khāqānī's imprisonment, see Khan, 'Life of Khaqani': 43, and Storey and de Blois, *Persian Literature*, 5: 321, n. 4.

<sup>86</sup> See note 27.

<sup>87</sup> For an analysis and translation of this poem, see Gould, 'The Political Cosmology'.

within which most comparison takes place. A non-presentist postcolonial agenda will engage productively with the political cosmologies of those who brought about poetic justice in non-revolutionary ways.

The words of Nizāmī ‘Aruḏī, referenced above as the first critic to reflect on the Persian prison poem, memorably capture the political cosmology of medieval Persian poetics that resulted from the challenge to normative geographies posed by ‘*ajam*. ‘Poetry’, Nizāmī ‘Aruḏī says in his treatise on the four basic professions (scribe, poet, astrologer, doctor), ‘is that art whereby the poet arranges imaginary propositions and adapts deductions, with the result that he can make a thing little appear great and a great thing small.’<sup>88</sup> Through such rhetorical theorisations, the art and science of poetic composition in Persian came to be as rigidly—and productively—codified as alchemy and astrology. *Ḥabsīyyāt* were one medium through which Persian poets voiced their political critiques, and through which they indicted the tyrants for whom they laboured.

After the disappearance of the Persian prison poem, the geographies of ‘*ajam* contracted. Across the eastern Islamic world, the spatial, temporal and political scope of Persian literary culture was irreversibly reduced, particularly in South Asia, where ‘Indo-Persian’ references a lost and somewhat suppressed pre-colonial culture. But, thanks to the ongoing resonance of Persian poetry from the Caucasus to South Asia, the prison poem genre’s incarcerational poetics remained alive for some, albeit now in vernacularised versions of poems that used to circulate within a Persian cosmopolis. In post-partition Pakistan, Faiz Ahmad Faiz composed a collection of prison poetry (*zindānnāma*) from his jail cell. Among these poems was one that forged an inter-textual relation between himself and his eminent predecessor in the art of prison poem poetics, Khāqānī. Faiz was writing in Urdu, newly christened as Pakistan’s national language through a process that paralleled, and arguably exceeded, the linguistic machinations of the Iran nation-state:

How many crosses are buried in my window  
 Each stained with the blood of its own Messiah  
 Each aspiring to unite with God.  
 Each day, these godly beings of kindness and beauty  
 Come, blood-drenched, into my sorrowful cell,

<sup>88</sup> Nizāmī Samarqandī al-‘Aruḏī, *Chahār maqāla*: 30.

And each day, before my eyes  
Martyrs' bodies are raised up and healed.<sup>89</sup>

Faiz's literary appropriation indicates that, in contrast to the literary critics of his era, he was unwilling to participate in the reduction of the geography of Persian to the restricted domain of modern Iran. Whereas Khāqānī had invoked the cross in order to make a statement about the status of Christians in the Muslim world, Faiz was working within an exclusively Islamic imaginary. This poem illustrates that Faiz was on intimate terms with earlier Persian prison poetry.

Faiz turned to a distant Caucasus geography to underscore his conceptual embrace of religious plurality in post-partition Pakistan. Among its other inter-texts, Faiz's 'crosses buried in a window' is taken directly from Khāqānī's 'Christian Ode'. Although Faiz was writing in Urdu and Khāqānī was writing in Persian, the word for cross in both poems is *salīb*. Both turned to prison poetry to critique regimes that perpetuated injustice. Faiz entitled the collection in which this poem was included according to the genre to which he had assigned it: *Zindānnāma*. He did not invoke *ḥabsīyyāt*, the term that had been preferred by Mas'ūd Sa'd, Khāqānī, and their biographies such as Niẓāmī 'Aruḏī. In opting for the Persian-Urdu title, Faiz completed this genre's break with Arabic precedents, for whereas *ḥabs* has an Arabic signification, albeit one that is not used with respect to any genre, the words *zindān* (prison) and *nāma* (letter, but here poem) are wholly Persian. Consciously or not, Faiz was working continuing the work of his equally famous predecessor, Ghālib (d.1869) whose Persian and Urdu poems about imprisonment had in their turn been inspired by the *ḥabsīyyāt* of Khāqānī and Mas'ūd Sa'd.<sup>90</sup>

When he wished to intensify the stakes of his imprisonment, this Pakistani poet turned to the Caucasus. Given the resonance of the prison poetry of Shirvan on the subcontinent to which his choice attests, should not contemporary scholars of Indo-Persian literature inquire as seriously into the beginnings of this literary tradition as they have inquired into its decline? In addition to expanding our knowledge of early Indo-Persian literature, such inquiries will help to clarify what

<sup>89</sup> Faiz Aḥmad Faiz, *Zindānnāma*: 122–23. I have omitted the middle stanza (four lines) and modified the translation in Habib, *An Anthology of Modern Urdu Poetry*: 23.

<sup>90</sup> See *Divān-i Ghālib Dihlavī*: 293–95, 452–55.

the medieval prison poem can offer the study of the relation between aesthetic and politics, while also clarifying the trans-regional scope of the geographies of 'ajam. The literary legacy of the Persianate Caucasus is uniquely suited to explicate the aesthetic and political cosmologies of Ḥasan Sijzi Dehlavī, Amīr Khusrow, Mīrzā Ghālib and Faiz Ahmed Faiz, among many other poets of Persianate South Asia. When rendered with greater textual specificity, the cross-confessional linkages these poets cultivated across the Persianate ecumene can enrich the contemporary quest for a global past that is neither ethnic nor national. By embracing their planetary condition, and grounding their work in the trans-regional geography of 'ajam, the prison poets of pre-modern Persia confounded long-naturalised binaries between culture and power.

## References

- Abjadī, Muḥammad Isma'īl. 1954. *Kulliyāt-i-Abjadī*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Maḥvī, Madras.
- Abū Firās, al-Ḥamdānī. 1408/1987. *Dīwān al-Amīr Abī Firās al-Ḥamdānī: 'alā riwāyat Ibn Khālawayh wa-riwāyāt ukhar*, ed. Muḥammad al-Tūnjī, Damascus.
- Ahmad, Nazir. 1977. 'Amīd Loiki-A Seventh Century Poet', in Fathulla Mujtabi (ed.), *Indo-Iranian Studies*, Delhi.
- Ahmadi, Wali. 2004. 'Intertextual Influences and Intracultural Contacts: History and Memory in the Poetry of Akhavan-sales and Wasef Bakhtari', in Aḥmad Karīmī Ḥakkāk and Kamran Talattof (eds), *Essays On Nima Yushij: Animating Modernism in Persian Poetry*, Leiden: 221–36.
- . 2004. 'The Institution of Persian Literature and the Genealogy of Bahar's "Stylistics"', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 31(2): 141–52.
- Akimushkina, E. 2006. *Zhanr Habsiyyat i persoiazychnyi poezii XI–XIV vv*, Moscow.
- al-ʿArudī, Niẓāmī Samarqandī. 1927. *Chahār maqāla (=Majmaʿ al-navāder)*, Muḥammad Qazvīnī (ed.), Berlin.
- al-Rāzī, Shams-i Qays. 1338/1959. *Kitāb al-muʿjam fī maʿayir ashʿār al-ʿajam*, Mudarris-i Raḍawī (ed.), Tehran.
- Alam, Muzaffar. 2003. 'The Culture and Politics of Persian in Precolonial Hindustan', in Sheldon Pollock (ed.), *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia*, Berkeley: 131–98.
- . 2004. *The Languages of Political Islam. India 1200–1800*, London.
- Alikberov, A.K. 2003. *Epokha klassicheskogo Islama na Kavkaze: Abu Bakr ad-Darbandi i ego sufiskaia entsiklopediia 'Raikhan al ha-qa 'iq', XI–XII vv*, Moscow.
- Alibekova, P.M. 2001. *Katalog persidskikh rukopisei v institute istorii, arkhologii i etnografii DNTs RAN*, Makhachkala.
- Aliev, G. Iu. 1968. *Persoiazychnaia literatura Indii. Kratkii ocherk*, Moscow.

- Amanat, Abbas. 2012. 'Iranian Identity Boundaries: An Historical Overview', in Abbas Amanat and Farzin Vejdān (eds), *Iran Facing Others: Identity Boundaries in a Historical Perspective*, London: 1–36.
- Ashurbeli, Sara. 1983. *Gosudarstvo Shirvanshakhov*, Baku.
- . 1990. *Ekonomicheskie i kulturnye svyazi Azerbaidzhana s Indiei v srednie veka*. Baku.
- ʿAwfī, Muḥammad. 1906. *Lubāb al-albāb*, ed. M. M. Qazwīnī and E.G. Browne, Vol. 1, Leiden.
- Badāʿūnī, ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Mulūk Shāh. 1973. *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*, Delhi.
- Bahār, Muḥammad Taqī. 1942. *Sabk shināsī: yā, tā ʿrīkh-i tayavvur-i nasr-i fārsī*, Tehran.
- Barabanov, A.M. 1945. 'Poiasnitelnie znachki v arabskikh rukopisiakh i dokumentakh severnogo kavkaza', *Sovetskoe vostokovedenie* III: 183–214.
- Baranī, Ziyāʿ al-Dīn. 1862. *Tarīkh-ī Ferozshāhī*, ed. Saiyid Aḥmad Khān, Calcutta.
- Baylaqānī, Mujīr al-Dīn. 1358. *Dīvān-i Mujīr al-Dīn Baylaqānī*, ed. Muḥammad Abādī, Tabriz.
- Beelaert, A.L.F.A. 2000. *Cure for the Grieving: Studies on the Poetry of the 12th Century Persian Court Poet Khāqānī Shirwanī*, Leiden.
- Berkey, Jonathan. 1992. *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education*, Princeton.
- . 2007. 'Madrasas Medieval and Modern: Politics, Education, and the Problem of Muslim Identity', in Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (eds), *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*, Princeton: 40–60.
- Boletsī, Maria. 2013. *Barbarism and its Discontents*, Stanford.
- Browne, Edward. 1906 [1977]. *A Literary History of Persia*, 4 vols, Bethesda, Maryland.
- Davidson, Olga Merck. 2004. 'Genre and Occasion in the *Rubāʿīyyāt* of ʿUmar Khayyām: The *Rubāʿī*, Literary History, and Courtly Literature', in Beatrice Gruendler and Louise Marlow (eds), *Writers and Rulers: Perspectives on Their Relationships from Abbasid to Safavid Times*, Wiesbaden: 133–48.
- Desai, Z.A. 1978. *Centres of Islamic Learning*, Delhi.
- D'Hubert, Thibaut. 2006–2007. 'La réception d'un succès littéraire persan dans les campagnes du Bengale: une traduction de Jāmī par le poète ʿAbdul Hākīm', *Bulletin d'Études Indiennes*, vol. 24–25: 121–38.
- Dihlavī, Amīr Khusrāw. 1988. *Duvalrānī Khazir Khān*, eds, Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Sālīm Anṣarī and Khālīq Aḥmad Nizāmī, Delhi.
- Dihlavī, Ḥasan Sijzī. 2004. *Dīvān-i Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī Dihlavī*, ed. Nargīs Jahān, Delhi.
- . 1385/2006. *Fawāʿid al-fuʿād*, ed. Tawfīq Subḥānī, Tehran.
- Eaton, Richard. 2014. 'Comparing the Persian Cosmopolis (900–1900) and the Sanskrit Cosmopolis (400–1400)', keynote address delivered to the workshop 'Persianate Studies: A Conceptual Inquiry', Yale University, 9–11 May.
- el-Tayib, A. 'Abu Firas al-Hamdani', in Julia Ashtiany (ed.), *Abbasid Belles Lettres*, Cambridge: 315–27.
- Ephrāt, Daphna. 2000. *A Learned Society in a Period of Transition: The Sunni 'Ulama' of Eleventh-Century Baghdad*, Albany, NY.
- Faiz, Faiz Aḥmad. 1956. *Zindānnāma*, Lahore.
- Faruqī, Shamsur Rahman. 2004. 'A Stranger in the City: The Poetics of *Sabk-i Hindi*', *Annual of Urdu Studies*, vol. 19: 1–93.

- Flood, Barry Finbar. 2009. *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval Hindu-Muslim Encounter*, Princeton.
- Gabbay, Alyssa. 2010. *Islamic Tolerance: Amīr Khusraw and Pluralism*, London.
- Gadzhiev, M.S. and S. Iu. Kasumova. 2006. *Srednepersidskie nadvpisi Derbenta VI veka*, Moscow.
- Gasanov, Magomed. 1999. *Dagestan i iranskii mir: shtrikhi vzaimosviazei*, Erevan.
- Ghānim, Ramlah Maḥmūd. 1991. *Fann al-ḥabsiyāt bayn Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī wa al-Khāqānī*. Cairo.
- Ghālib, Mūrā Asad Allāh Khān. 1376/1997–98. *Dīvān-i Ghālib Dihlavī*, ed. Muḥsin Kiyānī, Tehran.
- Gould, Rebecca. 2012. 'Prisons before Modernity: Incarceration in the Medieval Indo-Mediterranean', *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean*, vol. 24(2): 179–97.
- . 2012. *The Political Aesthetic of the Medieval Persian Prison Poem, 1100–1200*. Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University.
- . 2013. 'Inimitability versus Translatability: The Structure of Literary Meaning in Arabo-Persian Poetics', *The Translator*, vol. 19(1): 81–104.
- . 2014. 'The Political Cosmology of Prison Poetics: Khāqānī of Shirwān's Christian Qaṣīda', *Literature Compass*, vol. 11(1): 496–515.
- . 2015. 'The Much-Maligned Panegyric: Towards a Political Poetics of Premodern Literary Form', *Comparative Literature Studies*, vol. 2(51).
- . Forthcoming. 'Why Daghestan is Good to Think', Moshe Gammer (ed.), *Written Culture in Daghestan*, Helsinki.
- . Forthcoming. "'I Bind Myself in the Belt of Oppression': Khāqānī's Christian Qaṣīda and the Prison Poetry of Medieval Shirwān', *Journal of Persianate Studies*.
- Habib. 1981. *Politics and Society During the Early Medieval Period: Collected Works of Professor Mohammad Habib Vol.*, K.A. Nizami (ed.).
- Habib, M.A.R. 2003. *An Anthology of Modern Urdu Poetry*, New York.
- Hamori, Andras. 1974. *On the Art of Medieval Arabic Literature*, Princeton, NJ.
- Herodotus. 2003. *The Histories*, trans. Aubrey de Selincourt, New York.
- Husain. 1937. *The Early Persian Poets of India*, Patna.
- Ibn Khallikan. 1842–71. *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, trans. William MacGuckin Baron de Slane vol. 1, Paris.
- Iṣāmī, 'Abd al-Malik. 1948. *Futūḥ al-salāṭīn*, ed. Sayyid Yūsha, Madras.
- Kemper, Michael. 2005. *Herrschaft, Recht und Islam in Daghestan—Von den Khanaten und Gemeindefürstentümern zum gihad-Staat*, Wiesbaden.
- Keshavmurthy, Prashant. 2011. 'Finitude and the Authorship of Fiction: Muhammad 'Awfī's Preface to his *Lubab al-albāb* (The Piths of Intellectuals, 1221 C.E.)', *Arab Studies Journal*, vol. 19(1): 94–120.
- Kettenhofen, Erich. 1996. 'Darband', *Encyclopedia Iranica*, vol. VII, Fasc. 1: 13–19.
- Khan, Rifaqatullah. 1959. 'Life of Khaqani', *Indo-Iranica*, vol. 12(2): 43.
- Khāqānī Shirvānī, 1388. *Dīvān-i Afzal al-Dīn Bedīl b. 'Alī Najjār Khāqānī Shirvānī*, ed. Ziyā' al-Dīn Sajjādī, Tehran.
- . 1978. *Tuḥfat al-'Iraqayn*, ed. Yahyā Qarīb, Tehran.
- Khurāsānī, Sirāj al-Dīn. 1972. *Dīvān-i Sayyid Sirāj al-Dīn Khurāsānī ma'rūf bah Sirājī*, ed. Nazir Ahmad, Aligarh.



- Kia, Mana. 2014. 'Imagining Iran: Land, Ethnicity, and Place', in Kamran Scot Aghaie and Afshin Marashi (eds), *Rethinking Iranian Nationalism and Modernity*, Austin, TX: 89–112.
- Kinra, Rajeev. 2007. 'Fresh Words for a Fresh World: *Tāza-gū* 'r and the Poetics of Newness in Early Modern Indo-Persian Poetry', *Sikh Formations*, vol. 3(2): 125–49.
- Korangi, Alireza. 2013. *Development of the Ghazal and Khāqānī's Contribution: A Study of the Development of Ghazal and a Literary Exegesis of a 12th c. Poetic Harbinger*, Harrassowitz.
- Kozubskii, E.I. 1906. *Istoriia goroda Derbenta*, Temir-Khan-Shura.
- Kremer, Alfred, Freiherr von. 1875–77. *Culturgeschichte des Orients unter den chalifen Wien*, ed. W. Braumüller.
- Lange, Christian. 2008. *Justice, Punishment and the Medieval Muslim Imagination*, Cambridge.
- Lāhijī, Ḥazin. 2009. 'Nāma-yi Ḥazin be Mīr Shams al-Dīn Faqīr', appendix to Jaleh Tajaldini, 'Iranian Perceptions of India and Indian Shiism in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', Ph.D. dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University: 229–31.
- Loikī, Faḍl Allāh 'Amīd. 1985. *Dīvān-i 'Amīd*, ed. Nazir Ahmad, Lahore.
- Makdisi, George. 1981. *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*, Edinburgh.
- Marr, I.U. 1935. *Khaqani, Nizami, Rustaveli*, Moscow.
- Mardoni, T. 2006. *Mas'ūd Sa'd Salman i arabskaia poeziia*, Dushanbe.
- Mas'ud Sa'd Salmān, 1364/1985. *Dīvān-i ash'ār-i Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salmān*, ed. Mahdī Nūriyān, Isfahan.
- . 1318/1939. *Dīvān-i Mas'ūd Sa'd*, ed. Rashīd Yāsemī, Tehran.
- Miller, Matthew Thomas. 2015. *A Persian Poetics of Transgression: The Poetry and Cultural Politics of the Qalandariyyāt*, Ph.D. dissertation, Washington University in St. Louis.
- Minorsky, Vladimir. 1945. 'Khāqānī and Andronicus Comenenus', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 11(3): 550–78.
- Mirza, Mohammad Wahid. 1935. *The Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, Calcutta.
- Mu'īn, Muḥammad. 1985–88. 'Khāqānī o ā'in-i masīh', *Majmū'ah-i maqālāt*: 201–16.
- Nizami, K.A. 1961. *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India in the Thirteenth Century*, Aligarh.
- Nu'mānī, Shiblī. 1948–58. *Shīr al-'ajam*, Persian trans. Muḥammad Gīlāni, 5 vols., Tehran.
- Pollock, Sheldon. 2005. *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*, Berkeley.
- Rypka, Jan. 1968. *History of Iranian Literature*, ed. Karl Jahn, Dordrecht.
- Safā, Zabīh Allāh. 1335/1956–57. *Tārīkh-i adabiyāt dar Īrān*, Tehran.
- Saidov, M.S. 1977. *Katalog arabskikh rukopisei Instituta istorii, iazyka i literary im. Gamzata Tsadasy Dagestanskogo filiala AN SSSR*, Moscow.
- Shackle, Christopher. 1996. 'The Secular Qasida in Mughal and British India', in Stefan Sperl and Christopher Shackle (eds), *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa: Classical Traditions and Modern Meanings*, Vol. 1, Leiden: 205–52.
- Sharma, Sunil. 2000. *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier*, Delhi.
- . 2012. 'Redrawing the Boundaries of 'Ajam in Early Modern Persian Literary History', *Iran Facing Others*: 49–62.
- Sherwani, H.K. 1942. *Maḥmūd Gāwān, the Great Bahmani Wazir*, Allahabad.

- Siddiqui, I.H. 2003. 'Muslim Intellectual Life in India' in I.H. Siddiqui (ed.), *Medieval India: Essays in Intellectual Thought and Culture*, Delhi.
- Smith, Matthew C. 2006. 'Literary Courage: Language, Land and the Nation in the Works of Malik al-Shu'ara Bahar', Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University.
- Storey, C.A. and François de Blois. 2004. *Persian Literature: A Bio-bibliographical Survey*, Vol. 5: *Poetry of the Pre-Mongol Period. Second, Revised Edition*, London.
- Thrift, Nigel. 2004. 'Intensities of feeling: Towards a spatial politics of affect', *Geografiska Annaler*, vol. 86B(1): 57–78.
- Vishanoff, David R. 2011. *The Formation of Islamic Hermeneutics: How Sunni Legal Theorists Imagined a Revealed Law*, New Haven, CT.
- Vohidov, Sulton. 1989. *Zhizn' i tvorcheskoe nasledie Mukhammada Auifi*. Dushanbe.
- Welch, Anthony. 1996. 'A Medieval Center of Learning in India: The Hauz Khas Madrasa in Delhi', in Gülru Necipoglu (ed.), *Muqarnas*, vol. 13: *An Annual on the Visual Culture of the Islamic World*: 165–90.
- Yūsufī, Muḥammad Rīza. 2012. *Zindān nāmah 'hā-yi Fārsī az qarn-i panjum tā pānzdahum*, Qum.
- Zafarī, Valī Allāh. 1364/1985. *Habsīyah dar adab-i Fārsī: az āghāz-i shī'r-i Fārsī tā pāyān-i Zandīyah*, Tehran.