Poetry and Poetics: the Sufi Eye and the Neoplatonic Vision in Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*

By Parwana Fayyaz

Trinity College

March 2020

This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit of 100,000 words exclusive of bibliography for Degree Committee at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

Poetry and Poetics: the Sufi Eye and the Neoplatonic Vision in Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*

By Parwana Fayyaz

Abstract

This doctoral thesis focuses on a fifteenth-century *masnavī* (narrative poem) of *Salāmān and Absāl* by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 1492), the "seal of the poets" of classical Persian literature. It is a long, mystically and philosophically complex, narrative. Despite its importance, the poem's challenging philosophical material and difficult themes (including incest) led to its neglect by the intelligentsia of the pre-modern Islamic dynasties in Iran, Afghanistan, and India, as well as in contemporary scholarship. My thesis is the first-ever study of this poem within the two important contexts from which it emerged; these are the broader Greco-Roman, Arabic, and Persian intellectual traditions and the complex medieval courtly and social reality. I was able to reveal a world of textual, cultural, linguistic, and religious exchanges that, when viewed with this broader perspective, has important ramifications for the way in which we speak about the relationship of East to West, of Islam to the Greco-Roman and Christian European worlds, and of the circulation of philosophy and images. My two theories, 'Poetry of the Eye' and 'Poetics of Vision' examine Jāmī's mystical-philosophy on the interaction of bodies and minds, spaces, and even time in the purely corporeal world through the sense of sight, employed in the search for love and knowledge, and how he intermingled his emanation theory borrowed from Neoplatonic tradition with the Sufi concept of imagination. Jāmī's self-reflective message, which conveys the poet's mental, physical, and spiritual states, is yet another interesting addition to understanding this long-forgotten and presumably morally problematic story of Salāmān and Absāl.

To my parents—Roqya Fayyaz and Ghulam Sarwar Fayyaz

تقدیم به مهربان ترین والدین : غلام سرور فیاض و رقیه فیاض

Acknowledgements **7**

Preface **1**

Chapter I: Jāmī, the Timurid Poet and His Oeuvre in Context **11**
- **Jāmī's Position in the Persianate Literary Tradition** 17
- **Jāmī: Dialectician on Mystical Court Poetry and Sufi Scholar** 20
- **Jāmī and Ebn al-'Arabī** 26
- **Jāmī's Poetry and Poetics** 29
- **Jāmī's *Haft Awrang* and His Other Literary Works** 36

Conclusions **47**

Chapter II: Background on Salāmān and Absāl: Arabic-Persian Sources, Review of Secondary Literature, and a New Approach **50**

Origin of the Names "Salāmān" and "Absāl" **50**
- **Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ's Version of the Tale** 54
- **Ibn Sīnā's Version of the Tale** 57
- **Ebn Ṭofayl's Version of the Tale** 58
- **Jāmī's Poem on the Tale of Salāmān and Absāl** 60

Critical Assessment of the Existing Studies on My Primary Source **64**

A New Approach to Studying Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* **81**
- **My Methodology** 84
- **Gutas on Ibn Sīnā's "Indicative Method'** 86
- **Jāmī's Indicative Method** 87

Intertextual Analysis of *Salāmān u Absāl* with Homer's *Odyssey* **91**

Conclusions **99**

Chapter III: "Poetry of the Eye" and the Centrality of the Sense of Sight **101**

The Metaphysics of Sight **102**

The Poetry of the Eye **106**

A Dialectical Preface: Chapter One of the Mathnavī of *Salāmān u Absāl* **112**

A Definition of Sight and Jāmī on Sight **122**
- **Active Sight: The Eye in Search for Love** 125
- **Passive Sight: Beyond the Eyes, Sense of Touch** 136
- **Guided Sight: The Mediator of Knowledge** 144

Conclusions **158**

Chapter IV: "Poetics of Vision:" The Eye in Translation **165**

Neoplatonism and Jāmī **166**

The Metaphysics of Vision **170**

The Poetics of Vision **175**

The Penultimate Chapter of *Salāmān u Absāl* **179**

The Neoplatonic Eye and Jāmī on Vision **192**
- **The Vision of Love** 197
- **The Vision of Beauty** 198
- **The Vision of Vision** 200

Conclusions **201**

Chapter V: Conclusion: *Salāmān u Absāl,* A Poem of Jāmī's Old Age **205**

Jāmī's Late-Style Poem **208**

Jāmī's Rhetoric on Old Age **213**

Old Age and Poetry of the Eye **217**
Jāmī's Poetics of Aging **223**
Aging and the Poetics of Vision **227**
Conclusions **234**

Bibliography **239**

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to my supervisor, Dr Christine van Ruymbeke's for her guidance, encouragement, and trust in my ability to write this dissertation on *Salāmān and Absāl*, Jāmī's narrative poem of 1130 lines. I thank Christine for her mentorship, kindness, and for believing in me.

I am grateful to Professor Peter Garnsey of Jesus College, Cambridge who read and offered excellent suggestions on Chapters two and four. I am also indebted to Dr Mary Sansalone for reading drafts of each of the chapters in this thesis; her editorial comments and suggestions helped bring clarity to my writing and sharpness to my ideas.

I am grateful to the scholars-friends I have met at Trinity College for their support, inspiration, and laughter. Aaron listened to my ideas and restored my enthusiasm when things looked bleak. Alex shared with me the art of listening and hearing one's ideas before capturing them in writing. Anna-Maria and Sheldon encouraged me to find my voice in my academic writing "just like in your poetry." And Luca inspired me to write between two different languages by constantly translating and reshaping my thoughts. Without their support, encouragement, and friendship, my intellectual world would have been incomplete.

I wish to thank my readers and examiners Dr Dominic Parviz Brookshaw of Oxford University and Dr Domenico Ingenito of University of California, Los Angeles for their thorough reading of my thesis and for their useful comments.

I express my heartfelt thanks to my parents and my sisters and brothers for their unconditional love, encouragement, and understanding, and for supporting me throughout my journey beyond Kabul به دنبال علم *in the pursuit of knowledge*. And to my sister Shabnam, who joined me in this pursuit of education, your understanding and love have been especially important to me.

Finally, I would like to gratefully acknowledge the funding I received from the Trinity College External Studentship, which enabled me to pursue my PhD at Cambridge University. I am also grateful for their three Rouse Ball Research Fund and a Gaillard T. Lapsley Fund for Medieval Studies, and to the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies for their E. G. Browne Memorial Fund, Fieldwork Funds, and the Graduate Support Fund that helped me in completing my research work.

Preface

This thesis focuses on how the notions of 'poetry of the eye' and the 'poetics of vision' explain the poet Jāmī's knowledge of mystical and philosophical dialectics on the relationship between human love and Divine love in his unusual, long-narrative poem, the *Mathnavī of Salāmān u Absāl*.[1] An acclaimed poet-dialectician of the Timurid period, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 1492) wrote *Salāmān u Absāl* between 1480 and 1484 in the city of Herat, in present day Afghanistan. In Jāmī's time, the city of Herat was a thriving and dynamic center in the region. During Jāmī's lifetime, three of the rulers of Herat– Šāhroḵ Mirzā (r. 1397-1447), Solṭān-Abu Saʿid (r. 1451-69), and most importantly Solṭān-Ḥosayn Bāyqarā (r. 1470-1506)– welcomed intellectuals, painters, philosophers, calligraphers, Sufi practitioners and scholars, and poets from all backgrounds to their court. These poets and scholars, especially those within the Naqšbandiya Sufi intellectual tradition, such as Jāmī himself, led a renaissance of culture and literature that has been mostly overlooked in current scholarship. This thesis, which is comprised of five chapters, studies and re-evaluates the dialectics expressed in Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*. One might ask why this very particular poem and more importantly why only this poem?

The mathnavī of *Salāmān u Absāl* is one of seven mathnavīs in Jāmī's the *Haft Awrang*. In comparison to the other six mathnavīs, *Salāmān u Absāl* is an outlier for this is a poem about an unusual love affair between a young prince and his wet-nurse. The poem also is at odds with some of the well-known mathnavīs preceding Jāmī, who was a talented imitator of preceding poets' style and subject matter. His form of mathnavī writing openly imitated that of the works of Neẓāmi Ganjavi and Amir Ḵosrow Dehlavi. In relation to their mathnavīs, such as Neẓāmi's *Ḵamsa* (Quintet) or *Panj Ganj* (The

[1] The edition of Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* I use in this dissertation is Aʿlā-Khān Afṣaḥzād, Ẓāhir Aḥrārī, Jābilqā Dād ʿalīshāh, Aṣghar Jānfidāh, and Ḥusain Aḥmad Tarbiyat's edition of 1997.

five treasures) and Ḵosrow's *Ḵamsa* (in response to Neẓāmi's *Ḵamsa*), one can observe that Jāmī's compendium "Seven Thrones" *the Haft Awrang*, besides the question of its didactical purposes, stands at odds with the tradition of the number of mathnavīs in the compendium. In both Neẓāmi's and Ḵosrow's compendia, the number is five. This is due to the addition of the mathnavīs of *Selselat al-ḏahab* ('The Golden Chain') and *Salāmān u Absāl*. "But Jāmī was not content with a sextet, and went on to compose the philosophical allegory Salāmān u Absāl sometime between 893/1488 and 896/1491, dedicating it to the Āq Quyūnlū ruler, Sulṭān Yaʿqūb, and thus rounding out a heptad—"Seven Thrones," or Haft awrang."[2] That being said, *Salāmān u Absāl* – a shocking love story that has no architype in the tradition of poetry in the Persian language –completes Jāmī's *the Haft Awrang*. Jāmī openly elevates the theme of an unusual love in the poem. It is this unusual love, which is the central focus of this thesis, that leads us to understanding the intersection between Sufi mystical thought and Neoplatonic philosophical tradition. Jāmī explains this transformation of physical love to a spiritual love through the process of intellection by inexplicitly channeling the teachings of Ibn al-ʿArabī and Ibn Sīnā, which had an immense impact on Jāmī's poetics and scholarship.

This unusual love stands in stark comparison to Jāmī's "three other mathnavīs [*Yusof and Zoleyḵā* and *Leyli o Majnun* and *Ḵerad-nāma-ye Eskandari*] that elaborate on the theme of love [and] are finely crafted works that each explore different aspects of the multiple dimensions of the topic…Jāmī's approach is different and less explicit [in *Salāmān u Absāl*] than in the more paradigmatic mathnavīs YZ [Yusof u Zoleyḵā] and Laylī u Majnūn."[3]While the other three mathnavīs of *Selselat al-ḏahab*, *Toḥfat al-aḥrār*, and *Sobḥat al-abrār* follow the tradition of how mathnavī poems are mainly for mysticaly

[2] See Franklin Lewis's "To Round and Rondeau the Canon Jāmī and Fānī's Reception of the Persian Lyrical Tradition" in *Jami in Regional Contexts: The Reception of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī's Works in the Islamicate World, ca. 9th/15th-14th/20th Century*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2018. pp, 494.

[3] See Thibaut d'Hubert's "Foundational Maḥabbat-nāmas: Jāmī's Yūsuf u Zulaykhā in Bengal (ca. 16th–19th AD)" in *Jāmī in Regional Contexts. pp,* 653.

inclined teaching purposes. By reflecting upon the knowledge that the mathnavī of *Salāmān u Absāl* contributes to, or, saying this differently, the knowledge that completes or seals Jāmī's *Haft Awrang*, it is fair to juxtapose this poem with Jāmī's own title as "the Seal of the Poets (khātim al-shuʿarā)."[4] What does it mean when a poem completes a collection of poetry? In the same manner, what does it mean for us to regard a poet or a poem to bring closure to a poetic era? Would that poem be considered the poem that reiterates the poet's last message, especially when the poem is written in old age?

My main reason for focusing on this single mathnavī—as opposed to also looking at Jāmī's other mathnavīs and lyrical poetic corpus in a comparative lens– is due to the role of the poem in Jāmī's body of work. In each of his mathnavīs, for instance, Jāmī chooses a distinctive form and subject matter(s) to convey his mystical and philosophical ideas, be it passionate love in the case of *Yusof and Zoleyk̲ā* and *Leyli o Majnun* or the ethics of being a good ruler under the guidance of one's master/teacher for the sake of wisdom in the case of *K̲erad-nāma-ye Eskandari*. There is the need to approach each of these mathnavīs on its own—before a comparative generalizing study can be made on all of Jāmī's mathnavīs. Moreover, in his lyrical poetry, Jāmī's style of writing is distinct, even if for the most part, Jāmī writes his lyrics in imitation "to poems by Saʿdi, Amir K̲osrow, Kamāl of Khojand, and Ḥāfeẓ in the same rhyme and meter."[5] This needs an entire study of its own that takes under consideration an entire poetic tradition (mainly lyrical poetry) that flourished before Jāmī. For this thesis, I have chosen to work mainly on Jāmī's mathnavī(s) and with a particular attention entirely given to *Salāmān u Absāl*; in doing so, it is not to intermix his narrative style poetics with his lyrical voice.

[4] Lewis, 2018. pp, 470.
[5] See Paul Losensky. "Jāmī i. Life and Works." Encyclopædia Iranica.https://iranicaonline.org/articles/jami-i

In this thesis, my focus is on Jāmī's longer narrative poetic style and the progression of events that tell a story as well as complete the philosophically intriguing dialogues between characters. Marc Toutant in his article, "Imitational Poetry as Pious Hermeneutics? Jami and Nava'i/Fani's Rewritings of Hafez's Opening Ghazal," writes that "Jami [in his lyrical poetry] creates a narrative whose progression is simpler to grasp than that of his model" and that "what Jami's verses lose in complexity, they gain in clarity."[6] Or as Paul Losensky writes, "Intricacy, however, is not necessarily a logical consequence of imitation."[7] This is evidence that Jāmī is a good storyteller and developer of narratives, and that his mathnavīs inherently encompass the same logic he wishes to reveal in his lyrical poetry. Jāmī's interests in the progression of ideas, as well as in providing clarity through this narrative mode cause him to describe, in detail, events that encapsulate larger matters of mystical and philosophical importance. As a result, I believe Jāmī's mathnavī work is more accessible and comprehensible. The narrative poem of *Salāmān u Absāl* is a good example of Jāmī's straightforward approach. In addition, this work reveals where the fifteenth century poetic tradition stood during Jāmī's time. In the beginning of *Salāmān u Absāl*, the reader is faced with the dilemma of human love that concerns beauty and love at the physical level. In the middle of the story, the poem becomes shocking to the reader for its immodest scenes of love-making. And near the end, that physical love has been transcended by a spiritual love. What is happening in this poem? Where does Sufi thought and philosophy fit in this kind of a narrative? Through the progression of events, Jāmī provides an explanation for the immodest or 'grotesque' act of love between the prince and his wet-nurse as a necessity for a body and soul relationship. This will be explained in detail in Chapters III and IV of this thesis, by drawing on the

[6] See Marc Toutant. "Imitational Poetry as Pious Hermeneutics? Jami and Nava'i/Fani's Rewritings of Hafez's Opening Ghazal" in *The Timurid Century: The Idea of Iran*. Ed. Charles Melville. London: I.B.Tauris, 2020. pp, 105.
[7] Paul Losensky. *Welcoming Fighānī: Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal*. Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda, 1998. pp, 135.

role of the intellect and imagination within the philosophical and mystical ideas that were prevalent in Jāmī's time.

To the best of my knowledge, the majority of studies done on Jāmī's work focus on his Sufi affiliation within court politics, particularly when his lyrical poetry is the focus of a study. As a result, Jāmī's poetry has been viewed as a work that promotes Sufi teachings within the boundaries of Sufi fraternities, and thus his poetry fails to be viewed for the nuances, singularity, and independence that it deserves.[8] At this stage of scholarly research on Jāmī, it is important to first approach each work on its own before attempting to embrace his entire oeuvre and try to work out an overarching trend that might be present and that matures through each of his works. I chose to begin work, which I hope will, over time, provide the insights to achieve this larger goal of a comprehensive understanding of Jāmī's poetry and poetics, by starting with Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*, which is one of the last poems Jāmī wrote near the end of his life. Working on Jāmī's poetry in old age and then moving retrospectively to study his earlier poetry, I believe, will illuminate us about how the philosophy that Jāmī came to comprehend in his old age continued the conversation with his mystical teachings, which are more prevalent in the lyric poetry that he wrote earlier in his life.

I begin Chapter I with a claim that Jāmī's role as a poet is as a dialectician (a dialectical scholar rather a mystic per se) on mystical learning. I discuss his poetics and scholarly works on mysticism, particularly his work within the Naqšbandiya Sufi order and its intellectual tradition. I examine Ebn al-'Arabī's teachings, which in turn shaped Jāmī's poetry and poetics. Jāmī has long been known to have been as a canonical classical Persian poet who observed the rules of prosody and was a popular

[8] Hamid Algar is the leading scholar on the Naqšbandiya Sufi intellectual tradition. He often cites Jāmī's poetry and other works for his studies of the Sufi teachings and representation of the Sufi circle. Some of highlighted works by Algar include: "The Naqshbandī Order: A Preliminary Survey of Its History and Significance." *Studia Islamica*, no. 44, 1976, pp. 123–152. *JSTOR*; "Reflections of Ibn ʿArabī in Early Naqshbandī Tradition." *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ʿArabi Society* 10 (1981): 45–66. *Jāmī*. Oxford University Press, 2013. And "*Jāmī* and *Ibn 'Arabī*: *Khātam al-Shu'arā* and *Khātam al-Awliyā*." *Ishraq. Islamic Philosophy Yearbook 3* (2012). Pp. 138-158.

Timurid court poet and a distinguished Sufi scholar, yet not enough scholarly attention has been given to his poetry and poetics. This chapter sheds new light on Jāmī's poetry and poetics by first discussing his knowledge of and scholarship on the Persian poets and poetry that preceded him, and then showing how, due to his knowledge, he adopts a measure of creativity that is unique to his own style, and which does not have any antecedent or follower.

Chapter II is dedicated to examining the background to the story of Salāmān and Absāl by studying the origin of the names and evaluating the secondary literature and relevant commentaries that mention the names as a pair in a story. Since the meaning of the poem is complicated due to the unusual theme of passionate love that develops between the young prince, Salāmān, and his wet-nurse, Absāl, I end Chapter II with an analysis of the role of the wet-nurse in relation to the prince and other important people in the Kingdom and draw a comparison between the role of the wet-nurse in Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* with Homer's *the Odyssey*.

Like any other poem about love, Jāmī's poem is full of references to the gaze of the lover and the eyes of the beloved. Chapter III is devoted to this subject. I explain my theory of 'Poetry of the Eye' and the centrality of the sense of sight in *Salāmān u Absāl* by defining three kinds of sight Jāmī uses in the poem. These are active sight, passive sigh and guided sight. The main purpose in defining these types of sight is to study Jāmī's thoughts on sense perception for triggering the event of love, which results in knowledge and knowing. In examining Jāmī's references to the eyes or to the sense of sight, I also seek to discover Jāmī's metaphysics of sight.

Chapter IV is about Jāmī's 'Poetics of Vision.' It examines Jāmī's discussion of the intellect, more precisely the Active Intellect "as one of the immaterial substances" in relation to the soul(s)/the intellect(s) within the framework developed by Neoplatonic philosophy on the role of "retentive imagination."[9] The retentive imagination is responsible for storing "sensible form" and the disposition

[9] See Jon McGinnis, *Avicenna*. Oxford University Press, 2010. pp. 135, 150.

of the "potentially intelligible,"[10] which leads to "compositive imagination," or in the Sufi mystical sense 'creative imagination,' which is an intermediary (or isthmus) realm for "intellection" or for enabling the visionary experience. In doing so, the 'poetics of vision' is explained by Jāmī and reveals his mystical-philosophy by going beyond the encounter of physical love and beauty (sense perception) to the attainment of knowledge by seeing an image or hearing "the linguistic counterpart" in the imagination, which results in the experience of celestial love and beauty through the act of intellect.[11] In this integration of philosophy (and the explanation of the intellect's role in vision) and mysticism (on account of imagination), I define Jāmī's dialectics on the One, and most importantly his main idea that the Divine reveals His existence not far from our existence and experiences in the human soul. In the poem, the Rational Soul or "نفس گویا" *the speaking soul* that is Salāmān, is an emanation of the Active Intellect. He is on the journey of intellection so that he can experience the vision of divine beauty and love in the image of the celestial Venus. Lastly in this chapter, I discuss Jāmī's metaphysics of vision, which focuses on the poetics of creation and innovation of new poetry, and how this metaphysics of the vision in a poem is an indication of the otherworldly.

Chapter V concludes my thesis by focusing on Jāmī revealing his old age sentiments in the poem through sharing his own bodily weaknesses as he writes the poem. This state of old age impacts the way we come to understand the poem in form as well as in content. I begin by discussing how *Salāmān u Absāl* is one of Jāmī's 'late-style' poems. In it, Jāmī regards old age as an inevitable progression that has caused bodily weaknesses, while in contrast aging is also a process of becoming more mature in his intellectual abilities and wisdom. I juxtapose these two distinct ways of talking about old age with my theories on the 'poetry of the eye' and 'poetics of vision,' discussed in Chapters Three and Four. I reevaluate Jāmī's definition of a poem at the level of the form akin to bodily

[10] Ibid, pp. 136.
[11] Ibid, pp. 140.

existence that changes and deforms in old age. At the level of the content, a poem is comparable to the soul, for it is complex yet discernable due to the ideas that go into the making of a poem. Unlike the form that retains a physical existence, the content requires thinking and is always in need of the intellect for interpretation of the meaning. Jāmī's self-reflection on old age results in elevating the idea of aging as a cause to write a good poetry inspired by his intellectual prowess.

Let me finish this introduction with a comment on the title of the thesis. My research, though underpinned by the awareness of Jāmī's intellectual engagement in the Naqšbandiya Sufi order, highlights aspects which shows that Jāmī was also aware of and interested in the reworking of Greek views and ideas. In my study, I have tried to assert a synthesis of ancient philosophical knowledge and Islamic scholarship based on Greco-Arabic sources. I have examined ideas and texts within Greek mythology, early New Persian Romance, the genealogy of the novel, and Islamic theology, mysticism, and philosophy, in order to address the complexities that the poem embodies. The notion of "A Sufi Eye" in the title of the thesis, is an indication of Jāmī's intellectual learning, which was inspired by the mystical tradition of his time, while "The Neoplatonic Vision" conveys his knowledge of Greek philosophical learning both of which are embedded in the story.

Stepping back from the focus of each chapter, I have, in this thesis, attempted to understand the thinking that went into the making of this intriguing piece of Medieval Persian poetry, showing that poetry is to be read not only for its poetics of rhythm or as mere allegories, but for the embedded history of ideas that it represents. If we are to imagine Jāmī's library and the books he read, we could list besides his books on Persian poetry and prose, other books on ancient philosophy, medicine, cosmology, astrology, mathematics, and possibly other religiously related subjects that benefited him in "عقل و دین" *intellect and faith*. I have attempted to understand Jāmī's poem, and if there are any limitations in my thesis, it is because the complexities in this poem are too great, and I am unable to understand them fully. Let me end this introduction with Jāmī's final words in his poem.

1119 This task of summarization of this discourse is complete, and *God* knows what is right.

۱۱۱۹ هم بر این اجمال کاری این خطاب ختم شد و الله اعلم بالصواب

Guidelines for the Reader

Throughout the text, the poem is followed by my own translation or otherwise stated. The Persian script embedded in the main text of the thesis is not transliterated due to personal stylistic preferences. The script appears in quotation marks, and the English translation follows in *italics*. I have adhered to the transliteration system provided by the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. A table of correspondences is attached.[12] The dates are given according to the Gregorian calendar.

Consonants				Vowels	
ء	ʾ	ض	ż	ـَا	ā
ب	b	ط	ṭ	ـُو	u
پ	p	ظ	ẓ	ـِی	i
ت	t	ع	ʿ	ـَ	a
ث	ṯ	غ	ḡ	ـُ	o
ج	j	ف	f	ـِ	e
چ	č	ق	q	ـه	a
ح	ḥ	ک	k	ـَو	ow/aw
خ	ḵ	گ	g	ـَی	ey/ay
د	d	ل	l		
ذ	ḏ	م	m		
ر	r	ن	n		
ز	z	و	v		
ژ	ž	ه	h		
س	s	ی	y		
ش	š				
ص	ṣ				

[12] https://www.iranicaonline.org/pages/guidelines

Chapter I: Jāmī, the Timurid Poet and His Oeuvre in Context

The following background data is presented to situate Jāmī as a Timurid court poet by understanding his Sufi connections as well as his scholarly and poetic works in the context of existing scholarship. That said, given the limited number of scholarly works written about Jāmī and his work, I cite Najib Māyel-Heravi on the life of Jāmī and a few other primary Persian sources.

Born in the Ḵarjerd of Jām on Sha'ban 23, 817/ November 7, 1414, Mowlanā Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd or-Raḥmān Ebn Aḥmad, who is better known as Jāmī, records his birth in the following lines.

[I was born] In the year 817, since the migration of the Prophet,	به سال هشتصد و هفده ز هجرت نبوی
when he set his glorious tent from Mecca to Madīnah	که زد زمکه به یثرب سرادقات جلال
…	[13]...

Jāmī drew his penname from his birthplace as he explains in the following verse.

My birthplace is Jām, and the drop of my pen	مولدم جام و رشحه قلمم
is a draft from the Jām [the place] of Shaikh al-Islami.	جرعه جام شیخ الاسلامی ست
Needless to say in my book of poetry,	لاجرم در جریده اشعار
for these two meanings, my surname becomes Jāmī.[14]	به دو معنی تخلصم جامی ست

He was widely known as Nūr al-Dīn ('the light of religion') by his contemporaries, and this title referred to his commitment and devotion in the Naqšbandi Sufi circle.[15] Prior to moving to Jām, which is located between Mashad and Herat, Jāmī's family lived in the Dašt district of Isfahan. Jāmī's father, Aḥmad Dašti, was himself a well-known member of his community who offered guests (mainly the shaikhs) a place to rest on their pilgrimage to Mecca. One of Jāmī's biographers, Neẓāmi Bāḵarzi describes how the well-respected Naqšbandi Shaikh Ḵᵛāja Moḥammad Pārsā (d. 1420) stopped at Dašti's home on his way to Mecca and encountered the five-year-old Jāmī.[16]

We have few details about Jāmī's early years, which were spent in two important cultural centers (Herat and Samarqand) in the greater Khorasan region. But we know for sure that Jāmī was

[13] Vasitat al-ʿIqd in Divan, II. pp. 35.
[14] *Divani Jami*, 46.
[15] Algar (2013), pp. 14.
[16] Neẓāmi Bāḵarzi, pp. 50.

educated from an early young age by his father, who taught him Arabic, Persian, and the sciences of the theological curriculum. After the family settled in Herat, Jāmī went on to learn theology, literature, and Arabic grammar. As an established young scholar, Jāmī then moved to Samarqand to learn the popular sciences of his time.[17]

Jāmī was fortunate to live in a period of prosperity. It was a quiet period that coincided with the rise of Timur (d. 1405), in the aftermath of the devastating disruptions wrought by the Mongols. And most importantly, he lived prior to the political upheavals that occurred with the rise of the Safavids in Khorasan. The political stability and socio-economic prosperity also fostered Herat's literary activity. Māyel-Heravi compares the situation of this period in these words: "هرات عهد تیموری یا ایتالیای عصر رنسانس" *Herat during the Timurids* [was] *as of Italy in the Renaissance Era.*[18] This renaissance under the Timurid leadership enabled Jāmī to move between Herat and Samarqand for his scholarly and poetic studies. Moreover, during this time the more well-developed forms of Sufism were spreading across Central Asia. And the Timurid rulers actively participated in propagating Sufi teachings alongside their political influence in the Persianate lands. Therefore, inviting Sufi adherents and poets like Jāmī to be part of the court in Herat was a key step toward endorsing Persian language and literature at the state level.

Jāmī was not affiliated with any specific Sufi order in the early stage of his life. As a young man, he left Herat for Samarqand, "after an unsuccessful love affair."[19] Later, after he was instructed and invited in a dream by the Naqšbandi Shaikh, Sa'd-al-Din Kāšḡari (d. 1456), he returned to Heart and joined the Naqšbandiya order. By this time, Herat had become a major center for learning and intellectual activities under Timurid leadership. With Jāmī's return to Herat, he became fully engaged in leading and disseminating the Naqšbandi Sufi practices and teachings. Jāmī was introduced to the

[17] Māyel-Heravi (1998), pp. 33-35.
[18] ʿAbd-al-Wāseʿ Neẓāmi Bāḵarzi*, Maqāmāt-e Jāmi*, ed. Najib Māyel-Heravi, Tehran, 1992, pp. 3-4.
[19] Ṣafi Kāšefi, I, pp. 238-39. Paul Losenky, "Jāmī i. Life and Works" iranicaonline.

Timurid court by Sa'd-al-Din Kāšḡari, and thanks to his initial guidance Jāmī was able to maintain his affiliation with the court in Herat for many years. This form of an invitation to join the Sufi fraternity and thus the court is an example of how "[h]istories, biographies of poets, and other sources attest to the importance of court poets throughout the medieval period."[20] The common medieval view of a poet's role, is that he should use the eloquence of his language and vividness of his imagination to benefit the rulers (the poet's patrons) through offering "moral guidance—whether generalized or direct to a specific issue or circumstance," and, at the same time, to glorify the court and by extension the dynasty itself.[21] Jāmī's acceptance of the invitation to join the order is evidence of the Naqšbandi shaikhs' continuing effort to maintain ties with the rulers. Further evidence of this is seen in Jāmī dedicating his earliest work *Ḥelya-ye ḥolal* to the Timurid ruler Abu'l-Qāsem Bābor (d. 1530) in 1452, and his first *Divan* to the next Timurid ruler Abu Sa'id b. Moḥammad (d. 1469) in 1463.

After Kāšḡari's death in 1456, and under the guidance of the Naqšbandi Shaikh Ḵᵛāja 'Obayd-Allāh Aḥrār (d. 1490), Jāmī was elected as a representative official in Herat. It was at this time that Jāmī began writing his major poetic work, the first book of *Selselat al-ḏahab* ("The Chain of Gold") and also completed his first Arabic commentaries (*Naqd al-noṣuṣ fi šarḥ naqš al-foṣuṣ*) in 1459 on Ebn al-ʿArab'i. Jāmī remained focused on his poetry, despite the inevitable political changes under different leaders in the court. In 1470 Herat was seized by Sultan Hosayn Bāyqarā (d. 1506) and by this time, Jāmī, who was fifty-six-years old was already an established scholar in the Sufi circle and a close friend of Bāyqarā's great influential advisor and vizier 'Ališir Navā'i (d. 1501). Subsequently, his career as a poet and cultural figure prospered at court.[22] During Bāyqarā's rule, Khorasan experienced "relative stability … [and regained] much of its pre-Mongol prosperity and cultural richness, and Herat became

[20] Julie Scott Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry* (1987), pp. 10.
[21] Ibid, pp. 14.
[22] Algar (2013), pp. 1-10.

an unrivalled center of Islamic learning and art".[23] As Herat prospered culturally, socially, and politically, so did Jāmī's reputation as a poet and Sufi scholar.[24]

As a result of his close ties with the vizier 'Ališir Navā'i, Jāmī was entrusted in Navā'i's absence with all matters of courtly and personal affairs; and he was also able to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1472 at the age of fifty-eight. This journey raised Jāmī's visibility among the people in the cities he visited. The rulers and the governors welcomed him in all the regions where he stopped. Upon his arrival in Hamadān, the governor Shah Manučehr welcomed Jāmī. Subsequently, Jāmī dedicated his most celebrated mystical treatise *Lavāyieh* (Flashes) to him.[25] Jāmī's popularity among the intelligentsia was due to his political ties to the Timurid Herat rulers, his Sufi affiliation in the Naqšbandi circle, or most importantly his poetic achievements.

After performing his pilgrimage in Mecca in 1473, Jāmī returned to Khorasan, traveling through Damascus and Aleppo. In Aleppo, Jāmī received the invitation from the Ottoman Sultan Mohmmad II (d. 1481) to join his court in Istanbul.[26] Whether or not this invitation was actually extended is open for debate among historians, but reports of the invitation speak to Jāmī's reputation among literary and religious circles in the Islamic courts. Jāmī turned down this invitation to return to Herat, where he remained for the rest of his life. This is where he wrote his *mathnavīs* of *Yusof and Zoleyk̲ā* and *Leyli o Majnun* and the rest of *Haft Awrang,* which included *Salāmān u Absāl.*[27]

In these years, his [Jāmī's] *life was rich in colors, culturally and socially.*[28]

Jāmī's participation in the cultural and social development of Herat is an important interest among scholars. In contrast, critical studies of his poetry and poetics are sparse in contemporary scholarship.

---

[23] Ibid, pp. 8-9.
[24] Ibid, pp. 40-61.
[25] Māyel-Heravi (1998), pp. 44. Also See Māyel-Heravi (1992), pp. 174.
[26] Paul Losensky. "Jāmī i. Life and Works." Encyclopædia Iranica.
[27] Māyel-Heravi (1998), pp. 59.
[28] Ibid. "در این سالها زندگی او صبغه ای کاملاً فرهنگی- اجتماعی داشت"

Jāmī was keen to promote literary culture and the Naqšbandiya Sufi order. With his ample knowledge of the literary canon, Jāmī refined and introduced some new themes and topics in Persian poetics.[29] Jāmī seems to have introduced nuances specifically in the mathnavī (long-narrative) form of poetry, and his mathnavī poem about the unusual love between Salāmān and Absāl is a good example of Jāmī's approach. In addition, in order to enlighten his courtly audience, he synthesized philosophy and mystical knowledge with other sciences such as philosophy, medicine, botany, natural sciences, and ancient history. Yet it is only in a close reading of his poetry that this effort can be seen. I allude to Jāmī's practice of poetry and his interpretation of poetics throughout this thesis. Meanwhile, there are some primarily biographies of Jāmī that provide us with important details about Jāmī's personal life, his association with the Sufi Shaikhs and rulers alike, and his recognition as a poet. These are:

1: "تکمله نفحات از لاری" *Takmela-ye ḥawāši-e Nafaḥāt al-ons: šarḥ-e ḥāl-e Mawlānā Jāmi*, discusses the first "نگارش" *recording* of Jāmī's life.[30] It was written between 1492 and 1503 by Jāmī's closest disciple, ʿAbd-al-Ḡafur Lāri (d. 1506); and it is a short biographical piece on Jāmī and his Sufi mystical teachings. Lāri's work includes short anecdotes of Jāmī's life that elaborate on his social activities and enlighten us about Jāmī's scholarly achievements and other events he went through in his lifetime.

2: "خمسة المتحرين از نوائی" *Ḵamsat al-motaḥayyirin*, was written in the Chaghatay Turkish language by 'Ališir Navā'i and dedicated to his deceased friend Jāmī.[31] This account honors Jāmī's poetic achievements. Navā'i was Jāmī's closest associate in matters of politics, intellectual debates, Sufi learning, and other legal gatherings.[32] In this account, Navā'i includes memories and also excerpts

[29] Ibid.
[30] Māyel-Heravi (1992), pp. 14. Abd-al-Ḡafur Lāri, *Takmela-ye ḥawāši-e Nafaḥāt al-ons: šarḥ-e ḥāl-e Mawlānā Jāmi*, ed. ʿAli-Aṣḡar Bašir-Heravi, Kabul, 1964.
[31] ʿAlišir Navāʾi, *Ḵamsat al-motaḥayyirin*, trans. (from Chaghatay into Persian) Moḥammad Nakjavān, ed. Mehdi Farhāni-Monfared, Nāma-ye Farhangestān, supplement 12, 2002.
[32] Marc Toutant. "Evaluating Jāmī's Influence on Navāʾī: The Case Studies of the Khiradnāma-yi iskandarī and the Sadd-i iskandarī" Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2018. pp. 602-648.

from letters that show Navā'i and Jāmī's close ties as two Sufis with mutual interests in Sufi scholarship and Persian literature.

3: "مقامات جامی از علی کاشفی" *Rašaḥāt-e 'eyn al-ḥayāt* was written by Faḵr-al-Din 'Ali b. Ḥoseyn Ṣafi Kāšefi (d. 1505) on Jāmī's mystical teachings.[33] Part of a friendship triangle with Jāmī and Navā'i, Kāšefi was a close associate in spreading Sufi practices as well as in contributing to the political glory of the Timurid court in Herat.

4: "مقامات جامی از باخرزی" *Maqāmāt-e Jāmi* was written by Abd-al-Wāse 'Neẓāmi Bāḵarzi.[34] This biographical account is more comprehensive than the works by Lāri, Navā'i, and Kāšefi's. One of the most distinct aspects of Bāḵarzi's account is his description of Jāmī's familiarity with poets who preceded him, including their poems (in Persian and Arabic) that Jāmī recited on different occasions. In particular, Bāḵarzi writes about Jāmī reciting poems by Ḥāfeẓ (d. 1390) on several occasions, which is also an indication of Ḥāfeẓ's fame in medieval literary circles.

These biographical accounts explain Jāmī's significance as a Sufi adherent primarily and then as a poet. That said, these are accounts that capture Jāmī's important cultural contributions to the Timurid court as well as to the Naqšbandiya Sufi order. There is not much about his poetry and poetics. However, because my research deals with Jāmī's poetry and poetics and examines how his ideas were influenced by the philosophical and mystical teachings of his time in the mathnavī of *Salāmān u Absāl*, an exhaustive study of Jāmī's biography (e.g., his political relationship with patrons and his master-disciple relationship to other poets and Sufi mystics) does not necessary add to what I want to establish in this thesis. Instead, in the following sections, I draw on Jāmī's intellectual interest in Naqšbandiya Sufi teachings, as well as in the philosophical tradition that influenced not only Jāmī but also the poets who preceded Jāmī and who he imitated in his poetry and other literary works.

---

[33] Faḵr-al-Din ʿAli b. Ḥoseyn Ṣafi Kāšefi, *Rašaḥāt-e ʿeyn al-ḥayāt*, ed. ʿAli-Aṣḡar Moʿiniyān, 2 vols., Tehran, 1977.
[34] ʿAbd-al-Wāseʿ Neẓāmi Bāḵarzi, *Maqāmāt-e Jāmī,* ed. Najib Māyel-Heravi, Tehran, 1992.

Jāmī's Position in the Persianate Literary Tradition

Jāmī's artistic achievements and the sophistication of his work coincided with the prosperity that the city of Herat experienced in the medieval period under Timurid leadership. When the Timurids ruled greater Khorasan, the social-political scene was sophisticated, and culture and literature thrived in the city of Herat, the home of the Timurid court. "Under the impetus of the broadening social interest in poetry, the ninth/fifteenth century took at largely conservative turn: poetic practice was frequently aimed at organizing and preserving the literary past."[35] Jāmī was invited to join the Timurid court as a Naqšbandiya Sufi scholar and a poet, which enabled him to thrive and earn a reputation within and outside the Timurid court as a poet-scholar. His fame grew due to his active participation in maintaining and propagating the Persianate literary tradition, which was possible due to the project of "consolidation and systematization" of the classical literary tradition by "imitative practices."[36]

In the time of Jāmī, the poetry produced under court patronage not only tried to call "for new forms of poetic education" but also emphasized imitation as "an important element in the poet's education and a test of his poetic skill, and by their choice of models, poets such as Jāmī defined a canon of classical works."[37] In doing so, "[p]oets such as Jami and Nava'i used poetry to talk about poetry. They used imitational poetry to analyze Hafez and to convey this analysis to the reader. The more they standardized their 'replies', the more they clarified the way they wanted Hafez's poetry to be approached by other readers."[38] This tradition not only educated and informed Jāmī about the art of poetry and the poetic traditions of the past, but also paved the way for a renaissance of poetic ideas to befit the literary purposes of his time, for "the reading and interpretation of the literary past is a

[35] Paul Losensky. *Welcoming Fighānī*. pp. 144
[36] Ibid. pp. 164.
[37] Ibid. pp. 136.
[38] Marc Toutant. "Imitational Poetry as Pious Hermeneutics?" pp. 108.

purposive and active response to historically variable needs and concerns."[39] Whether this act of imitation functions as a continuity or as "an instrument for change," is a topic that remains a major concern in literary studies.[40] This work of imitation is true of Jāmī's lyrical poetry and of some of the mathnavīs in the *Haft Awrang*. Therefore, this belief on the importance and power of imitation makes us question Jāmī's choice of writing the *mathnavī of Salāmān u Absāl*, which is unprecedented as a work of imitation, especially in its content.[41] As one of the last works by Jāmī, it seems that *Salāmān u Absāl* might give us an encompassing account of Jāmī's personal taste for how the poetry of his time should look and/or perhaps what the poetry of the past lacks, for in this poem Jāmī's subjective views are the main concern. In this larger literary tradition, especially when there are quite a few important Timurid-Turkmen poets who wrote under patronage, why is Jāmī the most studied poet and for that reason the major poet to represent the Timurid court, and not any of his contemporary poets?

Posthumously, in the early twentieth century in the Qajar literary circle, Jāmī was given the title of "خاتم اشعرا" *the seal of the poets,* which we may interpret as "the last of the greatest classical poets."[42] In evaluating Jāmī as a poet to seal the classical period, this title also emphasizes the importance of Jāmī's proximity to the era of post-classical poetry. As discussed previously, the poetry produced during Jāmī's time was understood and developed in imitation to the classical Persian poetry developed in an ealier period. In its turn, the classical Persian poetry, relied "so much on [the old Persian] tradition and cultural memory, that the strong connections with the pre-Islamic past are displayed in sundry ways: in its meter (although adjusted to Arabic), as well as its vocabulary and major themes," and then it was by relying on classical poetry that the consolidation with the literary tradition

[39] Paul Losensky. *Welcoming Fighānī*. pp. 135.
[40] Ibid. pp. 237.
[41] Ibid. pp. 171. Losensky gives a little detail on how each one of Jāmī's seven mathnavīs is written in imitation to the work of poets preceding him, except for *Salāmān u Absāl* for which he does not identify a forerunner (yet he does not mention who has he imitated the *mathnavī of Salāmān u Absāl* from, which). This in itself is an indication that we do not know a precedent for this narrative poem (does not have any precedent) within the Persianate Literary tradition.
[42] Najib Māyel-Heravi, *Sheyk ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān Jāmī*, (1998), pp. 12. Also, see H. Algar. *Jāmī*, 2013, pp. 63-87.

in the fifteenth century seems to take place.[43] "Jāmī's oeuvre and poetic technique make him the single greatest representative of the consolidating and systematizing project of Timurid-Turkmen culture."[44]

In a recently published book, *Jāmī in Regional Contexts: The Reception of 'Abd Al-Raḥmān Jāmī's Works in the Islamicate World, Ca. 9th/15th-14th/20th Century,* edited by Thibaut d'Hubert and Alexandre Papas, we are given a detailed account of the literary context which enabled Jāmī to flourish as a poet, intellectual scholar, Sufi adherent, and as a friend and mentor to so many more literary and political figures of his time. Each of the contributing studies in this collection gives us knowledge about how Jāmī becAme a sensational poet and the scholarly works and poetry that he spawned in the twenty-first century. "The oeuvre of the polymath from Herat also inspired dissertations that ambitiously strove to cover the entire span of his works to provide a unified account of his life."[45] It is in this breadth of Jāmī's polymathic life-style and scholarship that scholars like myself find ourselves intrigued by his work, especially the literary work, such as the *mathnavī of Salāmān u Absāl*, which stands in stark contrast not only within the poet's own corpus, but in the long literary tradition that he consolidated and became a representative of in his lifetime and posthumously.

However, my thesis does not aim to study Jāmī in the light of comparing and contrasting him with the preceding Persian poets or his contemporaries. Instead, it is my contention to contextualize Jāmī's scholarly and poetry in light of his Sufi learnings alongside his philosophical knowledge through my critical analysis of his narrative poem of *Salāmān u Absāl*. In doing so, the main focus of this chapter is, first and foremost, to introduce Jāmī as a scholar-dialectician of the mystical tradition and as a poet writing about philosophically complex topics, such as the importance of the human intellect.

---

[43] See Charles-Henri De Fouchécour "Iran viii. Persian Literature (2) Classical," *Encyclopædia Iranica, XIII/4. pp. 414-432;* available online at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/iran-viii2-classical-persian-literature (accessed online at 17 July 2020). Also see Losensky. *Welcoming Fīghānī.* pp. 134-192

[44] Losensky. *Welcoming Fīghānī.* pp. 189.

[45] See Thibaut d'Hubert and Alexandre Papas's "Introduction" in *Jāmī in Regional Contexts: The Reception of ʿAbd Al-Raḥmān Jāmī's Works in the Islamicate World, Ca. 9th/15th-14th/20th Century. pp. 16.*

Therefore, the underlying implication is that Jāmī was not as a mystic per se. In my analysis, I examine Jāmī's definition of a poem, and how this definition integrates the mystical interests and philosophical learnings present in the poetry of previous poets Jāmī had read. Domenico Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty* (2020) gives us evidence of such literary tradition in the work of Saʿdi, where lyrics are complex works of mystical and philosophical accounts. However, in this thesis, with one exception, I focus on the form of a mathnavī poem and not on the wide-range of Jāmī's lyrical poetry.

Jāmī: Dialectician on Mystical Court Poetry and Sufi Scholar

Jāmī, a Naqšbandi Sufi adherent and dialectic scholar, is far from being a mystic himself, even though his scholarship and poetry reverberate with a great deal of mysticism. I use a definition of mysticism that is based on Pieter Coppens's study of the vision and meeting of God in crossing the boundaries between physical and spiritual worlds in his book, *Seeing God in Sufi Qur'an Commentaries: Crossings between This World and the Otherworld* (2018). Coppens challenges us to understand mysticism within in its larger "cultural, intellectual, and theological norms, as well as historical [that of a pre-Islamic Jewish mystical tradition] and social influences… [and that the idea of] the mystical is always mediated and can be understood only by taking the broader context into consideration."[46] That being said, I also agree that one cannot detach "*taṣawwuf*" (Islamic) mysticism, or 'Sufi Islam', from Islamic religious learnings, especially in the case of Jāmī.[47] For instance, in his *Lavāyieh* (the Flashes of Light; or Illuminations,)[48] a work inspired by Ebn al-ʿArabi's mysticism, Jāmī bases his Sufi teachings in the mediation between the Qur'anic verses and the discourses written by the mystics. For example, in

[46] See Pieter Coppens's "Introduction" to *Seeing God in Sufi Qurân Commentaries: Crossings between This World and the Otherworld.* Edinburgh University Press, 2018. pp.6-7.
[47] Ibid. pp. 7.
[48] *Lavāyieh*, in Majmuʿa-ye Monlā Jāmi, Istanbul, 1309 A. This treatise on Sufi mystical thoughts is written in the form of a prosimetrum. Another form of such prosimetrum is *Šarḥ-e Robāʿiyāt*, ed. Māyel-Heravi, Kabul, n.d.; ibid, in *Majmuʿa-ye Monlā Jami*, Istanbul, 1309 A.H.; repr. in *Seh resāla dar taṣawwof* with an introduction by Iraj Afšār, Tehran, 1981, pp. 42-103. He also appended to one of his own works, *Sharh-i Rubaʿiyyat*, Kasghari's very brief description of the Naqshbandi method of *dhikr*.

"Flash XXV" on the omni-presence of "حقیقه الحقایق" *Truth of truths*, he cites Surah al-Hadid, verse 3, that "هو الاول والاخر والظاهر والباطن" "It is He who is the first and the last, the exterior and the interior."[49] In "Flash XXVI," Jāmī starts off by citing Ebn al-ʿArabi's saying that: "که عالم عبارتست از اعراض مجتمعه در عین واحد که حقیقت هستی است" "the universe consists of accidents all pertaining to a single substance, which is the Reality underlying all existences" and then backs up Ebn al-ʿArabi's point of view citing a verse from the Qur'an on how there are individuals "in doubt of the new creation."[50] Jāmī's dialectical approach to explaining his mystical knowledge by drawing on the verses from the Qur'anic and other mystical discourses is not unique. Sufi tradition was inevitably the intellectual allure of his time, and so it is not surprising that he refers to the existence of the *Necessary Existent Being* in his poetry, as well as his other scholarly works.

By integrating Qur'anic verses as well as the sayings of mystics, such as Ebn al-ʿArabi, who is believed to have experienced a mystical journey as well as intellectualized it, Jāmī's *Lavāyieh* is a presentation of his knowledge of mysticism, but not necessarily Jāmī's mystical experiences. Jāmī's mystical inclinations are purely intellectual for he is using Sufi practices for theoretical purposes. As a dialectician on mystical learning, his work is profoundly integrated with pedagogical method, and by inserting poetry (especially in his *Lavāyieh*) he uses poetry as another rhetorical devise to channel his teachings.[51]

His poetic imagery and language explain a mystical journey that has already been narrated or experienced by other Sufis preceding him. His famous Sufi hagiographical work called ***Nafaḥāt al-ons men ḥażarāt al-qods*** (Breaths of intimacy from presences of sanctity) is another good example.[52]

---

[49] Here I am citing Whinfield's translation of excerpts from Jāmī's *Lawāyeḥ* into English. See Whinfield, E. H., Qazwīnī, Muḥammad, and Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Lawā'ih. English and Persian.* 2nd Ed. [3rd Pr.]. ed. London: Theosophical House, 1978. Print. Oriental Translation Fund. New Ser.; Vol.16. pp. 28-29, in the same edition the Persian appears on pp. 35.
[50] Ibid, English translation pp.29, Persian text, pp. 37.
[51] In the edition used for this thesis, there are approximately 171 verses cited throughout his *Lavāyieh.* See Whinfield.
[52] Abd-al-Ḡafur Lāri, *Takmela-ye ḥawāši-e Nafaḥāt al-ons: šarḥ-e ḥāl-e Mawlānā Jāmī*, ed. ʿAli-Aṣḡar Bašir-Heravi, Kabul, 1964.

What is intriguing is that Jāmī's poetic works exhibit, over time, an increasing integration of the Neoplatonic philosophical tradition with the well-developed medieval Islamic Sufi thinking of his time. That said, it is fair to call Jāmī a dialectician on the knowledge of mystical poetry in his own terms. A dialectician's task is to reason based on his intellectual investigation and know the purpose of his dialects.

> "[Dialectics] is the science which can speak about everything in a reasoned and orderly way, and say what it is and how it differs from other things and what it has in common with them…It discusses good and not good, and the things that are classes under good and its opposite, and what is eternal and what is not eternal, with certain knowledge about everything and not mere opinion..."[53]

Through his dialectics, Jāmī conveys his knowledge of Sufi mystical tradition on various topics common in medieval poetry. These dialectical speeches are found in chapters one and the penultimate chapter of the *mathnavī* of *Salāmān u Absāl.* The first chapter explains the logical progression and the last offers a Neoplatonic interpretation of the story.

Moreover, Jāmī's work on mystical content is intermixed with philosophy and can be difficult to interpret without recognizing the indications.[54] Jāmī's use of the indicative method is to help readers understand his meaning through his mystical and philosophical references. In Chapters III and IV of this thesis, I will discuss how by closely reading the indications introduced by Jāmī, *Salāmān u Absāl* becomes an intriguing poem for its dialectical and rhetorical qualities, rather than a 'grotesque' story in a superficial reading. That said, Jāmī's explanation of the mystical journey in *Salāmān u Absāl* can be interpreted based on reasoning and the work of the intellect, as well as the work of the imagination.

---

[53] Plotinus, *the Enneads I.* pp. 157-58.

[54] Jāmī's use of an indicative method was likely influenced by Ibn Sīnā's method of teaching and conveying his knowledge. For Ibn Sīnā's 'indictive method' see Michael A. Rapoport's dissertation (*The Life and Afterlife of the Rational Soul: Chapters VIII-X of Ibn Sina's Pointers and Reimanders*, Yale, 2018. pp. 40.

This logical method of writing about and teaching mystical knowledge is not only evident in Jāmī's pedagogy, but also in his learning about other mystics and their mystical subjects.

Jāmī owes much of his standing to the Sufi masters who preceded him for they helped him receive the knowledge required to become a Sufi intellectual.[55] Jāmī's first encounter with the renowned Naqšbandi Shaikh Ḵʷāja Moḥammad Pārsā as a child, instilled in him the desire to follow the learnings of the Naqšbandiya Sufi masters.[56] Later in life, Jāmī wrote *Sokhanān -i Ḵʷāja Pārsā* (The Words of Ḵʷāja Pārsā), which is a brief treatise on the practice of Naqšbandi Sufism, as a tribute to his childhood encounter with the Shaikh.[57]

Upon his return to Herat, Jāmī joined the Naqšbandi Sufi circle, and his affiliation with the order came as a (pleasant) surprise.[58]

> *Jāmī's adherence to the circle of Naqšbandi Sufis—so unusual among the inhabitants of the Madras in Herat—caused wonders, and it particularly bewildered some of the literati of his time…On this subject, Kāšḡari [himself] understood that Jāmī's adherence was "a Divine favor/grace" and used to say in a Sufi meeting that: "today, a falcon has fallen into our trap, and there is no one in the world who does not wish to sit next to him.*[59]

By the time he had accepted Kāšḡari's request to join the Naqšbandi Sufi practices, Jāmī's intellectual credentials had also enabled him to find his way to the Herat court. Jāmī's political engagement in the

---

[55] For a more historical reading on the phenomena of manuscript, text and narrative fund project under the Naqšbandi Sufi discipleship see Shahzad Bashir's article, "Naqshband's Lives: Sufi Hagiography between Manuscripts and Genre," pp. 22-75, in *Sufism in Central Asia: New Perspectives on Sufi Traditions*, 15th to 21st Centuries, edited by Devin DeWeese and Jo-Ann Gross (Leiden: Brill), 2018.

[56] See Algar (2013), pp. 91.

[57] The unpublished *Jāmeʿ-e soḵanān-e Ḵʷaja Pārsā* (date unknown, in Persian and Arabic) collects the sayings and sermons of the famous Naqšbandi shaikh, accompanied by Jāmi's own commentary. iranica

[58] On the account of Sa'd-al-Din Kāšḡari's role in the propagation of Naqšbandi order see http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kasgari-sadaldin.

[59] Māyel-Heravi (1998), pp. 220-221. Bāḵarzi, pp. 88.

" پیوستن جامی به حلقه صوفیان نقشبندی البته چونان حادثه ای در میان اهالی مدارس هرات شگفتی آفرید و خصوصا برخی از دانشمندان عصر را متعجب کرد... به همین جهت' کاشغری پیوستن جامی را به جرگه تصوف' گونه ای از «منت الهی» می دانسته و می گفته است: « امروز شاهبازی به دام ما افتاد که در همه عالم کسی نیست که پهلوی وی نشیند»... "

court, on the one hand, seemed a barrier to his development as a poet. However, on the other hand, his mystical involvement with the Sufi practices served throughout his life as a springboard for his career as a poet of high esteem.

After the sudden death of his master Kāšḡari in 1456, Jāmī gave "دست ارادت" *the hand of devotion* to 'Obayd-Allāh Aḥrār and asked for his guardianship in the Sufi circle.[60] A "دهقان" *dihqan* and a Sufi Shaikh by profession, Aḥrār was well-known among people from all ranks and walks of life in Herat, which is likely how Jāmī made his acquaintance.[61]

And Jāmī by joining Aḥrār benefitted from such fame among people and in politics.[62]

In such a beneficial fraternity circle, Jāmī could easily claim to become the next Shaikh of the order. Nonetheless, he was critical about the politics involved in the Sufi practices, and more importantly, Jāmī was not interested in the practical aspect of the order, but in the intellectual development of it. In the following verses, we get a glimpse of Jāmī's criticism and thoughts on the Naqšbandi order and particularly his reference to Aḥrār's deployment in the order.

Whoever is in the assembly of the esteemed ones,	کسی چون او به لوح ارجمندان
in the role is as exquisite as the Naqšbandies.	نزد نقش بدیع نقشبندان
When poverty comes under the kingly robe	چو فقر اندر قبای شاهی آمد
it comes under the counsel of 'Obayd-Allāh.	به تدبیر عبید اللهی آمد
To whom he familiarized with the grace of that poverty,	به فقر آن را که لطفش آشنا کرد
if he has worn a cloak, it turns into a cassock.	به بر گر خرقه ای بودش' قبا کرد
…	…[63]

These verses belong to the ninth chapter of Jāmī's *Mathnavī of Yusof u Zoleyk̲ā*, completed in 1483. Algar calls these verses "somewhat incongruous given the narrative rather than didactic nature of the work."[64] In this particular reading, and Algar might agree, the verses explicitly reveal Jāmī's disagreement with the political involvement of the Naqšbandi under Aḥrār. However, this is true only

[60] Māyel-Heravi (1998), pp. 223.
[61] Ibid, pp. 224.
[62] Ibid.
"و جامی با پیوستن به احرار از این همه شهرت مردمی و سیاسی او بر خوردار شد."
[63] Afsaḥzod, A., Dād 'Alīshāh, J., Jānfidā, A., Aḥrārī, &., Avery, P., & Tarbīyat, &. (1997). Mathnavī-i Haft awrang / Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad Jāmī. *Mathnavī of Yusof u Zoleyk̲ā*. pp. 31-32. Lines 235-7, 261. (1997).
[64] Algar (2013), pp. 90.

if we interpret Jāmī's use of *kingly robe* to mean that in the Naqšbandiya order, the Sufi adherents come under the patronage of the rulers. Yet in the juxtaposition of *poverty* with *kingly*, there is a straightforward and unproblematic interpretation that refers to the gain of material benefits within Sufi tradition. Traditionally such behavior of seeking wealth is in contrast to the overall presumption of the Sufi way of giving up material attachment. However, within the context of the poem, in an alternate reading, the *kingly robe* could also refer to the Sufi master's disposition (as an old and wise man) to turn poverty (as the soul's inadequacy) into wealth (as the soul's richness) for those seeking the master's counsel. Regardless, whether Jāmī "seeks to reconcile the poverty that is defining for the true Sufi (here to be understood as lack of attachment rather than indigence) with the material wealth and political influence that were at Aḥrār's disposal"[65] or condemn the intertwined political and mystical associations remains unclear. Moreover, despite the mutual reverence and learning shared between Aḥrār and Jāmī, and though they were living in different places, the master-disciple relationship between them remained convoluted.[66]

Instead, Jāmī fully devoted himself to the intellectual growth of the order. Among his numerous corpus of intellectual writings, only one composition is devoted to the practice of the Naqšbandiya order and that is his brief treatise ***Sukhanan-i Ḵᵛāja Pārsā*** (*The Words of Ḵᵛāja Pārsā*). Based on remarks in this work, it seems that Jāmī preferred (most probably due to the political involvement of the order in the Timurid court) the intellectual dimensions of Sufism rather than its practicing aspects. As the Shaikh of the order, he would have been required to practice and rehearse Sufism and train a number of disciples.[67] With the exception of his notable and closest disciple, ʿAbd-al-Ḡafur Lāri, Jāmī is believed to have always refused to accept disciples, and this likely preserved for

[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] For a more comprehensive study of Shaikh and disciple relationship, see William C. Chittick's *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination*, (1989) pp. 255-270.

him the time and vitality to occupy himself with the intellectual pursuit of what Sufism truly meant to him.[68]

In addition to the *Sukhanan*, Jāmī also produced other significant writings inspired by the Naqšbandiya mystical teachings, including the *Lavāyieh* (the Flashes of Light);[69] ***Šarḥ-e robāʿiyā,*** quatrains containing poetry and short commentaries concerning metaphysical topics and themes;[70] *Lawāme* (Gleams),[71] a Sufi commentary on the wine poetry of Ebn al-Fāreż (d. 1235) and on the poetry of Faḵr-al-Din ʿErāqi (d. 1289) concerning the theme of love; and lastly, what was perhaps Jāmī's "most substantial and widely read contribution to the Sufi canon," the ***Nafaḥāt al-ons men ḥaża-rāt al-qods***."[72] Encouraged by Aḥrār, Jāmī also wrote ***Naqd al-noṣuṣ fi šarḥ naqš al-foṣuṣ***, his first Arabic commentary on Ebn al-'Arabī's teachings in 1459. This work became central to Naqšbandi teachings.

Jāmī and Ebn al-'Arabī

Jāmī pursued independent studies, "beyond the [Niẓāmiya, which was in Herat] *madrasa* curriculum," and seems to have acquired his knowledge of Ebn al-'Arabī's mystical teachings on his own, "driven by personal inclination rather than instruction."[73] The famous Andalusian Sufi mystic, Moḥyī-al-dīn Abū 'Abd-allāh Moḥammad ṭā'ī Ḥātemī, better known as Ebn al-'Arabī (d. 1240), was

---

[68] Algar (2013), pp. 91.

[69] *Lawāyeḥ*, in Majmuʿa-ye Monlā Jāmi, Istanbul, 1309 A. This treatise on Sufi mystical thoughts is written in the form of a prosimetrum. Another form of such prosimetrum is *Šarḥ-e Robāʿiyāt*, ed. Māyel-Heravi, Kabul, n.d.; ibid, in *Majmuʿa-ye Monlā Jāmi*, Istanbul, 1309 A.H.; repr. in *Seh resāla dar taṣawwof* with an introduction by Iraj Afšār, Tehran, 1981, pp. 42-103. He also appended to one of his own works, *Sharh-i Rubaʿiyyat*, Kasghari's very brief description of the Naqshbandi method of *dhikr*.

[70] *Šarḥ-e Robāʿiyāt*, ed. Māyel-Heravi, Kabul, n.d.; ibid, in Majmuʿa-ye Monlā Jāmi, Istanbul, 1309 A.H.; repr. in *Seh resāla dar taṣawwof* with an introduction by Iraj Afšār, Tehran, 1981, pp. 42-103. He also appended to one of his own works, *Sharh-i Rubaʿiyyat*, Kasghari's very brief description of the Naqshbandi method of *dhikr*.

[71] *Lawāmeʿ*, in Majmuʿa-ye Monlā Jāmi, Istanbul, 1309 A.H.; repr. in Seh resāla dar taṣawwof with introduction by Iraj Afšār, Tehran, 1981, pp. 104-89.

[72] Algar, H. (2008), http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ Jāmī -ii

[73] Algar, H. (2012). "Jāmī and Ibn `Arabī: Khātam al-shu`arā and khātam al-awliyā." (3), pp. 138-39. As the main instructor of Niẓāmiya in Herat, Mawlānā Muḥammad Jājarmī was not fond of Ebn al-'Arabī's teachings and had criticized his mystical ideas.

born in Murcia, in al-Andalus and spent his early years in Seville.[74] He had a first-hand experience of mystical 'unveiling' at the age of fifteenth, and at the age of twenty, he started practicing Sufism as a discipline.[75] While in Mecca, in 1201 he began writing his most celebrated works, which are ***al-Fotūḥāt al-***makkīya "The Meccan Openings," and toward the end of his life, ***Foṣūṣ al-ḥekam*** (Bezels of Wisdom).[76]

Jāmī's first knowledge of Ebn al-'Arabī came through Ebn al-'Arabī's disciple Ṣadr ad-Dīn Qunavī (d. 1234). Bāḵarzi describes the introduction of Ebn al-'Arabī's teachings into the Naqšbandiya Sufi circle in his "مقامات" *biography* on Jāmī.

> *And the truth* [to be said] *if the provision of Shaikh Moḥyī-al-dīn has become noble and honorably exquisite in this age* [during Jāmī's time]*, the foundation of such a period was laid by the Naqšbandi order due to their study of Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam, and when the opponents* [the more orthodox believers] *of the truths in Sufism got the news, the trickery of their education and the Divine mystery couldn't impact their* [the Naqšbandi's followers] *speech. One of the examples of such a case* [as to oppose Ebn al-'Arabī] *is in the Shaikh's Fotūḥāt: "Glory to the things that He has shown to us." ...*[77]

Despite the general disagreement about Ebn al- 'Arabī's thoughts on the material aspects of creation that carries an affirmation of God's existence, the above-mentioned excerpt indicates how the Naqšbandi order received Ebn al- 'Arabī's mystical teachings. And Jāmī was the first scholar in

---

[74] There has been disagreement about Ebn al-'Arabī's teachings and his mystical interpretations of some Qur'anic narratives or the hadiths. See, for example, Carl W. Earnst, "Controversies over Ibn al-'Arabī's Foṣūṣ: the Faith of Pharaoh". http://www.unc.edu/~cernst/pdf/fusus.pdf

[75] Chittick W. (1989), pp. xiii-xiv, 383-84. Also see Chittick W. (1996), http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ebn-al-arabi.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Bāḵarzi, pp. 91.

" و حقیقت آن که اگر خدمت شیخ محیی الدین شرف بدایع این عصر شریف دریافته' معاصر آن مناط سلسله نقشبندان بودی از تحقیقات فصوص و از جمله این عبارت شیخ را در فتوحات که: حکم' و معارضات حقایق عرفان خبر یافته نیرنگ معارف و اسرار الهی بر چهرهٔ ضمیر نقش نبستی. »سبحان من أظهر الأشیاء و هو عینها.."

Khorasan at that time to fully understand Ebn al-'Arabī's mystical teachings and to employ them in his Sufi poems and then to propagate them among the intellectual community of his time.[78]

Jāmī's Sufi ideas became more complex as a result of Ebn al-'Arabī's teachings and these ideas, in turn, are expressed in his poetry. With a desire to comprehend the essence of being and existence, he came to expand Ebn al-'Arabī's concept of ***waḥdat al-wojūd*** (monorealism) and this earned Jāmī the title of "وجودی" ***wojūdi*** "an adherent of ***waḥdat al-wojūd***."[79] Jāmī's main goal in understanding Ebn al-'Arabī's teaching was to find the connection between the Real and the rest of the existence through the subject matters of love and knowledge. And it is this topic of the quest for love and knowledge that becomes an important theme in his poetry.

Jāmī makes references to Ebn al-'Arabī in his *Silsilat al-Dhahab*:

2116	He is the head model of the Sufis— the pole of truth, the master of *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. …	قدوه عارفان به سر قدم قطب حق صاحب فصوص حکم [80]…	۲۱۱۶
4485	The sage of oneness, Shaikh Moḥyī-al-dīn— [is] the sun in the skies of discovery and certitude.	پیر توحید شیخ محیی الدین آفتاب سپهر کشف ویقین	۴۴۸۵
4486	Whatever he has declared from his delight (or experience with Divine grace),[81] he has written down in his *Fotuḥāt al-makkiya:*	زانچه از ذوق خود بیان کرده ست در فتوحات مکی آورده ست	۴۴۸۶
4487	'when I came from the west to Damascus, the pocket of my soul was taken up with the gravity of love.' …	که ز مغرب چو آمدم به دمشق جیب جانم گرفت جذبه عشق [82]…	۴۴۸۷

Love is the guiding path to earning knowledge of the physical world and the spiritual one. Jāmī alludes to love as an important event to engage humans with the material world (accessible to humans through

[78] 'Abd al-Ghafūr Lārī, *Takmila-yi Nafaḥāt al-Uns*, pp. 17. Bāk̲arzi, pp. 90-92

[79] Ibid, p. 142. Also see Sajjad Rizvi, "The Existential Breath of al-raḥmān and the Munificent Grace of al- raḥīm: The Tafsīr Sūrat al-Fātiḥa of Jāmī and the School of Ibn 'Arabī," Journal of Qur'anic Studies, 8:1 (2006), pp. 75–76. Scholars such as Sajjad Rizvi have studied the continuity of Ebn al-'Arabi's influence on Jāmī's thought. Rizvi writes that "Jāmī had already provided a vigorous philosophical defense of the master's metaphysics, in particular an exposition of his central doctrine of monorealism (waḥdat al-wojūd), the postulation that only the divine essence and its manifestations that comprise the totality of the cosmos exist, and had written a number of commentaries and works expounding the doctrine of the master including a partial commentary on the Qurʾān" (65). Also see Ansari, Abdul Haq. "Ibn 'Arabī: The Doctrine of Waḥdat Al-Wujūd." Islamic Studies, vol. 38, no. 2, 1999, pp. 149–192. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20837036.

[80] See "First Daftar," *Mathnavī of Silsilat al-Dhahab* in Jāmī's Haft Awrang, pp. 167. Lines 235-7, 261. ed. Afsaẖzod (1997).

[81] See Steingass online dictionary, pp. 559, and Dehkhodā Dictionary (available online at parsi.wiki), https://www.parsi.wiki/fa/wiki/258301/ذوق

[82] "Second Daftar," *Mathnavī of Silsilat al-Dhahab* in Jāmī's *Haft Awrang*, pp. 288. ed. Afsaẖzod (1997).

senses) and thus to inspire us to gain knowledge of the otherworld, where the vision of the Divine is perceived through our human intellect. In this thesis, I use the concept of 'the otherworld' to mean "the domain of meeting with God, communion with Him and vision of Him," which, as Coppens explains, "may also be synchronically immanent in this world, most poignantly in the form of certain Sufi stations and states."[83] In crossing the boundary between the worldly into the otherworld, Jāmī makes even the most dangerous passionate love between Salāmān and Absāl result in a vision of divine beauty in the form of the celestial Venus, which will be discussed in detail in Chapters III and IV.

Jāmī wrote his commentary *Naqd al-Nuṣūṣ fī Sharḥ Naqsh al-Nuṣūṣ* on Ebn al-'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, probably in defense of Ebn al-'Arabī's teaching against accusations of heresy and related controversies among scholars contemporary to Jāmī.[84] "[He] presents Ebn al-'Arabī as a culminating figure in the Sufi tradition, one who integrates into the single complex whole the fragmented insights of those who had preceded him."[85] Even so, Ebn al-'Arabī's teachings were necessarily in harmony with the teachings of the Naqšbandi order, specifically the practice of (silent) invocation and remembrance (dhikr) of God.[86]

Jāmī was constant throughout his life in his reliance upon Ebn al-'Arabī's teaching. Jāmī's final incomplete exegetical work on *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* is evidence of this distant discipleship between the long-deceased Ebn al-'Arabī and the well-known poet that Jāmī had become.[87]

Jāmī's Poetry and Poetics

As a prolific poet with an affiliation with the Naqshbandī Sufi order, Jāmī's "method of imagining" becomes clear in his poetic expression with his use of rational thinking and with regard to

[83] Coppens. *Seeing God in Sufi Qurân Commentaries*. pp. 3, 14.
[84] There has been disagreement about Ebn al-'Arabī's teachings and his mystical interpretations of some Qur'anic narratives or the hadiths. See, for example, Carl W. Ernst, "Controversies over Ibn al-'Arabī's Foṣūṣ: the Faith of Pharaoh". http://www.unc.edu/~cernst/pdf/fusus.pdf
[85] Algar (2012). "Jāmī and Ibn `Arabī: Khātam al-shu`arā and khātam al-awliyā." (3), pp. 149.
[86] Algar (2013), pp. 114-115.
[87] Ibid, pp. 100.

sense perception. It is in the integration of mysticism, philosophy, and imagination that Jāmī's poetics exhibit the nuances that allow his poetics to be regarded as theosophical work. This theosophical theme is borrowed from Ebn al-'Arabi's teaching and assimilated with Neoplatonic philosophy.[88] The main relationship between the Neoplatonic philosophical tradition and Ebn al-'Arabi, as one of the major Sufi scholars interested in ancient philosophy, is the emanationist approach to understanding "the One" and "the Intelligence."[89] Though Ebn al-'Arabi was not the first with an emanationist view, the earliest Islamic philosopher al-Kindī (d.873 AD) "followed the Neoplatonists in understanding God as the One, and individual souls as yearning to return to their origin and seeking to contemplate their Creator from the Intelligence."[90] At the core of this discussion on the integration of mysticism and philosophy is that the One's essence can be perceived in things seen and perceived in this world. This integration enables Jāmī's poetry to link two distinct phenomena—worldly and otherworldly—through the use of imagination. For instance, in his most celebrated Sufi work ***Nafaḥāt al-ons,*** Jāmī incorporates Ebn al-'Arabī*'s* Qur'anic interpretation of the tale of Ibrahim walking through fire, which he drew from Ebn al-'Arabī*'s* ***al-Fotūḥāt al-Makkīya*** "The Meccan Openings."[91] Jāmī also incorporates this narrative in verse form in his *mathnavī* of ***Silsilat al-Dhahab*** ('The Golden Chain'). This story captures a debate between a self-acclaimed philosopher-like and the mystic Ebn al-'Arabī himself. The debate unfolds about the nature of the fire through which Ibrahim walks unharmed. [92]

4232	[the philosopher said] Whatever that is naturally burning, at the end, due to its nature, it departs. …	آنچه بالطبع محرق است کجا گردد از مقتضای طبع جدا ...	۴۲۳۲
4235	[Ebn al-'Arabī] Said: 'Insert your hand in the fire, you do not see/feel any heat in the fire.	گفت درکن میان آتش دست هیچ گرمی ببین در اتش هست	۴۲۳۵

[88] For a discussion on the relationship between Neoplatonic philosophy and Sufi Islam and how the concept of the One predates Ebn al-'Arabī refer to the section "Neoplatonism and Jāmī" in this thesis.
[89] The idea of the One and the long discussion on the intelligence predates Ebn al-'Arabī. See, Mark J. *Western Sufism: From the Abbasids to the New Age*. 2016. Print. pp. 46. One of the chapters titled, "Jewish and Christian Emanationist" gives a good overview of how Neoplatonism was closely associated with the place Al-Andalus where Ebn al-'Arabī was born and raised.
[90] Ibid, pp. 36.
[91] See Moḥammad Esmā'il Mobaleq's *'Rfani-e Jami,* pp. 239.
[92] "Second Daftar,"*Silsilat al-Dhahab*. pp. 275-76, lines 4227-39. ed. Afsaẖzod (1997).

4236	When neither his hand nor his skirt was burnt, his face burned (became luminous) because of his foolish ignorance.	۴۲۳۶	چون نه دستش بسوخت نه دامن شد از ان جهل او برو روشن

In these verses, Jāmī indicates that the arrogant person "حکیمک" *the wise-like person/the little hakim* (in a mocking way) is a self-acclaimed person who practices "مذهب فلاسفه" *the faith of philosophies* and speaks from the point of view of "فلسفی" *a philosopher/philosophy*. While the wiser person is the one who is also mystically inclined to reason through experiences. In this case, it is Ebn al-'Arabī explaining the miracle of Ibrahim from a mystical and theosophical perspective. The nature of the fire is at stake here. Physically it appears to be burning, and thus it can cause harm to the body. And the little hakim dismisses the miracle of Ibrahim coming out of the fire without any harm on the basis of such reasoning. In contrast, Ebn al-'Arabī reasons based on the nature of the soul and the impact of fire on the soul. In the fire, the soul experiences a state of purification and acquires an otherworldly awareness (and knowledge) of its existence. Ebn al-'Arabī suggests to the wise-like person that he put his hand in the fire and experience its effects for himself. The fire is introduced as a complex phenomenon. Through the element of fire, the paradoxical views on the physiological aspect of the body and the mystical-philosophical aspect of the soul are explained.

In his turn, Jāmī presents his mystical and philosophical explanation of fire in *Salāmān u Absāl* as a severe self-punishment and self-annihilation ordeal. Both Salāmān and Absāl jump into the fire but only Salāmān (the soul) remains intact.[93] The fire burns Absāl (the body), who is to be eliminated/integrated in order to grant Salāmān (the soul) the purpose to comprehend the vision of divine beauty and love which appears through the image of the celestial Venus.[94] In order to explain the complexities encompassing the soul and body, Jāmī synthesized the knowledge of the world

[93] It is significant to note that Jāmī invents the scene of jumping in the fire/judgment by fire. In the Hermetic version of the tale, Salāmān and Absāl jump into the water, while in the Avicennian version, there is no story, and thus there is no similar scene identifiable. Jāmī's sublime and nuanced way of bringing this fire scene could have been inspired by Ebn al-'Arabī's Qur'anic interpretation of Ibrahim jumping into the fire and coming out alive.

[94] See Chapter IV on the Poetics of Vision.

through the experience of love with the otherworldly intellectual beauty of Venus. It is in this synthesis of mysticism and philosophy that Jāmī's poetics can be explained.

On the general definition of a poem and the purpose of poetry, Jāmī's *Bahārestān* (composed in 1487 and a work that mirrors Saʿdi's *Golestān*) offers intriguing points of view. First, Jāmī explains poetry as a speech with a rhetorical power that convinces the listeners. In this case, Jāmī esteems Rūdakī (d. 941?) for the power of his poem that persuades Naṣr II (914–943) to go back to his state in Bukhara.[95] As Justine Landau puts it, this poetry is "[e]vocative rather than persuasive, [its] imaginative discourse appears as the only discourse capable of prompting the listener to action by stirring passions in his soul."[96] This capability to convince and stir the soul of the listener is a matter of the language of poetry as a speech. Landau proposes that: "[p]oetry represents with and by language; it alone is capable of stirring its audience's imagination through speech."[97] In addition to valuing Rūdakī's words that are sung at the King's camp, Jāmī also praises Rūdakī's use of a musical instrument, the "عود" *lute,* which accompanies and presents his poem like a song to the King. For Jāmī, a poem is a logical argument or "a rhythmic imaginative discourse"[98] set to music and conveyed as musical speech. That said, Jāmī defines poetry as a speech encompassing a purpose, with a compelling inner musicality (an indication of its harmony and order), and most importantly its ability to influence the reader's imagination.

> *Poetry in the old custom of the wise-ones* [old scholars] *is a speech composed from the rudiments of imagination. This means it is* [in the composer's] *ability to cast the meaning to play to the imagination of the listener, to become that which instigates grace on a thing or acts in a petition for something that is inherently true or not. Whether the listener believes in such truth or not is immaterial. Thus, they say: wine is a ruby that has melted*

[95] Jāmī. *Bahārestān,* (2006). pp. 91.
[96] Justine Landau, "Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and Poetic Imagination in The Arabic and Persian Philosophical Tradition." in *Metaphor and Imagery in Persian Poetry* edited by Ali Asghar Seyed-Gohrab, 2012. pp. 16.
[97] Ibid, 35
[98] Ibid, pp. 36.

or melted ruby, or that honey is a thing of bitterness or salty—the vomit of the bee. The latest wise-ones [modern scholars] *have talked about rhythm and rhyme on poetry. Yet in the tradition of a gathering, there is no respect for poetry except for its rhythm and rhyme. So, poetry is a speech with rhythm and rhyme and imagination, and in the absence of imagination and truth and in the lack of truth there is no validation for poetry…*[99]

According to Jāmī, in the development of images and the maintenance of form and prosody, there could be a lack of imagination and truth in this highly image-driven poetic speech. In the context of Sufi meetings, poetry is celebrated for its musicality as well as for its active imagination. However, Jāmī, who is the poet among them, regards the intent for the words of poetry to do more than just appeal to senses for pleasure as, to tell the truth. This statement supports Jāmī's belief that poetry should not be a superficial work of aesthetics. A poem must speak of the truth even if it is an imaginative speech. Jāmī elaborates this point with Rūdakī's poem about convincing the King to return to his homeland:

The king is the moon, Bukhara the sky,	شاه ماهست وبخارا آسمان
the moon coming to the sky sweeping.	ماه سوی آسمان آید همی[100]

Upon hearing Rūdakī's poem through music, the King immediately returns to "منزل" *his post.* By quoting Rūdakī's poem, Jāmī declares on the one hand that a poem unveils the truth. On the other, it is the truth veiled in images that become more convincing to the listeners and readers.

In another instance, Jāmī's description of a poem is of a work that entails a speech with a purpose. He relates his statement to the case of Ferdowsī, who used his poetry, to tell the truth about his patron's meager reward of his work. Ferdowsī's *Šāh-nāma* did not receive the praise he expected at

---

[99] Jāmī. *Bahārestān,* (2006). pp. 89.

شعر درعرف قدمای حکما کلامیست مولف از مقدمات مخیله یعنی از شان آن باشد که در خیال سامع اندازد معانئی را که موجب اقبال باشد بر " چیزی یا اعراض از چیزی خواه فی نفسه صادق باشد وخواه نی, وخواه سامع اعتقاد صدق او داشته باشد یا نی, چنانکه گویند: خمر لعلیست مذاب, یا یاقوتیست سیال یا عسل چیزیست تلخ یا شور, قی کردهٔ زنبور. ومتأخرین حکما به آن وزن وقافیه را عتبار کرده اند. فاما در عرف جمهور جز وزن وقافیه در آن معتبر نیست. پس شعر کلامی باشد موزون ومقفی وتخیل وعدم تخیل و صدق و عدم صدق را در آن اعتبار نی"

[100] Ibid. pp. 95.

the court of the Ghaznavid Sultan Maḥmūd (d. 1030). In his discontentment, Ferdowsī reveals his true emotions of unhappiness in a poem. When Sultan Maḥmūd read the poem, he felt regretful and decided to pay the poet the amount he deserved for his *Šāh-nāma*. However, but this time, Ferdowsī was dead. Jāmī gives the poet Ferdowsī the attribution of having and knowing his "قدر شناسی" *self-value* or *self-worthiness* that Ferdowsī had established and projected it in his poetry.[101] Poetry must serve a purpose, and that purpose must not be alien to or alienate the poet from the vision. We will learn in Chapter V of this thesis that Jāmī develops his belief that the purpose of a poem is to highlight the relevance of ancient philosophy and thoughts through a new rhetorical approach in poetry, even if the rhetorical approach is an imitated work.

On the technical aspect of writing poetry, Jāmī is very knowledgeable about the rules, formality, and conventions of Persian poetry. Jāmī takes liberties in the use of his own lexicon in order to make the content and meaning understandable to any reader. Particularly, when it comes to a panegyric poem, which deals with a speech that praises or is focused on aesthetics more than the meaning. Jāmī is very critical of such poetry.

> *Jāmī's recognition, based on his knowledge of the history of panegyric in Persian poetry, is not limited to his knowledge. He is critical of panegyric poetry for the cash reliability as substance involved in it, he also looked into the phenomenon of such poetry for its* [less serious] *meaning and content but also for the use of lexicon and form… He understands that accurate meaning is* [conveyable] *through 'solid and sturdy vocabulary.' The meaning* [according to Jāmī] *must be clear and plain and the word should not veil the meaning.*[102]

[101] Ibid.

[102] Māyel-Heravi (1998), pp. 138.

" شناخت جامی به آگاهی او از تاریخ مدیح در شعر فارسی محدود نمی شود او اگر شعر مدیع را فقط به اعتبار نقد محتوا مورد توجه داشته است به پدیده شعر نه تنها به لحاظ معنا و محتوا بلکه به جهت لفظ و صورت (فورم) نیز نگریسته است... معنای دقیق را (لفظ استوار و محکم) مفهوم می کند. معنا باید زلال و صاف باشد و لفظ هم نباید حجاب معنا شود..."

A panegyric poem is for the purpose of praising a king, and it can alter the meaning and the content for the sake of the right form of praise. In *Salāmān u Absāl*, for example, Jāmī brings an allegory of a clever poet who praises the king in a speech and hands him the blank page that is supposed to have the poem in praise of the king.[103] Jāmī writes that instead of praising his ruler for his "ملک و عدل" *kingship and justice* and "تاج و تخت" *throne and crown* in the poem (ln. 106), the poet inscribes the king's name on the piece of paper and presents his reasoning that:

108	Said: "Oh King, you with this prosperous name, have found fame in noble attributes..."	۱۰۸ گفت شاها تو بدین فرخنده نام یافتی شهرت به اوصاف کرام

Jāmī seems to convey that the purpose of a poem should not be merely a matter of patronage and praise. Jāmī himself dedicates *Salāmān u Absāl* to Sultān Ya'qūb— in which Jāmī inscribes his name three times in chapters 5 (line 81), 8 (line 125), and 76 (line 1126). And Jāmī clearly intends the mentioning of the Sultan's name to fulfill the etiquette of the patronage: "نام او گفتم همین مدحش بس است" *I said his name and this very praise is sufficient for him* (ln. 99).

Jāmī regards poetry as a speech with rhythm and rhyme that also conjures one's imagination when the speech is conveyed; moreover, this speech must have the power to refine truth through poetic expression. Only this kind of speech on truth is worth writing about in a poem. Jāmī concludes his *Bahārestān* with the following verses on writing and spreading speech that is worth speaking about, saying that otherwise, it is better to be silent.[104]

Oh Jāmī, bring excellence to the expansion of [good] speech, for there is no better way to be speaking freely. But sit silent and remain behind the closed-door with a temperament in which there is no cheerfulness.	بسط کن جامیا بساط سخن که از آن خوبتر بساطی نیست لیک خامش نشین و دم درکش طبع را گر در آن نشاطی نیست

Jāmī embraces the task of writing a poem as speech that can benefit "عقل و دین" *reason and faith* rather than solemnly for the sake of its aesthetic features (ln. 147-8).[105]

[103] "Mathnavī Salāmān u Absāl" in Jāmī *Haft Awrang*. ed. Afsaẖzod (1997). pp. 396. Lines (100-111).
[104] See Māyel-Heravi (1998). pp. 130-217. See *Bahārestān*. pp. 121.
[105] "Mathnavī Salāmān u Absāl." pp. 398.

Jāmī's *Haft Awrang* and His Other Literary Works

As stated earlier, Jāmī was a well-educated poet familiar with his forerunners and expert in all poetical techniques. Yet what makes Jāmī an intriguing poet is his knowledge and imitation of the old stylistic form and by merging it with his favorite narratives (both popular and unpopular ones) to usher in a new order in poetic form. Māyel-Heravi explains Jāmī's position as someone very knowledgeable about the different forms and genres of the old, that Jāmī's "new" order "in a test of its value" allowed him to earn his own "خلاقگی" *creativity*.

> *Experience, to use Jāmī's word "ingenuity," resulted in Ferdawsī's creativity in the form of mathnavī. If for the sake of a hobby, Ferdawsī had tried other forms of Persian poetry—such as qaṣida, which in his time was a commonly used format – we do not know if he could have been compared to Nāsir Ḵosrow Qabādiyān and Sanāʾi… Jāmī's knowledge about the experience of writing different kinds of Persian poetry and experiencing* [one's] *creativity in* [a form among] *all given forms, is once again an indication of his appreciation for the extent of insight and perception. Despite his knowledge, Jāmī himself could not reach for that creativity, and also it must be said that in all kinds of Persian poetry, he remained a scholar and following the rest.* [106]

The knowledge of different forms can be an advantage for any poet. Moreover, by knowing what form best serves one's poetic expression, this knowledge can be used to enhance the poets' creativity. Nonetheless, I disagree with Māyel-Heravi when he says that Jāmī is not reaching his own creativity given his knowledge about all forms. A poet's level of creativity cannot be measured against his knowledge of his predecessors or in comparison to them. A poet is always creative as long as she/he is aware of how to frame her/his own poetics, and remain in full control of their speech. Jāmī seems

---

[106] Ibid. pp. 143.
تجربه و به قول جامی «مهارت» او[فردوسی] در نوع مثنوی سبب خلاقگی او شد. اگر او از سر تفنن به انواع دیگر شعر فارسی—مثلاً نوع قصیده که در عصرش قالبی عام بود—می پر داخت ' معلوم نبود که مثلاً در قصیده بتواند در جایگاه ناصر خسرو قبادیانی و سنایی بپاید... این شناخت جامی از تجربه انواع شعر فارسی و خلاقگی در یک نوع آن' باز هم شناختی است در حد رای و نظر' که هرگز خود او در عمل سرایش شعر به آن تعلق نیافت و در بیشترینهٔ انواع شعر فارسی سخن گفت' اما در هیچ یک از آنها به خلاقگی دست نیافت و همچنان که خواهم گفت' در همه انواع شعر فارسی متتبع و پیرو باقی ماند

to evaluate the purpose of his poetic speech based on his knowledge of traditional literary canon as well as his familiarity with other essential texts (such as philosophical texts) of his time. For example, his choice of re-narrating the neglected story of Salāmān and Absāl stands out as Jāmī's most innovative and creative work. Despite the story's unusual and unique subject matter, Jāmī re-writes the story in a poem. He intentionally preserves the most human dispositions discussed in this (supposedly ancient) story, and yet he introduces and enhances the story's complexity from the point of view of (Neoplatonic) philosophy and Sufism. Jāmī takes the well-read poet Rūmī's most renowned work, the *Mathnavī,* as an imitation to write the mathnavī of *Salāmān u Absāl.* This mathnavī form provides a familiar subtext to the story of Salāmān and Absāl within the Persian literary canon. Jāmī imitates the form, but not in content (ideas). In each of the six other *mathnavīs* in the *Haft Awrang*, Jāmī also uses his knowledge of well-established forms of poetry in composing each one. In doing so, Jāmī intentionally imitates the well-established mathnavī-forms in order to establish his poetics within the traditional canon with certain nuances.

On Jāmī's poetry and scholarship, Algar writes that:

> *"This somewhat formulaic subordination of the two pursuits* [the composition of poetry and the cultivation of scholarship] *to the primary concerns of the Sufi is questionable, for Jāmī had little choice in the matter: he was and remained a scholar by temperament, and his lifelong devotion to verse can fairly be called addictive."* [107]

One cannot negate such a claim. If Jāmī's poetic oeuvre, which includes about 39,000 verses, is a mere work of scholarship on "تقلید و تتبع" *imitation and* (to) *pursue* or (to) *conform* [108] of the "old" and "tradition" of Persian poetry, does that mean there is no *creativity* or if there is it must it be undervalued?[109] Jāmī clearly imitates his predecessors Neẓāmi Ganjavi (d. 1209), Amir Ḵosrow (d. 1325), and Rūmī (d. 1273)

---

[107] Algar (2013), pp. 63.
[108] See Dehkhodā Dictionary (available online at parsi.wiki), https://www.parsi.wiki/fa/wiki/183617/تتبع. Also, Steingass Dictionary. pp. 281.
[109] Māyel-Heravi, pp. 167.

in the composition of his magnum opus, *Haft Awrang*, and Ḥāfeẓ (d. 1390) in writing his *Divān*. Yet it is Jāmī's use of this mode of poetic composition, which I would argue is clever poetry in imitation. Imitation is only done at the level of form; in content Jāmī's creativity conjures any imaginative reader on an intellectual level. This emphasis on imitation of other poets' work seems to have been a reason for neglecting Jāmī's sense of "شعر شناسی" *poetics*. That said, Jāmī's poetry has not received the attention it deserves, and past scholarship has led to a harsh judgment on the grounds that Jāmī was unable to reconcile his identities as a poet, a scholar, and a mystic. I would argue that Jāmī's scholarship and knowledge of the poetic tradition enabled him not to only write good poetry, but to define poetry beyond its mere function of communication in images or metaphors.

Notable literary works by Jāmī include both poetry and prose, written in Arabic or Persian. Jāmī's poetic works include his *Haft Awrang* and his *Divān*, which has three sections titled: ***Fāteḥat al-šabāb,*** 'Opening of Youth,' ***Wāsiṭat al-ʿeqd***, 'Middle of the Necklace,' and ***Ḵātemat al-ḥayāt***, 'The End of Life.' One of his most studied prose works is the already cited *Bahārestān*, a work mirroring Saʿdi's *Golestān* in form and content.[110]

Jāmī's *Haft Awrang*, "The Seven Thrones/Heavens" or "The Constellation of the Great Bear," is modeled after a collection of five narrative *mathnavīs*, collectively known as ***Ḵamsa (The Quintet)*** by Neẓāmi Ganjavi.[111] Instead of five *mathnavīs*, Jāmī's *Haft Awrang* is a series of seven *mathnavīs*, which projects Jāmī's poetic expression on ideas encompassing ethics, morality, mysticism, and philosophy.[112] Before going into detail about what the *mathnavīs* in *Haft Awrang* cover, it is important to understand the conceptual importance of the *Haft Awrang* and what it stands for as of a book with seven narrative-poems. Why seven? In the following paragraphs, I present my hypothesis on the

[110] See Losensky, "Jāmī i. Life and Works."
[111] Domenico Parrello. "Ḵamsa of Neẓāmi," Encyclopædia Iranica,
[112] "Jāmī: Persian Poet and Scholar." Encyclopædia Britannica.

number seven and its significance in the context of Sufi literature. The concept of "هفت آورنگ" means *seven thrones* or *seven heavens*. In astronomical terminology, *Haft Awrang* also relates to The Constellation of the Great Bear or Ursa Major.[113] In both cases, *Haft Awrang* conveys the qualities of celestial entities as well as earthly tendencies.

On the importance of seven, as a number/symbol/integer, one cannot help but think of the mathnavī ***Mānteq al-ṭayr*** (The Conference of the Birds) by Farīd-al-dīnʿAṭṭār (d. 1221), who writes about innumerable birds flying across seven valleys in search of their king the Sīmorḡ.[114] These seven valleys, though they are not universally recognized as stages or valleys, appear in the poem in a sequential order to explain the breaks within the journey in itself, and this order is "quest, love, understanding, independence and detachment, unity, astonishment and bewilderment, and deprivation and death."[115] In the last stage of their journey, only thirty birds end up arriving to witness their king in the celestial realm. In this seventh realm, they see their own reflection on the mirror as that of the celestial king Sīmorḡ *thirty birds*. In the context of Sufi literature, the concept of "مقام" *māqam* conveys the different spiritual stages or *stations of resting in a place* (اقامت و آرام کردن بجایی)[116]; and there are usually seven stages/valleys/stations to be undertaken by a Sufi on the journey to achieve a spiritual soul.[117] These seven *maqāmāt* "have become famous in later Sufism and are listed as: repentance (*tawbah*), abstention (*waraʿ*), asceticism (*zuhd*), poverty (*faqr*), patience (*ṣabr*), confidence (*tawakkul*), and

[113] For an etymological explanation, see D. N. MacKenzie. "Constellations," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, VI/2, P. 147-150; an updated version is available online at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/constellations (accessed on 14 October 2019). Also, for a more in-depth and a pre-Islamic astrological study of the celestial planets as of 'connection to bodies', see Enrico G. Raffaelli. "Astrology and Religion in the Zoroastrian Pahlavi Texts." *Journal Asiatique* 305.2 (2017): 171-190.

[114] For a comparative reading of ʿAttār's mathnavī of *manteq al-tayr* with the earlier mention of works including discussing *resālat al-tayr* see the introduction in Shafiʿi-Kadkani's edition. 'Aṭṭār, and Shafī'ī Kadkanī. *Manṭiq Al-ṭayr*. Print 1.; Chāp-i 1. ed. Tihrān: Intishārāt-i Sukhan, 2004. Print. pp. 23-65

[115] Ayfer Summermatter. "Attar of Nishapur's Seven Valleys and the Stages of Human Cravings from a Psychological Perspective". *Spiritual Psychology and Counselling*. pp. 117-143.

[116] See Dehkhodā Dictionary (available online at parsi.wiki). https://www.parsi.wiki/fa/wiki/405000/مقام

[117] See "Maqām". Encyclopædia Britannica. https://www.britannica.com/topic/maqam-Sufism. Access 14 October, 2019.

contentment (*riḍā*)."[118] This is not to say that Jāmī employs a similar or strict ideological background, structure, or contextualization for his seven *mathnavīs* to designate the seven stages or valleys. Nonetheless, each *mathnavī* seems to develop the conceptual dialectics on the One in the contexts of mysticism and philosophy for each of the distinct stages. It is this dialectic on the One that seems to designate the main unity of Jāmī's collection of seven *mathnavīs* under the title of *Haft Awrang* to convey the all-encompassing vision of divine beauty manifested in all things created.[119]

In the preface in a *robā'i* (a quatrain) poem, Jāmī explains how the seven *mathnavīs,* heavens or thrones are related in themes and subjects.

These seven books in speech are one-colored,	این هفت سفینه در سخن یکرنگند
and these seven treasures, in essence, are from one stone.	وین هفت خزینه در گهر همسنگند
They are like seven brothers on the high sphere,	چون هفت برادرند بر چرخ بلند
on the earth, they've become perfect as a total of seven thrones.	تامی شده بر زمین به هفت اورنگند

Though in number they are seven, yet Jāmī's "این هفت سفینه" *these seven books* have one thing in common. These seven books are like seven treasures, seven celestial brothers/associates (which is an indication of their spiritual harmony), and on earth seven worldly thrones either in wisdom or deceit. They are one in union or unity, and Jāmī designates them as having an analogous speech. As seven treasures, they have one stone in common. This one stone can be a metaphor for having the dialectics on the One/ the Creator/the Divine. We will see how all the seven *mathnavīs* engage with the topic and theme of the spiritual journey toward the Divine. The last line, on the one hand, can mean that the seven celestial planets on the higher sphere (perhaps at the level of intellect) end up having a harmonious or hospitable message. On the other, it also can mean that on the earth (due to worldly matters), the seven thrones (*mathnavīs*) end up revealing deceits/fraud or hostility on the human level.

[118] Seyyed Hossein Nasr. *Sufi Essays* (1999). pp. 77.
[119] On Jāmī exclusive discussion on the Divine and the Divine manifestation as the Truth in all things created see his *Lavāyieh,* Whinfield, 2nd Ed. Print. Oriental Translation Fund. New Ser.; Vol.16.

Though the conceptual understanding of the title (*Haft Awrang*) might still remain unresolved and ambiguous, yet there is a chance for us to unveil what each *mathnavī* covers by looking at the themes and topics individually and collectively. The first *mathnavī* in *Haft Awrang* is "سلسلةالذهب" *Selselat al-ḏahab* ('The Golden Chain'). It comprises of three *daftar*s (booklets), and it was composed and completed between the years 1468-1485. The poem covers themes and topics on morality, justice and other ethical aspects in the domain of good governance. In his composition of *Selselat al-ḏahab*, Jāmī imitates ***Ḥadiqat al-ḥaqiqa wa-šari ʿat al-ṭariqa*** by Sanā'i Ḡaznavi (d. 1130) in style and form, and all three books cover didactic themes with illustrated short anecdotes. In the first *daftar* of *Selselat al-ḏahab*, there are about 210 chapters, and each chapter contains about ten to forty lines of poetry. These chapters cover topics under the headings of: "حکایت" *tale*(s), "قصه" *fable*(s), "تفسیر" *exegesis*(exegeses), "سوال و جواب" *inquiries*, "حدیث" *Hadith*(s), "گفتار" *saying*(s), "سخن" *speech*(es), "اشارات" *indications*, and "بیان" *explanation*(s).[120] In the second *daftar*,[121] there are about 77 chapters, covering *speeches*, *tales*, *explanations,* and *indications*. Unlike in the first *daftar*, Jāmī discusses the theme of love in the second *daftar*. For example, the well-known story of *Majnun* appears in chapter 42, and there are other headings relating to "قصه عاشق شدن" *the story of falling in love*.[122] The final *daftar* of *Selselat al-ḏahab* has about 51 chapters, and these mostly cover *fables*, *tales*, and *sayings* of famous Sufi Shaikhs.[123] Jāmī's *mathnavī* of *Selselat al-ḏahab* seems to reveal the critical first steps at the beginning of the soul's journey toward spirituality by finding the purpose of one's "طلب" *quest* in the heart.

[120] See Afṣaḥzād (1997). pp. 59-246.
We cannot be so sure about the originality of the designated headings of each chapter based on the poet's intention, in the seven *mathnavīs* as they appear in Afṣaḥzād 's edition. Since I will be using this edition throughout my thesis, and given how useful the headings could be, I thus use the headings and structure of the *mathnavīs* as chapters.
[121] See Māyel-Heravi (1998), pp. 172. See *Second Daftar,* "Silsilat al-Dhahab," Afṣaḥzād (1997). pp. 249, line 3691.
[122] See Afṣaḥzād (1997). pp. 249-326.
[123] Ibid. pp. 327-378.

The second *mathnavī* of *Haft Awrang* is "سلامان و ابسال" *Salāmān u Absāl*, which was composed between 1480 and 1484 and was dedicated to Sulṭān Ya'qūb (d. 1490) the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler.[124] In *Salāmān u Absāl*, Jāmī imitates Rūmī's *Mathnavī* in form and narrative style.[125] Similar to Rūmī's *Mathnavī*, *Salāmān u Absāl* follows the traditional form of a romance narrative-poem and the chosen meter is called *ramal musaddas mahẕūf/maqsūr*, which reads in the syllables as (-u--/-u--/-u-). Jāmī quotes Rūmī in his *Mathnavī* on the art of composing verse by contemplating on rhyming and the Divine as Rūmī once did.

173	There is a strong relevance to my situation in the following couplets from *the Mathnavī -yi Maulavī*.	نسبتی دارد به حال من قوی این دو بیت از مثنوی مولوی	۱۷۳
174	'How come the art of verse and rhyming come to me, after the foundations of my sanity are destroyed".	کیف یاتی النظم لی و القافیه بعد ما ضاعت أصول العافیه	۱۷۴
175	I think of rhyme and my beloved says to me, 'don't contemplate anything but the sight of me'.	قافیه اندیشم و دلدار من گویدم مندیش جز دیدار من	۱۷۵
176	Who is the Beloved, the One who abodes in all hearts, the sum of souls is His treasure of secrets.	کیست دلدار آن که دلها دار اوست جمله جانها مخزن اسرار اوست	۱۷۶

Salāmān u Absāl is comprised of 76 chapters, of which 25 chapters are "حکایت" *tale*(s) as allegories to supplement the main narrative. These allegories include episodes from *Leyli u Majnun, Yusof u Zoleyk̲ā*, *K̲osrow u Širin*, *Vāmiq u Aẕrā*, and *Solomon u Belgīs*. There are also three animal fables, and some other chapters are "اشارات" *indications* to explain what is at stake in the main story.

It is this *mathnavī* of Salāmān and Absāl that is the subject of the present doctoral thesis. *Salāmān u Absāl* is about an unusual love story between a young prince and his wet-nurse. Its central theme is passionate love, which in the end inspires spiritual love. The poem becomes even more complex when Jāmī explains his metaphysical message on the integration of the physical world through love and knowledge with the vision of Divine. It is in the combination of an unusual story with complex philosophical and mystical meaning (discussed in Chapter III and IV) that we come to

[124] See Māyel-Heravi (1998), pp. 177.
[125] Ibid. pp. 173-76. Also see Lingwood (2013), pp. 4, 22.

understand Jāmī's definition and evaluation of poetry of old age, which is discussed in Chapter V. Despite the story's unusual subject matter of passionate love between the young prince and his wet-nurse, this *mathnavī* of *Salāmān u Absāl* is about the importance of "عشق" *love* on the spiritual journey of the soul to experience the vision of divine beauty that is otherwise not perceivable through the eyes in the sense perception form.

The third *mathnavī* is called "تحفةالاحرا" *Toḫfat al-aḫrār* ('Gift of the Free'), which covers themes concerning Naqšbandiya Sufi practices, and it was dedicated to Naqšbandi scholar Shaikh Ḵᵛāja 'Obayd-Allāh Aḫrār.[126] *Toḫfat al-aḫrār* was completed in 1481 and was thus the first *mathnavī* in Jāmī's seven *mathnavīs*. It imitates Neẓāmi Ganjavi's *Maḵẓan al-asrār* and Amir Ḵosrow's *Maṭlaʿ al-anwār*, *Toḫfat al-aḫrār* and is comprised of twenty "مقاله" *chapter*(s) on topics ranging from prayer, charity, and pilgrimage to other "مسائل عرفانی" *mystical topics* illustrated in anecdotes.[127] There are 60 chapters in this *mathnavī*. The first chapters are on the "مناجات" *prayers*, "نعت" *eulogium,* and are written in praise of the great Shaikhs. Some chapters are on "صحبت" *conversation*(s). The rest of the chapters cover alternatively a "حکایت" *tale,* a "مقاله" *discourse,* and also other various topics, such as observing *ramaḍān* and the spiritual state of "صوفیان" *the Sufis*, "وزیران" *the viziers*, and "دبیران" *the writers/secretaries.*[128] The *mathnavī* of *Toḫfat al-aḫrār* encompasses Jāmī's discourse on "معرفت" *knowledge* of the mystical tradition learned from other Sufi Shaikhs.

The fourth *mathnavī*, "سبحةالابرار" *Sobḫat al-abrār* ('The Rosary of the Pious') was composed in 1482. It also focuses on the themes and topics inspired by Sufi teachings, yet in a traditional *mathnavī* form. The structure of the *mathnavī* follows a rigid format, unlike the other *mathnavī*s. This *mathnavī*

[126] In *Toḫfat al-aḫrār,* Jāmī writes: "تحفه الاحرار لقب دادمش/ تحفه به احرار فرستادمش" *I've given it a title toḫfat al-aḫrār/ I've sent it as a gift to Aḫrār.* Afṣaḥzād (1997). pp. 550. Ln. 1692.
[127] Ibid, pp. 177-8.
[128] See Afṣaḥzād (1997). pp. 449-549.

comprises of 129 chapters. The first eight chapters are the preliminary "تشریح" *explanation* and the poet's "سبب نظم" *reasons for composing* the *mathnavī*. Starting with chapter nine, "عقد اول" *the first knot/bead* reveals a "حکایت" *tale* followed by "مناجات" *prayer*. This setting and rhetorical style continue in the format of a chapter on *a knot*, and then *a tale*, and then *prayers* finally ending with the *fortieth knot/bead*, with *the fortieth tale,* and *the fortieth prayers*. Jāmī explains the reason he composed this *mathnavī* was due to the prayers he found himself contemplating day and night.

278	I run the pen to tie a necklace, bead on bead I tangled them together.	مرسله مرسله بر هم بستم عقد بر عقد به هم پیوستم	۲۷۸
279	In its completion it has become a rosary in pursuit of piousness, I've called it *the rosary for the pious* in title.	سبحه ای شد پی ابرار تمام خواندمش سبحةالابرار به نام[129]	۲۷۹

Jāmī explains the forty knots/beads to designate the forty "درهای فتوح" *degrees/valleys/doors in the conquest* of the spiritual essence.[130] It is fair to say that in the *mathnavī* of *Sobḫat al-abrār*, Jāmī shares his own learned prayers as *knots/beads*, which seems to convey his idea of *maqam* or the valley of "استغنا" *independence/contentment/detachment*, unlike his *Toḫfat al-aḫrār*, which relies heavily on the teachings of the preceding Sufi Shaikhs.

The fifth *mathnavī* of "یوسف و زلیخا" *(Yusof u Zoleyk̲ā*) was composed in the year 1483, and it bears the famous Sufi re-telling of a love narrative inspired by the Qur'ānic tale of Prophet Joseph.[131] In this *mathnavī*, Jāmī once again imitates the meter of Neẓāmi's *K̲osrow u Širin*. Composed and finished when Jāmī was 71, *Yusof u Zoleyk̲ā is* next to *Salāmān u Absāl* a more enhanced work, demonstrating Jāmī's maturity in style and in his "داستان سرایی" *storytelling skills*.[132] It comprises of 75 chapters, with each chapter to add on the development in the plot of the story. Unlike in his *mathnavī* of *Salāmān u Absāl*, Jāmī does not include other allegories to compare and contrast or supplement the main narrative about Yusof and Zoleyk̲ā. Jāmī's reason for composing this book is to convey the importance of the

[129] Afṣaḥzād (1997), *Sobḫat al-abrār*. pp. 569. Also, see Māyel-Heravi (1998). pp.178.
[130] See Hossein Nasr. *Sufi Essays* (1999). pp. 77-80.
[131] See Qurʾān 12.20.
[132] See Māyel-Heravi (1998), pp. 179-80, 81-82.

speech about love by giving this pair of lovers Yusof and Zoleyk̲ā the honor of having the most beautiful of all love stories.

394	The state of Širin and K̲osrow is outdated, I will mark with sweetness the new K̲osrow. …	کهن شد دولت شیرین و خسرو به شیرینی نشانم خسرو نو ...	۳۹۴
395	God has called it the most beautiful one among all tales, in a beautiful manner, I will draw a speech on it.	خدا از قصه ها چون احسنش خواند به احسن وجه ازان خواهم سخن راند[133]	۳۹۵

Jāmī in *Yusof va Zoleyk̲ā* preserves the traditional form of a Sufi poem inspired by the Qur'anic tale, yet he highlights the role of the female character Zoleyk̲ā's journey of achieving "توحید" *unity/union/becoming one* with the Divine by way of falling in love with Yusof. Zoleyk̲ā's "lust for her beloved Yusof, toward a pinnacle of spiritual love enables her… [to achieve] a pious encounter with the cosmos."[134]

Jāmī's sixth *mathnavī* "لیلی و مجنون" *Leyli u Majnun* was completed in 1484. This *mathnavī* imitates the famous works by Neẓāmi's *Makẖẓan al-asrār* and Amir K̲osrow Dihlavī's *Matla 'al-anvār*.[135] In the epilogue of his book, Jāmī cites Neẓāmi as the first person to tell the story about Leyli and Majnun and in the most eloquent form:

3800	Although like a river of disappointment, this goblet [*Jāmī*] is enough for your palate. …	هر چند چو بحر تلخکامی این کام تو را بس است جامی ...	۳۸۰۰
3820	Where is that sweet-spoken bird Neẓāmi, from whom I have this sugar in excellence.	کو مرغ شکر شکن نظامی کش دارم ازین شکر گرامی[136]	۳۸۲۰

Jāmī's mentions Neẓāmi as his main aspiration for writing this *mathnavī* even if it is in imitation, yet what is more important for Jāmī is once again the speech on "عشق" *love*.[137] The *mathnavī* of *Leyli u Majnun* is comprised of 58 chapters and each chapter is a development in the main story. The *mathnavī*

---

[133] Afṣaḥzād̄ (1997). pp. 39
[134] Rebecca Ruth Gould. "Sweetening the Heavy Georgian Tongue." (2018). pp. 803.
[135] Ibid pp. 181. Also, see Ali Asghar Seyed-Gohra. Layli and Majnun: *Love Madness and Mystic Longing.* (2003). And also see Michael Dols. *Majnun: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society.* (1992).
[136] Afṣaḥzād̄ (1997). pp. 404-05.
[137] See Gould. (2018).

of *Leyli u Majnun* encompasses instances of "حیرت" *bewilderment* and *astonishment* in Majnun's journey of spirituality— first by falling in love at first sight with Leyli, then by witnessing the Divine manifestation in the wilderness, and finally by falling in love with the Divine manifestation.

The seventh and last *mathnavī* in the *Haft Awrang* is "خردنامه اسکندری" *Ḵerad-nāma-ye Eskandari* ('The Alexandrian Book of Wisdom'), which was completed in 1485 and also dedicated to Sultan Ḥosayn Bāyqarā.[138] *Ḵerad-nāma-ye Eskandari* mirrors in meter Neẓāmi's *Eskandar-nāma* and also Amir Ḵosrow's *Ā'īna-ye Sekandarī.* There are 78 chapters in this *mathnavī*, and "Jāmī's text is structured according to a binary pattern: each part of Alexander's narrative is followed by an inserted story or *ḥikāyat.*"[139] It is important to add that in addition to Jāmī's interpretation of Alexander's story "to highlight his ethical concerns and his Sufi conceptions," he also (explicitly) interjects the importance of ancient [Greek] philosophical thought. Thus, Jāmī includes the "خردنامه" *book of wisdom,* which was revealed to Alexander by distinct Greek philosophers and names them as Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Hippocrates, Pythagoras, and Hermes, as well as the ten sages, who share their wisdom after the death of Alexander. In the main narrative, Jāmī "emphasizes [Alexander's] inward travel at the expense of the outward journey,"[140] which demonstrates the goal of simultaneously gaining knowledge of this world and the otherworld through experiences and expeditions. That said, this is once again an instance of Jāmī's integration of the outer (physical) knowledge and the inner (metaphysical) knowledge for the sake of the purpose of his poetry and poetics.

Jāmī's choice of the Alexander novel, *Ḵerad-nāma-ye Eskandari*, as the seventh (station and valley) and the final *mathnavī* in *Haft Awrang* concludes his speech on the One. This *mathnavī* emphasizes Alexander's death (annihilation) in the physical world, and it also portrays his (mystical)

[138] See Losensky, "Jāmī i. Life and Works." And Muhammad Raushan's *Salāmān u Absāl-i Jāmī.* (1994). pp. 125-127.
[139] Toutan. (2018). pp. 607.
[140] Ibid. pp. 636.

journey to have reached the final stage as an all-encompassing station, even with physical death. Jāmī first highlights the narrative of Alexander "with the episode of [the mythical] Qāf Mountain, [as his] last expedition [to] bring the highest level of spirituality to the conqueror, for Alexander becomes a saint (*vali*) and a prophet (*payamber*) after his exploration of the bottom of the sea."[141] Then Jāmī completes his dialectics on Alexander's conquest of the world as becoming "شاهنشاه عقليم راز" *the king of weather and mystery*,[142] yet Alexander must still experience death as the final stage. "Never are Alexander's regrets toward his conquest more clearly expressed in Jāmī's *mathnavī* than in his farewell letter addressed to his beloved mother."[143] Jāmī's narrative of Alexander could correspond to the last valley of a mystical journey called "فقر" *deprivation* and *poverty*. Jāmī not only regards Alexander's mystical journey toward the final valley within the limits of Sufi thinking but also regards his narration of the journey of Alexander as opening up a debate about the relevancy of ancient (Greek) knowledge/wisdom/philosophy in the medieval thinking and poetry of his time. It is indeed in studying the integrated Sufi-philosophical poetry, that we can see Jāmī's creativity and poetics come alive.

Conclusions

In concluding this chapter, it is important for me to emphasize that Jāmī's fame as one of the renowned poets of medieval Persian literature is not a coincidence. Though the political stability under the Timurids and the kind of Sufism popular in those days facilitated Jāmī's rise to become one the greatest poets of the Persian literary canon, he had maintained his intellectual pursuit and interests outside Timurid politics and the Sufi establishment through his poetry. The Timurid court in Herat had welcomed poets like Jāmī to enhance their social, cultural, literary, scholarly, and political agendas

[141] Ibid. pp. 630. Afṣaḥzād (1997). pp. 503-05. Lines. 1781-1826.
[142] Ibid. pp. 503. Line. 1781.
[143] Afṣaḥzād (1997). pp. 507-11. Lines. 1868-1960.

by way of networking with the most politically noteworthy individuals in the court. Yet, despite the political changes that occurred under different rulers, and the fact that Jāmī's poetry could have easily been overlooked or subsumed into the long tradition of patronage in the court-system, in fact, Jāmī's poetry and scholarship thrived. This had to do with Jāmī's individual choice to keep his mystical and scholarly affiliations with the Naqšbandiya Sufi order as well as with the court at the level of intellectual interests, which earned him recognition in all the Islamic courts of the day. Not only did he become an influential thinker and poet within the Timurid capitals, but his fame spread among other well-known rulers, such as the Ottoman rulers and some Persian rulers in India.[144]

While there are a number of scholarly works on Jāmī's affiliations with the Naqšbandiya Sufi order and the Timurid court in Herat. there is little scholarship on Jāmī's poetry and poetics. It is my contention that more scholarly study of Jāmī's poetry and poetics is needed, rather than focusing on studying Jāmī in the context of Timurid history and politics. Even though Jāmī was intellectually inspired by Ebn al-'Arabī's mystical teachings and Rūmī's poetry, he formulates his poetry using his own creativity and introduces a more philosophical lens to the already well-established and mystically-driven Persian literary canon. Jāmī introduced integration of mysticism and philosophy (metaphysics) by way of storytelling in poetry. Each of Jāmī's poetic works (for example in *Haft Awrang*) encompasses the nuances of mystically-inclined and philosophical narratives that survey humans' very naturalistic dispositions and needs in the physical world and instances to show the vision of the Divine in relation to worldly experiences. With this in mind, this introductory chapter discussed Jāmī as a dialectician on mysticism rather than a mystic himself. His poetry functions as dialectics on the One, as Jāmī relates to topics of love by way of discussing mysticism, philosophy, and other poetic expressions in a traditional form. Though often criticized for writing poetry using forms in imitation of other poets

[144] See Muzaffar Alam. "Scholar, Saint, and Poet; Jāmī in the Indo-Muslim World" in *Jāmī in Regional Contexts*. pp. 136-176.

preceding him, I explained how Jāmī's innovative storytelling skills and creativity in the content brings out Jāmī's originality in thinking as he introduces new ideas and approaches to discuss the well-known subject matters (such as love) within Sufi literature and beyond. I briefly explained the focus of each of Jāmī's seven *mathnavīs* from his *Haft Awrang* as examples.

This thesis focuses exclusively on Jāmī's long narrative poem of *Salāmān u Absāl*. Chapter II situates the poem in its broader cultural and intellectual contexts of Greek, Arabic, and Persian backgrounds from which the story of Salāmān and Absāl had emerged, translated, evolved, narrated, and re-narrated. I begin by discussing the origin of the story of Salāmān and Absāl and give a literary review of the Arabic-Persian sources that mention the two names Salāmān and Absāl. I examine how different scholars studied the tale of Salāmān and Absāl. I then introduce a new approach to and methodology for studying Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*. Finally, I end the chapter by giving an intertextual analysis of Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* with Homer's Odyssey exploring the danger that wet-nurses pose to kingdoms.

Chapter II: Background on Salāmān and Absāl: Arabic-Persian Sources, Review of Secondary Literature, and a New Approach

The purpose of this chapter is three-fold. First, I will examine the sources that mention the two names "Salāmān" and "Absāl" as a pair. These tales present different storylines, and this helps to understand the origin of the tale told in Jāmī's poem. I will discuss how Ibn Sīnā (d. 1037) is the first to mention the names of the two characters "Salāmān" and "Absāl" as puzzles in his mystical treatise, *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt*. In doing so, he brought them to the attention of numerous Arabo-Persian cultural circles. I will then examine how several medieval Islamic scholars created their commentaries around these two mysterious names in versions of the tale and in narrative adaptions around the two names. I will then introduce Jāmī's version of the story in the form of a mathnavī poem, which indeed seems to encompass or enhance the elements introduced in the preceding versions of the tale, about which Jāmī is likely to have been well informed. Second, I will bring the existing secondary literature on the study of "Salāmān" and "Absāl" into the discussion. Finally, I will introduce my innovative approach and the methodologies I will use in studying Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* with the goal of achieving a better understanding of the poem. As part of this approach, I will discuss the implications of Jāmī's decision to write a poem based on the Greco-Arabic sources. In what I consider an essential enlightening ex-cursus, I will give a brief intertextual analysis and comparison of *Salāmān u Absāl* with Homer's *Odyssey*.

Origin of the Names "Salāmān" and "Absāl"

The oldest surviving mention of the two names "Salāmān" and "Absāl" is by Ibn Sīnā. In the ninth chapter of his philosophical work *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt,*[145] which is "not a work of demonstrative

[145] See Ibn Sīnā, al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt t, ed. Sulaimān Dunyā pp. 47–56.

reasoning… [and] an insurmountable challenge to those without sufficient mental abilities,"[146] Ibn Sīnā references the two names as symbols, hints, or suggestions "on the stations of the knowers" "العارفين". He mentions that the names refer to a tale, yet he does not say what the tale is about:

> *Chapter nine: on the stations of the knowers*
> *In this earthly world, there are stations and stages for the knowers, identifiable only to them, invisible to others. In other words, for a knower who preserves his inner isolation in closure, he cuts himself off from the stages and steps into the world of retreat and celibacy. The knowers have enjoyed both the affairs that are hidden and are secrets to them and the affairs that become disclosed and revealed to them. The one who is unfamiliar and in denial of such affairs, he does not rely on them, while the one how is familiar and is aware of such affairs, he considers them important. And we shall narrate a story of such stations.*
> *Whenever you hear the story of Salāmān and Absāl, or should someone relate the story for you, pay attention; for Salāmān represents you and Absāl represents your stage in knowledge, if you are one of the knowers. Then, if you can, solve the riddle.* [147]

---

[146] See Rapoport's dissertation (*The Life and Afterlife of the Rational Soul: Chapters VIII-X of Ibn Sina's Pointers and Reminders*, Yale, 2018. pp. 39. Rapoport's dissertation challenges us to question the "originality" of *the Pointers* by challenging our very established notion of what mysticism and mystical meant to Ibn Sīnā.

[147] Ibid.

النمط التاسع: في مقامات العارفين
إن للعارفين مقامات ودرجات يخصون بها وهم في حياتهم الدنيا، دون غيرهم، فكأنهم وهم في جلابيب من أبدانهم، قد نضوها وتجردوا عنها، إلى عالم القدس. ولهم أمور خفية فيهم، وأمور ظاهرة عنهم. يستنكرها من ينكرها. ويستكبرها من يعرفها. ونحن نقصها عليك.
وإذا قرع سمعك فيما يقرعه، وسرد عليك فيما تسمعه، قصة لسلامان وأبسال، فاعلم أن سلامان مثل ضرب لك، وأن أبسالا مثل ضرب لدرجتك في العرفان إن كنت من أهله. ثم حل الرمز إن أطقت.

As for my translation into English, I have also consulted the Persian translation by Dr. Ḥasan Malikshāhī in his book, *Tarjumah va sharh-I isharat a tanbihat-I Ibn Sina* (1363/1984 AD). P. 440. Also see Dimitri Gutas' *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition* (2014). Gutas translates the passage from Ibn Sīnā's *al-Ishārāt wa al-tanbīh*: "If among the things that reach your ear and the tales you hear there is the story of Salāmān and Absāl, know that Salāmān is an image referring to yourself and that Absāl is an image referring to the stage you [have reached] in Knowledge, if you are worthy of it. Now analyze the allegory, if you can" (p. 492). The *namat 9* or "نمط ٩" *chapter 9* is considered the most significant section of Ibn Sīna's *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt* on the topics concerning mysticism. While the sections before *namat 9* are concerned with philosophy mainly ethics, physics and metaphysics. A good translation of Ibn Sīna's *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhā*t on the sections concerning physics and metaphysics into English would be Shams Inati's *Ibn Sina's Remarks and Admonitions: Physics and Metaphysics: An Analysis and Annotated Translation* (2014). Dr. Malikshāhī in his book quotes al-Rāzī the first commentator of Ibn Sīna's *al-Ishārāt* multiple times on *namat 9*. See, Malikshāhī (p. 7, 21). Also, George F. Hourani in his article, "Ibn Sīnā's 'Essay on the Secret of Destiny'," refers to Ibn Sīnā's mention of the two names Salāmān and Absāl and puts more emphasis on Ibn Sīnā's encouragement to "حل الرمز" 'solve the enigma'. "This is significant four our problem because it shows *ramz* clearly in the meaning of an 'enigma' or 'puzzle' to be solved, and not merely a 'sign' or 'symbol'… Ibn Sīnā is asked to explain, not the secret of destiny but only the meaning of the Sufi saying condemning knowledge of the secret" (p, 43). See Moḥammad Esmā'il Mobaleq's *ʿERfani-e Jāmi*, pp. 371-462. He says in page 388 that: *The main intention of Ibn Sīnā is intellect and philosophy, while Ebn Ṭofayl has associated intellect with narration, and has studied it while comparing the ways of the sages/philosophers with the ways of the masters and possessors of the discovery.* Also see Heath, Peter. "Salāmān and Absāl" in Encyclopaedia of Islam

In *namat 9* of *al-Ishārāt,* Ibn Sīnā goes beyond the simple mention of the two names (Salāmān and Absāl) as "Ishārāt" *Remarks*, which connote pointers or indications and presents them in a story, which require commentaries with significant philosophical knowledge and interpretation.[148] Ibn Sīnā himself seems to have known of the two names in the form of "قصة" *a story,* because he gives the reader a glimpse of the two names, intending them to be perceived as two plots or events as cause and effect—the mystic as an agent and the stages of the mystic as his actions. More importantly, Ibn Sīnā's effort of "حل الرمز" *to solve the riddle* makes this reference to the names even more intriguing for later commentators. In this untold *story*, there is "the full sequence of events as we assume them to have occurred in their likely order, duration, and frequency, while the plot [as it appears in two names] is a particular selection and (re)ordering of these."[149] Interested in developing the narrative-form that would effectively make use of the two names Salāmān and Absāl, later commentators contemplated the story and gave their interpretations.

Ibn Sīnā's intentional exclusion of the storyline allows and requires the reader of the *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt* to interpret the names (as remarks) only by having knowledge that they are indicators within a story. Ibn Sīnā presents Absāl as a remark about the journey or an entity, thus on a different level altogether from Salāmān who is a character.[150] In this case, unlike in Chad Lingwood's interpretation of a traditional image of Absāl as a symbol for the wine,[151] my reading views Absāl as a multi-dimensional female character (see the section on Absāl comparison with Homer's Eurycleia). This is the point of departure for my analysis.

---

148 See a translation by Kevin Brown*, Nasir al-Din Tusi's Commentary on Ibn Sina's al-Isharat wa'l-Tanbihat: al-Namat al-Tasi' fi Maqamat al-'Arifin: Namat Nine on the Stations of the Mystics,* 2007. Pp. 185-238.

149 For a definition of "story," see the Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (3 ed.).

150 Corbin, H. *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital* (1960). pp. 207, 218. See also Dimitri Gutas's *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition* (2014).

151 Chad G. Lingwood (2015). pp. 68.

What is Ibn Sīnā's story actually about? How are the two names to be related to the journey and the stage of the journey? It is this unknown storyline that intrigued the later commentators, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209)[152] and Naṣīr-al-dīn Ṭūsī (d. 1274).[153] It allowed them to suggest their interpretations of the two names as distinct entities and to hypothesize different versions of the tale in order to better understand where the two names fit in. In his commentary, al-Rāzī gives his interpretation of the names: "Salāmān must represent Adam" and "Absāl represents *thy* Paradise."[154] The main hypothesis put forward by al-Rāzī is that the two names were invented by Ibn Sīnā and used in his tale on Adam. The two names are only interpretable as conceptual terms. In defense of his interpretation, al-Rāzī maintains that the two names Salāmān and Absāl could be indicators for a story that has theological importance and might thus be well-known.

A few decades later, Ṭūsī proposes relatively convincing sources about the origins of the two names. Highlighting the insufficiency of Rāzī's theological[155] interpretation and bringing forth his own findings, Ṭūsī writes:

> *This tale is a narration from Greek into Arabic by Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ.*[156]

Ṭūsī details the available information:

> *This tale is not [taken] from amongst the subjects of the Shaykh al-Ra'is (Ibn Sīnā; the way in which Imam Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī in his explanation of the Ishārāt relates the invention of these two names to the Shaikh (Ibn Sīnā) is unclear (sihhati nadarad). For this tale existed in Arab stories, and the two names were mentioned in the Arab tales and anecdotes. I heard from the people of scholarship in Khurasan that they named two people—one famous for his good deeds and his name was Salāmān and the other [Absāl] was famous for evildoing and who died on that very path.*[157]

---

[152] See Razi, Fakhraddin *Kitab al-mabahith al-mashriqiya*, Hyderabad. See Corbin's *Visionary Recital*. pp. 207.
[153] On the influences and works of Ṭūsī see George E. Lane, "Ṭusi, Naṣir-al-Din," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, 2018, available at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/tusi-nasir-al-din-bio (accessed on 19 April 2018).
[154] Refer to footnote 6.
[155] For a discussion on Rāzī's theological work see Peter Adamson's *Philosophy in the Islamic World*, pp. 309-315.
[156] Ṭūsī's *Sharh Ishārāt*. v. III, pp. 366. و نقلها حنين بن اسحاق من اليونانى الى العربى
[157] Mobaleq's *'Rfāni-e Jāmi*, pp. 375.

Ṭūsī is known as a man of multidisciplinary learning,[158] and in keeping with this reputation his interpretation and search for the sources of the narrative of Salāmān and Absāl is multidimensional, rather than limited to a single theological interpretation. He introduces two versions of the tale—the Hellenistic version, which became famous among the Arabs and Ibn Sīnā's version. As will become evident, the synthesis of these two versions (with an emphasis on the Hellenistic version) becomes the genesis of Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*. Ṭūsī does not say much about Ibn Sīnā's intention in mentioning the two names.

The very idiosyncrasy of the names, Salāmān and Absāl, puzzled medieval Persian and Arabic scholars. In what follows, I will give, in chronological order, a summary of the extant tales that incorporated the two names, specifically based on Ṭūsī's commentaries and findings.

Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ's Version of the Tale

The first version[159] of the tale (chronologically) is the Hermetic version, which has a Greek origin and was believed to have been translated into Arabic by Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ [d.873].[160] It is this Hermetic version of the story that Jāmī adapts for his mathnavī. As mentioned before, there is no source to validate this version of the tale: Ṭūsī is unique in alluding to Isḥāḳ's version. We will see some similarities between Jāmī's tale and Isḥāḳ's version.

این قصه از موضاعات شیخ الرئیس نیست و طوری که امام فخرالدین رازی در شرح خود بر اشارات وضع این دو نام را به شیخ نسبت داده، صحتی ندارد. زیرا این داستان در قصص عرب و جود داشت و در امثال و حکایات عرب همین دو نام مذکور بود و من در خراسان از مردمان دانشمند شنیدم که، دو شخص را نام برده که یکی مشهور به خیر و نیکی بود و سلامان نام داشت. دو دیگر که جر همی بود به بدی و شر مشهور بود، و در همین راه بمرد.

158 See Badakhchani, S. J. *Contemplation and Action: The Spiritual Autobiography of a Muslim Scholar* (London, I. B. Tauris in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 1998).

159 There have been debates about the origin of the tale of Salāmān and Absāl; it is possible that the tale of Salāmān and Absāl is older than the Greek version that was translated by Ḥunayn, it has been called an Indian mystery tale. See Jaleh Mottahedin's *A Flame in the Ashes: An Essay on the Tenth Century Persian Poetess,* (2018), pp. 71-73.

160 Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ [d.873] was "an eminent translator of ancient science and philosophy, well versed in the Greek, Syriac, Arabic, and Persian languages" for more see Strohmaier, G. (2012), "Isḥāḳ b. Ḥunayn." *Encyclopaedia of Islam.* For a good overview of the period of translation also see Young, M. J. L, & Serjeant, R. B. (1991) Philosophical literature. In *Religion, Learning and Science in the ʿAbbasid Period* (The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, pp. 76-105). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The Sage called Aqliqulas (قالیقوس) helps the King Hermanos (هرمانوس) to have a son, to be the heir to his kingdom. Salāmān is not conceived as a result of human sexual intercourse, nor is he born of a woman. The Sage makes "[an] astrological observation, procure[s] a mandragora, and put[s] a little of the king's semen in it [;] the Sage then [undertakes] to treat the mixture in an environment suitable for the operation.[161]" The child born of this alchemical operation is named Salāmān and is nursed by a beautiful young woman called Absāl. Salāmān grows into a handsome young prince and falls in love with his wet-nurse, Absāl. His father and his father's sage disapprove of the heir's love for Absāl. This situation causes Salāmān to flee with Absāl to the far western lands. Yet, the King remains steadfast in his love of, and yearning for, his son. Eventually, a miserable Salāmān returns to the Kingdom after Absāl drowns. Through the Sage's guidance, Salāmān develops love for Venus, the celestial beauty, and is crowned as the next King. Salāmān becomes the ruler of the Greek kingdom and rules for years with justice. His story was written down:

> *They wrote the story on seven silver tablets and on other seven silver plates, and they imprinted seven stars on it, and they placed everything near the father's (the King's) head in his grave*. [162]

Plato attempted to find this treasure in the lands of Greece, but was prevented by the kings of the time.[163] Therefore, Plato advised his disciple Aristotle to search for the story and "و از علوم پنهانی روحانی آن استفاده نماید" *to make use of its enigmatic knowledge of mysticism.*[164] With the conquest of Alexander the Great, Aristotle was able to travel to "مغرب" *the west* and upon his arrival in "هرمن" *Herman*, he opened the gates of the pyramids where he hoped to find the story recorded on tablets, but did not discover the entire narrative. It is presumably the saved part of the story that Isḥāḳ tells. Ṭūsī, collating

---

161 Henry Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*. pp. 211.

162 Mobaleq, pp. 381.
بر هفت لوح سیمین نوشتند و بر هفت تخته ی سیمین دیگر، ادعیه هفت ستاره را نقش کردند و تمام آن را در گور پدر پیش سرش گذاشتند

163 See Corbin, pp. 217-18.

164 Mobaleq, pp. 382.

Isḥāḳ's version and Ibn Sīnā's reference to the names, Ṭūsī became convinced that Ibn Sīnā refers to a different tale using the names Salāmān and Absāl.

> *After the completion of his Sharh Ishārāt, [Ṭūsī] had forgotten about such a subject, yet he believed that the Shaykh al-Ra'is (Ibn Sīnā) in his remark did not mean the same story, rather, the Shaikh had another version in mind.*[165]

Ṭūsī adopts Isḥāḳ's Neoplatonic interpretation of this Hellenistic Greek version in which every character represents a symbol. The king symbolizes "the active intellect,"[166] the Sage is "divine emanation."[167] Salāmān symbolizes "the rational soul."[168] Absāl represents the corporeal faculties.[169] The far western lands symbolize the material realm.[170] The role of Salāmān as a future King is to become and remain "the active intellect." The medieval Arabo-Persian scholars and thinkers discovered and employed Neoplatonism alongside Islamic mysticism.[171] Neoplatonic ideas were addressed and developed within those circles that followed Ibn Sīnā's philosophical method of telling stories and writing poetry. Ṭūsī in his commentary on Ibn Sīnā's version brings forth a Neoplatonic interpretation, and so too does Jāmī give a Neoplatonic reading in chapter 75 (lines 1084-1119).[172]

---

165 Ṭūsī's *Sharh Ishārāt*, v. III. pp, 367.
بعد از تکمیل شرح اشارات، همین متن از نظرش گذشته بود، ولی وی به این عقیده است که مقصد شیخ الرئیس اشاره بدین ترتیب، قصه نیست، بلکه شیخ وجه دیگر آن را در نظر داشته است.

166 On the topic of "The Active Intellect" see Herbert A. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Ibn Sinā, and Averroes, on Intellect: Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, and Theories of Human Intellect* (1992). Specially chapter 4. And Schroeder, Frederic M. "Light and the Active Intellect in Alexander and Plotinus." pp. 239–248.

167 For more on the concept of "Divine Emanation" see M.A. Alibhai's "The Transformation of Spiritual Substance into Bodily Substance in Ismaili Neoplatonism" p. 167-177.

168 On the concept of "the Rational Soul" see D. Gutas, "Ibn Sīnā v. Mysticism." "The ʿāref mentioned in the final chapters of the Ešārāt, for example, refers to the person whose rational soul has reached the stage of the acquired intellect." pp. 79-83.
Also see: Dr. Gildea. "On the Immateriality of the Rational Soul." pp. 151–159.

169 Corporal Faculties: see Wildberg, Christian, "Neoplatonism."
On the portrayal of female body see Merguerian, Gayane Karen, and Afsaneh Najmabadi. "Zulaykha and Yusuf: Whose 'Best Story'?" pp. 485–508.

170 Material Realm: see Wildberg, "Neoplatonism".

171 For a discussion on the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition and Plotinus's theory of Intellect see Eyjólfur Kjalar Emilsson's *Plotinus on Intellect.*

172 See Mobaleq. pp. 398-401. This aspect of Jāmī's take on the Neoplatonic reading of the story is discussed in detail in the chapter IV of my dissertation. A mystical reading of Jāmī's text reveals that the King, Salāmān's father, is disappointed by his son's passion for a transient earthly beauty, which he attributes to his son's inability to understand his role as the next king. In contrast to Absāl, Venus appears as a disincarnate object of love and beauty whose grandeur can only be understood through the intellect.

Ibn Sīnā's Version of the Tale

The second version, which we do not have, is Ibn Sīnā's version. We can only refer to his two mentions of the names, first in his *al-Ishārāt* and later in his *risala* (treatise) on *Destiny*.[173] A version of the story ascribed to Ibn Sīnā reaches us through Ṭūsī's commentary.[174]

Salāmān and Absāl are two kind brothers. Salāmān is the king, and Absāl is the younger brother. Absāl resists Salāmān's wife's sexual advances and leaves to conquer the East and the West. In the midst of war, Absāl is left alone to fight the enemy, as his comrades are beguiled by Salāmān's wife and abandon him on the battlefield. Absāl is nursed back to health by suckling a wild animal's milk.[175] Absāl recovers and returns to the kingdom only to be poisoned by Salāmān's wife.[176] Salāmān orders her execution, and accepts solitude and meditation on God.

Ṭūsī believes that it is this version of the tale that Ibn Sīnā meant to convey when he referred to the names of Salāmān and Absāl.[177] He gives his interpretation on the representations of the names as:

"Salāmān represents the seeker, that Absāl stands for the seeker's goal."[178]

---

[173] "In the *risala* that Ibn Sīnā composed *on Destiny*, not only does his spiritus rector, Hayy ibn Yaqzan, appear, but in his own discourse Hayy ibn Yaqzan explicitly refers to an episode in the Ibn Sīnān Recital of Salāmān and Absāl: the flash of lightning parting the clouds that darkened heaven and revealing to Absāl the face of Salāmān's wife" (Corbin, 223). I here use Ṭūsī interpretation.

[174] Ṭūsī is not basing himself on al-Rāzī commentary (see below), in fact he presents his defense of philosophy against al-Rāzī's theological explanation.
al-Rāzī's commentary states that the two names of Salāmān and Absāl are symbols of Adam and Paradise respectively. Based on secondary literature, al-Rāzī does not seem to construct the story line, but he tries to make sense of the two names. While he also mentions that the two names were not invented by Ibn Sīnā, instead there was the tale among Arabs bearing the same names. It was not until al-Ṭūsī's second commentary (some twenty years after his first commentary on Ibn Sīnā's *Al-ešārāt*) that he came across Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ's translation of the tale from Greek into Arabic. See Heath and Corbin, p, 207.

[175] Mobaleq. pp. 386.

[176] Ibid.

[177] Ṭūsī's *Sharh Ishārāt*, v. III. pp. 369.

[178] Brown, *Nasir al-Din Tusi's Commentary*. pp. 187.

Ebn Ṭofayl's Version of the Tale

The two names also appear in the *Treatise of Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān* by the Andalusian Aristotelian Philosopher Ebn Ṭofayl [d.1185].[179] Ebn Ṭofayl's story is about *Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān's* spiritual journey, which focuses on becoming a mystic in the 'Orient' (as opposed to the 'Occident')and deals with the philosophy of light and wisdom.[180] "Salāmān" and "Absāl" appear toward the end of the story, when Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān, the child who is left in the island to be brought up and nurtured by a gazelle, attains "الإنسان الكامل" *al-Insān al-Kāmil* (referring to the "Perfect Man"[181] and union with the divine beauty through vision in the intellect). The character Absāl is the mystic who has achieved inner spirituality and ends up meeting Ḥayy on his lonely island in search of a "solitary spiritual contemplation."[182] As a result of this encounter, Absāl and Ḥayy share their spiritual attainment, and Absāl becomes Ḥayy's disciple. Hayy then learns about Absāl's island and Absāl's people's religion and Hayy "decides to visit the island to inform the people [Salāmān and Absāl's people] of the inner

---

[179] See Goodman, Lenn. *Ebn Ṭofayl's Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān: A Philosophical Tale* (2009). The story of Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān is also mentioned by Ibn Sīnā and Suhrawardi, yet there is no mention of Salāmān and Absāl in the story. For more on the philosopher Ebn Ṭofayl see Conrad, Lawrence, The World of Ebn Ṭofayl: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān (1996).

[180] On the discussion of the Orient wisdom or the vision of the Orient, the first figure that appears in mind is Suhrawardi (d. 1191). Both Ebn Ṭofayl and Suhrawardi were "heavily influenced by Avicenna." See Heath "Allegory and Philosophy in Avicenna". For more details, also see the following useful sources. Harawi, M. Anwariyya: Tarjuma va Sharh-i Hikmat al-Ishraq-i Suhrawardi, (1979). And Suhrawardi, Shihab al-Din. The Philosophy of Illumination. A New Critical Edition of the Text of Hikmat al-Ishraq, with English trans., notes, commentary and intro. J. Walbridge and H. Ziai, Provo (1999a). See Mobaleq, pp. 388-89.

ابن طفیل آن (حی بن یقظان) را انسان عاقل متصوف ساخته و سهروردی او را شخصیت صوفی دانسته که به وسیله ی کشف و شهود به معرفت اعلای انسانی رسیده است. پس' حی بن یقظان ابن طفیل انسانی است که از انسان ابن سینا مترقی تر است و انسان سهروردی هم از آن ابن طفیل رساتر به نظر می آید.

Ebn Ṭofayl describes Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān as an intellectual human, Suhrawardi calls him a Sufi man who reveals his knowledge of Truth based on his knowledge. This makes Ebn Ṭofayl's Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān a complete human, more complete than the man described by Ibn Sīnā, while Suhrawardi's man is more complete than Ebn Ṭofayl.'

[181] The term "the Perfect Man" refers to "'soul, psyche, spirit, mind, life, person,' etc… Jāmī's technical terminology can probably best be rendered as 'soul,"' which refers to the stage of perfection. For more see William C. "The Perfect Man as the Prototype of the Self in the Sufism of Jāmī." pp. 135–157.1979.

[182] Heath uses the phrase "solitary spiritual contemplation" with a purpose to convey how "For Avicenna isolation is a precondition for spiritual progress." See Heath. Allegory and philosophy in Avicenna (Ibn Sînâ).

truths that their revelation contains."[183] There the two meet Salāmān, who is portrayed as a believer of "the external tenets and rituals of religion." Ḥayy finds that the people on Salāmān and Absāl's island [a designation of the west] do not understand Hayy's spiritual and mystical teachings, so he and Absāl both return to Hayy's island, to the 'Orient,' where they had first met, and where they can continue "their pursuit of truth away from society."[184]

In addition to being a philosopher, Ebn Ṭofayl "performed the role of a minister of culture" by bringing together scholars and other philosophers at the court of his patron.[185] He was influenced by both Aristotle and Plato, and "it was through Ebn Ṭofayl's influence that Ibn Rushd was commissioned to write his monumental commentary on the works of Aristotle."[186] It is no surprise that we find cross-references to Aristotle, Plato, Neoplatonism, and Ibn Sīnā in Ebn Ṭofayl's work. Ebn Ṭofayl states in the introduction of *the Treatise of Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān* that "he composed the narrative to clarify what Ibn Sīnā meant by the phrase 'Oriental Philosophy' (*al-ḥikma al-mashriḳiyya*), and he refers to passages from the final chapters of *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt"*.[187] Even though *Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān* is not directly related to my primary source, Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*, it is one of the major works that addresses the concepts derived from Neoplatonism in the eastern adaptation of the concept of illumination and "Oriental Philosophy," specifically on the phenomenon of the imagination.[188]

---

[183] Heath, P., "Salāmān and Absāl," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Goodman, Lenn. *Ebn Ṭofayl's Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓ'an: A Philosophical Tale* (1972). pp, 3-4.
[186] ibid, pp, 5.
[187] Heath, P.
[188] Moreover, the metaphysical, ontological, and other themes, such as union with the Divine through the vision of divine beauty, hold interesting comparative potential between *Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān* and Jāmī's poem. See my chapter IV, 'Poetics of Vision': The Eye in Translation, where I will be discussing the concept of the Neoplatonic Eye and Jāmī's discussion of the imagination as the isthmus, (*barzakh*), the in-between realm of the intellect and the corporeal world, a concept alluded to ibn 'Arabī's theosophical doctrine.

Jāmī's Poem on the Tale of Salāmān and Absāl

Jāmī's narrative-poem *Salāmān u Absāl* is, to the best of my knowledge, the last major version of the tale in the medieval period. The tale is used as a mystical allegory influenced by Neoplatonic thought.[189] In Jāmī's version, the narrative begins with an introduction to the glorious King, who rules over Yunan (Greece) and who is advised by a Sage.[190] The King's rule is complete: from his people's love to control over faraway lands. The King wishes to have a son to inherit the kingdom. The Sage first cautions the King about such a desire, condemns women for their lust, and warns of the fall of his kingdom due to such desires. Then the Sage also praises a son of good character, who would neglect lust, women and distractions and become the just King. Yet such a son is only possible in the absence of sexual intercourse with a woman.

The Sage arranges for a son to be born; he is named "Salāmān". Salāmān is taken care of by a beautiful wet-nurse, Absāl, who is twenty years old. At fourteen, Salāmān is charming and strong, unique among all the other boys in the town. Not surprisingly Absāl fancies him with a growing intensity. She attempts to attract Salāmān, wins over his heart, and they fall in love. The King becomes aware of their affair. He reminds Salāmān of his duty as the next King. However, Salāmān's heart is with Absāl, and soon he elopes with her for an isle with beautiful seas and stars, mountains and landscapes, where isolated from the kingdom, they find freedom. The King is distressed by the absence of his son. He uses a magic mirror to find Salāmān, and discovers him intoxicated with Absāl's love.

---

189 One of the seven mathnavīs collected in the poet's *Haft Aurang*, Salāmān u Absāl follows a similar plot-line to the Hermetic version of the tale, and thus departs from the Ibn Sīnān version and the mixed version by Ebn Ṭofayl. Mathnavī: "the name of a poem written in rhyming couplets" see Bruijn, J.T.P. de, Flemming, B. and Rahman, Munibur, "Mathnavī", in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, (2012).

190 The role of the Sage in the Greek version is highlighted as he deposited sperm from the King inside a mandrake/*mandragora* tree, see Henry Corbin, *Avicenna and Visionary Recital,* trans. Willard R. Trask (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), pp. 211. The Sage is as an important advisor to the King. In Jāmī's version, the Sage's advice makes it possible for the King to rule over all the Greek lands. Jāmī also portrays the role of the Sage as a significant one. When Jāmī first introduces the King, the role of the Sage is also revealed and it is clear that the entire kingdom is administered based on the Sage's advice and wisdom. His relationship to the King is established through the Sage's characteristic as being "حکمت شناس" *the wise*, and thus "شاه چون دانست قدرش را شریف/ ساختش در خلوت و صحبت حریف" *when the Shah [King] realized the Sage's noble value/ he made him a companion in private and in public* (l. 281).

The King casts a spell over Salāmān, who now longs for the kingdom and is no longer happy with Absāl. The spell entices him to return home.

His father rejoices, but Salāmān suffers and longs for Absāl, and soon he runs away to join Absāl in the desert. They decide to undertake an ordeal by fire. The reason for this decision, Jāmī indicates, is "جانفشانی" [*jān-fishānī*] "hard labor; extreme diligence; waste of life in another's service" (ln. 911).[191] The fire consumes Absāl while Salāmān emerges unscathed. Salāmān returns home again, but he lives in despair. Anxious about his son's situation, the King asks for his Sage's counsel. The Sage uses magic to heal Salāmān's sorrow. First the Sage shows Salāmān the departed image of Absāl as if she were standing in front of him. He then enchants Salāmān through descriptions of Venus, who embodies eternal beauty and love. Salāmān sees (imagines) the face of Venus and falls in love with her. Salāmān recovers from his distress and longing for Absāl. He takes over the Kingdom.

In the penultimate Chapter 75 (lines 1084-1119) of his poem, Jāmī provides a Neoplatonic interpretation of the symbols his uses in the poem. Jāmī's Neoplatonic interpretation is similar to Ṭūsī's interpretation of the Hermetic version.[192] According to Jāmī, the King symbolizes "عقل فعال" *the active intellect* (l. 1086), and the Sage symbolizes "فیض بالا" *divine/superior emanation* (l.1095). Salāmān symbolizes "نفس گویا" *the rational soul* (l. 1096). Absāl represents "تن شهوت پرست" *the lust-worshipping body* (l.1099). The far western lands symbolize "لجه لذات نفساني" *deep void of carnal pleasures*, which refers to *the material realm* (l.1003). As for fire, we do not know exactly what it would stand for within Neoplatonic thought.[193] But Jāmī uses fire as "آتش رياضت هاي سخت" literally, *the severe spiritual training fire*. This

[191] Steingass, p. 353.

[192] See Ṭūsī's *Sharh Ishārāt*, and Mobaleq, pp. 396-401. It is not certain that a similar interpretation is given to the second version Ṭūsī has ascribed to Ibn Sīnā.

[193] It is not immediately evident why Jāmī replaces the jumping of Salāmān and Absāl into the sea in the Hermetic version with a jumping into the flames of fire, another form of trial by ordeal. C. Lingwood sees ties with Zoroastrianism: "Fire is a pure and purifying element" and I agree with the explanation that fire is a motif for purification, yet the motif of fire is explicable in Neoplatonism too. De Vogel cites Plotinus, the major figure in Neoplatonic thought, in his explanation of fire that: "[the fire] 'holds the position of Form in relation to the other elements', though itself a body, and that it is near to the incorporeal inasmuch as it is the subtlest of bodies, that the others receive it into themselves but it does not receive

practice of "ریاضت", which is also translated as "spiritual training" or "inner/spiritual purification"[194] within Sufi literature entails eliminating "the influences of bodily interference."[195] In the poem, the fire is an external physical force that cleanses Salāmān's soul (or his intellect and heart) from "شهوات حیوان" *animal lust* or external senses (ls. 1110-1111).[196] Venus in her turn represents the internal senses. She is the celestial beauty, "زان جمال عقل نوراني شود" *through her beauty*, *the intellect becomes luminous* (l.1116). Here, I understand Jāmī's use of "عقل" *the intellect* to mean the rational intellect, which is closely associated with Salāmān as the rational soul, and is also responsible for contemplation. In this case, the primary purpose for the existence of Salāmān, who was a metaphysical creation, is as an emanation from the Active Intellect and because of his ability to comprehend, so that he can receive the vision of Venus in his intellect, is also a work of the intellect. Venus as celestial beauty is considered an intelligible being herself in the supernal realm of celestial intellects. "All the intelligibles comprise abstract concepts such as universals, axioms, and any sort of 'immaterial' truth, they are stored in the celestial world and, in particular, in the 'active intellect', which through its contact with the human rational soul offers man the faculty of thinking."[197] Venus is from the realm of the invisible; she is immaterial and functions as a cognition. In contrast to a direct vision of the divine, the vision of Venus is to be perceived ontologically as a celestial body, which beholds divine beauty and love and is a mirror-image

---

the others." (64) See: De Vogel, C. J. "On the Neoplatonic Character of Platonism and the Platonic Character of Neoplatonism." (1953), pp. 43–64. Another possible theory is that Jāmī implies the image of the fire to deliver a similar undamaging quality of fire (for its purifying quality) as that of Ibrahim crossing the fire intact. This scene is mentioned by Ebn al-'Arabī in his mystical treatise *al-Fotuḥāt al-Makkīya* "The Meccan Openings," and Jāmī elaborates this scene in several instances in his *Haft Awrang*. For more see Chapter I of this dissertation, section, "Jāmī's Poetry and Poetics."

[194] I have borrowed a Sufi contextualized meaning of *riyāżat* from Domenico Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty*, pp. 239, 371, 471, 497. For an in-depth discussion of *riyāżat* within other Sufi traditional discourse especially see Ingenito's "The Cosmology of the Heart, between Philosophy and Poetry," pp. 370-379. Also, another good example in another of Jāmī's uses the term "ریاضت" in the context of his mathnavī work is Zoleyḵā's purifying her soul from yearning for Yusof due to physical pleasure to passionate love. See Afsaḥzod, Y and Z, pp. 168.

3157	Hidden from the stories, under the veil due to spiritual training, her love had cleansed.	۳۱۵۷ ز دستانهای پنهان زیر پرده ریاضتهای عشقش پاک کرده

[195] Ibid, pp. 471.

[196] On the different way of studying the intellect to mean the soul and the heart refer to Alexander Treiger's *Inspired Knowledge in Islamic Thought: Al-Ghazali's Theory of Mystical Cognition and Its Avicennian Foundation*. Routledge, 2011.

[197] Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty*. pp. 317.

in juxtaposition to a human form, which in this case is Absāl, as well as to contain the meanings of the invisible world that aligns with the rational soul that of Salāmān himself. Therefore, Venus becomes interactive through the mediation of the Sage by way of activating Salāmān's 'retentive imagination' for "the category of the invisible belongs to a level of reality that is intimately connected with imagination, the mental visualization of future and past events, and to universal ideas and subtle meanings which the human intellect can only grasp through its interaction with the celestial bodies."[198] That being said, Venus is not an idea, she is the translated image of the 'unseen' appearing to the intellect, and Salāmān can only become intellectually capable of grasping the presence of Venus by activating his internal senses. I will add more on this discussion in Chapter IV.

It is also worth mentioning that Jāmī's choice of the fire scene (that eradicates the bodily form of Absāl) functions as an element, as well as an essential part of the plot that he refines throughout the poem.[199] The scene of fire (in its physicality) can be analyzed in juxtaposition with the scene of Venus appearing to illuminate Salāmān's intellect. The former is to disintegrate the physical existence of Absāl from Salāmān's soul; the latter is to replace her memory. These are essential plots in Jāmī's philosophy of vision that is a work of intellection, as we will see in Chapters III and IV. Jāmī even uses a conventional way to project his authorial voice when toward the end of the poem he says that: "شرح اینها یک به یک از من شنو" *Hear from me the explanation one by one of these things* (ln. 1083), and then he proceeds to give his Neoplatonic interpretation for each character and element in the poem. Nonetheless, in order to make "اسرار کهن" *these ancient secrets* become "مفصل" "*distinct/clear/ample*,"[200] Jāmī also, surprisingly, encourages the reader to "فکری بکن" *think for yourself* (ln. 1118) for "تفصیل" "*an analysis/detail*."[201]

---

[198] Ibid, pp. 345.
[199] Jāmī's references to the fire, light, flame is discussed in details in Chapter IV, in the section called, 'The Penultimate Chapter of *Salāmān u Absāl*.'
[200] Steingass, pp. 1286.
[201] Steingass, pp. 313

Critical Assessment of the Existing Studies on My Primary Source

In this section, I present the secondary literature on Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*. For each, I include the main arguments and premises of the work, because each author takes a different research angle that is specific to their specific discipline. These disciplinary angles are deliberately observable to have a bias toward an historical reading of the poem, a theological or more specifically a Sufi mystical reading, or even philosophical and theoretical readings of the poem. Each of these readings, as I will lay out in the following paragraphs, attempts to understand the poem, (and its multi-layered and complex literary topics on the themes of love and divine union, as well as its place in history) as a historical text that embeds important political advice to the ruler of the time. In this overview of previous studies, I begin with the most recent work, which is the comprehensive study by Chad Lingwood, who views the poem as a historical text. In light of what he describes as Jāmī's political involvement as a poet in the Āq Qoyūnlū court, he argues that Jāmī composed *Salāmān u Absāl* as an advice text to the prince of the time.

Next, I examine how earlier studies on the poem are based on the theological interpretation of Jāmī's poetics with an overemphasis on the poet's Sufi adherence and teachings. I will then highlight another reading of the poem that tries to understand *Salāmān u Absāl* by providing a more theoretical understanding, which involves an allegorical reading from a philosophical point of view. After offering my own point of view on each of these studies' contributions, I will then provide my interdisciplinary reading of the poem, that through a close reading, oscillates between Jāmī's knowledge of mysticism (inspired by Ibn al- 'Arabī?) and the Islamic peripatetic/Neoplatonic philosophy (inspired by Ibn Sīnā's philosophical works), while strongly agreeing with Lingwood that the poem also has considerable historical importance as well as a political significance, given the time of its composition. If viewed from an interdisciplinary angle, the poem becomes more complex and this helps readers not only to go with one meaning and interpretation of Jāmī's poem, but also see the multi-interpretive

ways to contextualize and understand the poem. My aim in this section is not to compare and contrast these earlier studies with my present interdisciplinary research approach, but to pursue a close reading of the poem by keeping in mind Jāmī's stance and role within the larger literary tradition, a tradition that has been an important one both in historical and cultural discourses. His scholarly interests in the poetry of the past, Sufi mysticism, philosophy, and more importantly in crossing the disciplines of knowledge, to include even medicine, is what makes the act of composing *Salāmān u Absāl* in his old age significant. This idea of the importance of old age in the interpretation of *Salāmān u Absāl* is contested in Chapter V.

Chad Lingwood's recent study of Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* is titled, *Politics, Poetry, and Sufism in Medieval Iran: New Perspectives on Jāmī's Salāmān va Absāl* (2013). Lingwood provides a full English translation of the work and uses Jāmī's poem as a lens to look at the political and cultural importance of poetry and Sufism in the court of the Āq Qoyūnlū rulers, particularly that of Sulṭān Ya'qūb (d.1490).[202] In the court of Ya'qūb in Tabriz, poets such as "Ahlī Shīrāzī, Kamāl al-Dīn Banā'ī Haravī, Shahīdī Qumī, and Bābā Fighānī" presented their work addressing the ruler.[203] Jāmī, who resided in the far corner of Herat, thought of Sulṭān Ya'qūb as "the Sufi-ruler whose inner being is supported by the twin-pillars of *dīn* and *daulat*, and who attains that degree of perfection, or 'inner justice,' by seeking the blessings of Sufi mystics and by following strictly their advice."[204] Ya'qūb, who is portrayed as a merciless ruler with a "volatile temperament" was in need of spiritual advice. Jāmī began advising Ya'qub from a distance by writing him letters. Later on, "Jāmī did nevertheless take more than a casual

[202] See Lingwood's *Politics, Poetry, and Sufism in Medieval Iran: New Perspectives on Jāmī's Salāmān va* Absāl (2013). Also see Lingwood. "The Qebla of Jāmī is None Other than Tabriz: Abd al-Rahman Jāmī and Naqshbandi Sufism at the Aq Qoyunlu Royal Court." (2011). Pp. 175-191. In this article, Lingwood hypothesizes that Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* was sent in a personal letter to Sultān Ya'qūb "from his residence in Timurid Herat, who may have exerted the most significant Naqshbandi influence over the Aq Qoyunlu [the dynasty of Tabriz]". pp .233.
[203] Ibid, pp. 112. On an account of patronage under the Āq Qoyūnlū rulers see Paul E. Losensky *Welcoming Fighani : Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal*. Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda, 1998. Print. Bibliotheca Iranica. Literature Ser.; No. 5.
[204] Ibid, pp. 2.

interest in advising him about the moral and ethical responsibilities that went along with kingship."[205] Jāmī's act of advising the ruler from a distance (as was the practice of *Himmat*) seems to suggest that he was propagating the teachings of the Naqšbandiya Sufi in the court of the the Āq Qoyūnlū ruler. In response to Yaʿqūb's letters, Jāmī sent him panegyric odes (qaṣāʾid), and Jāmī's "familiarity with Yaʿqūb enabled him to address a qaṣīda highly relevant to Yaʿqūb and his moral wellbeing." [206] As for the mathnavī of *Salāmān u Absāl*, which is not an ode, it functioned as an "ethical mathnavī" and was dedicated to Yaʿqūb after the year 1480, as it arrived in Ya'qūb's court after Ya'qub publicly repented from wine-drinking.[207] Imbued with Naqšbandi terminology, the mathnavī of *Salāmān u Absāl* needed a mediator to establish its meaning to Yaʿqūb. Lingwood suggests that it is possible that Shahīdī Qumī was "an ideal candidate to explicate to Yaʿqūb and his courtiers the most salient or allusive points of Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*."[208]

Lingwood explains how *Salāmān u Absāl* is an esoteric 'Mirror for Princes,' which in its historical context is an allegory to educate Sulṭān Ya'qūb on the path of self-realization and 'repentance'.[209] In doing so, Lingwood approaches *Salāmān u Absāl* as a Perso-Islamic book of advice, providing Sufi guidance to the spiritually convoluted, drifted, and distraught ruler Yaʿqūb, which would eventually have an impact on Ya'qub's "moral and ethical outlook."[210] Lingwood builds the historical context for the poem through his study of the religious and political influence of Sufis in the medieval court system.

---

[205] Ibid. pp. 107- 110, 111.
[206] Also see Lingwood, C. "Trading Pearls for Beads Jāmī's Qaṣīdas in Praise of Sulṭān Yaʿqūb and Their Significance to Āq Quyūnlū History" in *Jāmī in Regional Contexts*. pp. 269.
[207] Lingwood's *Politics, Poetry, and Sufism in Medieval Iran.* Pp. 155-158.
[208] Ibid/ 113, 115
[209] Ibid. pp. 22.
[210] Ibid, 117, 128. Though we are not so sure if *Salāmān u Absāl* had any impact on the ruler but there are evidence that some of Jāmī's odes that are indication of Jāmī's direct guidance to the ruler.

On the topic of *Salāmān u Absāl* providing Sufi guidance, Lingwood highlights the act of repentance as a stage on the Sufi path, and he observes that repentance is the main theme discussed in the poem. If we consider the poem as a text bearing mystical advice from Jāmī to his patron in Tabriz, Sultān Ya'qūb, then one must pay close attention to the topic of "توبه" *repentance/penance* appearing in the poem in chapters 13, lns. 199-215, and 15, lns. 226-236; in the first case this topic appears as a foreword to the narrative, and in the second case on the theme of drunkenness and relating to a king.[211] The implication of *repentance* in these chapters somehow seems in contradiction to "اجتناب" *abstention/refraining* from some prohibited activities, such as drinking wine, which is mentioned in line 202. In these chapters, Jāmī seems to advocate for what appears to be a mere act of inevitable applause for *abstention* before *repentance*. Besides calling upon Sultān Ya'qūb to repent and embark upon the Sufi path, Jāmī also seems to initiate a conversation on abstention in the form of knowledge that requires no discontinuity, if we consider how repentance implies discontinuity from a task.[212] Then it makes sense that the poem arrives at Yaʿqūb's court "in commemoration of his public repentance from wine-drinking."[213]

In addition, Lingwood also makes references to Neoplatonic symbolism, which has been traditionally associated with the names of Salāmān and Absāl (as discussed earlier in the work of Ibn Sīnā) and which Jāmī himself infers in the penultimate chapter of his poem. Because Lingwood builds the core of his argument on Jāmī's dedication of his poem to Sulṭān Ya'qūb as the poem operates on "three distinct yet interrelated levels of meaning—the ethico-political, the mystical, and the historical,"[214] he quickly moves away from a philosophical reading of the poem and states that: "Salāmān appears to represent the addressee of the poem, Ya'qub; the King of ancient Greece

---

[211] Afsaẖzod, pp. 402-4.
[212] See Lingwood: "Jāmī's Salāmān va Absāl: Political Statements and Mystical Advice Addressed to the Āq Qoyūnlū Court of Sultān Ya'qūb" (2011). Pp. 175-191.
[213] Lingwood's *Politics, Poetry, and Sufism in Medieval Iran.* pp. 155-158.
[214] Ibid, pp. 2

represents the idea of kingship; the Sage represents Ya'qūb's advisor and vizier…and Absāl symbolizes wine and the life of libertinage."[215]

On a microcosmic understanding of the poem, Lingwood's work informs us about the larger political context and the historical background of the poem, and this knowledge is indispensable for understanding the relevance of Jāmī's poem, as well as his position, within the court, in addition to further understanding the poem's mystical and philosophical implications. On a macrocosmic level, Lingwood's study of *Salāmān u Absāl* provides clear evidence on Jāmī's role as a scholar and poet who was very knowledgeable about the tradition that he was part of. Jāmī worked to maintain this tradition by actively participating in it, thereby extending and serving the long tradition of Persian poetry (for the didactic purposes) far beyond the court of Herat. This book and other major articles by Lingwood are important to my understanding of Jāmī's status as the poet and dialectical scholar who devoted his entire life's work to composing his oeuvre to benefit his readers, be it a ruler as depressed as Ya'qūb or intellectuals as eager as ourselves for the knowledge that Jāmī has offered us. On that note, it is fair to say that there can be ample room for multiple interpretation of Jāmī's message in the poem, as he calls for pro-active reading, which is mentioned towards the end of the poem in chapter 73:

1075	There is within the outer form of any story, a certain share of meaning to those who are the acute observers.	باشد اندر صورت هر قصه ای خرده بینان را از معنی حصه ای	۱۰۷۵
1076	As the outer form of this tale is completed, you must now search for its meaning.	صورت این قصه چون اتمام یافت بایدت از معنی آن کام یافت[216]	۱۰۷۶

Jāmī's statement about the completion of the tale and that there is a share of meaning for "خرده بینان" *the acute observers* can be extended to include readers seeking critical advice based on how they perceive the content of the story. In doing so, Jāmī regulates, as well as restricts, a situation where any interpretation can be "حصه ای" *part of* "معنی" *the meaning* in the tale. In fact, Jāmī does not provide the

[215] Ibid, pp. 22.

[216] Afsaẖzod, A., Dād 'Alīshāh, J., Jānfidā, A., Aḥrārī, &., Avery, P., & Tarbīyat, &. (1997). Mathnavī-i Haft awrang / Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad Jāmī. Mathnavī Salāmān u Absāl. Pp. 391-448.

reader with any clue that there could possibly be only one reading of the poem. As a matter of fact, Jāmī's opening the door for multiple interpretations serves as a platform for any kind of hermeneutics. There can be a historical interpretation of the poem, such as Lingwood's, or a theoretical one such as Iraj Dehghan's "Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*", which is a survey article that provides an overview of the tale's sources.[217]

Dehghan's study offers a brief discussion about Jāmī's poetic career and his artistic achievements, which in hindsight becomes superfluous, because in this theoretical approach Dehghan trace the tale's origin and how much this origin is inserted in Jāmī's poem. Dehghan argues that Jāmī's tale of Salāmān and Absāl is based on "Ṭūsī's summary of the Hellenistic romance [which refers to the Hermetic version]. He demonstrates in several places Jāmī's literal translation from Ṭūsī's summary. Moreover, wherever Ṭūsī seems to have damaged the logical progression of the story, Jāmī, who had probably not seen Hunayn's text, is at a loss."[218] Although Dehghan does not provide an explanation of why Jāmī is at a loss in his version, he lists the alterations that Jāmī made to Ṭūsī's version of the narrative: 1) the King is a ruler in Greece; 2) the Sage is the only one who "criticizes women and physical pleasure;" 3) Absāl sees Salāmān and "falls in love with him and then, when he reaches maturity, tries to make him fall in love with her"' (4) "the 'instrument' in Ṭūsī's summary appears as "آینه گیتی نما;"[219] 5) the couple's jumping into fire rather than into water; and 6) no mention is made of the two pyramids.[220]

Dehghan also points out that Jāmī makes additions such as "Absāl's beauty, her love for Salāmān, Salāmān's beauty, his intelligence, his bravery, his generosity, the description of the ocean, the island, etc. Jāmī also introduces a number of extraneous stories upsetting the linear progression of

---

[217] Dehghan, "Jāmī's Salāmān and Absāl." 1971, pp. 118–126.
[218] Ibid, 121.
[219] The image of world-showing/viewing mirror, آینه گیتی نما, (in line 839) appears the same way in Jāmī's poem, and I do not understand what Dehghan means when he includes this in his list of the alteration in Jāmī's version.
[220] Dehghan, (121-122).

the tale."[221] Dehghan does not provide any explanation, nor does he ascribe any meaning to Jāmī's descriptions of Absāl, Salāmān, and the ocean, except for a mention that Jalāl-al-Din Rūmī (d.1273) also used "these kinds of stories" in his *Mathnavī*. Dehghan's main interest is to examine the transmission of the tale and the adaptations/corrections in play, while also indirectly criticizing Jāmī. He does not address the interests created by these additions. Jāmī's additions clarify his interpretation of the meaning behind the tale, which I will discuss in detail in Chapter III on the 'Poetry of the Eye.' In summary, Dehghan's article is an overview of the earlier versions of the story and is written to highlight Jāmī's poetic achievement in his poem. But it does not provide enough context to enable the reader to engage with the poem itself.

In another theoretical approach, in his article, "The Origin of the Tale of Salāmān and Absāl—a Possible Indian Influence" (1996), Shlomo Pines tries to solve "the puzzle of these two names [Salāmān and Absāl]" by building on Henry Corbin's study of the Greek origin of the tale and adding his own hypothesis about a possible Indian Sanskrit theme.[222] Pines seeks to study the cultural elements in the poem, as he believes that the poem must be a representative of three distinct cultures (Greek, ancient Persian, and Indian) coming into contact through their ideological exchanges. While Pines is convinced that the tale has a Neoplatonic theme, he thinks it is equally important to recognize other interesting elements, particularly the two names Salāmān and Absāl.

> "The Hellenistic element is not, as it seems to me, the only one that went into the making of this tale. There is, I believe, also an Indian element, represented by the names Salāmān and Absāl; my hypothesis being that these names are transcription of the Sanskrit words: *Sramana* and *Apsara* or *Apsaras*."[223]

---

[221] Ibid, pp.122.
[222] Shlomo Pines. "The Origin of the Tale of Salāmān and Absāl: A Possible Indian Influence." 1996. P. 343. Also, on the whole discussion of ancient thought shared between the Greeks and the Indians in the court of the Persian Kings, see Thomas McEvilley's overview of the history of ideas shared between the Greeks and the Indians in the land of Persia in his *The Shape of Ancient Thought*, 2002.
[223] Ibid, pp. 351.

Pines takes his theoretical approach in identifying the names that appear in Sanskrit literature that have similar characteristics. The name Assaras or Apsarases, which means "divine or semi-divine nymphs," can be read as Absāl, and Sramana, "which is a general term applied to Indian both Buddhist and non-Buddhist ascetics," can be read as Salāmān. In Sanskrit literature, Sramana is portrayed as an ascetic prince who is at the stage of perfecting himself in asceticism, while Assaras is known as the lustful corporeal body, similar to Absāl.[224] The question related to Pines' study is this: does finding the identical names of the characters reveal much about the original of the tale and how does this identification of names add to what the story is about? What knowledge do we as scholars of Medieval Persian Poetry and Sufism contribute by theorizing about the origin of the tale being Indian or Greek, Persian or Arabic? Tales like Salāmān and Absāl are examples of a period when cultures and traditions were integrated; tales were retold and assimilated within different cultures. In addition, the origin of the tale in the early Islamic period (prior to or during Ibn Sīnā's time), either in the Arabic or the Persian literature, might equally be found in the Zoroastrian tradition.

In his turn, Muhammad Raushan in his book, ***Salāmān u Absāl-i Jāmī: Sharh va sanjish-i ān bā rivāyathā-yi Pūrsīnā va Hunain bin Ishāq va maqūlātī dar tamsīl-shināsī*** (1994), adds an interesting lens to the study of Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* by hypothesising a possible ideological integration in the origin of the story. Raushan carries out a study of the story of *Salāmān u Absāl* by introducing the phenomenon of creation as it is understood within three distinct religious beliefs – Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Islam. He introduces the idea of "داستانهای رمزی" *mystical tales*. He defines the concept of "رمزگونه" *mystical* in juxtaposition with the idea of "تمثل" *representation*.[225] Raushan's work lacks in critical or innovative approaches; nonetheless, the beginning of his book, which focuses on the concept of "مثل و تمثل" *representation and tales,* provides numerous sources to define the concepts he

[224] On the concept of "the Perfect Man" and how Jāmī uses it in his work, see William Chittick's "The Perfect Man as the Prototype of the Self in the Sufism of Jāmī," (1979).
[225] See Muhammad Raushan's Salāmān u Absāl-i Jāmī, 1994. pp. 102.

uses.[226] However, Raushan does not speak to how Zoroastrian elements might have played a role in the making of the story.

In a more theologically inspired approach, more specifically by implying his (eastern) metaphysical reading of the poem within the context of *ta'wil* [spiritual exegesis], Henry Corbin in his *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital* (1954) provides an analysis and a critical study of the story of Salāmān and Absāl as a spiritual recital. As mentioned before, there are no sources indicating Ibn Sīnā's version of the tale, and it is through Ṭūsī's commentary that we are informed of two different versions of the tale. Corbin in his turn seems to have arbitrarily reconstructed the *visionary recital of Salāmān and Absāl* on the basis of Ṭūsī's commentary for the purpose of his own exegetical commentary, while also being critical of Ṭūsī's commentary. On the one hand, Corbin formulates as his main critique of Ṭūsī that "[Ṭūsī] contented himself with making a summary [of Ibn Sīnā's tale (in comparison to the Hellenistic version)]."[227] On the other hand, Corbin criticizes Ṭūsī for giving "a summary of [the recital], then a *ta'wil* [spiritual exegesis], that is, unfortunately, artificial and scarcely convincing."[228] While critically assessing Ṭūsī's choice of compressing Ibn Sīnā's version of the tale and expanding the Hermetic version, Corbin incorporates Jāmī's poem (inspired by Ṭūsī's Hermetic version) in order to support his explanation of *ta'wil* of the tale as a visionary recital. In doing so, he uses Jāmī's poem in conjunction with his own interpretation of the "experience of integration and of attainment to one's self."[229] Thus, Corbin cites the allegory of Wāmiq and Azrā from Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* (Chapter 59, lns. 825-835) for its replication of a "perfect spiritual romance" to explain his concept of "integration,"[230] even though the allegory is not originally part of the story containing the names

[226] Ibid.
[227] ibid 224.
[228] Ibid. 204, 209.
[229] Ibid.
[230] Wāmiq and Azrā is the story of two lovers, which stands alongside the two other famous love-narrative poetic pairs of Yusof and Zoleyḵhā and Leyli and Majnun. The Persian poet Abu'l-Ḳāsim 'Unṣurī (d. 1039-40) wrote the version of the tale in a Mathnavī poem. See Utas, B., "Wāmiḳ wa ʿAdhrāʾ", in: Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition, Edited by: P.

Salāmān and Absāl. Nonetheless, in a very careful juxtaposition, Corbin initiates the thought of a mystical/spiritual integration of Salāmān's consummation of love with Absāl with that of Wāmiq's desire toward Azrā and the integration of Aṭṭār's birds collectively seeking Sīmurgh in the *Manṭeq al-ṭayr.*[231]

In order to challenge Corbin's concepts of "integration" and the "experience of integration," it is important to understand how Corbin's "integration" specifically conveys a Sufi trajectory within the discussion of *ta'wil* (the spiritual exegesis). This concept of 'integration' is used to convey the meaning behind the recital of Salāmān and Absāl in a more systematic and developed way. In other words, Salāmān and Absāl's union and Salāmān and Venus's union and integration are unavoidable due to the essential premise stated in the preface of the poem that "the speech of beauty and love belongs to You [the Divine]" (ln. 7). The word 'integration' normally means to affiliate, to align ("to align oneself to something or someone"), to network, to form, coordinate, or "blend into a functioning or unified whole."[232] This meaning of unification underpins Corbin's discussion, and examples include Wāmiq's union with Azrā through consummation or the integration of 'Attar's birds,' which collectively become the *Simurgh* during the time of experiencing assimilation. In the case of Salāmān and Absāl, it is important to know how the word 'integration' is used to describe the union of two opposites (Salāmān as spiritual soul and Absāl as carnal soul) in the same duration and with shared experiences.

Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Also see B. Utas, "Did 'Adhrā Remain a Virgin?" Orientalia Suecana, xxxiii-xxxv (1984), 429-4; idem, "The Ardent Lover and the Virgin—a Greek Romance in Muslim Lands," in Acta Orientalia Ac. Scientiarum Hungaricae, xlviii (1995), 229-39. And "The Invention of the barbat according to 'Unsuri's Vamiq u-'Adhra." Sokhanvari: 55 papers in memory of Parviz Natil Khanlari, pp. 145-152, in Manuscript, Text and Literature (1977). This allegory of Wāmiq and Azrā is significant in the 'Poetry of the Eye' in the forthcoming chapter.

[231] *Corbin*. pp. 215

[232] See cambridge.org for the definition of 'integration': http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/integrate and https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/integrating

Corbin's philosophy of integration entails an 'initiation' as an act of preparation for unification in a mystical process. By "initiation" Corbin means the start of "integration."[233] In the following example, Corbin uses 'integration' alongside the mystical experience, offering additional clarification. In this second case, which describes the mystical journey of Salāmān, another sort of integration occurs after Salāmān jumps into the fire with Absāl:

> "Between these two universes, these two forces of the soul, consciousness is rent constantly asunder…So long as the mystical child born of the mandragora has not succeeded in integrating these two worlds [the father being 'the world of tradition' and Absāl as 'the feminine world of premonitions'] with its being, the lamentable vicissitudes and failures described by the recital will be repeated. This integration is the outcome not of a rational dialectic but of a terrifying and painful experience, nothing less than a descent into the depths, such as a spiritual initiation cannot but be. The decisive episode in the initiation occurs when Salāmān and Absāl cast themselves into the sea (or into a furnace, according to Jāmī)."[234]

According to Corbin, Salāmān's integration with the earthly world is inevitable due to his very nature of creation as well as his experiences of worldly pleasures. There are two kinds of integration. On the one hand, integration is the actual act of the Sage creating what becomes "the mystical child." On the other, after Salāmān goes through "[the] terrifying and painful experience [of entering into a furnace]" of integration within himself, as if pulling himself together to become 'the Perfect Man,' which occurs after Absāl is "mystically dead."[235] One has to assume that if Salāmān is to represent the "rational soul," then he is "not of a rational dialectic," by which Corbin must mean that Salāmān's integration/unification with Absāl does not, in the first place, project a rational disposition.

Sami Hawi suggests that Corbin "employs a psychogenetic approach which, if it aspires to objective conclusions on the one hand, may be arrested on the other by the subjective and

---

[233] See Corbin's discussion of Salāmān meditating on the 'Image' of the deceased Absāl, which results in 'integration' pp. 221. Corbin says that, "The image becomes more definite, grows, daily imposes the reality of its pure presence, fills the soul's entire horizon. And precisely because it is pure presence and at the same time so total it finally flowers in the shinning Image of the celestial Aphrodite" (pp, 221).
[234] Ibid, pp. 220.
[235] Corbin, pp. 240.

introspective states of the writer's own imagination" in his *ta'wil* of the story.[236] I also agree that by use of the word 'integration,' Corbin certainly has a psychoanalytical approach in mind to define the experiences of both the Sage and Salāmān. Therefore to suggest (as Hawi does) that even the Sage can be read as "a kind of psychotherapist who aids his patient to integration slowly and painfully ridding him of the intense libidinal fixations which led to the dramatic rupture of his personality" is indeed reasonable.[237] I also think that in the context of Neoplatonism, the story of *Salāmān u Absāl* can be interpreted in such a way that the concept of emanation is more prominent than the concept of integration at the level of humans' experience, sense perception, and the vision of love and mystical union. So, how are we to distinguish divine emanation from human integration?

In the following passage, Corbin once again explains the idea of unification and formulation through the concept of integration both at the human and divine levels. After Absāl is dead, the only integration possible for Salāmān is achieved through experiencing a connection of his own being with Absāl's "Image," which is a form of his last memories of her.

> "His meditation must so perfectly realize the *integration* of this Image [Absāl's image] with his being, with his 'spiritual body,' that it will become his companion forever, in the joy of recognized presence. The *integration* of this celestial Double with his own being realizes the royal dignity of the great Hermetistic Arcanum: the conjunction of male-female, mas femineus; thus will it finally come to pass for Salāmān with the Image of the Celestial Aphrodite."[238]

Here, integration is once again used as the assimilation of two opposites— Absāl's image, as a corporeal form, with that of Salāmān's existence, which represents the rational soul and thus in proximity to Divine Emanation. In contrast, the integration of Salāmān as 'the rational soul' with Venus' image is an assimilation of a "celestial Double". As a result of such distinct integrations, we find different outcomes. Salāmān's integration with Absāl results in mortal suffering, while Salāmān's

---

[236] Sami Hawi. (1974). *Islamic Naturalism and Mysticism: A Philosophic Study of Ibn Ṭufayl's Ḥayy bin Yaqṣān*. pp. 264.
[237] Ibid, pp. 264-5.
[238] Corbin, Avicenna and the Visionary Recital. pp. 221.

meditation on the deceased Absāl as the 'Image' results in Salāmān's integration with the celestial Venus/Aphrodite. Both Salāmān ("نفس گویا" *Rational Soul/* literal meaning *as the speaking breath,* but also "نفس" *as carnal desire*)[239] and Venus ("کمالات بلند" *lofty perfection*) [240] are considered celestial beings and are honored for their proximity to the Divine emanation of the One, and as a result, Salāmān will soon become "the Perfect Man."[241]

Among the readings of the poem are some that are based on western theological ideas or in the context of (an eastern) mystical narrative, and in these the meaning and message of the poem has been contextualized so much so that it seems to have resulted in a narrower interpretation or a complete misunderstanding of the poem due to its an unusual theme of love. Such readings have earned the poem the label of grotesqueness. Scholars such as Edward G. Browne, Arthur. J. Arberry, and Jan Rypka, who have worked on Jāmī as the poet and Sufi adherent and his other works, do but comment on Salāmān and Absāl very briefly.[242] Browne (d.1926)[243] in his *A Literary History of Persia* briefly refers to Jāmī's *Nafaḥāt al-ons,[244] for the biographies of the mystics and poets; his Bahārestān,*[245] *and* his famous mystical treatise *Lavāyieh.*[246] In his commentary on *Salāmān u Absāl*, Browne specifically states that "[a]mongst the somewhat grotesque features of the story are the birth of Salāmān without a mother to bear him (reflecting the fact that the poet held marriage in abhorrence, though he was

---

239 Steingass, pp. 1415-16.
240 Afsaẖzod, lines 1096, 1115, pp, 446, 447.
241 W. Chittick's "The Perfect Man as the Prototype of the Self in the Sufism of Jāmī," (1979)
242 One reason for the lack of studies on Salāmān u Absāl could be as Lingwood states that this tale "appears to discomfort modern literary historical of classical Persian belles-lettres. Largely dismissed by its critics, including Edward G. Browne, Arthur J. Arberry, and Jan Rypka, as 'curious,' 'silly,' 'crude,' and even 'grotesque,'…[and] one of Jāmī's lesser achievements…" (7).
243 Edward G. Browne, A Literary History of Persia, Vol. 3, 1964. Browne mentions that Jāmī is "the last and greatest of [the poets who died in the second half of the fifteenth century] …whose claim to be regarded as one of the most notable poets of Persia is indisputable" (CH. VIII, p. 497).
244 ʿAbd-al-Ḡafur Lāri, *Takmela-ye ḥawāši-e Nafaḥāt al-ons: šarḥ-e ḥāl-e Mawlānā Jāmī*, ed. ʿAli-Aṣḡar Bašir-Heravi, Kabul, 1964. *Jāmi's Nafaḥāt al-ons ('Breaths of Fellowship') is considered one of the greatest works that contains "a biography of 614 Sufi saints" (p, 924). See* Jackson and Lockhart, (1993). The Cambridge history of Iran.
245 *Bahārestān va rasāʾel-e Jāmī*, ed. Aʿlāḵān Afsaḥzād, et al., Tehran, 2000,
246 For more on *Jāmi's Lawāyeh*á see: Algar, "*Jāmī: ii. And Sufism*," pp. 475-79.

himself married), and the seniority by some twenty years of the charming Absāl over her nursling."[247] Jāmī certainly refers to the unusual birth of Salāmān as being due to the Sage's abhorrence toward women and their lust in the first few chapters of the poem. These statements, however, are not Jāmī's personal objections toward children, women, or love [lust] of any kind, as he shows the progression of passionate love and its transference into a spiritual one. Instead, they are specifically the concerns and objections that the Sage raises. But it is uncertain whether Browne is calling the story itself "grotesque" or whether he is being critical of Jāmī's adaptation of the story, nor does he say much about the poem itself.

Arthur. J. Arberry (d.1969) studied FitzGerald's rendering of Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*.[248] He mentions FitzGerald's fascination with the character of Salāmān, and his single-minded desire to produce an English translation of *Salāmān u Absāl*. He observes that with the help of his friend E. B. Cowell, FitzGerald's translation "tried too well to be faithful."[249] Arberry's work is a critical reading of FitzGerald's translation of Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* and does not say much about Jāmī and his work.

Jan Rypka (d.1968) states that Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* took its subject from the commentary of Naṣīr-al-dīn Ṭūsī on Ibn Sīnā's *al-Ishārāt*. Rypka too hastily views some elements of the tale as indications of the author's misogyny, citing the fact that Jāmī not only makes Salāmān motherless, but also eradicates Absāl in the fire.

> "a story presumably of Greek origin and in the Arabic version obviously of a hermetic nature that Avicenna [Ibn Sīnā] himself had already made use of in a separate allegory of the same name. In relation to Naṣīr-al-dīn, Jāmī—or maybe already his unknown source—exhibits some variations, but without depriving the fable of its grotesqueness (the motherless birth of the boy Salāmān, on the contrary, appealed to Jāmī in view of his

[247] Browne, p. 523.
[248] A. J. Arberry, *FitzGerald's Salāmān and Absāl: A Study*, 1956.
[249] Arberry, pp. 50.
As on the question of what could be the origin of the tale, Arberry writes:

> "Ṭūsī must have derived the legend from a still earlier source, that was advertised as a translation from a Greek original made in the ninth century by the great interpreter of ancient learning Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ. Needless to say, no such Greek original has so far not been discovered; and the tale may not have been Hellenistic at all, but the invention of some austere Christian monastic moralist, or even conceivably a Manichean" (pp.41).

misogyny, just as did the fact that Absāl, Salāmān's nurse, gets burned while the boy emerges from the same fire unharmed)."[250]

The three scholars, Browne, Arberry, and Rypka, have no admiration for Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl.* It could be that they regard the story as incestuous.[251] There is the chance of a reading of *Salāmān u Absāl* as a poem of incest, however, Salāmān and Absāl are not a biological son and mother. Another well-known narrative that Jāmī was familiar with, Gorgāni's *Vis o Rāmin*, does arouse the question of incest, with the distinction that *Vis o Rāmin* is more precisely on the importance of endogamy. In essence, both of these stories concern pre-Islamic narratives that are recapped in poetry by Persian poets and thus possibly reframed within Islamic ethics. [252] *Vis o Rāmin* is about the love between the "like brother and sister" or milk-siblings, which concerns sibling incest,[253] while *Salāmān u Absāl* is about the love for one's mother-like figure, a woman who has breastfed and nurtured the male baby, who becomes the lover. There are a few remarkable similarities between *Salāmān u Absāl* and Vis *o Rāmin* that are intriguing. These include: the kings' hostile state in the game of love between the lovers; the sagely figures who appear in making their remarks; and the constant pursuit of and union with the beloved. More importantly, if we accept incest to be a concept that "implies forbidden relationships,"[254] then *Salāmān u Absāl* might fit within the definition of incest.

One of the underlying messages that Jāmī highlights in the story is the extreme hostility towards women (which within the philosophical terminology can be interpreted as external senses).

---

[250] Jan Rypka et al., *History of Iranian Literature*, trans. P. van Popta-Hope. pp. 287.
[251] Chad Lingwood (2013). pps, 8, 13, 65, 150, and 161.
[252] See J.C. Burgel, *The Romance* in *Persian Literature*, ed., E. Yarshater, New York, 1988, pp. 164-65.
http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/vis-o-ramin; Fak̲r al-Din Asʿad Gorgāni, *Vis o Rāmin*. Editions: Ed. W. Nassau Lees, Calcutta, 1865; ed. M. Minovi, Tehran, 1314/1935; ed. Moḥammad Jaʿfar Maḥjub, Tehran 1337/1959; ed. by A. Devonaqulov, Dushanbe, 1966; ed. M. Todua and A. Gwakharia, Tehran, 1349/1970. Also see Dick Davis's translation of *Vis o Rāmin* (Penguin Classics, 2009).
[253] See Sudhir Kakar and John Munder Ross. "Kings and Cuckolds: Passion as Power" in *Tales of Love, Sex, and Danger.* Oxford University Press, 2012. pp. 98-119.
[254] See Geert Jan Van Gelder. "Incest and Inbreeding." *Encyclopædia Iranica, XIII/1. pp. 5-6;* available online at https://iranicaonline.org/articles/incest-and-inbreeding (accessed online at 18 July 2020).

Misogyny is practiced in the kingdom, where the King and the Sage rule without women's involvement in the Kingdom. In fact, any relation with any woman, for there are no female members in the family, is prohibited. So, whenever a woman enters the Kingdom, she is an outsider. Absāl is never to be considered to be the mother of Salāmān or even a legal member of the family. She is an outsider. Thus, she (animal lust/external senses) is allowed in the Kingdom merely for the purpose of nurturing Salāmān (the Rational Soul). Her love for the young Salāmān is ostensibly forbidden, for she is not the wet-nurse anymore. Nonetheless, her love (as a matter of external senses to impact Salāmān's inner senses) is not unintelligible. For instance, as a matter of literary aesthetics and an explanation for a philosophical overturn, Jāmī projects one of the most visually appealing aspects of their love being admired by the King, who witnesses their love-making through his magic mirror and Jāmī reveals that the King himself is impacted by the sight of Salāmān and Absāl.[255] Moreover, since the dialectics loops around the intellect and rational beings, the idea of the inside (inner) and outside (external) the Kingdom is highlighted through the characters of the King as an insider and Absāl as the outsider, while Salāmān is the human soul/intellect or heart oscillating between the inside and outside.

It could be that story concerns a pre-Islamic narrative that entails a sexual relationship that could be justifiable within the Zoroastrian framework, as it concerns the one- and only-woman available situation.[256] I cite Johann Fück in Geert Jan Van Gelder's *Encyclopædia Iranica* entry that:

> "Zoroaster had not commanded his followers to copulate with their mothers. He had been asked by the leading scholars of his time what someone should do who, isolated from others, was left with his own mother; should he (by analogy with Lot and his daughters) ensure the survival of his line by bedding the only woman available? Zoroaster had ruled that it was allowed, and his fatwā was misinterpreted…"[257]

[255] See the section "Guided Sight: the Mediator of Knowledge" in this thesis.
[256] Gelder. "Incest and Inbreeding." *Encyclopædia Iranica.*
[257] Ibid.

Hence, I think incest could be a literary motif in the story, but it is not the one that Jāmī explicitly relies on to make sense of the story. Instead, Jāmī gives us a much broader reading of the story by saying that there is an outer and inner meaning to a story, and that if one wants to comprehend the inner meaning, he or she must probe deep.

In each of these approaches that I have laid out, there is a strong well-informed disciplinarily perspective that adds to a richer understanding of Jāmī's poem, particularly when it comes to the historical context in which the poem was produced. There is ample room for multiple interpretations of *Salāmān u Absāl*, and therefore I think there can also be another reading of the poem that draws on all of these disciplinary angles to examine the poem from an inter-disciplinary perspective, and by taking an analytical approach to understand the philosophical layer of the poem.

In my close reading of the poem, I take an inter-disciplinary approach by taking into consideration "pointers" or "indications", which are found in most parts/chapters of the mathnavī. These pointers/indications appear to convey Jāmī's own mystical and/or philosophical interpretation. In Chapter 75, Jāmī lays out a Neoplatonic reading of the tale of Salāmān and Absāl, which he may have borrowed from Ibn Sīnā and Ṭūsī's Neoplatonic reading of the Hermetic version of the tale (see above). Jāmī uses each character and element to stand as concepts within the emanation theory, starting with the most primary source of creation, "صانع" *the Creator,* moving to secondary emanations, such as "عقل اول" *First Intellect*, "عقل فعال" and *Active Intellect* (which is represented by the King) (lns. 1084, 86).[258] Important elements such as the sea and the fire stand for "لجه لذات نفسانی" *the abyss of carnal pleasures* and "ریاضتهای سخت" *the severe spiritual training* respectively (lns. 1103, 1110). Even so, Jāmī explains that the insertion of the puzzle or enigmatic element (in the form of "سر" *secret*) in the poem comes from "راهدانی" *the guide*.

1077	The guide has invented this,	وضع این را راهدانی کرده است	۱۰۷۷

[258] Afsaħzod, pp. 446

for he brought/presented it with the secret of the affair. کو به سر کار راه آورده است

Jāmī's reference to *the guide* can be either Ibn Sīnā or Ṭūsī. This ambiguity on who *the guide* is creates a double abstruseness when Jāmī indicates that there is "سر" *the secret* embedded in the tale. With such a puzzle at the heart of the poem and with the main characters' ambiguous names, Lingwood's historical reading of the poem proposes a contextualization that makes the poem a historic discourse, where the ideas of incest and grotesqueness are read to symbolically mean *wine* and *repentance* for the purpose of Jāmī's ethno-moral message. Jāmī voices the dedication of his poem to Sultān Ya'qūb only three times in the poem in chapter 5 (line 81), chapter 8 (line 125), and chapter 76 (line 1126). On the one hand, this does not seem to be sufficient material for the story to imitate Sultan Ya'qūb's life; on the other, at the end of chapter 5, Jāmī's takes an unusual way to praise Ya'qūb and dedicates his poem to him as his patron in an unconventional way.

99 To declare his praise is not within anyone's purview, مدح او گفتن نه حد هر کس است ۹۹
I said his name and this very praise is sufficient for him. نام او گفتم همین مدحش بس است

Jāmī discreetly alludes to his acknowledgment of Ya'qub by saying "نام او" *his name* and in doing so states that he has bestowed "مدح" *praise* on or *venerated* him, and that praise is "بس" *enough/sufficient*. It is the extent of Jāmī's complex thoughts and intuition on narrating the human experience in the poem that could likely be a narration of Sultān Ya'qūb's addiction, as Lingwood interprets it. Or that the interpretation of the poem can also go beyond the experience of the patron's addiction to wine to a more philosophical and abstract conceptualization of human's desire for intellectual progression.

A New Approach to Studying Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*

A close reading of the poem reveals that none of the above-mentioned scholars brings forth what is at the heart of Jāmī's version of tale, with the exception of Henry Corbin's concept of

'integration' and his interpretation of visionary recital. Jāmī concludes the preface with the following lines on the phenomenon of "یکتای" *becoming one* or *in union*.

18	In your sacred precinct, there is no burden of duality, and there is no need for small or long talks.	۱۸	در حریم تو دویی را بار نیست گفت و گوی اندک و بسیار نیست
19	I implore that You make me one out of this duality and grant me a place in the station of unity.	۱۹	از دویی خواهم که یکتایم کنی در مقامات یکی جایم کنی [259]

In these lines Jāmī announces his contention that in a dual state of mind and despite a great discourse of speech one cannot experience the vision of divine beauty. It is only in "خواهم" *my wanting/imploring* for union that God/Divine can/will grant His vision (becoming one with Him). Here, on the one hand, the concept of "یکتای" *one* affirms God's omnipresence as *the Necessary Existent Being* as to say that nothing exists except in the face of God. On the other, it is important to highlight that the concept of "یکتای" *one* does not entail the mystical perception of "fanā" or the annihilation of the self, and it does not have any implication in the story. Instead, it conjures a state of experiencing the love of the divine (through the intellect) in the physical world by witnessing and beholding the beauty of the beloved.

I suggest that these lines reveal Jāmī's intent for the entire narrative: it is concerned with becoming "یکتا" *union/one* as opposed to "دویی" *duality* (ln.19). I read the disclosure of the phenomenon of *union* between the human and Divine as the core of the poem. The narrative is constructed from the interactions of dualities to the negation of dualities in order to achieve union, and therefore Absāl's role and Salāmān's interaction with her are crucial. *T*hus, the whole poem conjures and magnifies the human experience of love, rather than elevating the simple mystical union, which pertains to the annihilation of the self for Him. Jāmī further elaborates this phenomenon of *becoming one* in the allegory of the Kurd man, who is perplexed in the state of duality, when he finds that the pumpkin (supposedly

[259] Afsaẖzod. pp. 391.

to remain fastened to his leg overnight) is tied to another's man's leg in the morning. This allegory will be explained in detail in Chapter V on old age.

20	So that, like the delivered Kurd from duality, am I me, I say, my Lord, or You.	۲۰ تا چو آن کرد رهیده از دویی این منم گویم خدایا یا تویی
21	If I am me wherefrom does this knowledge and power come, and if it is You where does this impotence and weakness arise?	۲۱ گر منم این علم و قدرت از کجاست ور تویی این عجزوسستی از که خاست[260]

Jāmī's preface (hereafter referred to as chapter one) functions as the introduction to his philosophy of mysticism, and it begins with praise of God/the Divine and ends with the vision of union with God/the Divine. In the middle, prior to the union, are the complexities and chaos of worldly matters. These worldly matters arise from humans' sense perception (human sight), humans' physical beauty, humans' experience of love, and the human psyche. Close-reading of Jāmī's opening and a study of the underlying structure of the poem reveals Jāmī's intention for how he proposes and develops the mystical union and explains his approach in writing the narrative-poem in the details concerning the human's worldly matters.[261]

More importantly for the present research, it is noticeable how Jāmī uses sight (as of seeing through the eyes), as the basis for his theory of interaction in the physical world. The mere act of seeing a beautiful face and the love that results is an experience of sight meeting another sight. The phenomena of sight and seeing are not new in the study of love poetry, especially in the field of Persian poetry. But Jāmī takes a more philosophical as well as psychological (and even medical) approach to refine the wonders of the first sight (of beauty) within the tradition of mysticism while making the human interaction in the physical world more relevant/significant.[262] Such interactions are portrayed in the matters of struggles, restlessness, and agony, as the first sight leads to love, love leads to the

[260] Afsaẖzod. (lns 22-42), pp. 392-3. The intention behind including the allegory of the Kurd man in chapter 2 of the poem is to introduce the concept of union and its relevance. Jāmī introduces the discussion of duality/disintegration vs. unity/integration in the most tangible way possible in this allegory. The Kurd man flees his hometown and enters a crowded city; he then ties a pumpkin to his foot as a token of self-recognition while sleeping.

[261] This opening section (which I have designated as chapter one) will be examined in my Chapter III, on the 'Poetry of the Eye,' as my theoretical framework on the definition of sight, beauty, and love.

[262] See my chapter III, : and the section on The Centrality of the Sense of Sight.

creation of memory, and memory initiates the vision of divine beauty in the image of the celestial Venus. This is how Jāmī rationalizes the procedures for obtaining the ultimate vision of the Divine or the process of intellection, as the memory of the worldly love (attained within the human world/Absāl) activates the love for the eternal beauty, Venus on the intellect level.

In my close reading, Jāmī's entire narrative poem is meant to promote/disseminate the phenomena of union over duality, integration over division, completion over imperfection. In the process of laying out his theory of Divine union, Jāmī conjures the discussion on corporeal life and human interactions. Lingwood's study offers an important historical reading of the poem and of the poet's political engagement, yet the poem also draws more profoundly on Jāmī's poetic nuances, which Jāmī himself declares to be the main content of the poem and the meaning of the story. Therefore, my approach considers how Jāmī formulates and underscores his thoughts on sight, physical beauty, and love, in order to convey the importance of human intellect in beholding the physical world as it appears in relation to the Divine creation. In this new approach, Jāmī's poem needs to be analyzed closely and a new set of theories is needed to help us understand the poem better, and these theories are philosophically drawn. Therefore, I rely on Ibn Sīnā's 'indicative method.'

My Methodology

In order to explore Jāmī's hypothesis of "یکتایی" *union* or becoming *one* through the romance between Salāmān and Absāl, it is important to understand Jāmī's development of the complex relationship between love/desire/yearning and reason. Only through a more systematic reading of the poem can we understand what is at stake in Jāmī's poem. How does Jāmī shape his thoughts around the narrative of love and knowledge/intellect? And what nuances does the poem address when conveying the meaning and narrative of becoming *one* in comparison with earlier poems composed on the complex matter of love and rational? Intrigued by this tension arising between love and rationality, Classical and Medieval Persian poets strived to highlight the importance of love over

rational/intellect.[263] Nonetheless, Jāmī crafts a new way of addressing this inevitable tension between love and intellect in *Salāmān u Absāl* by using a progression of interweaving events rather than a spontaneous, one-sided control/force. In order to understand Jāmī's poetry and poetics on the evolving matter of love and reason through sight and vision. I base my deciphering on Jāmī's language. In doing so, my research heavily relies on the methodologies developed in the medieval English literature for the study of poetry and novels through philosophical and psychological lenses in order to understand the tension between love and reason.

My study of Jāmī's 'indicative method', which draws upon Dimitri Gutas's study of Ibn Sīnā's 'indicative method,' is a recognition of Jāmī's poetics of form and style used in conveying the complex relationship of love and knowledge initiated by sight. The mathnavī form is intended for a narrative that has a heroic, romantic, didactic, and moralizing nature, but that being said, it is also used for longer narratives—whatever their genres.[264] The mathnavī uses a specific rhyme scheme and meter. Thus, Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* stands on a par with other classical romantic epic/narrative poems in theme and structure.[265]

In his *Salāmān u Absāl*, Jāmī highlights the sight (sense perception) as a main function of the experience of love and knowledge. In order to examine the content of Jāmī's philosophical and mystical take on the subject of love and intellect through sight, I use Norman Klassen's interdisciplinary ideas which he developed in *Chaucer on love, Knowledge and Sight.* I examine how Jāmī

---

[263] See Julie Meisami's, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry.* (Princeton University Press, 1987).

[264] See Bruijn, J.T.P. de, Flemming, B. and Rahman, Munibur, "Mathnawī", in: Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition, Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 06 December 2018 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0709>
First published online: 2012

[265] Throughout the poem, Jāmī includes direct or indirect references to the classical and medieval Persian poets receding him. By naming poets or by quoting them, Jāmī indicates his familiarity with the contents and style of their poetry. For some of the famous mathnavīs see: Ferdowsī's *Shāh-nāma,* 'Onṣori's *Wāmeq o 'Aḏrā*, Gorgāni's *Vis o Rāmin*, ʿAyyuqi's *Varqa o Golšāh*, Sanāʾi's *Ḥadiqat al-ḥaqiqa,* 'Aṭṭār's the *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*, Niẓāmī's *Ḵamsa* (Quintet), Sa'dī's *Būstān*, Rumi's The *Mathnavī*, and Amīr Ḵosrow's *Ḵamsa.*[265] Given the mathnavī's broader thematic concerns with the heroic or romantic or didactic, mystical, and philosophical experiences, Jāmī's attempt with this form combines these elements, including even the magical one, to make *Salāmān u Absāl* a poem of distinct expression.

elaborates on the relationship between love and intellect using the concepts of "parasitisme" and "symbiosis".[266] Jāmī's poetics of vision and his rationalization of the physical world on the subject of love and knowledge is explained distinctively through sight, which is the main causation of either "hostility' or "hospitality" of love and knowledge.

Gutas on Ibn Sīnā's "Indicative Method'

Dimitri Gutas in Chapter 8 of his book, *Ibn Sīnā and the Aristotelian Tradition: Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works,* identifies four main methods that Ibn Sīnā uses in conveying his (philosophical) knowledge to his audiences of different intellectual abilities.[267] 1. 'the symbolic method: symbol and allegory'; 2. 'the symbolic method: non-mystical knowledge'; 3. 'the indicative method'; and 4. 'the demonstrative method: syllogism'.[268] Gutas highlights the indicative and the demonstrative methods as the "two higher methods of communicating knowledge."[269] The demonstrative method is a composition by means of exposition that explains "openly and thoroughly the problem," while the indicative method prompts "further investigation."[270] The use of suggestive hints can show "the unexpressed conclusions" of the story of Salāmān and Absāl. Thus the "indicative method" has a second function, which it shares with the symbolic, namely, "concealment of Knowledge from the unworthy."[271] As mentioned above, Ibn Sīnā refers to the two names Salāmān and Absāl in his

[266] Klassen takes an interdisciplinary approach to study Chaucer's poetry not only for its philosophical, theological, and psychological underpinnings, but also for the aesthetics that Chaucer's poetry projects. See Klassen, Norman. *Chaucer on Love, Knowledge and Sight*. Boydell and Brewer, 1995.

[267] Gutas, D. (2014). Ibn Sīnā and the Aristotelian tradition: Introduction to reading Avicenna's philosophical works (Second, revised, and enlarged ed., Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science Texts and Studies). Chapter 8: The Elaboration of Methods, pp. 339-340.

[268] Gutas writes that "[i]n his mature period, and with increased self-confidence, [Ibn Sīnā] abandoned his approach ['as a commentator on the Aristotelian texts, and his style was accordingly expository, reformulating the accepted doctrines as transmitted"] and reverted to the expository method" (335). Ibn Sīnā basically dismantled the authority of traditionally studied philosophy and "separated[ed] philosophical school native to his place of origin, (the East), and to delineate its identity sharply by explicitly contrasting it with the Aristotelian tradition" (335). Ibn Sīnā's *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt* is a mature work of his time period, and this expository method is certainly the way to approach and understand Ibn Sīnā's *al-Ishārāt* also Jāmī's *Salamān u Absāl.*

[269] Gutas, (346, 351).

[270] Ibid (346-7

[271] 347-8

Remarks, *al-Ishārāt,* but not in his *Admonition,* a*l-tanbīhāt*. In *Remarks*, the two names are to be understood as indications (pointers, or symbols) for events and actions unfolding in connection to the mystic and the stage of the mystic.[272] As Gutas explains this relates to the 'indicative method,' "[this method] of teaching depends on providing hints and guidelines to the student, rather than ready-made arguments, who is then expected to elaborate the entire theory on his own. This is what the two words of the title, Pointers and reminders, refer to."[273]

Jāmī's Indicative Method

Jāmī, who was aware of Ibn Sīnā's philosophical/mystical/theosophical works particularly his *al-Ishārāt*, designates five chapters (17, 20, 38, 49, 74)[274] of *Salāmān u Absāl* as "اشارت/اشارة" *indications/indication*. These chapters serve as Jāmī's implication of his philosophical position either to complicate the narrative or to simplify it. For example, chapter 17 is titled " اشارت به خوابی که ناظم در اثنای این دیباچه دیده و تعبیر آن چنانچه خود کرده آرمیده" *an indication to a dream that the poet saw while composing this introduction and his own interpretation that has comforted him* (lines 245-264). In this chapter, Jāmī recalls a dream of himself as the poet "در اثنای" *in the interim* of writing a poem, while "تعبیر آن" *interpretation of that* dream results in easing his mind. The dream functions as the main philosophy in the composition of his poem, while his own interpretation results in his comfort/contentment.[275] In chapter 20, " اشارت به آنچه حق سبحانه و تعالی در شان پادشاهان عجم به داوود علیه السلام کرده است" *an indication to what God, may He be praised and exalted, said to David, peace be upon him, about the ancient Persian kings*, (lns 292-96)[276] is an important judgement call upon the (ancient) Persian kings in comparison to their rivals – the Arabs

[272] The *namat 9* or "نمط ۹" *chapter 9* has been elevated as the most significant section of Ibn Sīna's *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt* on the topics concerning mysticism. While the section before *namat 9* are concerned with philosophy mainly ethics, physics and metaphysics

[273] Dimitri Gutas, *Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science*, pp. 158.

[274] The rest of the chapters are either titled "حکایت" *narration/tale/parable* or "در بیان" in *explanation/elaboration* or some of the chapters are just the title of the plots.

[275] Afsaẖzod, pp. 403-4.

[276] ibid, pp. 406.

or even the Greeks/Romans. This is one of the very few settled (yet not easily discernable) hints that can suggest that despite highlighting certain Greek elements, Jāmī might as well be trying to make the story an anti-Greek tale.[277] In this chapter, through his praise of the Persian kings, Jāmī reveals his preference for the king's good ethics to rule his subjects based on justice and righteousness rather than on one particular religion:

294	Though their religion was fire worshipping, their custom was the practice of justice and rectitude.	۲۹۴ گرچه بود آتشپرستی دینشان بود عدل و راستی آیینشان

This chapter on the customary law of "آتشپرستی" *fire-worshipping* by the Zoroastrian Persian kings serves to negotiate Jāmī's introduction to the Greek King ruling over "یونان زمین" *the Ionian-land/Greece-land* in chapter 19, lines 278-291, in the start of the central narrative itself. Jāmī alludes to the King's practice of justice based only on his Sage's counselling. In the same stylistic manner, Jāmī's subsequent chapters 38, 49, and 74 are *indications* of his theoretical take on certain main subject matters. Chapter 38 is an indication about the greatness or superiority of the King (as the father) over Salāmān, which is revealed when Jāmī protests that he brings "وصف" *the description* of the King through his "مدح" *praise* of Salāmān (lns 555-564). Chapter 49 is an allusion to the story of Širuya killing his father, the Sasanian king Ḵosrow II and the misfortunes the killing created. On the one hand, this chapter verifies Jāmī's concept of "اصل" *root/core/authentic* or *loyalty* that is ascribed by the blood-relationship between the King and Salāmān (lns 703-705). On the other hand, the moral

[277] Jāmī starts the narrative with the introduction to the King ruling over "یونان زمین" *the land of Greece/* Who, like Alexander, possessed the crown and royal ring (Chap 19, lns. 278). Right after this chapter, Jāmī brings an analogy about how God had spoken to David in praise of "پادشاهان عجم" *the [ancient] Persian Kings* about their religious morality, their sense of justice, and their rectitude that resembles *the King of Greece.* (Chap 20, lns. 292-296). In doing so, Jāmī seems to suggest the Greekness of the tale by regulating its Greek elements, such as the land of Greece, while the King, ruling over Greece, could have been Persian. Subsequently, every time Jāmī relates to *the King of Greece*, which occurs at least four times, (Chap 21, ln. 297; Chap 25, ln. 352; Chap 62, ln. 863; Chap 72, 1024), one can presume that he might be implying/introducing an anti-Greek re-telling of the tale. Especially if the passionate love between Salāmān and Absāl is a concern, then Jāmī might be taking the story on the account of kinship, or *xwedōdah*, [Zoroastrian marriage practice] which refers "to marital unions of father and daughter, mother and son, or brother and sister (next-of-kin or close-kin marriage, nuclear family incest)". See Prods Oktor Skjærvø, "Marriage ii. Next of kin marriage in Zoroastrianism," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, 2013, available at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/marriage-next-of-kin (accessed on 16 October 2017).

indication behind this allegory is about the King earning the reward and contentment (as the reverse of misfortunes) when Salāmān returns to the Kingdom after abstaining from killing Absāl (lns. 855). As an epilogue to the story, the penultimate chapter, 74 (lns. 1084-1119), is Jāmī's indication/hint to "مقصود" *the purpose/the meaning* behind the tale of Salāmān and Absāl. And more importantly, throughout the poem there are chapters that have phrases as *indications/indicators*.[278] These chapters cover Jāmī's more philosophical and conceptual statements. And they stand in parallel to his chapters that contain "حکایت" *parables*[279] for elaboration or demonstrative explanations under the title "بیان" *illustration*.

Studied in light of the Gutas's research and given that Jāmī was knowledgeable about Ibn Sīnā's philosophical works, his re-counting of the tale with the characters Salāmān and Absāl in a *mathnavī* cannot simply be categorized as a demonstrative argument of the kind found in mystically-inspired knowledge. That being said, based on his chapters on *indications*, Jāmī seems to refer to his *mathnavī* of *Salāmān u Absāl* as a philosophical work on mysticism. I am not suggesting that philosophy can be reconciled with mysticism, rather I am aware of how, by paying attention to the differences, we can conceptualize knowledge versus experiencing knowledge. Jāmī enhances the distinctions and explains a systematic approach that allows one to go back and forth between philosophy and mysticism to refer to the secrets he shares in the poem that are not mysterious or eerie, but are the stages of knowledge required to achieve the vision of divine beauty through the higher intellect. First, he does this by introducing named characters to symbolize the conceptual world of intellect.[280]

---

[278] See Afsaẖzod, Chap 17, pp. 403; Chap 20, pp. 406; Chap 38, pp. 419; Chap 49, pp. 427; and Chap 74, pp. 445.

[279] Afsaẖzod, Chap 2, pp. 392; Chap 4, pp. 394; Chap 6, pp. 396, Chap 10, pp. 399; Chap 12, pp. 400; Chap 14, pp. 402; Chap 18, pp. 404; Chap 22, pp. 407; Chap 24, pp. 408; Chap 26, pp. 409; Chap 28, pp. 411; Chap 30, pp. 414; Chap 37, pp. 419; Chap 39, pp. 420; Chap 43, pp. 423; Chap 46, pp. 425; Chap 51, pp. 427; Chap 53, pp. 428; Chap 55, pp. 429; Chap 57, pp. 431; Chap 59, pp. 433; Chap 61, pp. 435; Chap 63, 436, Chap 67, pp. 438, and Chap 69, pp. 440.

[280] W. H. T. Gairdner in his book, *The Way of a Mohmmedan Mystic*, talks about how "the whole purpose of Sufism, the Way of the dervish, is to give him an escape from this prison, an apocalypse of the Seventy Thousand Veils, a recovery of the original unity with the One, while still in this body. The body is not to be put off; it is to be refined and made spiritual…" Leipzig, 1912, pp. 9f. Another good reading on a comparative aspect of Mysticism in Islam look at A Reynold Nicholson's book *The Mystics of Islam*, published 1914.

Secondly, he has the characters interact, which is part of the learning and experience of knowledge through their interactions with one another. In this oscillation between conceptually captivating the reader and offering evidence through human experience, Jāmī neither interjects his philosophical teachings nor his mystical learnings. In a manner that is similar to how Ibn Sīnā conveys his knowledge without calling it either a work of philosophy or of mysticism, Jāmī also minimizes his authorial voice as the poet and encourages a collaborative interpretation of the text as it appears on the surface and in content.[281]

However, Jāmī does not bring "detailed syllogistic reasoning," or "demonstrative proofs (*burān*) and arguments" to his poem.[282] This does not mean that Jāmī implies only one way of interpretation for his poem. His story is told, completed on the surface (the form), while the inner meaning is bestowed by the *guide*. Jāmī presents himself as a narrator who is dedicated to the task of storytelling, yet he encourages his readers to seek for meaning in the poetic elements. Indeed a reading of Salāmān and Absāl through a demonstrative approach can make the poem seem to be a "historical allegory," with an assumption that Jāmī aims for an interpretation of his narrative that makes a political statement.[283] However, we know that Jāmī does not argue from any political or pure philosophical position either,[284] and it is evident in the poem that his use of images and suggestions (as indications) are an elaborate way for the reader to understand his take on the narrative as a whole. Thus, it is fair to acknowledge Jāmī's 'indicative method' by closely looking into how the entire structure of the poem

[281] In chapter 74, (lns. 1075-1083), the second to the concluding chapter in the poem Jāmī talks about how there is an outer and inner form to any given story, as he completes the tale itself. Subsequently, he situates the poem's 'وضع' *meaning* to 'رهدانی' *a guide* (this can be a reference to Ibn Sīnā or Ṭūsī) (lns. 1077), Jāmī says that *the guide* has bestowed an exposition/an indication 'کشف' *to discover* 'سر' *the secret* in the tale, yet it is up to 'ما و توست' *us* (the poet and reader) to interpret the narrative.

[282] Dimitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, 2014, p. 351.

[283] See Lingwood, pps. 3, 4, 8, 22. 69, 70, 86, 107, 116, 128, 131,146, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 156, 159, 162.

[284] Jāmī poem is demonstrative as he uses images and metaphors, colors and scenic landscapes. The end of the poem differs with the use of the abstract ideas: in Chapter 72, Jāmī brings references to a Neoplatonic philosophical context by deliberately laying out the whole cause and effect structure of Intellect and how each character and instances in the poem suggest or indicate the emanation theory. I will discuss this in details in the chapter on 'poetics of vision.'

is set into chapters (sections), which are titled as "اشارات" *indications*, "حکایات" *allegories/parables* or "بیان" *illustration* and which serve to further explain the main message behind the poem.

Intertextual Analysis of *Salāmān u Absāl* with Homer's *Odyssey*

> "What a romance narrative therefore projects is a disharmonious vision of life which is nevertheless ordered within an artistic unity…" John Dean, "The 'Odyssey' as Romance."[285]

At the heart of Jāmī's poem is the complex ancient romance between a man (the prince) and a woman (in this case the wet-nurse). Jāmī further complicates this romance with images, visual metaphors, embedded allegories, and mystical knowledge. One could, upon a superficial reading of the poem, call the romance 'silly' and 'grotesque' and shun further inquiry about the origin of the narrative, which topoi are present, or how Jāmī chose to develop the ancient Greek themes of the tale. However, it is important to examine Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* in the light of the fact that the tale is a Greek romance, which became famous among the early Medieval Muslim intelligentsia, which is mentioned by the philosopher Ibn Sīnā, and which intrigued medieval Persian scholars.

It is fair to say that Jāmī has injected into his poem the elements of fascination and romantic mystery. There are three main themes taken from Greek romances and, in particular, the poem begs conversation with Homer's *Odyssey*, if we accept that the *Odyssey* is a romance.[286] These three themes are: the representation of a wet-nurse as a woman with maternal instincts and materiality, eroticism,[287] and transcendence.

---

[285] John Dean. "The 'Odyssey' as Romance." *College Literature*, 1976, pp. 233.

[286] "The 'Odyssey' as Romance." pp. 228–236. I have not read Homer in the original language of Greek. I am citing the online version of A. S. Kline's English translation for this case study.

[287] On the topic of eroticism in its most archaic use see Panos D Bardis. "The Concept of Love in Homer." *Social Science*, vol. 53, no. 4, 1978, pp. 220–231. "Eros as the god of love; it has been asserted that this concept had already changed by the time of the *Iliad*, and that Eros had ceased to be a divinity in Homer. This is basically true, for love is no longer idealized, no longer apotheosized. Eros as a noble, divine, cosmogonic force has practically disappeared. Indeed, in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, it frequently is a common noun, not a proper one. Even Helen does not represent a strong romantic element. In fact, what attracts her to Paris is Aphrodite Pandemos, which means sexual lust…So *eros* now stands for mere desire for something, such as food or drink, or for lust and sexual love…" Bardis, pp. 226.

As in Homer, an overriding theme of *Salāmān u Absāl* is concern over women's chastity.[288] Jāmī dedicates the first four chapters of his poem (before introducing Salāmān and Absāl) to the condemnation of "زن" *women*,[289] and their "شهوت" *lust/desire/yearning*[290] is shown in bearing " فرزند ناخلف" *the immoral child* that is a product of their desire for maternal and material love.[291] In the *Homeric Hymns,* there is "the assumption that there is a link between two inescapable aspects of the human condition, which are the fact of being born from a woman and the fact of having to die," and these aspects seem to run through the narrative of *Salāmān u Absāl* as well.[292] Since Salāmān, 'the questing figure'[293] is not born of a woman, he is seen as an immortal being and thus his mortality is not questioned. Due to the fact that he is suckled at the breast of a mortal woman, Absāl, Salāmān becomes a human being with mortal desires. This paradoxical state of Salāmān (as a mortal or immortal and moral or immoral being) holds until the end of the narrative. Thus, Salāmān must struggle and endure misery in love, while experiencing the necessity of returning to his home, the kingdom, for noetic pleasures.

On the one hand, Jāmī suggests that Absāl's love and devotion for Salāmān are so intense that she does not hesitate to choose death. Her mortality contrasts with Salāmān's immortality. And only in the reappearance of the deceased Absāl (in imaginal form) can Salāmān achieve otherworldly union

---

[288] For a critical study of women's role with a special reference to Penelope in the Odyssey and a discussion of their chastity see Victoria Josselyn Wohl. "Standing by The Stathmos: The Creation of Sexual Ideology in The 'Odyssey.'" *Arethusa*, vol. 26, no. 1, 1993, pp. 19–50. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/26309575. Also see Philip Whaley Harsh. "Penelope and Odysseus in Odyssey XIX." *The American Journal of Philology*, vol. 71, no. 1, 1950, pp. 1–21. Hanna M. Roisman. "Penelope's Indignation." *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, vol. 117, 1987, pp. 59–68.

[289] See Afsaḫzād, Chapter 27 (lns. 369-386), pp. 410-11.

[290] Ibid, Chapter 25 (lns. 352-362), pp. 409. And also Chapter 28 (lns. 387-397). pp. 411.

354	The eye of reason and knowledge is blind because of lust, a demon appears as an angel in front of the eye due to lust.	۳۵۴ چشم عقل و علم کور از شهوت است دیو پیش دیده حور از شهوت است
355	Wherever the excitement of lust rages it steals away from the heart the intellect and the light of from the eye.	۳۵۵ هر کجا غوغای شهوت کرد زور می برد از دل خرد از دیده نور

[291] Ibid, Chapter 23 (lns. 321-327), 24 (lns. 328-351), pp. 407-409.

[292] See Sheila Murnaghan. "Maternity and Mortality in Homeric Poetry." *Classical Antiquity*, vol. 11, no. 2, 1992, pp. 242–264. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/25010975.

[293] John Dean, "The 'Odyssey' as Romance." pp. 233.

with Venus (his transcendence to the 'perfect man') in a vision. This is where the motif of the fire/light comes in as an important component in conveying the two contrasting states—mortality vs. immortality and morality (in the image of purity or eternal, otherworldly or vision) vs. immorality (impure or transient, worldly or sense of sight). The fire as purifying and the cause of immortalization features in both Greek and Persian romances.[294] In contrast, Jāmī also introduces the functionality of the sea/water to convey fluidity and to affirm the motion toward earthly pleasure, as well as union in the form of bodily integration.[295] It is fair to say that at the level of "an artistic order," Jāmī through these scenes establishes enigmatic and paradoxical situations around water (sea) and fire to highlight the archaic romantic plots, such as Salāmān and Absāl's place of escape, *the Island of Pleasure*, for union, and their jumping into the fire in the desert, for separation. The water is not threatening. The couple are safe from the water; reposed in their habitation on the island, they are surrounded by the water. It is after experiencing all the essence of life and nature that the couple is torn apart by fire. Fire is destructive and only respects immortality, a life that is beyond nature.

In his book, *Panthea's Children: Hellenistic Novels and Medieval Persian Romances* (2001), Dick Davis touches on the theme that is common in Greek and Persian romance first based on the Parthian influences (mainly the topics surrounding the practice of endogamy) in the Greek novels. In describing the common topoi overriding in 11thcentury Persian romance that are also found in Greek novels, Davis observes:

> "Romance, which began as one of the most secular of genres, has been spiritualized, and in the process been rewritten for the purposes of Sufi edification."[296]

---

[294] The motive behind using the element of fire can be very tricky in such cross-referential units. In order to make the baby Demophon, Demeter (known as an old woman Doso) "sets out to make him immortal: the baby no longer eats food or [sucks mother's milk] …And every night Demeter secretly hides the baby in the fire, like a dalos, a brand of wood…" see Sheila Murnaghan. "Maternity and Mortality in Homeric Poetry." pp. 245. For a comparative reading of the Greek and Persian image of the fire see Dick Davis, *Panthea's Children Hellenistic Novels and Medieval Persian Romances* (2002). pp. 8.
[295] For an elaborated discussion on how the sea/water inspires Salāmān and Absāl, refer to Chap III, section, 'Active Seeing: The Eye in Search for Love'.
[296] Ibid. pp. 109.

Davis explains how the 11th century romances (Gorgāni's *Vis o Rāmin*,[297] Ayyūqī's *Varqeh o Golshāh*,[298] and ʿOnṣori's *Vāmiq o ʿAzrā*[299]) differ from the later [adapted] examples of the genre "in two fundamental ways: the poems' rhetoric contains no hint of the mystical, and they end happily. That is, they avoid both tragedy and transcendence."[300] The early romances were concerned with secular motifs and incorporated earlier Parthian and Greek themes. The later Persian medieval poets introduced Sufi ideas (inspired by religious beliefs) and incorporated "tragedy and transcendence" as a project of human experience and the Divine interference. Neẓāmi's *Khamsa* (quintet poems) are good examples of "how romances are then imbued with a moral and often spiritual tone which invites allegorical interpretation, implying that the true meaning of the poems is an edifying and perhaps mystical one."[301]

Writing in the fifteenth century, Jāmī seems to be the first poet to have composed *Salāmān u Absāl* as a Greek romance in the Persian metrical form of a mathnavī.[302] For the sake of Sufi edification, poets like Jāmī did not find it necessary to eradicate the original themes concerning carnal love in order to establish the mystical meaning. Instead, Jāmī synthesizes the secular components with the mystical ones, which were already present in the tale (an adaptation from Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ's translated version). The original tale has the theme of transcendence in the image of Venus. Jāmī also associates the transcendence unit of the narrative with the appearance of "زهره" *Venus*'s character in his poem.[303]

---

[297] See J.C. Burgel, *The Romance* in *Persian Literature*, ed., E. Yarshater, New York, 1988, pp. 164-65. http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/vis-o-ramin; Faḵr al-Din Asʿad Gorgāni, *Vis o Rāmin*. Editions: Ed. W. Nassau Lees, Calcutta, 1865; ed. M. Minovi, Tehran, 1314/1935; ed. Moḥammad Jaʿfar Maḥjub, Tehran 1337/1959; ed. by A. Devonaqulov, Dushanbe, 1966; ed. M. Todua and A. Gwakharia, Tehran, 1349/1970. Also see Dick Davis's translation of *Vis o Rāmin* (Penguin Classics, 2009).

[298] See Antony Eastmond's *Viewing Inscriptions in the Late Antique and Medieval World*, 2015. Pp. 149, 159.

[299] Moḥammad-Jaʿfar Maḥjub, "*Wāmeq o ʿAḏrā*-ye ʿOnṣori," *Soḵān* 18, 1968, pp. 43-52, 131-42.

[300] Davis, 37-8

[301] Ibid, also see http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kamsa-of-nezami

[302] Jāmī makes few intentional references in the start of the story (chapter 19, lns 278-291) to indicate the Greek backdrop to his own poem too.

[303] On the definition of transcendence from a philosophical prospective see *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (2 ed.) (2005). "In medieval philosophy, the transcendentals are notions that are too fundamental to be accommodated in Aristotle's ten

In an archaic poetic use, Venus is portrayed as being "as rich and elusive as her counterpart in the human psyche," she operates "in different realms of human experience that are themselves often contradictory and incongruous…[she possesses] the planetary attributes…She is feminine, with a phlegmatic and nocturnal complexion."[304] Jāmī also characterizes Venus as the counterpart to Absāl, feminine and with celestial attributes. In her planetary attributes, Venus is "شمع جمع انجم" *the candle of the assembly of stars* and her beauty "آفتاب و ماه را شیدا کند" *renders insane the sun and the moon* (lns.1008). Venus has "حسن باقی" *eternal/existent beauty* and is "عیش باقی" *eternal pleasure*, while Absāl is "فانی" *mortal* beauty and pleasure (ln. 1017).

Moving away from the above discussion of the themes of "tragedy and transcendence," let us consider how and why Jāmī stays close to the most dangerous and unusual motif that is original in the tale, which is possibly the reason for the superficial downgrading of the tale as 'grotesque'.[305] This is the conflation of the roles of maternity (the wet-nurse) and sexuality (the erotic beloved woman). Jāmī maintains the role in its traditional form as that of a "Greco-Roman antiquity tale [that] seems to have associated the telling of stories of romance, excitement and adventure with old women [to young girls].[306]" However, Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* is not about an old woman as the storyteller, but instead

categories: for example, unity, truth, goodness, and being." Moreover, the fact that Jāmī's suggests a Neoplatonic reading of the tale borrowed from Ṭūsī's commentary, that itself has a highly transcendental message.

[304] See Earl G. Shcreiber, "Venus in the Medieval Mythography Tradition." pp, 522-523. The Roman identified the deity of Venus as the Greek Aphrodite. Though there are some explainable reasons for Venus's identification with Aphrodite, what is more intriguing is that Aphrodite is the wife of Vulcan, who is god of fire, and he was worshipped in ancient times. "Vulcan was invoked to avert fires…" see https://www.britannica.com/topic/Vulcan. Since it was Jāmī, who added the scene of the fire the narrative, it is possible that he was influenced by similar stories previously told. Prior to Zoroastrianism, the Medes and Persians worshipped the cult of the goddess Anaïtis, the Persian goddess of the planet Venus. "The way in which it was made doctrinally possible for a Zoroastrian king those to impose the veneration of a partly alien divinity on the community at large was through assimilating her cult to that of the Zorastrian *Yazatā* Arədvī Sūrā Anāhitā. Therefore 'the Lady' of the planet Venus was still popularly worshiped as Anāhīd ī Bānū, but was venerated in the Zoroastrian liturgies with the Avestan invocations proper to the river *Yazatā.* See http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/anahid.

[305] For a general overview of what makes a tale/novel Greek see Tim Whitmarsh's *Dirty Love: the Genealogy of the Ancient Greek Novel* (2018). pp. 35.

[306] Whitmarsh, pp. 4.

features Absāl as the main actor in the story of romance and excitement in the life of the young prince Salāmān.

Jāmī portrays the wet-nurse (Absāl) as an independent woman, but she is also dangerous. Through her love and devotion for Salāmān, Absāl poses a threat to the future of the Kingdom. The King and the Sage are frustrated with Salāmān's deviation from the path of becoming the next King because of his preoccupation with Absāl's love. Jāmī explains, "[the King and the Sage's] hearts were split in two on account of Salāmān having deserted them" (lns. 676). Both the King and the Sage attempt in various ways to advise Salāmān. For example, the King counsels Salāmān saying: "Do not turn your face toward the foolish beloveds, / Do not remove the crown of good fortune from your head. // Do not set the hand of your heart upon a delicate beauty, / Do not kick the majestic throne of kinghood with your foot" (lns. 693-4). This depiction of Absāl as the most intimate companion as well as a threat for the future of Salāmān suggests a parallel with Eurycleia in the household of Odysseus.[307] As the wet-nurse to both the hero Odysseus and his son Telemachus, Eurycleia has earned great respect and status within the household of Odysseus and his wife Penelope.[308] Although Odysseus is disguised as an old beggar upon his return to Ithaca after years of exile, his true identity is discovered by Eurycleia, now old and frail with age, in the act of washing his feet.[309] Eurycleia's moment of recognition poses a great danger to Odysseus, who must later surprise and fight the suitors,

---

[307] see Scott, John A. "Eurynome and Eurycleia in the Odyssey." *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 12, no. 2, 1918, pp. 75–79. pp. 75.

[308] Eurycleia's greatness is due to her maturity and experience see Scott, John A. "Eurynome and Eurycleia in the Odyssey," pp. 75-6. Also, On the discussion of Odysseus's need for a close ally, see Hanna M Roisman. "Eumaeus and Odysseus—Covert Recognition and Self-Revelation?" *Illinois Classical Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1990, pp. 215–238.

[309] See Homer's *Odyssey* (Bk XIX:476-507), "As she (Eurycleia) spoke, she glanced toward Penelope, ready to tell her that her dear husband was home. But Penelope failed to meet her look with recognition, because Athene had distracted her attention. At the same instant Odysseus' felt for the woman's throat and gripped it with his right hand, while he drew her closer with the other, and whispered: 'Nurse, will you destroy me, you who suckled me at your breast? I am home indeed after twenty years of toil and sorrow, but now a god has inspired you and you have found me out to be quiet and keep it from all the rest of the house" (translated by A. S. Kline, 517). On the metaphorical reading of the scar and Eurycleia's reminiscence see D. Ben DeSmidt. "Horn and Ivory, Bow and Scar: Odyssey 19.559-81." *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 56, no. 1, 2006, pp. 284–289.

and in doing so, save his kingdom.[310] Following Odysseus's threat and warning to stay silent, Eurycleia agrees, and helps Odysseus fight the suitors when the time comes.[311]

There are two ways in which Jāmī's Absāl is comparable to Eurycleia. Both are wet-nurses to the prince(s), and as such both occupy an intimate space within the royal household.[312] Both Eurycleia and Absāl are introduced by the Kings themselves. We know that Eurycleia was chosen by Odysseus's father, Laertes, first as his mistress; yet they never consummated their love out of respect for his wife, Anticlea.[313] Instead Laertes made her the wet-nurse to his infant son, Odysseus, and later in life she becomes the wet-nurse to Telemachus (Odysseus's son).[314] Absāl is also chosen by the King and the Sage.[315] Secondly, Eurycleia and Absāl are both silent throughout the narratives. "Feminine silence is idealized, if not realized, in Greek thought, while the unrestrained speech of women is frequently

---

[310] On the danger of Eurycleia's disclosing the identity of Odysseus see John B. Vlahos. "Homer's 'Odyssey', Books 19 and 23: Early Recognition; A Solution to the Enigmas of Ivory and Horns, and the Test of the Bed." *College Literature*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2007, pp. 107–131.

[311] Ibid.

[312] See Homer's the *Odyssey* (Bk I: 421-444), "…and faithful Eurycleia, daughter of Ops, Peisenor's son, carrying a blazing torch waited on him [Telemachus]. Laertes had bought her himself long ago, when she was still quite young, at the cost of twenty oxen, and honoured her in his palace as he honoured his loyal wife, never lying with her for fear of his wife's anger. Now she carried the blazing torches for Telemachus, since of all the women, it was she who loved him most, having nursed him as a child" (Kline, 40). In the same manner the King and the Sage choose Absāl to nurse Salāmān. See Afsaḥzād, chapter 29, line 408.

408	Since he [Salāmān] was not benefited from the mother's milk, they chose him a wet-nurse.	۴۰۸ چون نبود از شیر مادر بهره مند دایه ای کردند بهر او پسند

[313] See Homer's the *Odyssey* (Bk I: 421-444).

[314] See Homer's the *Odyssey* (Bk XIX:476-507).

[315] See footnote 87. Jāmī gives details on Absāl's beauty: chapter 29 (lns. 408-445). Beside presenting her as a woman of beautiful allure, after Jāmī describes her "ساق و ران" *calves and thighs*, then we are informed that the very private part of Absāl "بود آن سری ز نامحرم نهان" *is a secret concealed from the forbidden people* (lns. 440, 442), p. 413. Nonetheless, we are also told that she was once raped by "دزدی" a thief.

443	Yet a thief had approached it, whatever there was he had seized.	۴۴۳ بلکه دزدی پی به آن آورده بود هر چه آنجا بود به غارت کرده بود
444	He had slit opened the door to that silver-shell, and had found the pearl of his pleasure.	۴۴۴ در بر آن سیمین صدف بشکافته گوهر کام خود آنجا یافته

Jāmī through the imagery of the thief stealing and seizing her virginity indicates that Absāl is the victim of such "غارت" *looting*. Confirming her complete devotion and affirmation of chastity, Jāmī says that upon nursing Salāmān and due to his love, Absāl stopped being affectionate toward anyone else.

460	The love of that moon [Salāmān] that sat on her soul, she closed the eye of affection to anyone but him.	۴۶۰ مهر آن مه بس که در جانش نشست چشم مهر از هر که غیراو ببست

equated with a lack of sexual restraint."[316] Absāl is portrayed as a silent woman, yet she also indulges in unrestrained gazing which is also associated to a lack of sexual restraint.[317]

In Homer's *Odyssey*, a number of women are associated with Odysseus, including the deceased and the invisible Anticlea (Odysseus's mother), Eurycleia (his wet-nurse), Penelope (his wife), the maids in Odysseus's house, as well as nymphs, princesses and goddesses.[318] However, in Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*, Absāl stands alone as the all-encompassing woman and has multiple roles in connection to Salāmān.[319] Jāmī's focus on the single character of Absāl with her multiple roles is indicative of the complexity of the plots, which make the romance intriguing.

Within the sphere of Persian literary works in the Islamic period for the fifteenth century audience and up to the present day, Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* has been branded as 'grotesque' because of its incestuous affair. The wet-nurse Absāl transforms her maternal-like affection into a lover's love. This unconventional love narrative makes Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* an outlier within Persian Sufi literature and mystical teachings. Yet, against the background of the long tradition of historical, literary and philosophical contact between the two distinctive yet interactive cultures of Persian and Greek (particularly in the creation of romance), Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* is neither unique nor unusual. Indeed, its motifs and themes fit into the same tradition of Greco-Persian romance. And since te origin of *Salāmān and Absāl* is a Greek narrative, a Homeric reading of it not only does not deviate from, but in

316 Fletcher, Judith. "Women's Space and Wingless Words in The Odyssey." *Phoenix*, Vol. 62, No. 1/2, 2008, Pp. 77–91. See pp. 77.

317 See Afsaḫzād, chapter 40, pp. 421.

603	For she knew that by way of sight, love leaves impact in the heart of the lover.	۶۰۳	زان که می دانست کز راه نظر عشق دارد در دل عاشق اثر
604	Only through the sight of heart-wrenching beauties, does love rest in the hearts.	۶۰۴	جز به دیدار بتان دلپذیر عشق در دلها نگردد جایگیر

318 The women in Odyssey, see Laurel Fulkerson's "Epic Ways of Killing a Woman: Gender and Transgression in 'Odyssey,' pp. 335-350.

319 Women and lust are condemned throughout the poem as the common belief that the King and the Sage had to live with. See footnotes 61, 62, and 63.

fact, helps us understand, the ideas and the tradition embedded in such tales, which reached the medieval Persian poets through the commentaries of the well-read scholars of the time.

Conclusions

More than a century and a half after Ibn Sīnā made a puzzling reference to the names Salāmān and Absāl in his *al-Ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt,* al-Rāzī provided his theological interpretation of the names in his commentary on the *al-Ishārāt*. Ṭūsī was the second author to write his commentaries on the *al-Ishārāt*, and he explored the idea that Ibn Sīnā did not invent the names, and that there was a famous tale bearing the names Salāmān and Absāl that was known among the Arabs and transmitted by Isḥāḳ suggesting its Greek origin. Ṭūsī referred to Ibn Sīnā's version of the tale and to Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ's translation from the Greek into Arabic, the latter being the oldest referenced version of the tale and possibly the source for Ibn Sīnā and Jāmī. Yet, Isḥāḳ's version of the translated tale has not come down to us. It is indeed Ṭūsī's reference to the Greek version of the tale that makes the tale of Salāmān and Absāl more intriguing, and, more importantly, highlights Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* a fascinating case-study. Jāmī projects the knowledge of the fifteenth-century literary take on the subject of hybridization of cultures and spaces that are Greek and/or Persian in essence.

I would like to suggest that existing scholarship on Jāmī's authorial intention results in inadequate and/or far-fetched conclusions. It does not do justice to its origin and the odd themes it covers, and the way in which Jāmī projects his poetics. It is enlightening to analyze Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* in parallel to existing research that disclose within diverse poetical traditions the tension between love and rationality in a 'indicative method'.

Moreover, despite the most unconventional yet significant erotic love between the prince and his wet-nurse, the tale of *Salāmān u Absāl* is placed in Jāmī's *Haft Awrang*, which is a collection of poetry on Sufi mysticism. The passion and love of Salāmān and Absāl stand as a rival against the King and the Sage's rational beliefs, as is illustrated in the name given to the place of hiding "جزیره خرم" *the Island*

of Pleasure, where Salāmān escapes with Absāl. This space is intentionally described as a place of concealment, far from the Kingdom but also far from the eyes of the King and the Sage. Jāmī highlights the tension between love and rationality through separation and migration. This unavoidable love between Salāmān and Absāl exists as long as the interplay of sight (active seeing) persists. It seems that Jāmī has incorporated the allegory of *Vāmiq u ʿAzrā* on the importance of the eyes and the seeing of the beloved, which I will analyze in the next chapter when I talk about 'active seeing'.[320] Making use of this tension between love and rationality/intellect as the main meaning behind the poem, while sight is at the birth of this tension, I examine Jāmī's poetry and poetics of the eye and vision.

Finally, I explored the Greek or anti-Greek origin of the tale. The last section of this chapter, which focused on an intertextual/comparative analysis with Homer's *Odyssey* expands the analysis of the tale beyond the limits of a political and historical reading. Instead, this comparative analysis invites a close reading of Jāmī's poem in parallel with other literary traditions.

[320] See Moḥammad-Jaʿfar Maḥjub, "*Wāmeq o ʿAḏrā*-ye ʿOnṣori," *Soḵān* 18, 1968, pp. 43-52, 131-42.

Chapter III: "Poetry of the Eye" and the Centrality of the Sense of Sight

This chapter is comprised of four main sections: the metaphysics of sight; 'poetry of the eye;' a discussion of the first chapter of *Salāmān u Absāl*; and Jāmī's depiction of sight – active, passive and guided – throughout the poem. All four of these sections result from a close analysis of the poem and an examination of Jāmī's intended meaning as it is conveyed through his poetic expression. Neither purely philosophical nor purely mystical (Sufi), the poetic language of *Salāmān u Absāl* results from the amalgamation of philosophy and mysticism, and its meaning is explicable through Jāmī's poetic imagery and tropes. I begin the chapter by discussing Jāmī's metaphysics of sight in relation to the physical world. I do this by examining the relevant and comprehensive way in which Jāmī explains his theory of sight in the poem. I will then explain what I mean when I use the phrase 'poetry of the eye' to describe Jāmī's poetic language. Next, I focus on the mathnavī's chapter one, which begins with abstract definitions and associations. And finally, in the fourth section I will discuss the different forms of sight that Jāmī employs in the narrative to convey the scrupulous relationship between love, knowledge and sight.

Jāmī unravels these complications at the beginning of his poem by relating to God's emanation with the physical existence of the beautiful faces of the beloveds who are visually perceived to be delightful and whose beauty causes the event of love at first sight. I will then discuss how Jāmī in *chapter one* introduces his theoretical framework for gaining knowledge of God through sight, love, and beauty. I will then examine how Jāmī uses sight as an allusion. I will do this by highlighting Jāmī's definition of the vision of the Divine and showing how Jāmī uses active and passive sight in very specific ways, which inspire different forms of love and knowledge. I cite specific examples, which reveal sight to be the central motif of the entire narrative.

The Metaphysics of Sight

> "All men naturally desire knowledge. An indication of this is our esteem for the senses; for apart from their use we esteem them for their own sake, and most of all the sense of sight. For not only with a view to action, but even when no action is contemplated, we prefer sight to practically all the other senses. The reason of this is that of all the sense sight best helps us to know things, and reveals many distinctions. Aristotle's *Metaphysics.*[321]

Aristotle's *Metaphysics* begins with a discussion of human's innate desire to know/gain knowledge of the things that are perceived to be delightful to the senses. The sense of sight, above all other senses, is given the highest esteem due to both its functionality of seeing and perception and because sight/seeing is associated with light. It is light that helps us bring forth differences between

---

321 Tredennick, H., & Armstrong, G. (1933). *The Metaphysics / Aristotle; with an English translation by Hugh Tredennick.* (The Loeb classical library; 271, 287). London: Heinemann. We are not sure whether Jāmī ever read Plato and/or Aristotle in translation or if he was ever directly aware of their work, particularly Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Nonetheless, Jāmī mentions both "افلاطون" *Plato* and "ارسطو" *Aristotle* in his *Haft Awrang* in several occasions. They also appear in the narrative-poem of *Salāmān va Absāl*, in the section where Salāmān replies to the Sage's counsel (Chapter 52, lns. 718-732, p. 428) of letting go of Absāl. In Chapter 54, line 741 p. 429, Salāmān says: "On your account, Plato's soul is contented with you, / and may a hundred Aristoteles submit to your command. //…" Since Avicenna's *Metaphysics* is based on his knowledge of Aristotle' *Metaphysics* and other Neoplatonic writings known in the Arabic world during his time and as it is certain that Jāmī was very well read and aware of Avicenna's *Metaphysics* (and other works), it is fair to say that Jāmī knew of the valuable knowledge of Plato and Aristotle through Avicenna and other earlier Persian/Arabic Islamic philosophers. See. Gutas 2014. Since Avicenna's *Metaphysics* includes "theology, cosmology and angelology, and provides a foundation for physics, psychology, prophetology and eschatology," (see plato.stanford.edu/entries/ibn-sina-metaphysics), there is no clear discussion on the human senses except on the existence explained through the theory of emanation. The only hypothesis/argument to make Jāmī's interests in the centrality of the sense of sight (for its physical mechanism of perceiving the Divine) would be that he is the first acclaimed translator (and transmitter) of the tale of *Salāmān u Absāl* especially considering the major implication of the Neoplatonic thoughts on the emanation of the Divine in the human world. This story must have had (well before Avicenna, who also mentions the tale in his *Remarks*) an important connection to what Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq (Latin name Johannitius) (d. 873) was working on during his time. Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq wrote the innovative "Ten Treatises on the Eye" that crystalized the knowledge of ophthalmology based on Galen's knowledge and commentaries on the eye; he explains the eye's anatomy in detail and describes the diseases of the eye along with their symptoms and treatments. By 1500s, during Jāmī's time, physicians and scholars (most importantly poets) were knowledgeable enough to relate to the eye and its importance. It is my hypothesis that Jāmī very attentively and intentionally asserts this importance of the eye/sight at the heart of his poem (and of other poems in the *Haft Awrang*). Beyond eyesight is vision, the otherworldly seeing of the unseen, which is where the main philosophy of Sufism (mystical Islam) rests. Such vision is discussed throughout Sufi literature. Almost all of the prolific scholarship on Sufism incorporates discussions on the importance of vision. For two of the most recent works see Kazuyo Murata's *Beauty in Sufism: the Teachings of Ruzbihan Baqli*, 2017 and Cyrus Ali Zargar's *Sufi Aesthetics: Beauty, Love, and the Human Form in the Writing of Ibn 'Arabi and 'Iraqi*, 2013. While we might over-read vision in Sufi literature, and often under-read or neglect the whole interest in the physical world and human experiences, medieval Persian poets were equally fascinated by eyes/sight. Human love affairs begin with love at first sight. Poetry's main tension and climax is this human experience of falling in love. It is indeed this act of falling in love through sight that conjectures love and knowledge in hostility and/or hospitality, which is at the heart of my concern in this current chapter on the centrality of the sight.

things, and therefore, light might be a synonym for knowledge. Pondering the bigger questions of human being/existence and the Being (Truth), philosophers and poets contributed through different modes of expression to activate, engage and regulate thinking about the purpose of knowledge, in and of itself. In his turn, on the question of metaphysics and to get to the root of meaning, Jāmī composes *Salāmān u Absāl* to convey his knowledge through what appears to be a mysterious, unconventional, 'grotesque,' and even unpleasant tale. At the language level, Jāmī's thinking appears complicated to the extent that it results in incoherency and disputable reasoning. Later we will see how Jāmī diverges from the extremes of mystical or philosophical points of view to instead use visually appealing images that best serve his poetic expression on the physical world. Nonetheless, the consistency and logic of Jāmī's thinking is captured in the most intriguing, yet easily overlooked motif of the sense of sight.

The metaphysics of sight as understood through an act of love is complicated and challenged by the intellect, and the entire narrative of *Salāmān u Absāl* deals with this conflict, which can be described as the hostility and the tension between love and knowledge through the act of seeing. Yet Jāmī takes the audience by surprise in the way he is handling this conflict between the event of love and the realm of intellect with sight as the isthmus. One example of this is when Jāmī relates the experience of union that occurs on *the Island of Pleasure,*[322] which is initiated through sight/eyes and results in the experience of love due to physical desire, and thus a passionate love. However, beyond the sight of lovers (such as within the Kingdom), intellect dominates. Jāmī oscillates between these two spaces to highlight the importance of sight. I will attempt to explain this dichotomy in detail in

[322] In Chapter 58 (lns. 785-824), Jāmī narrates Salāmān and Absāl's journey on the sea in search of a serener island, where they can be alone, calling it *the island of pleasure*. In the narrative, this scene takes place immediately after Salāmān's father and the Sage have been informed about Salāmān's preoccupation with Absāl's love, to detriment of his Kingdom. They therefore start advising him against such a love, and women in general. Desiring to escape their advice and criticism, Salāmān decides to leave the Kingdom for the sea and the island so he can be together with Absāl. This plot represents one of the major digressions in the narrative, relating to an intense love progressing due to sight and for the sake of sight. This entails a reliance on constant gazing at the beloved and remaining in close proximity to her. The sight in this chapter indicates an uninterrupted integration of physical bodies, and Jāmī develops this discussion through evocative images that spark the reader's imagination.

the upcoming sections on active and passive sight by closely and critically examining Jāmī's visual images.

The entire narrative and its allegories (and other allusions) are visually stimulating. The complexities of the narrative encompass the characters, their emotions (such as happiness in form of agony), and their objectives. This chapter includes an analysis of the parts of the narrative that discuss the poem's major dichotomy and conflict, which is the compatibility and integration of sight with vision. In doing so, the discussion advances our understanding of the following concepts: how sight is employed, — whether it is active, passive, or guided; beauty in relation to Absāl; and love in relation to Salāmān. Jāmī obsessively alludes to the importance of sight to gain knowledge and experience a vision of divine beauty that can also be expressed as union with the Divine. What do we mean, therefore, when we talk about the "poetry of the eye," which connotes sense perception?

The tradition of poetry of the eye, or the centrality of sight as the main triggering element in the event of love (be it passionate or spiritual in nature) is not only uniquely attested to in the poetry of Jāmī, and especially in his narrative-poem, *Salāmān u Absāl*. Jāmī's predecessors had dealt with the phenomenon of divine love that is manifested in the physical world in the image of the (earthly) beloved in their lyrical poetry. Some of these celebrated poets are Sa'di and Ḥāfeẓ, who had already paved the path to the poetics of synchronized physical desire and divine beauty, or simply the poetics of theo-eroticism, to borrow Domenico Ingenito's phrasing, in their amatory poetry.[323] As an imitator

[323] See Domenico Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty*, 2020. pp. 220-223. I am immensely grateful to Dr. Ingenito for giving me the permission to use his pre-publication monograph as an important case study in revising this thesis. His work has enhanced my understanding of what the poetry of these poets does on a more theological (mystical aspects) as well as with an interjection of philosophical underpinnings when certain poetic imageries are conveying intense physical sensuality, but also are a projection of divine manifestation. My work also focuses on a similar trajectory of a synthetization of the knowledge learnt from traditional learnings on integrating Sufi topics and by making innovations at the level of poetic imagery and content that are complex at the level of intellect. The only difference between our works would be the genre of poetry considered as the case study, Ingenito's work focuses on lyrical poetry (mainly qasida and ghazal), while my focus in this thesis is on studying Jāmī's narrative poetry, masnavī, the poems that tell stories and thus systematically progress to a conclusion and thus completion of ideas, be it on the surface or in content, as Jāmī puts it.

of their poetry and poetics, Jāmī, using his scholastic and systematic incursions and approaches, plays with the visual contemplation of the beautiful face to captivate the reader by oscillating between physical desire and spiritual meanings on the nature of beauty that impacts the external senses as well as the intellect.[324] This lover's gaze or the beholder seeing the beloved as "the practice of visual contemplation constituted a predominant aesthetic agenda that accompanied Persian lyricism until its early modern evolution, which corresponded with the late-15th-century transition from the Timurid to the Safavid period."[325] As a fifteenth century poet of the Naqšbandiya Sufi order, Jāmī establishes the image of the b/Beloved (in this case Absāl) on the basis of her vitality as a sensible body that can experience and also provide experience at the sensory level, which can then lead the soul (Salāmān)to the vision of divine beauty, which is attainable in the intellect. Based on Ingenito's interpretation of what Sa'di might postulate that, "the vision of God within the world is primarily introvertive and, as such, it rejects all possibilities of 'cognizing' the divine presence by the means of forms and images,"[326] Jāmī's vision of God/Divine is purely intellectual that requires the 'retentive imagination' to correspond with 'compositive imagination' in order to arrive at 'estimative faculty.' Therefore, the appearance of the celestial Venus requires the sensory and "imaginal form" of Absāl in order to consolidate the otherworldly existence of the intellectual perception of love and beauty for Salāmān to fall in love with the divine beauty via the inner senses. That being said, Jāmī consolidates both aspects of the contemplative modality, which are the introvertive and cognitive ways of visualizing the divine, on the process of intellection decreed on Salāmān by the Sage.[327]

[324] For a comparative reading of how poets before Jāmī dealt with the idea of sensory experiences and world of spirituality, see Domenico Iginato's forthcoming work *Beholding* Beauty, particularly the second part on sight and desire in the works of Sa'di, pp. 207-386.
[325] Ibid. pp. 209
[326] Ibid. pp. 233
[327] Ibid.

The Poetry of the Eye

"Sight involves rational processes and it promises the experience of love"[328]

In chapter eleven of the poem, "در سبب نظم کتاب و باعث عرض این خطاب" Jāmī offers a few reasons for composing *Salāmān u Absāl*, which include 1. old-age, 2. matters of losing his focus, 3. his soul's enslavement to rhythm and rhyme in praise of "دلدار من" *my B/beloved*, 4. and most importantly for the sake of knowledge he likes to share (ln. 175). Jāmī quotes his predecessor Rūmī, whose *Masnavī-yi Maulavī* inspired the composition of *Salāmān u Absāl*, on mining treasures from "مخزن اسرار" his *treasure of secrets*.[329]

The addressee Jāmī had in mind was either the beloved Sulṭān Ya'qūb, to whom the poem is dedicated, or the Beloved Divine. Jāmī makes it clear that the heart is the abode of God' manifestation, "*He will make that abode [the heart] His place of manifestation*" (lns. 178). God's manifestation is defined in the form of knowledge and awareness. While Jāmī claims that whoever has a knowledge of such kind of abode, "غیر ازین معنی کجا افتد پسند" *how* [then] *could any other meaning* [for them] *be acceptable*? (ln. 179).

---

[328] Norman Klassen, *Chaucer on Love Knowledge, and Sight*. 1995. pp. 20. Klassen relates to Augustine's view of such vision of illumination, and he gives a clear distinction between sensual knowledge and intellectual knowledge.

[329] Jāmī completes his thought through this epigrammatic interjection by quoting from the *Masnavī-yi Maulavī*. These lines serve as Jāmī's composition of an aphorism, allowing him to condense 'much wisdom into few words' to communicate the intention behind his poem. For definitions of epigram and aphorism, see Oxford Reference. Jāmī drew much inspiration from *Niẓāmī* Gandjawī" *Ḵamsa* (Quintet) in his *Haft owrang,* and there is clear evidence to suggest that Jāmī employs such *imitation* both in the structure as well as in language of his poems. For instance, this well-known phrase مخزن اسرار *treasure of secrets* clearly is a reference to Niẓāmī's masnavī *of* Maḵzan al-asrār.

173	There is a strong relevance to my situation in the following couplets from the *Masnavī-yi Maulavī*.	نسبتی دارد به حال من قوی این دو بیت از مثنوی مولوی	۱۷۳
174	'How come the art of verse and rhyming come to me, after the foundations of my sanity are destroyed".	کیف یاتی النظم لی والقافیه بعد ما ضاعت أصول العافیه	۱۷۴
175	I think of rhyme, and my beloved says to me, 'don't contemplate anything but the sight of me'.	قافیه اندیشم ودلدار من گویدم مندیش جز دیدار من	۱۷۵
176	Who is the Beloved, the One who abodes in all hearts, the sum of souls is His treasure of secrets.	کیست دلدار آن که دلها دار اوست جمله جانها مخزن اسرار اوست	۱۷۶

See Afsaḥzod, pp. 399-400. Some hypothesise that the story of *Salāmān u Absāl* as a mystical mirror for princes that "is partly based on the first tale [the story of the king's falling in love with a handmaiden and buying her] in the *Masnavī-yi Maulavī*," see Chad Lingwood, 2014, pp. 22. Though there might be similar tropes and tension in the narrative line, yet I see no parallel with *Salāmān u Absāl* in terms of its framework as a narrative and as a poem considering the mystery behind the tale itself and the names themselves. Jāmī allows this mystery to thrive in the narrative by calling the entire poem *Salāmān u Absāl* in the same manner as tales that involves other pair of lovers such *as Leyli u Majnun* and *Yusof u Zoleyḵā.*

These lines seem to state that Jāmī is disposed to explain love and knowledge as entwined in the heart where the conjunction of "ذکر" *remembrance* and "فکر" *thought* occurs in the form of contemplation (ln. 181). In this juxtaposition of *remembrance* with *thought*, Jāmī implies "a syllogistic cognitive act" in which, by intellectualizing one's sensory perception of the external world, one is led to the knowledge of the unseen. Based on Ibn Sīnā's theories, in this process of intellectualization, the internal faculties of Common Sense, Imagery, Imagination, and Estimation become active.[330] By composing *Salāmān u Absāl* in old age, Jāmī claims that he employs his remembrance (a counterpart to Imagery or sense perception) as well as "syllogistic thinking" that of Estimation (the highest faculty) to draw an inference for new knowledge and cognition by remaining in "گفت و گو" *conversation* (through poetry) with/about his Beloved. This act of remaining in conversation attests to Jāmī's dialectical processes on the nature of divine creation in the physical world by the necessity of the Imagination, which becomes the Cognitive faculty.[331] But where does the eye/sight fit into such a conversation?

Jāmī's integration of this knowledge of the physical (outer) with that of the spiritual (inner) can be explained due to his close observance of the Naqšbandiya beliefs of the Sufi order. Hamid Algar relates to the distinctive practices of the Naqšbandiya Sufi order and its close association with the teachings and writings of Ebn al-ʿArabi's known as *al-Šayḵ al-akbar*, "the Greatest Master."[332]

> "Also distinctive and welcome to Jāmī was an eschewal of many of the customary features of Sufism, such as the cultivation of visionary states; delighting in the paranormal states and feats known as *karamat*… Then, too, it was by no means hostile to the cultivation of formal scholarship, abandonment thereof being a temporary and purgative measure, as we have seen in Jāmī's own case; the simultaneous pursuit of outer and inner knowledge characterizes all the major figures in the history of the order."[333]

---

330 Domenico Ingenito. *Beholding Beauty*. pp. 282-83. Also see Rapoport's dissertation, pp. 342-350. Also see McGinnis, *Avicenna*. pp. 115-116.
331 Ibid.
332 Jāmī's affiliation to the Naqšbandiya circle and his popularization of the doctrines of Ebn al-ʿArabi is discussed in Chapter I of my thesis, see "Jāmī and Ebn al-ʿArabi".
333 Hamid Algar, *Jami*. 2013. pp. 88-89.

Throughout the narrative we will see how Jāmī's intentionally conveys "the simultaneous pursuit of outer and inner knowledge" by integrating the knowledge acquired from the events of the physical matters (through sight) with the knowledge of the otherworldly matters of vision and intellect. In other words, the form (outer knowledge/sight) is as important as the meaning (inner knowledge/vision).[334] In employing his scholarship (in the form of poetry in this case) and to relate to the vision not only in Sufi terminologies but also in philosophical terms, this poetry of the eye is anyone's immediate encounter with the physical via sense perception. That said, Jāmī in *Salāmān u Absāl* contests a different way of conveying the teachings of the Naqšbandiya order through the discussion of sight, which later deciphers as the vision.

The eye/sight is about perceiving the world that immediately surrounds us, "it promises the experience of love," and poetry is the art of mimicking and inscribing the things seen and desired. For example, in Chapter 12, Jāmī's recalls the parable of *Leyli o Majnun,* which tells the story of the lover and poet, Majnun, who lives in the desert in isolation so as to evolve his carnal (erotic) love for Leyli into his spiritual love (related to Divine). Majnun writes poetry for his beloved Leyli by inscribing her name in the sand.[335] Jāmī's interpretation of this story equates Majnun making love to Leyli with

---

[334] This dichotomy of form and meaning is a common theme in Sufi poetry and literature. See, William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, 1984. In his poem, Jāmī employs a similar discussion of this dichotomy between the form and meaning throughout the narrative in discussing oppositions that are either hostile or hospitable and yet remain integrated. For example, Jāmī leaves it up to the reader to make a distinction between the surface and the meaning the story in the penultimate chapter of his poem. See Chapter II, section "Jāmī's Indicative Method." Also see Chapter V.

[335] The inclusion of the parable of *Leyli o Majnun* adds to the didactic and overall purpose of writing poetry as a means to remain in conversation with the B/beloved.

195	Said: 'I'm giving a description of Leyli's beauty, in order to set my own mind at ease.	گفت شرح حسن لیلی می دهم خاطر خود را تسلی می دهم	۱۹۵
196	I write her name first, and afterwards I imprint a letter of love and fidelity.	می نویسم نامش اول و زقفا می نگارم نامه عشق و وفا	۱۹۶
197	I don't have anything except her name in my hand, from that, my low self-esteem finds eminence.	نیست جز نامی ازو در دست من زان بلندی یافت قدر پست من	۱۹۷
198	I have not tasted a drop from her cup I make love with her name.	نا چشیده جرعه ای ز جام او عشقبازی می کنم با نام او	۱۹۸

See Afsaḥzod, pp. 400. Also see Julie Scott Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, pp. 159 on the state of Majnun's insanity and his willing to disclose/display his emotions in public.

Majnun inscribing his poetry in the sand. Majnun is portrayed as an eccentric lover. And thus his gesture of writing poetry on the sand is an act of expressing love in the form of an active love-making. This latter (imagery) statement provokes eroticism, while it elevates the discourse of spiritual love.[336]

In this simple image of Majnun inscribing poetry on the sand, there is the interplay of sight, love, and knowledge. This is the first analogy for Jāmī's intense interest in the intersection of sight, love, and knowledge in creating poetry, which is not unique to *Salāmān and Absāl* but relevant to any love poem. Sight is the main gateway to knowing and to love, as later on we will see how Jāmī relates to Absāl's active sight that initiates love in Salāmān's heart. Indeed, there is a nuance in Jāmī's guidance and progression toward such love. Either the prime trigger is knowledge which leads to love, or it is a gesture of love which guides toward knowledge (such as in the case with the development of Salāmān's love for Absāl). For example, Jāmī's the most famous romantic narrative poem, *Yusof o Zoleyk̲ā,* begins with Zoleyk̲ā seeing Yusof in her dreams. This dream (in the form of a vision) brings her knowledge of Yusof's beauty, which causes her to fall in love with him.[337] Here, the dream functions as a source of knowledge. How is this knowledge via dreams attainable? According to Aristotelian thoughts on dreams, dreams enlighten us by stimulating our intellect or, in the case of Jāmī, our imagination. Sense perception, however, is not necessarily actively engaged in dreams.

> "[W]hen the eyes are closed in sleep, are unable to see, and the analogous statement is true of the other senses, so that manifestly we perceive nothing when asleep; we may conclude that it

[336] For one of the most relevant and intriguing works on the traditional way of describing spiritual love through carnal love, see Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī's collection of *nasībs* (erotic and amatory prelude to longer poems) titled *Tarjumān al-Ashwāq, the Interpretation of Desires,* trans. Reynold A. Nicholson, 1911. This intertwined nature of spiritual and erotic love is not unique to classical or medieval Persian literature or Arabic literature; it is also very relevant to English literature. See Norman Klassen's "the Hostility of Love and Knowledge: Sigh in Medieval Love Poetry," pp. 75-114 and "the Hospitality of Love and Knoweldge, I: The Shared Language and Shared Ideas of Erotic Love and Spiritual Love," pp. 115-151.

[337] Afsaẖzod, *Yusof o Zoleyk̲ā*, pp. 49-50, lines 608-642. When in pursuit of Yusof, Zoleyk̲ā seems to invite sleep and thus a second and a third dream. In the second dream, (lns. 768- 841, pp. 56-60) she enquires about "کیی تو" *who are you* and "کدامین خاندانی" *which familial line DO you belong to* (ln. 795). In the third dream (lns. 842-894, pp. 60-62), Zoleyk̲ā becomes knowledgeable about who Yusof is and where he comes from, after Yusof himself enlightens Zoleyk̲ā that: "عزیز مصرم و مصرم مقام است" *I am the Azīz-e Misr* (the ruler of Egypt) *and my destination is Egypt* (ln. 870).

is not by sense-perception we perceive a dream."[338]

Justine Landau explains that according to Aristotle's discussion, "Imagination [which 'seems therefore to be the name of our capacity to have *phantasmata*, mental images'] by contrast, may well function independently from any present sensation, as in dreams, when mental images appear to us while our eyes are closed."[339] That being said, the function of imagination is to formulate dreams, as a faculty to communicate perception that might not have any existence in external form and is a result of the internal senses. Ibn Sīnā describes this faculty as 'compositive imagination' for to have the power of "combining and separating [that] can give rise to such fantastical images [such as seeing oneself 'in the future sating some desire, whether for food, a mate, or the like']…It , moreover, gives rise to dreams, whether daydreams or sleeping dreams. Indeed, in humans it is that faculty that vocalizes the words that one hears when one is engaged in internal discourse, and, as one might guess, it also imagines certain shapes, figures, or other images that one might use when trying to solve problems in mathematics or even other practical sorts."[340]

Whether be due to Yusof's actual existence or not, Zoleyk̲ā is certain about a vision of Yusof's existence via the dreams she sees. In a sequence of dreams, Zoleyk̲ā solves the mystery of this "imaginative knowledge" by initiating a dialogue within her dreams with Yusof, who upon being asked, opens up a conversation that leads to Zoleyk̲ā's decision to travel to Egypt for her search.[341] This functionality of the dream as a gateway to the knowledge of Yusof enacts as a work of "practical

[338] Aristotle, *On Dreams*. Trans. J. I. Beare. *The Internet Classics Archive*. 2013.
[339] Justine Landau, "Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and Poetic Imagination in The Arabic and Persian Philosophical Tradition." pp. 25.
[340] McGinnis*, Avicenna*. pp. 116

[341] see Afsaẖzod, *Yusof o Zoleyk̲ā*, pp. 49-50, lines 608-642. For a contrasting discussion on why would Zoleyk̲ā's dreams, I particularly consider, would be consider 'imaginative knowledge' and not 'intellective knowledge' for its acquiring of 'particular forms'; See Rapoport. *The Life and Afterlife of the Rational Soul*. pp. 172.

intellect" for Zoleyk̲ā, for she is capable of internally seeing and hearing him, and ultimately being guided inwardly.[342] Here, in this framework, Zoleyk̲ā (unlike Absāl) has been portrayed as the rational soul in relation to this kind of an imagination, for she is using 'Testing and Proving and syllogistic reasoning…[to] obtain something from the Unseen in the state of sleep.'[343]

Through this brief allegorical reference, Jāmī conveys his philosophy of intellection in the realm of dreams as of the work of imagination that enables the intellect to acquire the knowledge of the unknown—which in this case it is not necessarily the unseen, for Yusof is seen—and thus for the unknown to become known.[344] Yet, the main force of this knowledge is love experienced in between reality and dreams. Therefore, throughout the narrative, Jāmī discreetly follows the traditional medieval poetic trope about the lover seeing the beautiful face of the beloved, whose beauty pierces through the lover's glance and sets fire to the heart. The intense use of visual imagery and the emphasis on sight are not accidental. Jāmī's intention is that "this level of sight involves both an increased capacity to know and, ultimately, an increased capacity to love."[345] Jāmī conveys the intensity of Zoleyk̲ā's love for Yusof by the fact that, upon his death, she pokes her eyes out and dies after losing her sight.[346] With Zoleyk̲ā's ultimate blindness and death, the story/poem also ends.

---

[342] See Avicenna's *Daneshname,* Khurāsānī, and Khurāsānī, Aḥmad. *Dānishnamah-i 'alā'i, Yā Ḥikmat-i Bū 'Alī*. Ṭihrān: Shirkat-i Maṭbū'āt, 1936. Print. Pp. 68-69. Also see Rapoport. *The Life and Afterlife of the Rational Soul*. pp. 172-73.

[343] On the relationship between the rational soul and the imagination, see Rapoport. *The Life and Afterlife of the Rational Soul*. pp. 172-173. Here I am citing the translation by Rapoport in his dissertation.

[344] In this very allegory, Jāmī establishes how Zoleyk̲ā starts a conversation with Yusof in her dreams, thus learn all that she needs to recognize Yusof instantly when she sees him for real in Egypt. Jāmī's poem includes a few other instances that deal with the significance of dreams that stimulate not only the intellect but also sense perception, as can be seen in my discussion of "vision of vision" in Chapter IV 'Poetry of the Eye in Translation'.

[345] Klassen, pp.6.

[346] The first time Zoleyk̲ā's loses her sight, it is due to her extreme grief and desperate weeping and longing for Yusof. Her sight is restored by Yusof's miracle, but she makes herself blind again after Yusof's death.

3715	When her pain and yearning reached their limits, she became lost in the practice of kissing the dust.	چو درد و حسرتش از حد برون شد به رسم خاکبوسی سرنگون شد	۳۷۱۵
3716	Into her eyes, she entered her fingers, and pulled off the pearly narcissus from the bed of narcissus.	به چشمان خود انگشتان در آورد در نرگس را ز نرگسدان بر اورد	۳۷۱۶
3717	She tossed them on the ground from the skull, "for sowing narcissus is better on the dust.	به خاک وی فکند از کاسه سر که نرگس کاشتن در خاک بهتر	۳۷۱۷
3718	When my eye is disunited from the flower of your face, what use is there for my eye in this garden?".	چو باشد ازگل رویت جدا چشم چه کار آید در ین بستان مرا چشم	۳۷۱۸

Jāmī's poetic take on the subject of sight includes the traditional view on the vision of the divine, which entails the idea of physical being or natural philosophy, but also draws references to the unseen,[347] as well as Jāmī's own ideas about sight in its form of physical seeing. The development of this complex relationship between the physical world and the Divine makes Jāmī's poetry compelling. It is the vision of the Divine expressed in poetry through descriptions of physical sight that constitutes my theory of the 'poetry of the eye.' Poetry of the eye is an attempt to understand the hostile system of love and knowledge through sight that brings about conflicts and risks, which makes the experience of love more challenging.

A Dialectical Preface: Chapter One of the Mathnavī of *Salāmān u Absāl*

The twenty-one *bayts* of chapter one function as a dialectical preface to the poem. In this chapter, Jāmī introduces the essence of his philosophical claim through the phenomena of love, beauty, and sight in the most human form possible in order to establish the main thesis of his poem, which is "یکتایی" *becoming-one* with the Divine so as to liberate oneself from "دویی" *duality/two* and oppositions. Therefore, this dialectical preface requires a dialectical analysis of Jāmī's logical explanation of union in opposition to duality. I first examine how Jāmī defines love and beauty as all-encompassing of God's creation or God's fallen "سایه" *shadow* on earth. I then look at how Jāmī makes the storylines about humans experiencing love in physical form more eventful and intriguing. This is where Jāmī explains the importance of the eyes seeing the beautiful faces, which I term "poetry of the

---

… ...

3721 On his tomb she rested her blood-stained face, ۳۷۲۱ به خاکش روی خون آلود بنهاد
in desolation she kissed the earth and died. به مسکینی زمین بوسید وجان داد

Zoleyk̲ās second blindness aligns with the fact that Yusof's father (Jacob) also goes blind due to grief for Yusof's disappearance, only to regain his sight to see Yusof's face and realizing he is alive. See Afsaẖzod, *Yusof o Zoleyk̲a*, pp. 194.

[347] On the traditional Sufi take on the idea of vision of the divine within the Islamic discourse see Coppens. "A Vision at the Utmost Boundary" in *Seeing God in Sufi Qur'an Commentaries*. pp. 227-255. Also see Domenico Ingenito. *Beholding Beauty*.

eye," as Jāmī indicates the experience of physical love, which, at the end of the poem, inspires the vision of union with divine beauty.

Jāmī begins his poem by praising God, which is the conventional form of prefacing any poem directly addressing God in the second person of the possessive adjective case ("یادت" *in Your memory*), or in the second person pronoun as "تو" *You* (lns. 1-2) as an indication of the Unseen but All-present. In the same lines, he juxtaposes human lovers contemplating God in remembrance of one another. With these juxtaposition and oscillation between God's "لطف" *grace* and the beloved's [the human female's] "حسن" *beauty*, Jāmī presents the phenomena of "عشق" *love* and "حسن" *beauty* as human characteristics created by God. Jāmī situates God as remaining hidden behind the "پرده" *the veil* (lns, 8-12), and retains this throughout the poem.[348] Jāmī affirms this belief that beauty and love belong to God and makes clear that this is the truth by using the phrase "و بس" *nothing more* (ln. 7). I examine how Jāmī orchestrates this shift from praising God to describing human love and knowledge (of the beautiful faces of the beloveds) and human concerns and events.

Jāmī begins *Salāmān u Absāl* with a *bayt* on the concept of memory, specifically invoking the memory of God (ln. 1).[349]

1	With *Your* memory the souls of lovers are refreshed, with the water of Your grace the tongues of lovers are moistened.	۱	ای به یادت تازه جان عاشقان ز اب لطفت تر زبان عاشقان
2	From You a shadow has fallen upon the world, it has become the wealth to the beautiful faces.	۲	از تو برعالم فتاده سایه ای خوبرویان را شده سرمایه ای
3	The lovers are falling for that shadow, they are melancholic due to that wealth.	۳	عاشقان افتاده آن سایه اند مانده در سودا ازان سرمایه اند

[348]Jāmī associates a mystical reading of the veil to the essence of the beauty and the appearance of the beautiful. Functioning as an in-between (the isthmus between) the Divine and the human. In this way, *the veil* as an apparent beauty seems to cover God's beauty. That said, the veil is a semblance of God's beauty, not necessarily (a manifestation/incarnation of) God's beauty.
"Beauty appears as such only in what is veiled…Beauty is not a semblance, not a veil covering something else. It itself is not appearance but purely essence—one which, of course, remains essentially identical to itself only when veiled. Therefore, even if everywhere else semblance is deception the beautiful semblance is the veil thrown over that which is necessarily most veiled. For the beautiful is neither the veil nor the veiled object but rather the object in its veil."[348] Walter Benjamin's discussion of mystical language on the innate mysterious relationship of beauty and truth seems to point on the undividable link between semblance and essential beauty since "relation between semblance (Schein) and essential beauty is beauty itself." Anges Heller, "The Concept of the Beautiful," 2012, 136. *Selected writings*. Vol. 1, 1913-1926 / Walter Benjamin; edited by Marcus Bullock and Michale W. Jennings. Pp 350-51.
[349] Ibid, p. 321.

Jāmī implies that in the remembrance of God, the lovers remember each other, and, vice-versa, in the remembrance of one another (as lovers), the remembrance of God is likewise provoked. Thus, he implies that the existence of God and the remembrance of God are closely associated with the existence of the lovers, and the memories they share. The second half of the line clearly refers to "تر زبان" *moistened tongue* as the speech of the lovers, and this speech is also inspired by the grace of God (ln. 1). The poem integrates Neoplatonic philosophy,[350] and thus Jāmī uses the poetic image of God's *shadow*, which is closely associated with the phenomena of emanation, on earth to describe the lovers at the center of the *mathnavī* when he is defining why the memory of God is relevant when it comes to the pairs of lovers. The emanation of God's creation (fallen like a shadow) becomes a wealth to the beautiful faces (the beloveds).[351] The lovers are the ones who fall in love with the shadow of God. God's shadow (beauty) is fallen on earth, as a reference to the beautiful faces, and "عاشقان" *the lovers* fall for that beauty and beautiful faces.[352] Love (as a hospitable feeling) is a result of witnessing beautiful faces. And likewise, "سودا" *melancholy* (here it is used as a counterpart to hostility as a result of not finding their immediate union with the beloveds) is the result of interacting and intermingling with those same beautiful faces through sight.

---

[350] Nasr, S. (1964). *Three Muslim sages: Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Ibn 'Arabi* (Harvard studies in world religions). Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. Also, Fakhry, Majid's *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, 2nd ed., London: Longmans; New York: Columbia University Press (1983). Also, *Al-Farabi: Founder of Islamic Neoplatonism: His Life, Works and Influence by Majid Fakhry; and Aspects of Avicenna*, edited by Robert Wisnovsky.

[351] Afsaẖzod, "از تو بر عالم فتاده سایه ای/ خوبرویان را شده سرمایه ای" p. 391.

[352] Through the concepts of "فتاده" *has fallen* and "افتاده" *are fallen*, there is the theory of how creation is done as in emanating manner. It is worth mentioning that Jāmī does not explicitly indicate that his poetry is formed on Neoplatonic philosophy, yet the symbolism is there for the reader to interpret the poem based on the knowledge of emanation, which is more relevant in the philosophy of Neoplatonism. See Heer, Nicholas. "Al-Razi and al-Tusi on Ibn Sina's Theory of Emanation," *Neoplatonism and Islamic Thought: Beyond Transnational Globalization,* pp. 111-123.

After establishing the theoretical framework of remembrance and beauty belonging to God, Jāmī then moves forward to invoke three famous pairs of lovers[353] [354] [355] and the genesis of their love.

4	Only when the secret of Your beauty manifested in Leyli did her love set Majnun on fire.	۴	تا ز لیلی سر حسنت سر نزد عشق او آتش به مجنون در نزد
5	Only when You made Širin's lips sweet like sugar, did those two lovers suffer agony.	۵	تا لب شیرین نکردی چون شکر آن دو عاشق را نشد پر خون جگر
6	Only when through You 'Azrā's face became silver, did the eyes of Vāmiq filled with tears of mercury-hue.	۶	تا نشد عذرا ز تو سیمین عذار دیده وامق نشد سیماب بار

He also portrays the experience of the agony of love in the first sight of the beloved. [356] Visual beauty is critical to attract the eyes (the lover's gaze), which initiates painful physical love or lust. In referring to these pairs of lovers, Jāmī uses physically beautiful female characters who are each loved by a man for their physical beauty, which in essence existed with the will of God as symbols around which to construct his praise of God. Nevertheless, love in its most conventional form is described as bringing anguish and yearning.[357] Would such anguish continue forever? What is there beyond human love-induced sorrow? And how does Jāmī address this narration of love between human lovers and the love between humans and God on the basis of this agonized state of love, knowledge, and the play of the eyes seeing the beautiful face?

---

[353] On the allegory of Layli and Majnun see Seyed-Gohrab, A. (2003). *Layli and Majnūn: Love, Madness, and Mystic Longing in Niẓāmi's Epic Romance* (Brill studies in Middle Eastern literatures; v. 27). Leiden: Brill. For a good first introduction to the narrative of Leyli O Majnun see A. A. Seyed-Gohrab, "Leyli O Majnun," Encyclopædia Iranica, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/leyli-o-majnun-narrative-poem
And another comprehensive work done on the narrative-poem of Leyli O Majnun based on the famous poet Neẓāmi of Ganja's version from his Ḵamsa (the Quintet) would be: M. W. Dols, *Majnun: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society,* ed. D. E. Immish, Oxford, 1992.

[354] Ḵosrow O Širin is the second Mathnavī in Neẓāmi's Ḵamsa. For more see Orsatti, Paola. "Ḵosrow O Širin" Encyclopædia Iranica, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kosrow-o-sirin.

[355] For a general background information on the love story of Vāmiq and 'Azrā see Paul E. Losensky's "In the Bazaar of Love: The Selected Poetry of Amir Khusrau," 2013. Also see Hägg and Utas's the Virgin and Her Lover: Fragments of an Ancient Greek Novel and a Persian Epic Poem, 2003.

[356] Klassen, 75.

[357] On the topic of love in medieval Persian, see Solati, Bahman's *The Concept of Love in Medieval Persian Sufi Poetry,* 2018. Also see: S. H. Nasr, "Persian Sufi Literature: Its Spiritual and Cultural Significance", in *The Heritage of Sufism*, edited by L. Lewisohn, vol. II (Oxford: One World, 1999), pp. 1-10. As for medieval English literature on the notion of love see Brewer, Charlotte, and Barry Windeatt. *Traditions and Innovations in the Study of Medieval English Literature: The Influence of Derek Brewer.* 2013.

In the next lines, Jāmī introduces a common Sufi theme when highlighting the inevitable and intertwined relationship between love and beauty as belonging to God.[358] In line 7, Jāmī implies that God is (as the leading beholder of) the main essence of love (as opposed to physical passion) and beauty, as He is *hidden* behind *the veil* while the physical beauty (inspired by Divine beauty) is perceived in the physical world. That being the situation, in comprehending earthly beauty, one can comprehend the spiritual beauty of God, which is draped between human love as "پرده" *a veil*.

7	The conversation on beauty and love belong to You and nothing more, without You, there is no lover nor beloved.	۷ گفت و گوی حسن وعشق از توست و بس عاشق ومعشوق نبود جز تو کس
8	O in front of You the beauty of the beautiful faces is a veil, You have concealed Your face with the veil.	۸ ای به پیشت حسن خوبان پرده ای تو به پرده روی پنهان کرده ای

God exists at the center, as the Creator and Initiator, of the interactions between love and beauty. Love and beauty are philosophized as abstractions (perhaps like the idea of God). Jāmī argues that they are complementary and inextricably linked. The whole "گفت و گوی" *discourse*, *talk*, or *conversation* on beauty and love "ز توست و بس" *belong only to You* (God) (l. 7), while for God's part in the work of love (in the human world) can be experienced by witnessing the visible beauty in the physical world. This hiddenness is the grand poetic expression of love game, when the lover's gaze indefatigably seeks the beloved. Klassen states, "[t]he pleasure that the lover has in gazing upon his beloved becomes a delightful mental game as he attempts to draw attention to every aspect of her beauty with adequate comparisons. Hiddenness is an important component of this activity."[359]

The double images of "سایه" *the shadow* and "پرده" *the veil* are intriguing in relation with God. The shadow (a rather positive image of darkness that appears due to light) is described as a presence and is given a bodily entity that is depicted in the physical beauty of the beloved(s), while the veil has the characteristic of concealing. God created physical beauty as a veil, which invites passionate love to

[358] This intertwined theme of love and beauty is a common theme in Sufi teaching about how God's love and beauty manifested in the world. See William Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn 'Arabi's Cosmology*. (SUNY Press, 1997).
[359] Klassen, 78.

be experienced at the first stage, while demanding that the resulting desire step beyond the veil and discover God's ineffable Beauty. A shadow is not existent without the actual substance and light that casts the shadow, while the veil functions as an outward entity or subsistence of its own and of itself. Yet, according to Jāmī, both images of *the shadow* and *the veil* can function at the same level to ascribe God's creation and necessary presence. Thus, whatever is perceived at the level of revelation is the physical world of creation, and what is concealed is not accessible to physical senses but only to "عقل" *the intellect*.

In the same line of thought, on the topic of intellect, Jāmī asks for God to reveal *His* face and to come out from behind the veil (His concealment) and to dazzle him. In the following lines, Jāmī unambiguously suggests his desire to see God's beauty beyond human beauty, and thus he seems to wish for a state of becoming "بیخود" *selfless* (ln. 13). In Jāmī definition of selflessness first of all there is the state of "تماشای خودم" *in the spectacle of myself* and secondly to becoming "فارغ" *free/empty/hollow*[360] from all the discernments, and turning one's "دیده" *eyes* away from seeing "دیگران" *everyone else* but the Divine Himself (ln. 13-14).

9	You sustain the veil through Your own beauty, You give away the secret to the heart, who knows the secret.	۹	پرده را از حسن خود پروردگی می دهی زان دل برد چون پردگی
10	Your beautiful face is fashioned with the veil so well that no one can differentiate the veil from Your face.	۱۰	بس که روی خوب تو با پرده ساخت پرده را از روی تو نتوان شناخت
11	How long will You be coquettish in the veil and involve the world in the love-game in the role of the veil.	۱۱	تا به کی در پرده باشی عشوه ساز عالمی با نقش پرده عشقباز
12	It is the time to loosen this veil from before you, bare from the veil, show us Your face.	۱۲	وقت شد کین پرده بگشایی ز پیش خالی از پرده نمایی روی خویش
13	In the spectacle of myself, You make me go selfless, and You freeing me from discriminating good and bad.	۱۳	در تماشای خودم بیخود کنی فارغ از تمیز نیک و بد کنی
14	I will become the lover, luminous for You, I shall close my eyes from everyone else.	۱۴	عاشقی باشم به تو افروخته دیده را از دیگران بر دوخته

The undisturbed image of "پرده" *the veil* suggests God's beauty, and that God is integrally involved in the event of love and the causation of love. This beauty (as an image of the veil) in its own turn implies

[360] Steingass, 903.

"پنهان" *concealment* as well as revelation now. God creates human beauty out of his transcending beauty in order for the lover to witness this beauty and fall in love. The concept of the "پرده" *veil* also is an allusion to the heaven and the realm of otherworldliness. This substance of the *otherworldliness* (that has the power of concealment and revelation) has its main impact on the human world. Presented through the concept of beauty, this veil is the main fascination in engaging human's sight. As will be clear below, I hypothesize that "حسن" *beauty* is the main concern in the entire poem. In line 8, Jāmī suggests that God is hidden in the veil of beauty and in the *bayts* that follow, he seems to ask God to appear from behind that veil. Thus, the story that Jāmī is about to narrate is meant to show how we can implore to God to make His appearance in the form of human beauty and love and this is a first step towards knowing God's reality.

Jāmī also defines God's involvement in the event of love as a sustainer of "پرده" *the veil* (the beauty) through "حسن خود" *His own beauty*. In the next half of the line, Jāmī relates to how this cherished, beautiful face (of the beloved) takes away the heart (which is the center of love) from the lover after God intervenes and gives them "پردگی" *the* (hidden) *secret* (ln. 9). This juxtaposition of *the veil* with "پردگی" "*a modest/chaste woman*, *one who is confined at home*, and *concealed*,"[361] indicates Jāmī articulation of his position about women's beauty being a God-granted gift (ln. 9). Later, Jāmī portrays Absāl as having this divine beauty.[362] One can interpret this line to mean that when beauty is recognized, the hidden secret behind the veil is revealed, and the phenomenon of love is experienced. This secret once disclosed might be the experience of encountering the beauty of God directly, for He is not apparent behind the veil. This image of God being recognizable through the image of the beautiful face, or the beautiful face recognizable in the image of God, leaves the discussion of what is

[361] Steingass. pp. 241.
[362] This is a commonly negotiated male point of view about a woman's chaste state and hiddenness from the general public, while in the case of falling in love with the lover coming out of that concealment and showing her beautiful face. This translates within the actual story of Salāmān and Absāl, as Absāl reveals her (passionate) love for Salāmān and comes to his solitary place (ln. 639).

and is not Divine unfinished. This situation and its complexity create an obscure outcome, and Jāmī, by using the models of lover(s) and beloved(s), can only develop a highly Sufi, philosophical, and love narrative. The veil (as a matter of beauty) is an intermediary premise that functions as a gateway to understanding God. Jāmī suggests that understanding God may be incomprehensible, yet his portrayal of the beautiful face of the beloved is something humans can perceive visually. While he also warns that in witnessing God's presence humans will be bewildered.

This request to God of opening and showing "روی خویش" *Your face* is important considering how the entire poem develops along the love narrative of Salāmān and Absāl and on the love between humans developing and resulting in witnessing divine beauty through a vision (ln. 12). If God agrees to show Himself beyond the veil, what happens then? In line 11, comes the request for the demand for the removal of the veil. This is the key verse. It explains and introduces the story which is going to function as an illustration of God removing His veil and showing His face. The imperative verbs used in line 12 are "بگشایی" *loosen* (the veil) and "نمایی" *showing* (Your face) to demonstrate the progression and transference from the veil to unveiling that would enable human eyes to witness the Divine Himself. But as God is invisible, this is an indication that Jāmī plays with sight and vision. Seeing God's face does not involve the physical sense of sight, but can only happen in the mind/heart's sense of vision. Jāmī is, in effect, introducing the understanding that within his mathnavī he will play between these two 'senses.'

Jāmī for the first time states the importance of sight in relation to God, as "تماشای" [a] *spectacle* to be seen (ln. 13). This is where Jāmī differentiates between physical seeing and mental vision. The word "تماشا" is an indication of spectacle, amusement, looking, and show, "to be worth seeing, to be of interest…to enjoy a sight."[363] In juxtaposition is the word "تمیز" "discernment,

[363] Steingass. pp. 323.

discretion…discrimination between right and wrong,"[364] Jāmī brings two phases in regard to "دیدن" *seeing* God beyond the veil. First, in line 13, he suggests that God's revealing frees humans from having to make "تمیز نیک و بد" *judgments of good and bad*. Second, on a human level, Jāmī suggests that such a "تماشای" *witnessing* (of God beyond the veil) causes him (or humans in general) to fall in love with God, who is beyond the human figure of the beloved. Jāmī confesses that he would become the lover and "افروخته" *luminous* for God, the Divine, the luminous body that illuminates other bodies. This will be portrayed later in the story in the image of "زهره" *Venus*, the celestial body. As a result, " دیده را از دیگران بر دوخته" *I shall close my eye on everyone else* so as to abstain from seeing everything and everyone that is apparent and focus on or comprehend only the one Unseen—the figure behind the veil. The line indicates either that there is nothing more beautiful to see than God or that there will not be anything left to see but God. In developing this idea, in the forthcoming discussion on "دویی" *duality*, we will see how Jāmī very delicately makes his point of reference about confirming God's unity as the One in Himself[365] (l. 18).

In the next lines, Jāmī establishes what I consider his theory of the "poetry of the eye" or sight that overarches the entire poem. After encountering the ultimate beauty and truth, humans will be blind to human beauty and will be able to see only God's wholesome beauty.

15	O in every form manifested, the realities move toward You, there is nothing to concern the creatures except You.	ای در اطوار حقایق سیر تو نیست در کار خلایق غیر تو	۱۵
16	Even though I am a beholder of every manifestation I do not see anyone in the world except You.	گر چه باشم ناظر از هر منظری جز تو در عالم نبینم دیگری	۱۶
17	You are the Apparent One on the face/in the form of the world, You are the All-Knowing (the Acute-Knower) in the garment of Adam.	جلوه گر در صورت عالم تویی خرده دان در کسوت آدم تویی	۱۷

[364] Steingass, 325.

[365] The idea of union is defined according to Neoplatonism as a state of self-realization through experiencing "Goodness, Reality, and Beauty…intertwined,"[365] and as for Ibn Sīnā's identification of "the Necessary Existent with the Form of the Good," it is "the nature of self-realization in context of the union between certain aspects of the self and the Necessary Existent." See Morewedge, Parviz. "The Neoplatonic Structure of Some Islamic Mystical Doctrines," in *Neoplatonism and Islamic Philosophy*, p 65. Also see William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn 'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination*. (SUNY, 1989).

Line 15 indicates that God's existence is present everywhere, even if unseen, and His existence is perceivable through human senses. Jāmī describes how the entire creation has "در اطوار" *every form* [of God] *manifested*, and all things constantly "سیر" *move around/toward* God. While positioning himself as "ناظر" the *viewer/beholder*, Jāmī emphasizes the most important of human senses—to see and behold "هر منظری" *every manifestation* as a creation of God. In the second half of the line, Jāmī uses the negation "نبینم" I am *not-seeing* anything but God. If God is "جلوه گر" *the Apparent One* in the world, then so is He "خرده دان" *the All-Knowing* or *the Acute-Knower* "درکسوت آدم" *in the garment of Adam/human beings*—all things concerning human life.

18	In your sacred precinct, duality [*dou-i*] cannot enter, and there is no need for small or big talks.	۱۸	در حریم تو دویی را بار نیست گفت و گوی اندک و بسیار نیست
19	I wish that You make me one [*yakta*] out of duality [*dou-i*] and grant me a place in the station of unity [*yak-i*].	۱۹	از دویی خواهم که یکتایم کنی در مقامات یکی جایم کنی

This concept of "دویی" *duality*[366] is important as the meaning behind the poem is to convey unity and experiencing a vision of divine beauty. To state and then negate "دویی" *duality* in God— in the form of dichotomy and division—is to seek God's wholesomeness. As there is "no need for speech", this affirms that there is no *duality* in the absolute presence of God. In this dialectic of seeing and not-seeing (as well as the sense of hearing, because it is a matter of speech), Jāmī seems to indicate God's encompassing existence and the reaffirmation of this existence itself.[367]

The final lines of this passage are programmatic. The story of Salāmān and Absāl will be a narrative and an evidence of union and unity beyond the duality of human being vs. God, and the way to express this is through the duality of sight and vision. In order to unravel the complexities around

366 Algar, Hamid. "The Naqshbandī Order: A Preliminary Survey of Its History and Significance." *Studia Islamica*, no. 44, 1976, pp. 123–152. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/1595445.
Given that Jāmī also uses the Sufi concept of "دویی" in *Silsilat adh-dhahb*, one can conclude that the concept seems to govern all of his poetry that is preoccupied with philosophical dialectics, and that the story of Salāmān and Absāl represents a more intriguing case for the narrative aspect of it.
"گر برون آیی از حجاب تویی/ مرتفع گردد از میانه دویی// در زمین و زمان وکون و مکان / همه او بینی آشکار و نهان" (l. 387-8, p. 79)

367 This phenomenon of God's inevitable existence corresponds to the notion of *Necessary Existent Being* borrowed from ibn 'Arabī's teachings. See Chapter IV, section 'Neoplatonism and Jāmī'

the phenomenon of the vision of union with the Divine, Jāmī gives a visual reference and describes the *kurd* man, a shepherd.[368]

20	So like that *kurd*, [freed from] disturbed by duality I cry out loud, 'Oh God, am I me or You?'	۲۰ تا چو آن کرد رهیده[369] از دویی این منم گویم خدایا یا تویی
21	If I am me, whereabouts come this knowledge and power, and if it is You, this impotence and weakness is wanted by whom.	۲۱ گر منم این علم وقدرت از کجاست ور تویی این عجز وسستی از که خاست

Jāmī concludes this section with an important philosophical claim. In experiencing a vision of eivine beauty, the inevitable integration of "علم و قدرت" *knowledge and power* and "عجز و سستی" *impotence and weakness* leaves one bewildered. Jāmī alludes to the kurd man being troubled due to this dichotomy shouting, *am I me or am I You?* Jāmī implies that in this visionary experience there is no difference between the knowledge of the "You/Divine" and the weakness of the "I/man." Jāmī will explain his philosophy in the allegory of the Kurd fastening a gourd [to see and recognize himself] to his foot in the second Chapter.[370]

A Definition of Sight and Jāmī on Sight

As mentioned before, Jāmī's purpose in writing the masnavī of *Salāmān u Absāl* is to show how integration and union (of opposites) is made possible by suppressing dualities. The main elements to be integrated are love and knowledge, but this requires the sublime intervention of sight. Love, in the form of desire, and knowledge, in the form of intelligence, can be hostile or hospitable to one another. Jāmī states that sight incites love. And we know love provokes knowledge and vice versa. Not surprisingly, the world of romance and especially medieval poetry (of the East and the West) evolved around this treacherous interplay of sight, love, and knowledge. Similarly, in *Salāmān u Absāl*, Jāmī

---

368 For a definition and explanation of "کرد" *kurd* see Steingass, pp. 1022.

369 Afsaẖzod gives a useful footnote for the word "رهیده" *freed* or *liberated* for a possible correction to be "رمیده" *horror-stricken* or *disturbed*. See Afsaẖzod, pp. 392. For the definitions of the words, see Steingass pp. 587, 600.

370

835	When the lover sets foot in the valley of union, except oneness, nothing else is contained there, that is all.	۸۳۵ چون نهد عاشق به کوی وصل گام جز یکی می در نگنجد والسلام

illustrates how hostility is an act of resistance against integration between love and knowledge. But he also points out that this resistance against integration can be resolved or negotiated based on the premise that "all the talk of beauty and love belongs to You [the Divine]" (ln. 7). Extending this logic backwards, sight in the act of triggering love and knowledge is inevitable and can be reconciled. This is important because sight brings a transformative experience not only by way of seeing through the eyes per se, but also in activating other senses. In the following sections, I will examine this sense of sight, which lends itself easily to three kinds of seeing in Jāmī's discussions on love and knowledge.

Let me first discuss how Jāmī defines the sense of sight. In simple terms, sight is the act of seeing through the eyes. As Jāmī says: "گر چه باشم ناظر از هر منظری/ جز تو در عالم نبینم دیگری" *Though I am the beholder of every beautiful face, / except You I don't see anyone in this world* (ln. 16)[371] In more complex terms, the "poetry of the eye" alludes to the metaphysics of the eye, as discussed in the first section of this chapter. Jāmī uses optical language in order to highlight the experiences initiated with the simple act of seeing or being seen. The act of seeing can conjure up one's knowledge and imagination and result in an emotional outburst in the form of love/desire. Defined as contradictory to intellect/reasoning or even philosophy, love (at first sight) is simply a physical encounter with a beautiful human creation. At first, Jāmī complicates the phenomenon of sight by having seeing (in the wake of love) appear to be in conflict with intellect in its conventional form, yet, toward the end of the poem, he breaks the convention by ultimately using sight to harmonize love and knowledge. It is through the discussion of sight that Jāmī keeps the intended theme of integration/union flowing throughout the poem. Jāmī's theme of integration with the "مقصود" *aim/objective* [the B/beloved] can be interpreted as a constant motion without a break—as ordained by the Divine or as the shadow of God.[372]

---

371 Steingass, 1375, and 1330.

372 Henri Bergson in his essay, "Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness" (1889), discusses the conception of duration as "A qualitative multiplicity, with no likeness to number; an organic evolution which is yet

In *Salāmān u Absāl,* there are three scenarios where sight is the main trigger of love and knowledge. In the first scenario, the subject actively sees the object of desire without mediator or constraints. In this case, Jāmī makes sure hostility is reconciled with or negotiated as knowledge (recognition/knowing), and this reconciliation sustains love. An example of this type of scenario occurs when the wet-nurse Absāl meets the infant Salāmān for the first time. This is what I call *Active Seeing: the Eye in Search for Love,* and it involves an intentional gaze toward the object of desire.

In the second scenario, the object of desire receives the gaze and reacts accordingly. An example of this type of scenario occurs when the grown-up Salāmān becomes the focus of Absāl's gaze (or active seeing). As he witnesses her gazing at his beauty, he falls in love with her. This is what I call *Passive Seeing: Beyond the Eye and Sense of Touch*. In this case, the lover's gaze conveys hostility to the beloved; love appears dangerous next to knowledge. In passive sight, as in the absence of seeing or being seen, Jāmī evokes the sense of touch to draw on how sight can also be recollected.

In the third scenario, seeing is prescribed or made possible through a mediator. In this kind of sight/seeing, the mediator takes over the main functioning of what needs to be seen and perceived as knowledge through the sense of hearing. This is what I call, *Guided Sight: the Mediator of Knowledge*. In this form of seeing, sight is mediated/directed by a third person and thus knowledge is compromised

---

not an increasing quantity; a pure heterogeneity within which there are no distinct qualities. In a word, the moments of inner duration are not external to one another (226).

Bergson's duration is "a pure heterogeneity," and Jāmī's main purpose in the union of two opposites occurs due to their very nature of being opposites. In addition, Bergson's duration is "a qualitative multiplicity," and there is no enumeration or quantitative multiplicity. Similarly, Jāmī's formation of time and space (shown in Salāmān and Absāl's journey) also does not have any quantitative multiplicity. My reading of duration in Jāmī is about the inner existence and growth of the love between Salāmān and Absāl, which corresponds to their intuition and imagination. And finally, Bergson's duration is about temporality in constant mobility in search of something new. Jāmī's description of the "جزیره خرم" *Island of Pleasure* symbolizes the moving away from the intellectual sphere of the Kingdom to a new place. The sea is the perfect image to illustrate what Bergson considers "duration" or lived time being temporal/carnal/physical, so does Jāmī summarizes "بحر" *the sea* as:

1102	What is that sea in which they were, and from their union, they were happily settled in.	چیست آن دریا که در وی بوده اند وز وصال هم در او آسوده اند	۱۱۰۲
1103	It is the sea of sensual lusts, it is the abyss of carnal pleasures.	بحر شهوتهای حیوانیست آن لجه لذات نفسانیست آن	۱۱۰۳

in the act of love itself. There are two important instances in the poem that speak to this third form of sight. In the first, the King witnesses the passion shared between Salāmān and Absāl on *the Island of Pleasure* through his magical mirror. In the second, the Sage, using his knowledge, guides the heartsick Salāmān, enabling the vision of Venus through hearing her music so that Salāmān achieves his primal status as 'the Rational Soul' to become one with divine beauty through his intellect. Each of these scenarios reveals a different form of love and knowledge based on how sight is channeled. This formation of love (as desire/pleasure) and knowledge (as knowing) is at the core of the masnavī, and sight (the eyes) is the isthmus of these two. In the following sections, I will explain each form of sight in detail and illustrate each with examples.

Active Sight: The Eye in Search for Love

603	For she knew that by way of gazing love has an impact on the heart of the lover.	۶۰۳	زانکه می دانست کز راه نظر عشق دارد در دل عاشق اثر
604	Only in viewing the heart-wrenching beauties does love find abode in the hearts.	۶۰۴	جز به دیدار بتان دلپذیر عشق در دلها نگردد جایگیر[373]

Absāl's knows the relationship between gaze/sight and love. She not only knows that love occurs through "نظر" "*beholding, seeing*… 'to look[ing] favorably upon'," [374] but as a result of a (specific) "راه" *way/path/course* of seeing. This form of seeing requires a continuous act of seeing, a long gaze focused on the object of desire. And it requires the one doing the gazing (Absāl in this case) to make herself appear an alluring spectacle (or object of sight). The individual gazed upon, Salāmān, must see her beauty and find interest in her. Absāl is thus the main agent of this active seeing for she orchestrates herself as a beautiful sight for Salāmān via actively seeing him.

[373] Afsaḥzod, chapter 40, pp. 203.
[374] Steingass, 1410.

Absal's understanding that love occurs "راه نظر" *by way of seeing* is an indication of her own state. Absal is enthralled from the first at seeing baby Salāmān, and as a result offers her total devotion to the baby as his wet-nurse.

455 When her eyes fell upon Salāmān, ۴۵۵ چشم او چون بر سلامان اوفتاد
from that sight she rent off her collar. زان نظر چاکش به دامان اوفتاد[375]

I read "چاکش به دامان اوفتاد" *she rent off her collar*, as an indication of Absal offering her breast(milk) to the baby. From this first encounter, Absal is portrayed as the lover[376] while Salāmān is the beloved, the desired one, and thus Absal's main object of sight and desire. Jāmī elaborates that Absal, by actively looking at Salāmān, can direct her own love into the heart of Salāmān. In order to confirm and confess one's love, there is performance and presentation of emotions as well as devotion. And this performance is acted through constantly seeing the beloved.

461 If it was possible for her without any doubt, ۴۶۱ گر میسر گشتیش بی هیچ شک
she would place him in the eye like a pupil. کردیش جا در بصر چون مردمک[377]

Jāmī reveals Absal's growing love (a new form of devotion) for Salāmān in Chapter 40, when he refers to "عشق ابسال" *Absal's love* (lns. 577-604). Previously, she was referred to as "دایه" *the wet-nurse*, but from then on, she is never again called *the wet-nurse* and we are never reminded that Salāmān was once suckled by Absal. As Salāmān becomes "a youth of fourteen years," Absal appears his counterpart (ln. 468). She is beautiful and "پرعشوه" *full of coquetry* (ln. 582). Only in the act of "دیدار" "*look[ing]*; *appearance*; *manifest[ing]*, *exposed to view*," love is expressed as a growing habit of seeing the beautiful face. This active seeing by Absal also indicates her focus on her own appearance. Salāmān has now reached his "اسباب جمال" *utmost beauty* and his "حد کمال" *level of perfection* (ln. 577). However, he

375 Ibid, pp. 414.
376 Among other unusual thematic concerns of the poem, about it is a story about the role change of the conventional lover and beloved. The conventional role play of the man is to be the lover (or pursuer) while the woman is the beloved (the pursued one), but this storyline is upended in that Absal projects her utter beauty in pursuing the beloved, Salāmān.
377 Afsaḥzod, chapter 29, pp. 412.

is still "نارسیده میوه" *an unripe fruit*, but upon seeing him "خاطر ابسال" *Absāl's imagination* wishes to "چیدن" *pluck it* and "چشیدن" *taste it* (ln. 580). In pursuit of this love, Absāl starts with "عرض خوبی" *presenting/exhibiting/offering her kindness/goodness*[378] to Salāmān, and then works on her appearance in order to dazzle him, both by the sense of smell (perfumed musk) but especially by visually enhancing her looks (ln. 584): applying musk to her hair, putting kohl to her eyes and painting her cheek "به خون" *with blood* (lns. 586, 90, 98).

601	In short, by hundred ruses and stratagems, she made herself visible to his eyes everywhere.	۶۰۱ بودی القصه به صد مکر و حیل جلوه گیر در چشم او در هر محل[379]

Absāl knows that love finds an abode in the heart if she can sustain her actively seeing him as well as being an active sight. The extent of the duration of this sight, in which the seer's power of seeing is projected over the gazed upon object, is important. This sustained duration can be understood when Jāmī indicates how "صبح و شامش" *day and night* Absāl makes sure Salāmān is not "غافل ز خود" *neglecting her* "یکدمش" *even for a moment/one breath* (ln. 602). Jāmī also emphasizes the constant presence of Absāl being "هر محل" *everywhere* for kindling love of her in Salāmān's heart and this suggests the importance of the duration of active sight (ln. 601). Absāl is in control of the mobility of spaces and her own presence in them, ostensibly because of her earlier role as his wet-nurse.[380] Only as a result of this sustained duration can Salāmān be dazzled by what he sees, which is the trigger for love. And Absāl is operating a "visual bashing" both in space and in time, constantly presenting "جلوه گر در چشم او" *herself a sight in front of his eyes* without giving him the opportunity to be diverted by other interests (lns. 601-02).

Jāmī indicates that active seeing is not just about love at first sight; instead, through active

[378] Steingass, 843.
[379] Afsaẖzod, chapter 41, pp. 421.
[380] See Chapter II, section "Intertextual Analysis of *Salāmān u Absāl* with Homer's the *Odyssey*".

seeing, love develops/grows over a "duration" as a lived time, rather than in mechanical time. In Absāl's campaign to instill passionate love, she constantly keeps within Salāmān's gaze and as a result Salāmān becomes enthralled by Absāl and finally falls in love with her. Salāmān and Absāl very soon after consummating their love, (lns. 640-649), undertake their first journey together as a pair of lovers to *the Island of Pleasure*. It is in their journey that Jāmī's 'poetry of the eye' takes a more phenomenological turn, by which I mean the study of "conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first personal point of view."[381] And it is therefore important to understand Jāmī's explanation of these direct experiences in the physical world alongside with the concept of time and space, which has a more interpenetrating nature that enables more experiences in the physical world through the engagement of the sense of sight.

One of the most intriguing passages in the poem is Salāmān and Absāl's journey to "جزیره خرم" *the Island of Pleasure*. The lovers emigrate from the Kingdom to an island in the midst of the sea as an act of open revolt against the negative reaction from the King and the Sage. This act of moving out or forward is frequently described as the lovers actively looking for and engaging in a search for something new, a search for knowledge for an unknown (future) place. Before going into the details of the journey, Jāmī recounts the story of Yusof and Zoleyk̲ā. This analogy is used to explain Salāmān and Absāl's decision to journey to *the Island,* the farthest unknown place in order to prove the contentment of their union (lns. 779-84). The words are spoken by the lover, Zoleyk̲ā, who is actively longing for her beloved and her desire for union with Yusof.

783	She answered: "being far from the beauty of the friend, is for me like [seeing] the plains of the universe from an ant's eye.	۷۸۳ گفت باشد از جمال دوست دور عرصه آفاق بر من چشم مور
784	And if I were to be placed with him in the eye of the ant, I would be happier than in a hundred gardens.	۷۸۴ ور کنم با او به چشم مور جای خوشترم باشد ز صد بستانسرای [382]

[381]Smith, David Woodruff, "Phenomenology", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/phenomenology/>.
[382] Afsaẖzod, chapter 59, pp. 431.

The imagery of an ant's eye—a place far removed and immensely small for its inability to encompass the universe, signifies the lover's ultimate desire to become separated from the rest of the universe and existence and to remain in union with the beloved in a far-removed space of their own. The lover being far from seeing the beloved's "جمال" *beauty* is compared to an ant's eye in the universe. This juxtaposition of the microscopic sight of "چشم مور" *an ant's eye* [possibly seeing] "عرصه آفاق" *the plains of the universe* indicates a desire for distance summoned by the active gazer.

It is possible to understand that Jāmī main purpose in the union of two opposites is to highlight the very nature of being opposites. Salāmān says whenever his eyes fell upon Absāl, " کرده ام روی از دو عالم سوی او" *I turn my face away from two worlds toward her*, and as a result, "نی نصیحت مانده بر یادم به پند" *I do not remember any advice or good counsel* (ln. 712-13). Jāmī's description of the search for the "جزیره خرم" *Island of Pleasure* symbolizes the moving away from the intellectual sphere of the Kingdom, a place hostile to their union, to a new place. Thus, the entire journey via the sea toward the Island connotes temporality in constant mobility in search of something unforeseeable. Moreover, the position of the Island seems to be a symbol of the mysteriousness of a space that can inspire or least enable Salāmān and Absāl's union, similar to that of the eye of an ant. The unforeseen island is unthinkable, but leaving the Kingdom is well-thought about. Jāmī repeatedly relates to Salāmān's "اندیشه" *thinking/thought* in leaving "وطن" *the homeland* for a space far removed from the ruling of the King and the advices of the Sage, and thus in immense contrast from the Kingdom (lns. 770-72).

The images that Jāmī uses, such as "خاطر" "cogitation, thought, memory, mind…"[383] are to correspond to the inner world of Salāmān and Absāl, who wish to cross the sea in an attempt to escape from reproach.

۷۸۶	از ملامت ایمن و فارغ ز پند بار خود بر ساحل بحری فکند	786 Secure from reproach and free from advice, he cast his burdens on the shore of a sea.

[383] Steingass, pp. 439.

Jāmī's reference to "ایمن" *secured/ freed/ emancipated* with the thought of the moving sea relates to Salāmān setting himself free from the hostility and confinement of the Kingdom, and thus of the intellect. This trajectory in itself is an intriguing opposition between the sea voyage, which is fraught with physical danger, and the lovers who prefer to face these dangers rather than advice and reproach. Yet, Jāmī suggests the sea, despite its beautiful and dangerous presence, can bear their burdens (ln. 786). Jāmī calls attention to the eyes of the sea-creatures to highlight the hospitality of the sea from the vantage point of the shore.

787	He [Salāmān] saw a sea as unbounded as the firmament, the eyes of its sea-creatures-as the stars.	۷۸۷	دید بحری همچو گردون بی کران چشمهای بحریان چون اختران [384]

The imagery of the unbounded sea[385] containing innumerable sea-creatures is first of all an indication of a reflective image of the space, which is infinite with creatures comparable to the stars. And secondly, this image suggests that Salāmān and Absāl experience moving to the farthest end of the sea, like moving through a space with no beginning or end, but one that is animated and illuminated with its own celestial creatures. This image of "چشمهای" *the eyes*, which are seen by Salāmān and Absāl, is also an indication of wakefulness on the part of Salāmān and Absāl (ln. 787) The eyes of the creatures are also meant to represent the life surrounding Salāmān and Absāl as they move across the sea and through time.

791	There were innumerable fish visible like a gem, they were glittering as faceted by a sword.	۷۹۱	ماهیان در وی نمایان بی دریغ همچو جوهر از صقالت داده تیغ
792	In fact, to the eye of an acute-observer like the Katāy embroidery on Chin brocade.	۷۹۲	بلکه پیدا پیش چشم خرده بین چون خطای نقش بر دیبای چین[386]

[384] Afsaḥzod, chapter 59, pp. 431.

[385] And the sea's immeasurability (in duration) can correspond to Bergson's "qualitative multiplicities." See edited by Micheal. R. Kelly, *Bergson and Phenomenology*, (2014), "A qualitative multiplicity is therefore heterogeneous (or singularized), continuous (or interpenetrating), oppositional (or dualistic) at the extremes, and progressive (or temporal, an irreversible flow, which is not given all at once)" (p. 37).

[386] Afsaḥzod, chapter 59, pp. 431.

The depth of the sea is filled with innumerable glittering fish which have the eyes that look at Salāmān and Absāl. In the second line, Jāmī once again alludes to "چشم خرده بین" *the eye of the acute-observer* or *to the critical eye*,[387] who can see to the beauty in the depth of the sea as that of patterns on *the Katāy embroidery on Chinese brocade* (ln. 792). This is an indication of the clearness and transparency of the sea. Here active seeing is described as happening on both sides. The lovers look at the sea, and the fish in the sea also have eyes and look back at the lovers (ln. 791). In alluding to the sea with the overwhelming number of creatures living in it, Jāmī uses a similar image of the sea in an earlier allegory of the man in Chapter 30. The man is a whispering melancholic, who, on account of contamination by the creatures of the sea, seeks water that is purer than the sea.[388]

The sea is compared to the skies or the heavens, and in this comparison, the sea-creatures become the celestial bodies. These parallel images of the sea and the sky, the sea-creatures and the stars, project a sense of one's awareness of the wholesome creation of God. That being said, Jāmī's emphasis is on the spaciousness of the sea and the eyes of the creatures (including Salāmān and Absāl) are his concerns. For these eyes do not just see, but they see in motion, and in fact, in a constant forward motion. The area of the sea is "stretched from Qāf to Qāf" while its depth reaches "the back of the Bull and Fish" (ln. 788). The vastness, depth, and constant motion the sea is described through the eyes of Salāmān.

---

[387] Steingass, pp. 454.

[388] Throughout the poem, the sea is defined as a space and place of impurity and danger, lust and horror in constant creation or progression. The sea in this allegory is defined to be "full of fish and serpents, / Frogs and crabs, thousands upon thousands, were within it. // The waterfowl swimming on every side, / Diving, seeking nourishing from the depths of the sea" (lns. 447-450). Or the very intriguing allegory of the blind crow on the shore of the salty water and being ignorant of the whole bright and sweet water world around him. The common knowledge about the sea as borrowed from Dick Davis's book that the sea does not appear as alluring to the Sufi purpose as fire does.[388] For Jāmī the sea appears as the most terrifying element possible, "Whatever fell from that narrow path, / Its final place of repose was the bottom of the sea" (ln. 754).
While, in contrast the fire has a consuming quality, it has more of less a vertical motion of intake. The purifying element of the fire is due to not having any other creature in it, but only the fire and flame in itself.

789	Waves, mountain-like in appearance, out of agitation turned the surface of the water into a chain of mountains	۷۸۹ کوه پیکر موجها در اضطراب گشته کوهستان از آنها روی آب [389]

These contrasting images of the fluidity of the water in large waves compared with the solidity of the chain of mountains create a sense of loss of and basic sense of reality. Among the four elements – water, earth, fire, and wind/air– that appear throughout the narrative, it is these two opposing ones – water and earth – that become interchangeable during the journey, symbolizing confusion and the reaching of a different supernatural dimension. In the quote above, it was the comparison of water with wind as described in the image of *a chain of mountains* that was already noticeable. This image of the chain of mountains assumes the "quantitative multiplicities," which are "homogeneous" in formation and mixture.[390] Yet Jāmī's indication of the mythical "Qāf to Qāf" extension of the sea stretches the mobility of the sea out of space and time. Although time is not described in a mechanical sense, Jāmī's description of the extent and depth of the sea suggests a very long voyage that might take months. Jāmī's mention of the exact length of the journey becomes clear once the journey is undertaken and the Island is seen, but the time and place of the start of the journey, for Salāmān, Absāl and even for Jāmī, remain unknown.

The first description of Salāmān and Absāl's journey on the sea is given as a description of the motion of the boat on the sea.

793	They had cut the surface of water everywhere in two halves like silver scissors cutting dark blue fabric.	۷۹۳ کرده سطح آب را هر جا دو نیم همچو نیلی دیبه را مقراض سیم[391]

This image of cutting the surface of the sea like fabric can be read in juxtaposition to a similar image, which Jāmī described when Absāl first encountered the infant Salāmān.

455	When her eyes fell upon Salāmān, from that sight she rent off her collar.[392]	۴۵۵ چشم او چون بر سلامان اوفتاد زان نظر چاکش به دامان اوفتاد

[389] Afsaḥzod, chapter 58, pp. 431.
[390] On Bergson's "quantitative multiplicities" see his essay on *Time and Free Will*, pp. 76-77, 122.
[391] Afsaḥzod, chapter 58, pp. 431.
[392] According to Steingass dictionary, دامان *dāmān* means "Skirt, hem; foot of a mountain" pp. 499.

In this earlier image, Absāl's active seeing of the baby causes a rupture, which indicates how Absāl develops feelings for the infant Salāmān upon first sight. If the intensity of active seeing is to be measured by the impact of renting off, so does the fast motion of the boat on the sea create a cutting impact. That said, though the infant Salāmān might not be actively seeing, yet he is the pupil of the heavens,[393] which indicates Salāmān is all-seeing. In such a reading, Absāl upon seeing the infant Salāmān reacts toward such a sight with complete devotion as mentioned in line 455. In the same manner, Salāmān and Absāl upon seeing the sea and their star-like creatures, are actively engaged in their movement and cutting the sea into halves. In both cases, in the act of renting off or cutting into two halves, there is the risk of making oneself visible to the eyes seeing, despite the dangers. That said, Absāl opens up her collar for infant Salāmān, who is later to become her sole beloved and the cause of her death. The same danger and risks are equivalent to the state of their movement on the sea to find their sole space of union, the Island of Pleasure.

Could it be that these similarities between Salāmān and the sea are put forward due to their significance in representing the celestial bodies? If this were the case, then such juxtaposition wold make Jāmī's discussion of 'poetry of the eye' even more intriguing due to their (bodily) physical existence and embodiment rather than any otherworldly implications.

The dreadful appearance of the sea, described as a place filled with monsters, does not discourage Salāmān. He is determined to cross it.

795	As Salāmān inspected the sea, he became determined to cross it by any means.	۷۹۵ چون سلامان بحر را نظاره کرد بهر أسباب گذشتن چاره کرد[394]

This journey is a symbol of Salāmān's progress on the path of love as well as to escape criticism and

[393] (Lines 404-05), pp. 192.
[394] Afsaḥzod, chapter 58, pp. 203.

advice. And, surprisingly, the journey is not dangerous, Salāmān and Absāl move swiftly on the sea in a skiff like a duck.–Yet despite the overwhelming aspects of the sea due to its huge expanse and depth, Salāmān is determined to continue sailing. That being said, the hostility is temporal and so is the journey on the sea and on the island. Their time spent on the sea lasts for "ماهی" *a month* and finally "و ز دم دریا ز رونق ماندند" *on account of the sea breath, they stay away from the splendor* (ln. 801). Exhausted from the sea, Salāmān and Absāl set their mind to settle on the island that becomes "پیدا" *visible* to them.

Jāmī describes *the Island* as "بیشه" *a woodland* whose *description* "بیرون از اندیشه" *surpasses one's imagination* (ln. 802). Birds of all kinds lived there, they paraded together with their own kinds but mixing along with other pairs in a congregation (lns. 803-05). These images continue to describe the union of opposites due to their co-existence in a space of a distinct duration. The following lines contain examples of these inevitable integrations of opposites.

807	Fruit had scattered at the foot of the trees, dry and fresh mingled together.	میوه در پای درختان ریخته خشک و تر با یکدیگر آمیخته	۸۰۷
808	A spring of water beneath each tree, the sun and the dappled shade surrounding it.	چشمه آبی به زیر هر درخت آفتاب و سایه گردش لخت لخت	۸۰۸

As discussed before related to opposites, here the different dimensions, beyond human perception of space and time are reached and the opposites are perceived simultaneously. Even though, there are other senses at work in the description of the woodland, but it is the sense of sight that is the most convincing, because Salāmān and Absāl are looking for the most pleasurable space after leaving their boat.

In contrast, the "بیشه" *island/woodland* is described as a place that is beyond human's perception of space. Duration or lived time in this space is conceivable through interpenetration in the natural world. Jāmī describes the mixing and mingling of dry and fresh fruits, and thus time and seasons are negated. He describes the sun and its shade to indicate not only unification of heterogeneity, but also

constant change and the process of becoming. The Island is a place that is beyond our common perception of an ordinary space and time. It is here that the concept of "multiplicity," which attempts to unify two contradictory or heterogeneous points, defines Jāmī's transitioning between images. These images are perceptions or ideas are to convey a development of emotions shared between Salāmān and Absāl in encountering the nature surrounding them. In the island, "به هم" *to one another* they become "شادان همچو جان ودل" *contented as body and soul* and "خرم چون گل و سوسن" *delighted as rose and lily* (ln. 815).

The island contributes to the inward changes that Salāmān and Absāl experience together. On this island, there is "نی ملامت" *not blaming of anyone* and "نی نفاق" *no discrimination* (ln. 817). Because, in this space, "گل درآغوش" *the rose* [Absāl is] *in bosom* "خراش خار نی" *not* a *pricking thorn* (ln. 818). Salāmān's "دل پر از عیش و طرب" *heart is full of merriment and delight*, and in this way they spend "روز به شب" *day to night* (ln. 823). This place not only provides livelihood (water and fruits), joyous sanctuary (shade of the trees and the music of the birds) but also closeness to "مقصود" *the purpose*, which is an indication of the ultimate union of love between Salāmān and Absāl (ln. 819, 20-21, 824). At the heart of this duration Jāmī establishes that the temporal is conveyed by the sense of sight. Salāmān and Absāl move on the sea in constant motion in order to arrive to the island. They experience their entire journey through sight. And so their union on the Island of Pleasure occurs when their eyes meet in close proximity. Nonetheless, the unseen island serves Salāmān's purpose, which is union with Absāl without any criticism.

824	Next to you, there is nothing but the purpose, there is no denying of the existence of this purpose.	۸۲۴ در کنار تو بجز مقصود نی مانع مقصود تو موجود نی

In the above-mentioned lines, Jāmī addresses Salāmān, saying that on the Island far from the Kingdom, he has his purpose (Absāl) next to him. In comparison to Zoleyk̲ā's desire to live in union

with Yusof in the eye of an ant, Salāmān dwells on the island with his "مقصود" *purpose*, Absāl, in union, in each other's sight. The island is hospitable toward Salāmān and Absāl's love. Everything experienced on the island corresponds to active seeing and engaging.

Passive Sight: Beyond the Eyes, Sense of Touch

Passive sight occurs in the aftermath of being actively gazed upon. In this scenario, the receiving eyes (sight) are ineffective, and the individual gazed upon must react by using senses other than the sense of sight. In this section, I will highlight how Jāmī makes use of other senses such as touch and taste, to explain Salāmān's state of confusion about, as well as his growing desire for, Absāl. My main contention in this section is to explain how Jāmī formulates the beloved's passive sight as a response to the love of the lover. Salāmān, a representative of a pure form of "حسن" *beauty* himself, is captivated by Absāl's eyes. Absāl has conveyed her love through her "راه نظر" *way of looking*, which ultimately impacts Salāmān's "دل" *heart* (ln. 604-5). Witnessing her gaze upon him, Salāmān becomes "بی قرار" *restless* and *tormented* (ln. 621). And this feeling of *restlessness* is an indication of Salāmān's rising "شوق" *longing/yearning* for Absāl. While we are not told whether Salāmān ever actively gazes upon Absāl, we are told that her active looking as well as making herself appear as an alluring figure has begun to torment him. Absāl's "مژگان او خارش" *thorn-like eyelashes* "خلید" pricked him "در دل" *in his heart*, and "کمند زلف او" *her braided hair* "مارش گزید" *bit him like a snake* (ln. 616). Her "نرگس جادوی" *magical eyes* take away his sleep (ln. 618). In the memory of "دهانش" *her mouth*, "عیشش" *the enjoyment of* [his] *life* "تنگ شد" *was narrowed* (ln. 619). Absāl's plan has been successful: her beauty and this has stirred a longing within him. He is the passive sight upon whom the active seeing/sight is operating.

620	He saw on her cheek the black mole, his health was ruined because of that dark mole.	دید بر رخسار او خال سیاه گشت ازان خال سیه حالش تباه	۶۲۰
621	He saw her restless ringlets on her cheek, out of his wish for union with her, he became restless.	دید جعد بی قرارش بر عذار ز آرزوی وصل او شد بی قرار	۶۲۱

Salāmān's handles his state of restlessness differently than Absāl's. Despite becoming enthralled by Absāl, Salāmān first reacts against his feelings. Reason and his situation as future king make him develop hostility towards Absāl. He feels ambivalent in the matter of love toward Absāl, and this feeling of ambivalence is also an indication that love seems hostile to Salāmān.

622	His longing [for her] came out from behind the veil, yet inwardly he was thinking good thoughts:	۶۲۲	شوقش از پرده برون آورد لیک در درون اندیشه ای می کرد نیک
623	God forbid if I taste the meal of [sexual] union its flavor will become torment on my soul.	۶۲۳	که مبادا اگر چشم طعم وصال طعم او بر جان من گردد وبا
624	She won't remain with me and in this long life I might remain without my status and crown.	۶۲۴	آن نماند با من وعمر دراز مانم از جاه وجلال خویش باز[395]

Instead of pursuing her, Salāmān becomes more sensible as "درون" *inwardly* he engages in "نیک" *decent/good* "اندیشه" *thinking/reasoning* (ln. 622). The closest one can get with Jāmī's use of "نیک" *decent/good* would be to project Salāmān's thinking *ethically* and *morally* about his own future of becoming the next king, as well as Absāl's state of being substantially older than he, as indicated by "آن نماند با من و عمر دراز" *[s]he won't remain with me and yet in this long life* (ln. 624). With this line, Jāmī portrays Salāmān to be sensible enough to realize that this union cannot last very long.

What is beyond active or passive seeing? Is it the state of blindness or/and not-seeing? Such blindness corresponds to Salāmān deciding to accept a state of remaining ignorant and unaware of Absāl's love. To describe Salāmān's situation, Jāmī, in the next chapter, brings the allegory of a day-blind crow. This "زاغی روز کور" *a day-blind crow,* is living "لب دریای شور" *on the bank of a salty water*, and is in the habit of "آبشخورش" *drinking salt-water* and who refuses to taste sweet water offered by a pelican (lns. 626-7). This allegory follows upon the passage when Salāmān witnesses Absāl's love for him and feels his first temptation to desire her. Reasoning with himself, Salāmān abstains from the thought of his union with her, exclaiming that he will remain without "جاه و جلال" *a state and status* if he ever

[395] Afsaẖzod. Chapter 42. pp. 422-423.

achieves union with Absāl (ln. 624). Jāmī's inference with this allegory of the blind crow explains Salāmān's situation in the form of practical philosophy.

What is beyond active or passive seeing? Is it the state of blindness and not-seeing? Such blindness corresponds to Salāmān deciding to accept a state of remaining ignorant and unaware of Absāl's love. To describe Salāmān's situation, Jāmī, in the next chapter (43, lines 626-634), brings the allegory of a day-blind crow.[396]

624	There was once a crow, day-blind like an owl he had taken a place on the bank of the salty sea.	۶۲۶	بود همچون بوم زاغی روز کور جا گرفته بر لب دریای شور
	…		...
633	"Seated on the seashore day and night, I will to remain thirsty-lipped in the middle of both.	۶۳۳	بر لب دریا نشسته روزو شب در میان هر دو مانم تشنه لب
634	It is better to make accordance with salty water, so that I am not confronted with the pain of waterlessness".	۶۳۴	به که سازم هم به آب شور خویش تا نیاید رنج بی آبیم پیش

This allegory follows upon the passage when Salāmān witnesses Absāl's love for him and feels his first temptation to desire her. Reasoning with himself, Salāmān exclaims that he would remain without "جاه و جلال" *state and status* if he were ever to achieve union with Absāl (ln. 624). Jāmī's allegory of the blind crow can explain Salāmān's situation from the point of view of practical reasoning, which is to say practical philosophy. The metaphor of the eye/sight as a gateway to the event of love and knowledge is reversed. To have a day-blind eye indicates a situation that closes down the event of love in spite of knowledge. Here the relationship between love, knowledge, and sight is hostile, because the blinded one knows that the situation of blindness cannot be rectified.

Salāmān is compared to the day-blind crow in regard to his confinement in the Kingdom, not-knowing and unexperienced in the matter love and women. The Kingdom is the equivalent of the bank of the salty-sea (perhaps unpleasant). There are some important philosophical complexities in this allegory that can enrich our understanding of Jāmī's intention in describing Salāmān's state. First

[396] Afsaħzod, pp. 423.

of all, there is the significant detail that at day-light, the crow becomes blind. And thus, his inability to find another bank with sweet water ensues in the day time. As for the night, even if the crow can see, nocturnal darkness does not allow the crow to find an alternative shore. In both cases, the day-blind crow is deprived of external light, and thus he is the passive seer of the light. This blindness can be a situational reference to the crow's unawareness of what is not immediately present to his sight—the better location and the sweet taste of water.[397] Yet, there is also the conditional aspect of the day-blind crow to accept his own limited/bestowed circumstances.

The blind crow's resistance to the sweet water is based on his reasoning that: " در میان هر دو مانم تشنه لب" *in between both I will remain thirsty lipped in the middle of both* (ln. 633). The crow's fear and apprehension is justifiable given his inability to see due to being day-blind. This allegory affirms Salāmān's state of confusion and fear about the phenomenon of love and its (possibly powerful) impact on his soul and status. Salāmān remains a passive seer in relation to Absāl's active seeing. For one thing we know that Salāmān desires Absāl, and he presumably invites/welcomes her active seeing. "Love is a labyrinth, taxing his mind beyond its limit, leaving him wondering helplessly what he can do."[398] As a passive seer, Salāmān is the beautiful one who becomes aware of being seen, and he certainly desires the gazes he receives. This awareness results in him allowing himself either to remain a desirable sight to the desiring gaze or to deliberately accept safeguarding oneself for the sake of his status .

We are not informed about Salāmān's final decision or how he reciprocates such a love or desire. Very soon after his musings above, he is confronted by Absāl at night in his own room. Following the day-blind-crow's allegory, the night's sensibility and sensuality (as opposed to day-light's

[397] The story of the blind-crow seems to mirror Plato's story of the cave.
[398] Klassen, 94.

intellect) is reconfirmed: when Absāl approaches him, Salāmān is blind as it is night. Their first union is narrated through the sense of touch.

637	She was looking for an opportunity day and night to find her way into that moon's abode. …	فرصتی می جست تا بیگاه و گاه یابد اندر خلوت آن ماه راه ...	۶۳۷
639	Until one night she found her way to him in privacy, held the prize of her soul in hand, she hurried toward him.	تا شبی سویش به خلوت راه یافت نقد جان بر دست پیش او شتافت	۶۳۹
640	Like a shadow, she fell on his feet, out of humility, placed her face on his feet.	همچو سایه زیر پای او فتاد وز تواضع رو به پای او نهاد	۶۴۰

Jāmī uses a sequence of metaphors that stress the absence of sight and the importance of touch. Thus, the metaphor of "آن ماه" *that moon* for Salāmān connotes that he is the only light in the dark night. Jāmī once again portrays Absāl as a knowledgeable woman in the matter of love as she approaches Salāmānat night and express her love. Their first erotic encounter in the poem occurs in complete darkness. This darkness is invoked through the image of Absāl approaching Salāmān like a "سایه" *shadow* (ln. 640). Jāmī avoids using any references to sight or the eyes, and only highlights certain movements and senses such as touch and taste (particularly touch) to explicate their first erotic interaction.

645	Even though their lips touched for a long time yet the actual task had remained incomplete.	گرچه لبهاشان به هم بسیار سود ماند باقی آنچه اصل کار بود	۶۴۵
646	On the account of the concupiscence that they had in mind, they removed the veil of modestly from in between. …	بهر سودایی که در سر داشتند پرده شرم از میان برداشتند ...	۶۴۶
648	One had sugar, and milk the other, milk and sugar mixed together.	داشت شکر آن یکی شیر این دگر شد به هم آمیخته شیر وشکر	۶۴۸

Vision is absent from these lines, yet Jāmī engages his reader by utilizing other senses, such as touch and taste, to describe their passionate love. Above all other senses, "the sense of touch [is] to create the sensation of intimacy."[399] The vivid descriptions of the touch of the lips, and the taste of sugar for its sweetness, and the smooth creamy texture of the milk conveys the intensity of the physical love they experience. Touch is described as an ultimate encounter, a physical contact, or the meeting point

[399] Klassen, 80.

of two bodies. For example, Jāmī describes Absāl and Salāmān's lips "سود" *rubbing* and "آمیخته" *mixing* to the extent that they create "شیر و شکر" *milk and sugar* (ln. 645, 48).[400] This intermixing through touch can be explained as Jāmī highlights an integration of two opposites.

Jāmī moves away from a contact through sight to integration or contact through touch: "seeing fulfills itself in touching."[401] In the description of Absāl and Salāmān's first erotic encounter, touch unlike sight has neither active nor passive aspects. Absāl approaches Salāmān as if she is a shadow falling "چون سایه افتاد" on his feet, while Salāmān receives Absāl and " چون قبا تنگ اندر آغوشش گرفت" *held her tightly to his bosom like a qabā shirt* (ln. 642). In description and appearance, the shadow in front of Salāmān's eyes is a visual representation. The image of Salāmān hugging Absāl tightly to himself conveys that touch is sensually more powerful than sight.

In love, the main objective, "مقصود" *the goal/aim*, is integration or union of soul and body. On the sea, it was due to the *goal/aim* of integration that Salāmān and Absāl, like "چو بادام دو مغز" *an almond with two kernels*,[402] kept sailing, moving fast and forward (away from the past) into the future, to the Island. Chapter 58 ends with Jāmī saying that, in the present, there was nothing more important than Salāmān's *goal*, which is an indication of his beloved Absāl residing next to him, and that there was no denying in this reality of his *goal* (ln. 824). That said, Absāl is not only a beautiful sight for Salāmān; she is also present and thus able to touch and be touched.

Touch, despite being a non-visual perception, can, according to Jāmī, be provoked by passive sight. Jāmī in the next chapter (59) uses the allegory of Vāmiq and 'Azrā to explain the intense physical contact (touch) Salāmān and Absāl experience with one another. Jāmī recounts Vāmiq's desire to

---

[400] This imagery of intermingled like milk and sugar is a metaphor for sexual intercourse, see Christine van Ruymbeke's "From Culinary Recipe to Pharmacological Secret for a Successful Wedding Night: the Scientific Background of Two Images Related to Fruit in Xamse of Nizami Ganjavi," *Festschrift in honour of Professor J.T.P. de Bruijn, Persica, Annual of the Dutch-Iranian Society*. pp. 127-136 (2002).

[401] Jacques Derrida, *On Touching—Jean-Luc Nancy*, trans. Christine Irizarry, (Stanford University Press, 2005). Pp. 122.

[402] Afsaḥzod, (ln. 774), pp. 430.

become one with his beloved ʻAzrā and his desire to move to the desert and to become all eyes to see Azrā. It is as though Jāmī suggests that Vāmiq wishes to become eyes to see Azrā as to become/be Azrā, or to be seen by Azrā, and to possibly touch Azrā by self-touching.[403] Even though Jāmī brings optical references to describe passive seeing, the conscious self-affirmation of becoming the beloved relies heavily on touch.

831	Hair by hair, my limbs turn into eyes, And my ʻAzrā is to become the *qibla* of my face.	۸۳۱	دیده گردد مو به مو اعضای من قبله رویم شود عذرای من
832	With a thousand eyes I shall turn my face toward her, until eternity I shall gaze at her face.	۸۳۲	با هزاران دیده رو سویش کنم تا ابد نظاره رویش کنم
833	By the gaze I too, shall go astray, and liberated from duality, I will become her.	۸۳۳	بلکه از نظاره هم یکسو شوم و ز دویی آزاد گردم او شوم

These lines emphasize important optical references: "دیده" *the eyes* and "نظاره" [the active form of watching] *looking* or *gazing* occur twice. Here "دیده" *the eyes* relate to the anatomical aspect of the eyes, with Vāmiq wishing for his arms and legs to turn into eyes. There is a strong juxtaposition of the sense of sight with the sense of touch in this imagery. Vāmiq desires a close proximity to his beloved Azrā because he wishes to touch her as well as to see her by touching her. This imagery depicts the extreme degree of integration (or becoming one) with the eyes wanting to touch (or through touch wishing to see) in order to obtain the pleasure of two senses in one attempt. Similar to the metaphor of the ant's eyes for its microscopic sight and the spatial habitation in a far distance within the universe that I analyzed earlier, in Vāmiq's case this space and destination is comprised of sense of sight and touch. The metaphysics of sight and touch overlap to such an extent that two senses become one.

Touch can also inspire visual perception—as long as this touch involves the experience of love through poetry. As mentioned, Jāmī tells the parable of *Leyli o Majnun* to highlight the poetry of the eye. A significant point of this parable is Majnun's act of writing poetry by way of "زانگشتان قلم" *making his fingers like a pen* (ln. 191). Majnun not only witnesses his own act of inscribing the name *Leyli*

[403] See Jacques Derrida, "'To Self-Touch You'," in *On Touching—Jean Luc-Nancy*. Pp. 265-80.

in the sand, but also enjoys/takes pleasure in touching the sand with his fingers and in writing *Leyli*'s name and seeing her name appear in the sand. Jāmī's interpretation of this story is that Majnun is "عشقبازی" *making love* "با نام او" *to her* [Leyli's] *name* in the sand through the sense of touch. While the sight of her [name] might not remain on the sand, "کی به لوح ریگ باقی ماندش" *how long will it* [her name] *remain on the tablet of sand*? (ln. 194), sense of touch here reaffirms the contact and the pleasure of touching in itself. This touching creates proxy and pleasure, and thus the union is made complete by it and through it. In this instance, Jāmī reminds us that it is in the sensation of touch (and also in seeing through touching), the first act of poetry (even in the simple act of writing the beloved's name on the sand) is made possible. In the case of Salāmān and Absāl's first touch, Jāmī describes their erotic love using the poetic image of Salāmān's shirt. In simple terms, a shirt is a vest, and its function is to cover. However, in Jāmī's choice of poetic terms, Salāmān's shirt not only drapes, but enfolds his body, and then Absāl's body too. Through this image of the shirt, Jāmī's poetics of touch result in an all-encompassing experience of love, knowledge, and sight.

Later in the poem, Jāmī describes Salāmān's desperation after Absāl is consumed by the fire and he can no longer touch her. Touch is aligned with life and living. Aristotle in his essay, *On the Soul*, writes that "flesh is but the 'medium' of touch."[404] Jāmī describes how Salāmān remains "یکتا" *all by himself*, "چون تن بیجان" *like a body without a soul* (ln. 935). Salāmān misses the sensation of physical touch (being touched or touching her) more than the sight of her or her active seeing. Thus, Jāmī elaborates on Salāmān's suffering and pain by describing how in his "غم" *loss/grief*, Salāmān starts "سینه کندن" *tearing the breast*, which is an indication of pulling off "ناخنش" *his nails* (ln. 937-38). Jāmī furthers elaborates on Salāmān's self-inflicted pain in the following lines.

943	When he did not see his hand in the friend's hand, he would wound his hand with his teeth.	۹۴۳	چون ندیدی پنجه اندر پنجه یار پنجه خود کردی از دندان فگار
944	when he saw his fist empty of that jewel, with his teeth he would tear his fingertip.	۹۴۴	زان گهر دیدی چو خالی مشت خویش کندی از دندان سر انگشت خویش

[404] See Derrida's "When Our Eyes Touch," in *On Touching—Jean-Luc Nancy*, pp. 5-6.

945 When he did not see that sugar lip beside him,
he chewed on his fingers as though they were sugarcane.

۹۴۵ آن شکر لب را ندیدی چون به جای
نیشکر آیین شدی انگشت خای

Jāmī emphasizes that the sense of touch is regulated by sight. When Salāmān's eyes do not see Absāl anymore, the visual knowledge of the absence of physical love becomes the cause of self-harming touch. Salāmān starts mutilating his own hands, as if trying to destroy his own sense of touch.

Salāmān remains passive in the matter of Absāl's love. He has always been on the receiving end of the King and the Sage's consultations and advice. That said, Salāmān's existence and survival becomes a token of hostility in the experience of physical love, knowledge, and sight. If Salāmān remains in the Kingdom, next to the King and the Sage's sight/eyes, he is promised intelligence, knowledge and, in the future, the Kingship and the Kingdom. If he leaves the confinement of the Kingdom to be next to Absāl to experience her sight/gazing eyes, he is promised love, affection, and touch. In neither of these spaces, does Salāmān experience a hospitability/ reconciliation between love and knowledge. Thus, in the physical world, the ordeal (the touch) by fire in the desert is Salāmān approach to end hostility and the torment between love, knowledge and sight.

Only in the union with the celestial Venus (the untouchable, the unseen) can Salāmān experience the unification of beauty, love, knowledge, and sight. Salāmān's union with Venus is the matter of seeking eternal desire/pleasure and Salāmān's otherworldly experience of being in love for eternity. Nonetheless, even in this case Salāmān remains the passive seer who only perceives the beauty of Venus through the mediating voice and guidance of the Sage. This aspect of the discussion is detailed in the following section, where the sense of hearing/listening replaces sight and touch.

Guided Sight: The Mediator of Knowledge

The third kind of sight/seeing that Jāmī describes in the poem is the sight triggered by a third person. Neither active nor passive, this form of seeing/sight relies on knowledge conveyed through an external medium. The King and the Sage engage in this type of sight, and their media are a mirror

that displays the (unseen) world and speech, respectively. As the mediator, either the King or the Sage, takes control and guides Salāmān's eyes/sight to what needs to be seen or experienced in order to achieve the integration/union with Venus. Another way to understand this kind of sight is that it is the sight that aspires to gain comprehension (knowledge), it could be called "intellectual sight," and thus it relies on the conceptual importance of intellect. Since the King and the Sage are the representatives of higher "عقل" *intellect*, their interventions in the matter of love and knowledge in relation to Salāmān are what constitute the premise of guided sight. Two instances in the poem are useful examples of this kind of sight. In the first, the King uses his *world-displaying mirror* to see (which is still a connotation of sense of sight) Salāmān and Absāl on the Island of Pleasure. In the second, the Sage activates Salāmān's sense of hearing to listen to the music of Venus and thus to witness her ultimate beauty.

The major purpose of this kind of sight is the need for a third medium to bring reconciliation/hospitality between love and knowledge. Through such sight, love and knowledge are rationalized either in reflection (symbolized by the mirror)—a kind of "secondary sight" –or through the sense of hearing (symbolized by Venus' music). The latter case results in Salāmān being able to transcend his agonized state. Through the mirror's reflection, the only person who can find solace is the one seeing the reflection, and in this case, it is the King, who is the beholder.

It is important to highlight here that the distinction I am making. The King is using his *world-displaying mirror* as solely an instrument to become aware of Salāmān's whereabouts, because this mirror offers the King's the ability to see physically. Nonetheless, the metaphysical connotations of the idea of a *world-displaying mirror* should not be disregarded. In the greater scheme of Sufi thought, the idea of the mirror is used as metaphor for the heart. It is a mirror that can reflect and make the unknown known or the unseen seeable. The idea of the *world-displaying mirror* is traditionally used as a metaphor of the Sufi heart. This usage of the heart as a mirror has a more complex convention throughout the

poetry of the many poets who came before Jāmī.[405] In this earlier body of literature, there is the famous juxtaposition of "جام جم" (jām-e jam) *the goblet of Jamshid*, with a mirror that can display the unseen. This mirror or goblet image of the heart is used to convey a specific literary reference to align the physical and the metaphysical in order to make sense of the unseen.[406] The King is called 'the Active Intellect,' so how is it that the reference to his heart conveys his intellect? We will return to this discussion later in Chapter IV when I discuss how later philosophically driven Sufi thought used the heart to mean the intellect, soul, or spirit. For now, let's focus on the question: How is the heart the mirror to receive the unseen?

The reference to the heart as *jām-e jam* is an indication of the metaphysical aspect of the heart, which is "جام جهان نما" *the goblet that shows the world* or "آیینه تمام نمای" *the mirror that displays all things*.[407] It is only the matters of the heart, which cleansed and enlightened can reflect the truth of the unseen, for *jām-e jam* is also "آیینه حقیقت نمای" *the mirror that shows the truth*.[408] In this process of cleansing, Manūchihr Murtaẓavī makes a distinction between two groups: "یکی راه شوق را انتخاب میکند و دیگری راه ریاضت را" *one chooses the way of desire (love) and the other, the way of spiritual training*.[409] That being said, the heart or the mirror is a self-reflecting entity, where one sees oneself in relation to the unknown.

In chapter 60 of the poem, Jāmī describes the King's act of seeing/witnessing Salāmān and Absāl on the Island through his mirror (as a tool and not necessarily a process) – a mirror that shows the world where Salāmān and Absāl reside.[410] Here the mirror functions as a transmitter of knowledge not of the self, but of the one he yearns for, his son. Jāmī describes the King's state of agony for not

---

[405] Domenico Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty*. pp. 348-385.
[406] Manūchihr Murtaẓavī. *Maktab-i Ḥāfiẓ: Yā Muqaddamah Bar Ḥāfiẓ'shināsī*. Tihrān: Kitābkhānah-i 'Ibn Sīnā, 1965. Print. pp. 159-235
[407] Ibid, pp. 164.
[408] Ibid. pp. 177
[409] Ibid. pp. 164-166.
[410] It is important to add that the mirror does not function as cogitation here. "[C]ogitation is the intellect's tool in its cogitation," which is to be understood as the Imagination, according to Ibn Sīnā'. see Coppens. *Seeing God in Sufi Qurân Commentaries*. pp. 180.

"آگاه" *knowing/informed/knowledgeable* about where Salāmān's whereabouts and state of mind after he has gone missing (lns, 836, 38). Jāmī conveys that the King is "ناله" *crying/lamenting* and " ز دو دیده خون چکاندن گرفت" *and from his two eyes blood started dripping* (ln. 837). The image of the King's bleeding eyes is an indication of his deep paternal love for and sorrow due to the absence of Salāmān. This image of the King's bleeding eyes when he cannot see Salāmān is comparable to that of Salāmān hurting his own hands when he cannot touch Absāl anymore. In contrast to the state of Salāmān's love for Absāl, which is expressed through the sense of touch, the King's love for Salāmān is expressed through his sense of sight. At this moment, Jāmī introduces the King's "آینه گیتی نمای" *world-displaying mirror*, which is a medium to gain knowledge, in this case about Salāmān. This mirror enables the King's sight/eyes to see, and thus seeing (with the mirror functioning as a window) confirms knowledge.

841	He asked for his mirror to be brought to him, so in it he could see the face of his own purpose.	گفت کان آیینه را آرند پیش تا در آن بیند رخ مقصود خویش	۸۴۱
842	When his gaze fell on that mirror, he became aware of his lost ones.	چون بر آن آیینه افتادش نظر یافت از گمگشتگان خود خبر	۸۴۲
843	He saw both of them pleasuring one another in the woods, from the sorrow of days, he saw them unconcerned.	هر دو را عشرت کنان در بیشه دید وز غم ایام بی اندیشه دید	۸۴۳
	…	...	
846	When the King saw their union, he was overcome by sympathy for them.	شاه چون جمعیت ایشان بدید رحمتی آمد بر ایشانش پدید [411]	۸۴۶

Jāmī asserts two main ideas when he describes the functionality of the King's mirror. This mirror does not reflect the images in front of it, like an ordinary mirror would, but instead, "در آن" *in it* the King's purpose (the unseen) can be "بیند" *seen*.[412] In other words, it functions as a window to the world of secrets, in this instance the world of Salāmān and Absāl, who are residing on a distant island. For the King to ask for his mirror to be brought to him also connotes that he is asking the mirror " بیند رخ مقصود" *to see the face of* [his] *purpose* [Salāmān] and to become "خبر" *aware* [knowledgeable] of " گمگشتگان خود" *his lost ones*. This sudden shift from the King's purpose being his son Salāmān, to the King's *lost*

[411] Afsaḥzod, pp. 434.
[412] For a useful discussion of the world of the unseen for its mystical as well as philosophical connotations see Domenico Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty*. pp. 334-34.

ones, an indication that his concern is now both Salāmān and Absāl. In using these words, the King creates kinship (as opposed to hostility) in his thoughts about/in relation to Absāl. This shift occurs after the mirror facilitates the sight (knowledge) of the missing ones. The King not only becomes aware of the space where both Salāmān and Absāl are residing, but also he "دید" *sees* the state of their love affair and thus their union. Though the mirror, Jāmī "completely reverses the use of that illusion of space, when he forces it to enter into the original goal, that is to transform it into the support of the hidden reality—it being understood that, to a certain extent, a work of art always involves encircling the Thing."[413] Salāmān and Absāl's reflection in the mirror is an indication of a reality that exists in a place that is inaccessible by the King. Yet this reflection and knowledge/awareness of Salāmān's whereabouts serves the King's purpose, for he can now see Salāmān, and as a result, the King's eyes stop bleeding.

Upon seeing their "جمعیت" *congregation/intercourse*, the King feels "رحمتی" some sort of *sympathy* for them. This feeling of sympathy conveys the King's state of reconciliation of love and knowledge, which the sight (through the mirror) of Salāmān and Absāl brings forth. Jāmī informs us that the King now understands and accepts without reproach Salāmān and Absāl's love and pleasure in each other's company (ln. 847).

In the story, Jāmī describes the King's reaction in the aftermath of this knowledge by highlighting his best characteristic. The King is called a person of "روشندل" *illuminated heart* and praised for his "مروت" *manliness* in not interrupting Salāmān and Absāl's union (ln. 849). Jāmī's description speaks to the King's decision not to disturb Salāmān and Absāl's union, but to do "نیک" *good* by allowing "دو همدم را به هم" *two companions together* to share "جام شادی و غم" *the cup of joy and pain* (lns. 855, 850). Here the mirror's mediating role brings about a state of hospitality between love and knowledge.

[413] Jacques Lacan, "Courtly Love as Anamorphosis," in *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: Book 7: the Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960.* (London, 1992). trans. Jacques-Alain Miller, Dennis Porter. pp. 173.

The King not only becomes knowledgeable about the whereabouts of the missing Salāmān, but also the sight of the lovers suppresses any feeling of hostility toward Absāl.

In a more philosophical reading of this scenario of the King as the Active Intellect impacted by the external senses, one can turn to Ibn Sīnā's explanation. The mirror as "Imagination Cum-cogitation" is the King's instrument "when the intellect directs itself toward the supernal realm."[414] The sight of Salāmān and Absāl functions as external senses, and the King witnesses their physically sensual activity. Though the King might denounce the union of the soul and the body, he is drawn to such external senses regardless of his internal senses. These external senses are "interrupting the intellect's cogitation motions by directing its attention away from its tool (*al-quwwa l-mufakkira*) and toward external senses."[415] We shall see how the King ultimately, through his *himmat* ('the power of his spiritual concentration'), releases the soul (Salāmān) from the body (Absāl) by subduing the impacts the external senses have not only on him (as the intellect) but also on the (rational) soul.[416] Thus we can see that Jāmī regards the intellect as being capable of subduing the power of external senses so as to elevate the internal senses.

Another important instance of guided sight is the Sage's effort to introduce/show Salāmān the image of Venus to cause him to feel "میل" *desire/pleasure* toward Venus as the eternal form of the deceased Absāl. Salāmān is in an agonized state in the aftermath of Absāl's death in the fire. When the King "دید" *saw* Salāmān in the state of "ماتم" *mourning*, the King himself despaired " بر دلش صد زخم رنج و غم رسید" *a hundred wounds of pain and agony reached his heart* (ln. 978). Not knowing the remedy for Salāmān's situation, the King turns to "دانا حکیم" (ln. 980) *the knowledgably/wise Sage* and asks him to "چاره جوی از عقل دور اندیش تو" *seek a remedy through your anticipative intellect* (ln. 985). This *far-sighted/prophetic intellect* or the Sage's *intellect that is beyond any thinking* is evoked because the King knows the impossibility

[414] Coppens. *Seeing God in Sufi Qurân Commentaries*. pp. 180.
[415] Ibid.
[416] Lingwood's *Politics, Poetry, and Sufism in Medieval Iran*. pp. 143.

of "ابسال را آورد باز" *bringing Absāl back* [to life] (ln. 984). The Sage, who once bore the King his son Salāmān out of a plant, knows the remedy for Salāmān's agony as well. Thus, the Sage pronounces that a remedy is possible if two conditions are met: for "سلامان نشکند پیمان" *Salāmān not to break his promise* and to fully "آید اندر ربقه فرمان من" *submit under the collar of my command* (ln, 988).

990	For a few days, I will cure his condition, I will make Absāl his eternal companion.	چند روزی چاره حالش کنم جاودان دمساز ابسالش کنم	۹۹۰
991	When Salāmān heard this from the Sage, from his soul he submitted to his command.	از حکیم این را سلامان چون شنید زیر فرمان وی از جان آرمید	۹۹۱
	…	...	
994	Listen to this point that the learned man has spoken, stringing a jewel that is fine and beautiful.	بشنو این نکته که دانا گفته است گوهری بس خوب و زیبا سفته است	۹۹۴
995	'Be wise, without any quarrel or brawl, or escape under the shadow of the wise one.	باش دانا بی لجاج و بی ستیز یا که اندر سایه دانا گریز	۹۹۵
996	The crack that befalls on temperament due to ignorance, it finds a cure from the wise and the wisdom.	رخنه کز نادانی افتد در مزاج یابد از دانا و دانایی علاج	۹۹۶

This second kind of mediation (guided sight) is illuminated through the sense of hearing or listening. For the first time in the poem, Jāmī calls on the auditory sense when the Sage commands Salāmān to "شنید" *hear* the Sage's remedy for making Absāl Salāmān's "جاودان دمساز" *eternal companion*, if only he will to submit to the Sage (ln. 990). Here, Jāmī also uses the imperative form of hearing to call upon the reader to "بشنو این نکته که دانا گفته است" *listen to this point as the learned man has spoken* (ln. 994). This emphasis on the need to listen when Salāmān *hears* the Sage's speech, is Jāmī calling attention to the importance of listening. In other words, listening is to submit to "دانا" *the wise one* as for the guidance that is based on their "دانایی" *wisdom* (knowledge) and this also means that the desperate Salāmān is willing to be guided on the path of love (ln. 994).

Due to his state of agony, Salāmān "تسلیم" *submits* to the Sage, who makes use of "سحرکاری" *magic/sorceries* when "تعلیم" *instructing* him (ln. 998). Jāmī describes the Sage's wisdom as though he "ریخت" *poured* "باده های دولتش" *the wine of good fortune* in Salāmān's "جام" *cup*, and *poured* "شهد های حکمتش" *the honey of his wisdom* in Salāmān's "کام" *throat/desire/wish* (ln. 1000). Jāmī uses the metaphor of the Sage pouring *wine* and *honey* (as in the form of consumption) to Salāmān's *throat/desire* to convey the Sage's

efforts to discover the root of Salāmān's agony. In his enchanted situation, whenever Salāmān "ابسالش فرا یاد آمدی" *is reminded of Absāl*, "و ز فراق او به فریاد آمدی" *from her separation, he would start bewailing* (ln. 1001). Jāmī seems to suggest that the Sage through speech disrupts Salāmān's agony by reminding Salāmān about the deceased Absāl.

1002	When the Sage become aware of his state, he created the face of Absāl.	چون بدانستی حکیم آن حال را آفریدی صورت ابسال را	۱۰۰۲
1003	He held it in front of his eyes for one or two hours, and sowed the seed of repose in his heart.	یک دو ساعت پیش چشمش داشتی در دل او تخم تسکین کاشتی	۱۰۰۳
1004	When his grief and agony found solace, that image went off to the frontier of non-existence.	یافتی تسکین چو آن رنج والم رفتی آن صورت به سرحد عدم	۱۰۰۴
	…	...	
1006	Yet if for a second he became unaware of it, the form of existence would disappear from him.	لیک چون یکدم ازو غافل شود صورت هستی ازو زایل شود [417]	۱۰۰۶
1007	From time to time, in the midst of his speech, he interposed the description of Venus.	گاه گاهی چون سخن پرداختی وصف زهره در میان انداختی	۱۰۰۷

Here, Jāmī guides us through how the Sage "آفرید" *creates* "صورت ابسال" *Absāl's face* or *Absāl's reflection* to make her appear "پیش چشمش" *in front of Salāmān's eyes*. We are not told how the Sage does this, but one can gain some insight through Naṣīr-al-dīn Ṭūsī's commentary[418] on the Greek version of the tale (alluded to in Ḥunayn b. Isḥāḳ's Greek version, which inspired Jāmī's version). The Sage asked Salāmān to dress up like Absāl (and to possibly look at himself in a mirror). This physical creation (reflection) of Absāl's image invokes the sense of sight. The Sage establishes a vision for Salāmān to look at and perceive his own reflection. Jāmī gives agency to the Sage to regulate this sight by observing Salāmān's reaction to such an image. If "یکدم" *at once* Salāmān becomes "غافل" *unaware* of Absāl's "صورت" *image*, "صورت هستی" *the image of the* [physical] *world* "زایل" *vanishes* from his sight/eyes (ln. 1006). While in the duration of not seeing, most probably in Salāmān's unconscious stage, the Sage

[417] Afsaẖzod, pp. 434.

[418] we are informed that that the Sage sets three conditions for Salāmān in this period of healing: "'first, Salāmān will wear a robe exactly like Absāl's, and [second] whatever he sees the Sage do, he will also do…; finally, during all his life he will love no other woman but Absāl.'" *Visionary Recital*, 216. Salāmān accepts all three conditions, and what is more fascinating is that both texts (the supposedly Ḥunayn's version and Jāmī's version) establish the return of the physical existence of Absāl in the form of "صورت" *an image*.

mediates "سخن" *a speech* on "وصف زهره" *the description of Venus* (ln.1007). Through speech, the Sage activates Salāmān's sense of hearing. In order to get past Salāmān's hostile state, the appearance and disappearance of the image of Absāl is significant. First, it proves her physical importance to Salāmān, because for as long as Salāmān's eyes can see the image of Absāl, he is calm. Second, when Salāmān cannot see Absāl (her image goes to "سرحد عدم" *the frontier of non-existence* (ln.1004)), his desperation returns. As a result, the Sage is able to devise a remedy for Salāmān's agony. The Sage puts Salāmān into a state of delusion, and enables Salāmān to witness the appearance and disappearance of Absāl.

In Salāmān's state of being "غافل" *unaware*, the Sage brings forth the speech of Venus. Jāmī describes Venus's "حسن" *beauty* as "شمع جمع انجم" *the candle of the assembly of the stars*, and while "جمال خویش" *with her grace*, she "آفتاب و ماه را شیدا کند" *makes the sun and the moon go wild* (lns. 1008-9). Venus is presented by "سخن" *speech* in order to inform Salāmān intellectually (through sense of hearing/listening) about the something not perceivable through the sense of sight.[419] Jāmī, through the Sage, conveys this aspect of Venus' existence by referring to her singing and thus provokes Salāmān to listen to her.

1010	In tune, there is no one sharper than her, in bringing more joy to the banquet of pleasure.	نیست از وی در غنا کس تیزتر بزم عشرت را نشاط انگیزتر	۱۰۱۰
1011	The ear of the heavens filled with the melody of her harp, in the assembly, there is always her song present.	گوش گردون پر نوای چنگ اوست در سماع دایم از آهنگ اوست	۱۰۱۱
1012	When Salāmān listened to this speech, he found by himself a strong yearning for her.	چون سلامان گوش کردی این سخن یافتی میلی به وی از خویشتن	۱۰۱۲
1013	As this speech got repeated for many times, inwardly he found a great yearning for her.	این سخن چون بار ها تکرار یافت در درون آن میل را بسیار یافت	۱۰۱۳
1014	When the Sage perceived what it means on his state, he increased the impact of Venus on him.	چون ز وی دریافت این معنی حکیم کرد اندر زهره تاثیری عظیم	۱۰۱۴
1015	Until she manifested her grace completely, he worked on the heart and soul of Salāmān.	تا جمال خود را تمام اظهار کرد در دل و جان سلامان کار کرد	۱۰۱۵
1016	He washed away the image of Absāl from his mind, and the affection of Venus's face was imprinted on his soul	نقش ابسال از ضمیر او بشست مهرروی زهره بر وی شد درست	۱۰۱۶
1017	He saw the eternal beauty, and flew from the transitory one, he chose eternal pleasure over the transient one.	حسن باقی دید و از فانی پرید عیش باقی را ز فانی بر گزید	۱۰۱۷
	…	…	
1113	For that the Sage told him of the beauty of Venus,	زان حکیمش وصف حسن زهره گفت	۱۱۱۳

[419] For the heavenly and celestial representation of Venus asscotied with tones and sounds, see Cicero, *The Dream of Scipio*, *Somnium Scipionis* (1883) pp.3-14. trans. W. D. Peraman.
http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/cicero_dream_of_scipio_02_trans.htm

	and adjoined his soul with the affection of Venus.	کرد جانش را به مهر زهره جفت	
1114	Until he gradually reposed upon Venus, he emancipated from the agony and love for Absāl.	تا به تدریج او به زهره آرمید و ز غم ابسال و عشق او رهید	۱۱۱۴
1115	What is Venus, that elevated perfection with whose union, the soul becomes noble.	چیست زهره آن کمالات بلند کز وصول آن شود جان ارجمند	۱۱۱۵
1116	From that grace, the intellect becomes luminous it becomes the king in the kingdom of mankind.	زان جمال عقل نورانی شود پادشاه ملک انسانی شود	۱۱۱۶

The Sage informs Salāmān that Venus is incomparable in that she brings "نشاط انگیز" *more joy* to "بزم عشرت" *the banquet of pleasure* (ln. 1010), and that "گوش گردون" *the ear of the heavens/ skies* is "پر نوای چنگ" *filled with the melody of her harp* (ln. 1011). The Sage even evokes how "در سماع دایم از آهنگ اوست" *the assembly, there is always her song present* (ln. 1011). The use of "دایم" *permanent* conveys the inevitable existence and consistency of Venus's song in the air.

Jāmī informs us that "چون سلامان گوش کردی" *when Salāmān listened* to this speech (or most probably now listening to the melody of Venus's harp) Salāmān finds "میلی" *a* [form of] *desire/pleasure* from within "خویشتن" *himself* toward "وی" *her* [Venus] (ln. 1012). Jāmī's emphasis on this conventional appearance of Venus with her harp is worth noting.[420] Venus with her harp fulfills a celestial purpose by inspiring the human intellect through her music. Yet Jāmī invokes the importance of listening (to the music) as Salāmān gradually becomes aware of Venus's existence in the form of "visual sound".[421] In this stage, the Sage enchants Salāmān through speech. And as the Sage guides Salāmān to listen to the music, he simultaneously makes Venus "اظهار" *manifest* her "جمال" *grace* "تمام" *completely* (ln. 1015). It is as through the Sage that Venus is able "to [be] evoke[d] [as] a form—even a *vision*—that is

[420] See Earl G. Shcreiber, "Venus in the Medieval Mythography Tradition." pp, 522-523. The Roman identified deity of Venus is the Greek Aphrodite. Though there are some explainable reasons for Venus's identification with Aphrodite, what is more intriguing is that Aphrodite is the wife of Vulcan, who is god of fire, and he was worshipped in ancient times. "Vulcan was invoked to avert fires…" see https://www.britannica.com/topic/Vulcan. Here due to the fact that Salāmān crosses the fire intact and then eternally is united with Venus only after this adventure. Since it was Jāmī, who added the scene of the fire to the narrative, it is possible that he was influenced by similar stories. Prior to Zoroastrianism, the Medes and Persians worshipped the cult of the goddess Anaïtis, which is a Greek rendering the goddess, or the planet, Venus. "The way in which it was made doctrinally possible for a Zoroastrian king those to impose the veneration of a partly alien divinity on the community at large was through assimilating her cult to that of the Zoroastrian *Yaẕatā* Arədvī Sūrā Anāhitā. Therefore 'the Lady' of the planet Venus was still popularly worshiped as Anāhīd ī Bānū, but was venerated in the Zoroastrian liturgies with the Avestan invocations proper to the river *Yaẕatā*. See http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/anahid.

[421] Jean Luc-Nancy, *Listening*. trans. Charlotte Mandell, (Fordham University Press, 2007). pp. 4.

sonorous."[422] By listening to/hearing the Sage and the music of Venus, the truth shifts for Salāmān from what he sees to what he hears . This form of mediation is guided by the Sage and first activated through sight. Jāmī says that the Sage "بشست" *washed away* "نقش ابسال" *the image of Absāl* from Salāmān's "ضمیر" *mind*, and instead imprinted "مهرروی زهره" *the affection of Venus's face* by "تاثیری عظیم" a *grandiose impact* (lns. 1016, 1014). Jāmī once again describes how Salāmān "دید" *saw* "حسن باقی" *the eternal beauty* and was "پرید" *freed* from "فانی" *the mortal one,* and how he chose "عیش باقی" *eternal pleasure* over "فانی" *the transient one* (ln. 1017). Jāmī moves from the revival of the visual form of Absāl to the sonorous form of Venus. Here I quote Luc-Nancy who writes in *Listening* that:

> "[t]he sonorous… outweighs [the visual] form. It does not dissolve it, but rather enlarges it; it gives it an amplitude, a density, and a vibration or an undulation whose outline never does anything but approach. This visual persists until its disappearance; the sonorous appears and fades away into its permanence."[423]

In a theoretical framework, we can further develop this idea of the permanence of images conjured up by sound versus the more fleeting nature of images physically seen. Sight is physical. Only in the act of seeing (or touching) is the objects' existence confirmed. When its physicality is taken away, its appearance dissolves, although the image might survive as a memory. In contrast, a sound is heard. Before engaging any other sense perceptions, the intellect is engaged not only to process the rhythms, notes, and echoes of the sound but also to imagine the physicality of what is heard. Even when the sounds are no longer heard by the ears, the images it created remain as a memory in the mind. Thus a sound is more permanent, because it is more effective in involving the intellect and the

[422] ibid
[423] ibib, pp. 2

imagination. This is how the appearance of Venus (in sound) seems more imposing and powerful than the disappearing (visual) image of Absāl.

With the manifestation of Venus, Jāmī elaborates on the eternity of her existence, which has filled "گردون" *the heavens* through her "آهنگ" *music*. Only in "سماع" *hearing* [424] one can hear her. Here I define the concept of *samāʿ* to mean listening or hearing in relation to the rhythmical music of Venus (as a celestial being), which likely provokes the listener or the receiver (Salāmān) of her music to dance. Nonetheless, given the broader tradition of Sufi practice of *samāʿ* particularly within the Naqšbandiya order, one can draw a different sort of conclusion about this practice. Within the larger Sufi tradition, *samāʿ* means "the rhythmical movements to musical accompaniment," and for the Naqšbandiya Sufis this practice was presented alongside the performance of *silent dhikr*, which I believe means *a contemplative remembrance* of God in the heart.[425] Jāmī, who was not a practicing Naqšbandiya Sufi mystic himself, does not seem to necessarily think of the mere practice of *samāʿ* and *dhikr* when proclaiming the world of the unseen or to experience it in the physical world. Instead, he is more interested in the ritualistic use of *samāʿ* and *dhikr* for their literary, intellectual, and, more importantly, poetic uses within the periphery of poetry involving the event of love.[426] Algar puts it thus:

> "Unlike other Naqshbandis of the time, he was not unreservedly hostile to the practice, and even engaged in it himself, when brought to spontaneous ecstasy by his evocation of beauty (female, in this case) in *Yusuf va Zulaykha*. True *samaʿ* was, however, different from that in which the spiritually deficient (naqisan) engaged; theirs was simply a form of worldly and frivolous dance (raqs; an indulgence viewed by Sufis as utterly distinct from *samaʿ*)."[427]

---

[424] "سماع" *samāʿ: "*Hearing, listening to; the sense of hearing; ecstasy occasioned by hearing song or music; a song, a dance (especially a circular dance performed by dervishes in ecstasy), music; (in grammar) prescription Steingass, 695
[425] Algar. Jami. Pp. 114-115.
[426] Ibid. pp. 109-124.
[427] Ibid. pp. 115.

More importantly, Jāmī, in his ritualistic literary take on *samāʿ* in relation to Venus, alludes to Venus having "کمالات بلند" *elevating perfections* by projecting the heavenly music and adds that it is through the desire for "وصول" *union* with Venus' music that the soul (who is living in the physical world) becomes "ارجمند" *noble* (lns. 1115). Jāmī describes her impact due to her "جمال" *grace* (lns. 1015, 1116). This *grace* is not visual or a representation of sight like Absāl's "حسن" *beauty*, and instead this *grace* conveys the essence of harmony through "سماع" *hearing/music/song* (ln. 1011). With Venus's grace "عقل نورانی شود" *the intellect is illuminated* and thus makes one "پادشاه ملک انسانی شود" *become the king in the kingdom of mankind* (ln. 1116).

Moreover, what Salāmān listens to cannot be interrupted and it is safe to assume that "the sound that penetrates through the ear propagates throughout the entire body something of its effects, which could not be said to occur in the same way with the visual signal."[428] That being said, to listen is to be present and alive, according to Jāmī. Salāmān listens to what is shown to him through speech, and this guided/mediated sight transforms his vision.[429]

With the appearance of Venus through her music, Salāmān becomes all-hearing, "listening with all his being,"[430] as opposed to all-seeing (either active or a passive). Venus in turn becomes his "میل" *pleasure* (replacing his "غم" *sorrow*) not in a sense to demolish the "عشق" *love* that Salāmān experienced with Absāl, but giving Salāmān another sort of pleasure in life. This pleasure is not visual, but exists and permeates his senses through sound and timbre. It is also possible that Jāmī progresses Absāl to the next stage as Venus as a result of her absolute devotion to Salāmān and self-sacrifice in the fire. Not only is Salāmān capable of moving from passive seeing to listening, but Absāl transforms from "صورت" *an image* into "سماع" *music/hearing* (ln. 1011).

---

[428] Luc-Nancy, pp. 14.
[429] Ibid, "listening is passing over to the register of presence to self, it being understood that the 'self' is precisely nothing available (substantial or subsistent) to which one can be 'present'." pp. 12.
[430] Luc-Nancy, pp. 4

Henry Corbin informs us of Naṣīr-al-dīn Ṭūsī's summary of such a setting that:

> "Pure love of the ideal Image [Absāl] establishes itself permanently in Salāmān's soul as he becomes increasingly conscious of it as the Presence that is within his own being and that preceded everything that he had perceived outside of himself. The Figure [Venus] abolishes the phantom of Absāl or, rather, transfigures Absāl through sublimation of love in the true sense, and becomes Salāmān's companion for eternity, and 'celestial bride' who for the 'father' was still only hope or a hypothetical promise. There is no longer any conflict between Absāl and 'royalty'; each has become the other. Integrating with himself what he had previously believed to be other than himself, Salāmān becomes a complete man, Homo totus, and accedes to the royal dignity of the perfect Sage."[431]

Through the Sage's guidance, Salāmān's sense of hearing is activated in the matter of love and pleasure. Salāmān does not have to depend on his eyes and touch to be in love with Absāl, but his other senses now inform him of his eternal love for Absāl and thus Venus. The King uses the mirror to gain knowledge by seeing and thus comes to understand the extent of Salāmān and Absāl's love. Through the revival of the image of Absāl, the Sage gains the knowledge of how to save Salāmān, by recognizing that his torment stems from lacking pleasure through his senses. In both cases, knowledge is the hallmark of guided sight, which then enables a hospitable situation to be achieved between love, knowledge and sight. As a result, Salāmān "از غم ابسال رست" *becomes delivered from his grief over Absāl* (ln. 1021). The tormented Salāmān is healed so that he can see the otherworldliness of his own existence, as well as that of Absāl's in the form of Venus. The (deceased) Absāl and Venus are not immediate figures of sight, yet they both are equally accessible to Salāmān's vision (otherworldly sight/imagination/intention) in the form of music. Salāmān just has to listen and rely on the eternal existence of the planet Venus, visible in the night sky.

[431] Henry Corbin. *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital.* pp. 217.

Conclusions

I was intrigued by Jāmī's use of sight/eyes/seeing (and not-seeing), by how many encounters begin with a meeting of the eyes. I suggest here that Jāmī often intentionally integrates eyes/sight into his discussion, so much so that it almost seems that his poetic language tells the story like eyes watching the reader. With this premise in mind, this chapter examined Jāmī's take on several philosophical nuances on the subject of love and knowledge through sight.

I first examined the metaphysics of sight, and I tried to understand the major role the eyes (or sense of sight) played in the experience of love, and how, rational/intellect/knowledge stands to be either hostile or hospitable toward love depending on the role sight plays. Jāmī places the eye/sight in the highest esteem and as a result introduces some serious complexities that sight resolves in the interaction between love and knowledge. While Jāmī might not be the first poet in the medieval times to examine this complex relationship between love and knowledge; nonetheless, he experiments with using sight to convey the hostile/hospitable situations created by the interactions between love and knowledge. Subsequently, in the section on 'poetry of the eye,' I tried to understand the genealogy of Jāmī's thinking about the act of writing this poem as to negotiate the hostile and/or hospitable relationship between love and knowledge through sight.

Jāmī's opening chapter (*chapter one*) functions as the main preface to his entire argument and philosophical/mystical take on the complex relationship between love, knowledge, and sight. In order to analyze Jāmī's complex philosophical and mystical thinking, I tried to identify his definitions and explanations of what love is, how beauty is defined, what is the essence of knowledge, and what role(s) do sight/seeing play in the interactions between love and beauty, love and knowledge, and beauty and knowledge. Integration/union of the two souls Salāmān and Absāl is the major theme in the poem, and thus Jāmī uses sight/eyes as their main form of interaction. Sight functions to either encourage or suppress hostility/hospitality of love and knowledge. I developed three terms to classify Jāmī's

depiction or use of sight. These were: Active Sight: The Eye in Search for Love; Passive Sight: Beyond the Eyes, Sense of Touch; and Guided Sight: The Mediator of Knowledge.

In the section on *Active Sight: The Eye in Search for Love*, I explored how active sight/seeing promises the experience of love, and results in maintaining love for its interpenetrating nature of two opposites. The prime user of active sight in the poem is Absāl, who uses this form of sight to pursue her aim of winning the love of Salāmān. Through her active seeing/gazing, Absāl is able to project her desire into Salāmān's heart, and as a result Salāmān is enthralled with her physical beauty. After beginning their love affair, Salāmān and Absāl set their minds and hearts on leaving the Kingdom (a place of intellect) and the influence of the King's and the Sage's territory behind in search of their own Island, *the Island of Pleasure*. Jāmī beautifully describes the journey across the sea to the Island as a fast and continuous moving toward something heavenly—the Island where every creature lives in harmony with nature, despite their differences. Once on their island, the union of Salāmān and Absāl appears secure and safe from disapproval and interference. Salāmān and Absāl see and experience a similar harmonious co-existence. Up to this point in the journey, Jāmī purposefully designates active seeing as a means of enhancing their active engagement with the physical world, and as a result they experience the utmost in human existence.

While Jāmī proclaims that active sight incites physical love, on the other end of this active sight must be the passive seer, the one being desired, the one whom the action is directed upon. In this case, it is Salāmān, whose beauty and perfection, makes him a desirable sight for Absāl. Salāmān is and to remain passive seer (receiver) for his entire life. Born of a plant, as a result of the Sage's alchemy, he is then being taken care for/nurtured/suckled by Absāl, his wet-nurse. He is presented as the one Absāl desires since his infancy, and Absāl fashions him the way she wants to make him appear more beautiful. He is then enthralled with Absāl's active seeing, and thus he is drawn to fall in love with her. In the aftermath of Absāl's death, the agonized Salāmān still remains the passive

seer/beloved. Salāmān misses the physical presence/touch and love of Absāl. In such an instance, Jāmī emphasizes how touch promises the experience of love in the form of physical pleasure.

It is here that Jāmī shifts from the sense of sight to introduce the importance of touch in relation to passive sight. Touch becomes the most significant sense to describe Salāmān's miserable state after Absāl dies. Salāmān has become used to touching and being touched by Absāl. And thus, after he loses Absāl in the fire, he misses her touch and the feel of touching her. Salāmān turns to a self-inflicted torment of chewing his nails and fingers, which once touched Absāl.

The Sage is charged with finding a remedy for the miserable Salāmān. This is where guided sight, with the King and the Sage as the mediators of knowledge, comes into the discussion. This kind of the sight only happens through mirrors. Through guided sight, a new form of reconciliation/hospitality between love and knowledge occurs. Two key examples are discussed. The first involved the King, who through the reflection of his magical mirror, becomes sympathetic toward Salāmān as well as Absāl with regard to their love for each other. The King's simple act of hospitality toward Salāmān and Absāl's love results from the knowledge he gains about their love for each other upon witnessing their relationship through his mirror. The Sage, in his turn, is able to (gently) and (through speech) guide/transfer Salāmān's sight of Absāl's reflection in a mirror to Salāmān's listening to the harp of Venus, who forever plays in the heavens. With this form of knowledge of Venus's music, Salāmān discovers a new kind of pleasure, a pleasure he experiences through actively listening as opposed to seeing or touching. Salāmān's senses are transfigured, his sense of hearing is empowered. Salāmān is thus cured. He is now able to envision Venus using his sense of hearing rather than his sense of sight and touch. And thus, he is united with this divine music that gives him pleasure and falls in love with Venus for eternity.

In my study of sight, I discovered these three forms of sight, each significant and each effective for its own purpose. But I also came to the realization that Jāmī does not seem to value one sense

over the others. Instead he examines human perceptions, which are based on the use of the senses, and how these perceptions actively and passively inform human experiences. In this way, he makes the experience of life and living fascinating through sight and seeing the physical world around us.

In addition, in examining Jāmī's definition of sight and by analyzing three kinds of sight, one comes to understand that *Salāmān u Absāl* is neither purely philosophical nor pure mysticism. Instead, it is a poem about the philosophy of the mystical experiences on a very human (physical/worldly) level. By this I mean the process of using syllogistic reasoning during the journey of learning or becoming knowledgeable within the soul, while the soul is in close contact with the body and physical senses. In order to become an intellectual being, the experience of passionate love that transforms into spiritual one with the work of Imagination is the most essential step. Therefore, Jāmī, intentionally highlights the very ordinary act of seeing that conjures up the event of love in its most dangerous as well beautiful aspects. And the same argument goes for the phenomenon of knowledge, that is, how knowledge of the beautiful ones and the curiosity to pursue them results in/ provokes love. Answering the question whether love and knowledge through sight bring hostility/hospitability has given a poet like Jāmī the freedom to investigate and take the risk to write about the most unusual love between a young prince and his wet-nurse. In taking this risk and dealing with the most complex topics and themes, Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* proves itself to be a poem of great complexities. And by analyzing the philosophical and mystical importance of the poem through the discussion of sight, I introduce one way of understanding this rich and dangerous love-story poem.

A similar theory of sight, knowledge, and the experience of love can be studied in Jāmī's other two long-narrative poems, *Leyli u Majnun* and *Yusof u Zoleyk̲ā,* in which passionate love turns into spiritual love. For instance, Jāmī's description of Majnun as the lover comes when he appears to be in the process of making Leyli fall in love with him. In doing so, he actively gazes upon her face.

339 In stealing few gazes, he gazed upon her face, ۳۳۹ دزدیده به روی او نظر کرد

on her soul, that gazing left an impact. در جان وی آن نظر اثر کرد[432]

More intriguingly, in another instance, Jāmī juxtaposes the notion of passive sight with the actions of Mejnun, who so far has been the active seer. In the following lines, we see how Leyli subverts the role of active seeing by purposely ignoring Majnun, by not actively seeing him, as a matter of testing his love (lines 657-718). This is the scenario, where we see Jāmī establish the phenomenon of passive sight being as empowering as active sight and such a situation enhances hostility by bringing an incongruous nature between knowledge, sight, and love.

667 Leyli did not gaze at him, ۶۶۷ لیلی سوی او نظر نینداخت
in the crowd, she did not pay attention to him. زان جمع به حال او نپرداخت

By withdrawing her active seeing of her lover, Leyli's not-seeing causes an excruciating impact on Majnun for he seems to take pleasure in becoming the passive sight. Majnun falls on the ground unconsciously and can only recover if Leyli intervenes to bring back harmony in their love by seeing him. The guided sight or intermediaries in such love are introduced to be a number of individuals, such as the messengers who cross the desert and meet Majnun and Leyli at different locations. Majnun's art of writing poetry and letters also summon as guided sight, because these letters keep their love mediated through, and thus a new form of (non-interactive) reconciliation takes place to redefine the hostility that their love has caused to both of them.

In the narrative poem of *Yusof u Zoleyk̲ā*, this interplay of sight is even more intense. And it is not only the sight between the lover Zoleyk̲ā desiring to see her beloved Yusof, but also the prophetic sight and vision of the father Yaqub wanting to see his son. For instance, the very first encounter between Zoleyk̲ā and Yusof occurs in a dream. Zoleyk̲ā is the person dreaming and thus she is the

[432] Afsaẖzod. *Leyli u Majnun*, pp. 241.

active seer. In this interplay of love-gazes, she is the only one to maintain this active seeing in pursuit of Yusof despite the struggles and torments she goes through.

2328	I've opened the eyes in seeing you, in this country, I've become hopeless because of you.	نظر بگشاده در نظاره تو بدین کشور شدم آواره تو [433] ...	۲۳۲۸

The guided sight or the most prominent intermediary figures in this case are the wet-nurse in the case of Zoleyk̲ā, and the invisible voice, who guides Yusof.

Jāmī's *K̲erad-nāma-ye Eskandari* ('The Alexandrian Book of Wisdom') is another work that reveals the major themes of knowledge and experience. In this work, Jāmī takes on the similar ideas on the concepts of sight and vision, but this time incorporates his ethico-political agendas, which are inclined toward philosophy. In *K̲erad-nāma-ye Eskandari*, the active sight is equated with knowledge and allegiance to a greater cause that combines kingship, conquest, and victory. Alexander the Great is depicted as a conqueror and he was fortunate enough to have enlisted sages (wise men) from all disciplines in his service. Their wisdom become knowledge that only Alexander could benefit from. Once knowledgeable, Alexander starts the voyage toward experiencing a new land (even reaching the mythical mountain of Qāf) and interacting with people from all regions. His love of conquest is intermingled in a way that it cannot be explained. The best way to comprehend this love of conquest is to understand the underlying intention of Alexander to cross the oceans in search of new places to conquer. In describing his love of conquest, Jāmī's language enlivens the poet's love of poetry. For example, in the following lines, Jāmī paints a beautiful picture of Alexander crossing the Caspian Sea when Jāmī (the poet) depicts a scene from Alexander's conquest in his poem.

1223	He emptied himself from stuff on the surface of the water, he leaped across like a bubble.	تهی گشته از خویشتن بر روی آب همی رفت گنبد زنان چون حباب	۱۲۲۳
1224	You would say like a jewel-scattering pen, on the tablet of emerald, as he was writing.	تو گویی مگر گوهر افشان قلم به لوح زمرد همی زد رقم [434]	۱۲۲۴

[433] Afsaẖzod. pp. 129.
[434] Afsaẖzod. pp. 475.

Alexander's physical movement across the surface of the water is compared to a pen writing on a tablet. The allusion to the lightness of Alexander's travel has a connotation of freeing him from all worldly matters as he travels in search of the land of the East. This scene fits a Sufi practice of denouncing materiality in search of spirituality. However, Jāmī also completes the sublime image of writing poetry about Alexander's conquest, which serves both sight and vision. The goal is the conquest and the act of conquering the land of knowledge. Love is the means to that purpose. Alexander's love of conquest of the distant land and in turn, Jāmī's willingness to write poetry about Alexander, conqueror of distant lands, confirms Jāmī's love for the art of his poetry. This art of poetry, in hindsight, emphasizes the existence of the physical world that is in constant need of conquest and exploration, which in turn inspires knowledge and experience.

Chapter IV: "Poetics of Vision:" The Eye in Translation

This chapter is comprised of five sections: a brief history of Neoplatonism in medieval Arabo-Persian scholarship and an analysis of how Jāmī employs this philosophy in his poem; an examination of the metaphysics of vision; an explanation of my use of the expression, Jāmī's 'poetics of vision'; a close reading of *Salāmān u Absāl*'s penultimate chapter with particular attention paid to Jāmī's emanation theory; and an analysis of the Neoplatonic philosophical vision in the poem along with an examination of the 'translatability' of this vision. In the last section, I will explore three major topics within Neoplatonic thought, the vision of love, the vision of beauty and the vision of vision, by which I mean dream visions. These last three sections will be examined in juxtaposition with Jāmī's idea of integration/union involving both the intellect and the imagination.

I begin this chapter by giving a brief history of the ancient Greek philosophical influences on medieval Arabic and Persian scholarship and describing how poets like Jāmī interpreted and incorporated these philosophical influences in their poetry. I will explain how Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* is not just a poem that incorporates complicated mystical ideas, but one that also reveals complex philosophical thinking pertaining to the dialogue on intellect. Subsequently, I examine Jāmī's interpretation of the metaphysics of vision as an indication of the otherworldly, the conceptual sight of the unknown or the unseen, unlike physical and immediate seeing with the eyes. I then explain what I mean by 'poetics of vision.' Jāmī elaborates on his thoughts on vision in the same manner that he elaborates on the eye/sense of sight and with the same level of complexity. That said, Jāmī reveals his mystical philosophy through the encounters between love, beauty, and intellect, which he uses to explain how one achieves intellectual/spiritual pleasure through physical pleasure. This topic will be discussed in detail in the section that focuses on the penultimate chapter of the poem. Finally, in the section titled, The Neoplatonic Eye and Jāmī on Vision, I will elaborate on the transformation of physical sight (visibility) into otherworldly sight, which is in essence intelligence. In order to distinguish

between corporal pleasure via physical seeing and otherworldly desire via vision, I will then explain and provide examples of each of Jāmī's Neoplatonic indications of the vision of love, beauty, and vision (dreams). In short, it is in my intention in this chapter to study Jāmī's vision in juxtaposition to his use of and references to the sense of sight/eye, and to pay attention to the implications of the unseen, despite the many descriptions and images involving physical seeing.

Neoplatonism and Jāmī

The Neoplatonic philosophical school of thought first flourished in the Greco-Roman world of the late antiquity, mainly between the third and seventh century.[435] Antique "Neoplatonism" is a modern concept, which refers to the writings of a group of late antiquity philosophers (initially referred to as "Platonists" and later called "Neoplatonists"), engaged in reviving the spirit of Plato's teachings.[436] The philosophy of Neoplatonism developed as the Neoplatonists began to harmonize the philosophical, religious and literary traditions of the Hellenistic world. The Neoplatonists focused on engaging with Plato's dialogues, Aristotle's metaphysics, and Stoics' ethics in a newly-ordered form of philosophizing religious practices. The Neoplatonists' main concern was "the mindful consciousness (nous, often translated as thought, intelligence, or intellect), which is ontologically prior to the physical realm, and is typically taken for ultimate reality (Mind and Matter)".[437] Neoplatonism favors mind (spirit or consciousness) over matter, and Neoplatonists continued the never settled

[435] See also Wildberg, Christian, "Neoplatonism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/neoplatonism/>. Also, Emilsson, Eyjolfur Kjalar, 1988, Plotinus on Sense-Perception: A Philosophical Study, Cambridge (England) and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press,

[436] Gregory 1999, Smith 2004, O'Meara 2003: 3, n. 1. Also see "In the Light of the Sphere: the 'Vehicle of the Soul' and Subtle-body Practices in Neoplatonism" by Crystal Addey in *Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West: Between Mind and Body* edited by Geoffrey Samuel, Jay Johnston.

[437] See Wildberg, Christian, "Neoplatonism". Also see Wallis, R. T. *Neoplatonism* (Classical life and letters). London: Duckworth. 1972.

dispute between Plato and Aristotle over which objects of mindful consciousness have an ontological priority.[438]

In a monolithic religious belief system, Neoplatonic thinking on the One made sense.[439] In its turn, Islamic Neoplatonism developed with the rise of Islam in the seventh century.[440] As the Neoplatonists advanced the emanation theory, according to which all things emanate from the One source, so the idea of the transcendent God in the Qur'an was given a similar explanation. The first Islamic philosopher Abu Yūsuf Ya'qūb ibn 'Isḥāq aṣ-Ṣabbāḥ al-Kindī (d.873 AD) devoted himself to translating the works of Aristotle and the Neoplatonists into Arabic and wrote philosophical treatises on the One and the Intellect.[441] These Neoplatonic views were further developed by Abū Naṣr Fārābī (d. 951) and Ibn Sīnā (d. 1037). In a later period, Šehāb-al-dīn Yaḥyā Sohravardī (d. 1191) advanced the doctrine of the emanative hierarchy of light, and in his turn, the theosophist ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240) became associated with the founding concept of وحدت الوجود *Necessary Existent Being*,[442] which is inspired by works of Neoplatonists, particularly those of Plotinus.[443] These Islamic scholars metamorphosed the Neoplatonic thought. They introduced and then fused the concept of "وحدت"

---

438 Ainsworth, Thomas, "Form vs. Matter", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/form-matter/>.

439 For a good reading on the impact of Islam in the regions and how the pre-Islamic teachings and learning were transferred into the Islamic thinking, see Nasr, S. (1964). *Three Muslim sages: Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Ibn 'Arabi* (Harvard studies in world religions). Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

"Al-Kindi must be considered as the founder of that school in which Aristotelian philosophy as interpreted by Alexandrian commentators—especially Alexander Aphrodisias and Themistius—became combined with Neoplatonism, which had reached the Muslims through the translation and paraphrasing of sections of the Enneads under the name of the Theology of Aristotle, and the pseudo-Aristotelian *Liber de Causis*…" (10).

440 See Fakhry, Majid's *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, 2nd ed, London: Longmans; New York: Columbia University Press (1983). Also see Dimitri Gutas's *Greek Thoughts, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbasid Society*, (Brill, 1998) on the movement of translation in the early Islamic period.

441 Adamson, Peter, "Al-Kindi", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2015/entries/al-kindi/>

442 See Nasr 1964, pp. (28). "The being of the whole Universe has no higher status than that of contingency and depends for every moment of its existence upon the Necessary Being that keeps all things in existence by the continued effusion of the light of its Being upon them" (28, Nasr 1964).

443 See Landau, Rom. *The philosophy of Ibn 'Arabī* (Ethical and religious classics of East and West: no. 22). New York: Macmillan (1959). On the misleading reading of how *Ibn 'Arabī* might not be the founder of the term وحدت الوجود *Necessary Existent Being*, see https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ibn-arabi/#WahAlWuj. As for the influence of Ibn 'Arabī on Jāmī see Chapter I of this thesis.

oneness (the belief in the existence of the Necessary Existent Being) from Neoplatonic thought into Islamic thought on the question of the Truth. Their followers were called "اهل وحدت" *the people believing in the one God*. A Sufi mystical person belonged to "اهل تصوف" *the mystical people*, a people who sought knowledge of God through mystical beliefs and experiences relating to imagination (or some other form of mystical expression).

In dealing with a medieval Persian poet like Jāmī, who is important both culturally and intellectually, we must try to understand the philosophy and literary thinking that had developed in medieval times in the Persianate world. Jāmī is not only significant for his political and social roles within the Timurid court, he is also an important poet of the period who was operating on expanding the knowledge of medieval Islamic Sufi thought alongside Arabic and Persian literary adaptations of Neoplatonic philosophy. An adherent of the Naqšbandi Sufi order, Jāmī embraced and popularized ibn 'Arabī's doctrine of وحدت الوجود *Necessary Existent Being* and other writings within and beyond the order.[444] The doctrine of Necessary Existent Being corresponds to the existence of the One. And the main discourse surrounding such philosophical and mystical tradition (especially in ibn 'Arabī's doctrine that had inspired Jāmī) is theosophy. This permeates the whole issue of the existence of God apart from "the pure intellect" and "constructing proofs" to relying on the "experience or undergo (or 'suffer')."[445]

Because of the combination of the Islamic mystical tradition of Sufism with Neoplatonic philosophy, we are often dealing with a poetic language that is enriched with allegorical references to the Divine. One of the characteristics of Persian poetry in classical and medieval times is that there is a single Creator, who is above all other creation, the One (God). And thus, there is the need for dialectics, which expresses that the One is not very far from our own existence. This is where Jāmī

[444] see H. Algar's "*Jami* and *Ibn 'Arabi*: *Khatam al-Shu'ara*' and *Khatam al-Awliya*'" pp. 138-158.
[445] Corbin, Henry, *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*. Tran. Ralph Manheim, (Princeton University Press, 1998). pp. 127.

commences with the task of fashioning his knowledge of Neoplatonism and mysticism into a poem about humans falling in love. That said, Jāmī uses his poem to express his thoughts on the philosophy of mysticism and his Sufi learnings. In his preface, Jāmī establishes the philosophical position that from God "سایه" *a shadow* has fallen upon the world and "خوبرویان" *the beautiful faces* have benefitted from it (ln. 2). This imagery of the fallen or falling shadow is ascribed to have an attribution of the Divine descend. This is similar to the emanation theory—the belief that all things are created from the One source and that both light and shadow are part of the Divine creation (ln. 3) .The poem expresses this belief in what is only in appearance the story of two desperate lovers, Salāmān and Absāl, who are struggling to achieve union and suffering in the process. Their sufferings are conveyed through the images of the sea and the fire. But the point of Jāmī's story is that the suffering terminates with Salāmān achieving union with the celestial Venus. As we saw earlier, Jāmī challenges the reader to seek a deeper understanding of the poem/speech. This comes toward the end of the poem, when Jāmī distinguishes between the task of completing "اندر صورت هر قصه ای" *the outer form of any story* while there is "حصه ای" *a share* of "معنی" *the meaning* for "خرده بینان" *the acute-observers* or those who see the fine points for an interpretation of any kind (ln. 1075).

1076	As the outer form of this tale is completed, you must now search for its meaning.	صورت این قصه چون اتمام یافت بایدت از معنی آن کام یافت[446]	۱۰۷۶

The deeper, underlying meaning in the poem is constituted by the appearance of Venus. Venus, even though she is an active agent/seer, is evoked by the Sage as a means to transcend Salāmān's initial agony at her appearance. She alleviates the suffering of Salāmān's intellect by making him fall in love with her. Venus is introduced as "آن کمالات بلند" *that superior perfection* and "زان جمال عقل نورانی شود" *from that beauty Intellect becomes luminous* (lns, 1115-16). The celestial Venus comes to the rescue of the

[446] Afsaẖzod, A., Dād ʻAlīshāh, J., Jānfidā, A., Aḥrārī, &., Avery, P., & Tarbīyat, &. (1997). Mathnavī-i Haft awrang / Nūr al-Dīn ʻAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad Jāmī. Mathnavī Salāmān u Absāl. Pp. 391-448.

agonized Salāmān not in sight or visibly, but through pure intellect. We can detect a Neoplatonic intention in the mathnavī's structure: it starts with God emanating His beauty on earth, so that the lovers fall in love through the sight of each other; it progresses to another level with the appearance of the Celestial Venus via the intellect. Jāmī highlights this inevitable integration of the human soul with the celestial being due to the hospitable relationship between love, knowledge, and intellect. Moreover, it is in this trajectory of moving from visual or visibility (through the experience of earthly love and suffering) to intelligible union with Venus that Jāmī's Neoplatonic mystical-philosophy is explained.

The Metaphysics of Vision

The first Greek text we know of which was translated into Arabic was Aristotle's Metaphysics, in the 8th century AD, making it the point of departure for Arabic and Islamic philosophical thought.[447] For two centuries, early Islamic philosophers (see above) transmitted Greek knowledge, thought, and philosophy into Arabic by studying and interpreting Greek metaphysics.[448] They particularly focused on the theory of causes and principles, matter and form.[449] Thus, in almost all of his philosophical works concerning dialectics as well as mystical knowledge, Ibn Sīnā's brought together ideas from the Aristotelian philosophical tradition and the Neoplatonic idea of emanation regarding the concept of truth.[450] Yet, there is no simple or straightforward definition of metaphysics. Neither Aristotle nor Ibn Sīnā give clear definitions, except for situating metaphysics as the first principle of all other

[447] See Amos Bertolacci's "On the Arabic Translations of Aristotle's Metaphysics". (Arabic Sciences and Philosophy, vol. 15, 2005, online access, *Cambridge University Press*, 2005). Pp. 241-275.
[448] See "Building the Library of Arabic Philosophy. Platonism and Aristotelianism in the Sources of al-Kindi", in C. D'Ancona (ed.), *The Libraries of the Neoplatonists*. Proceedings of the Meeting of the European Science Foundation Network "Late Antiquity and Arabic Thought", Brill, Leiden, 2007. 319–50. Also see Pinès, Shlomo "Aristotle's Politics in Arabic Philosophy". *Collected works of Shlomo Pines: Studies in Arabic Versions of Greek texts and in Medieval Science.* 2. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, (1986). Pp. 146-157.
[449] See Ruth Glasner. *Averroes' "Physics". A Turning Point in Medieval Natural Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2009.
[450] See Dimitri Gutas. Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition: Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosopical Works. (Brill, 2014).

sciences/learning/philosophy.[451] Thus, for the sake of my argument and trusting that their understanding would mostly be germane to the way in which we use the term today, I will go with Jean-Paul Sartre's *definition of metaphysics, which has the advantages of brevity and clarity, as it appears in the* conclusion of *L'être et le néant:*

> "[Metaphysics is] the study of individual processes which have given birth to this world as a concrete and particular totality. In this sense metaphysics is to ontology as history is to sociology."[452]

Metaphysics investigates ontological existence and being. Within the framework of Neoplatonic philosophy, metaphysics recognizes a transcendent movement emanating from the One. That said, the fundamental birth of a thought is its metaphysical creation as an idea in the first place. With this framework in mind, I will explain how Jāmī defines his metaphysics of vision, which is beyond any experience and which has as its governing substance the eternal existence of the Divine. The concept of metaphysics is complex; the focus on the metaphysics of vision increases this complexity conceptually and objectively.

The metaphysics of vision in *Salāmān u Absāl* can be understood with reference to Jāmī's descriptions of the King and the Sage's roles and intentions. The King wants a son because he needs a successor, "از پس رفتن بود او را خلف" *who is to succeed him* [the King] *after he is gone* (ln. 302). The Sage's role and purpose are to make sure the son is born with virtues outside the human realm, thus not born as the result of lust and of a woman. So, the Sage uses his intellect in speech (in chapters 21, 25, 27, and 29) about having "فرزند نکو" *a good son* to fulfil this vision of ruling the Kingdom (ln. 321). This hypothetical creation of Salāmān starts with the King's "اندیشه" *thought* of having a son. The Sage's role

[451] Ibn Sina, *Ilahiyyāt*, I, 3, 18, 14–17; *Al-Ilāhiyyāt min Kitāb al-Šifā'*, [ed. by], H. al-Āmūlī, Maktab al-I'lām al-Islāmī, Qum: Markaz al-Našr, 1418 H.q./1376 H. š [1997–8]. and see, Cohen, S. Marc, "Aristotle's Metaphysics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/aristotle-metaphysics/>.

[452] Sartre, J.-P. : *L'être et le néant*. Paris: Tel Gallimard, 1943/1976; *Being and Nothingness*, trans. by H.E. Barnes. New York: Philosophical Library, 1956. Pp. 683.

is to transport the King's thinking into reality. Jāmī's description of the Sage's philosophical creation of Salāmān is mysterious as well as surreal. The Sage initiated "تدبیری" a "meditating upon/understanding/looking to the end or result of an affair"[453] that "ماند حیران فکرت دانشوران" *bewildered the thoughts of the learned men* (ln. 399). The Sage "نطفه را بی شهوت از صلبش گشاد" *without lust, drew sperm from* [the King's] *loins, and put it* "در محلی جز رحم" *in a place other than the womb* (ln. 400). The phrase, a place other than the womb, indicates a separate entity that has a phenomenological suggestion, which is distinct from the nature of being/becoming. In this case, Jāmī describes the Sage as undertaking a procedure to create a baby with a human soul, yet who is to remain independent of any bodily needs and attachments.[454]

This conversation about Salāmān's birth or creation is unlike the discussion regarding sight or the visibility of physical existence, which Salāmān experiences with Absāl. Rather, the metaphysics of vision is about intelligence and the pursuit of dialectics (conducted by the Sage) where thinking (thus philosophy) is regarded above the physical needs of Salāmān (the soul). Jāmī constructs the character of the Sage along the lines of Plato's Socratic persona in the Symposia, the one who is to direct the power of dialectic above all other means to define/refine love or the soul's purpose.[455] Jāmī describes the Sage as someone whose presence next to the King "کاخ حکمت را قوی کرده اساس" *made a firm foundation to the palace of wisdom* (ln. 279).

Jāmī emphasizes that the King's wish for a son comes as "اندیشه" *a thought*, which he shares with the Sage (lns. 300, 303-04). Salāmān is thus born out of a purpose (to lead and to succeed the King (ln. 302)) and a thought, an intellectual vision initiated and debated (intellectually) between the

---

[453] Steingass, pp. 289.

[454] The most problematic aspect of this creation is that: despite the most physical functionality of the male sperm, the female womb is considered the most corporeal of all. The female womb is thus to be replaced with a plant, in which case, the Sage seems by-pass the female agency, for she is the body, lustful and not intellectual at all.

[455] See Mary P. Nichols, "Socrates' Contest with the Poets in Plato's Symposium". Political Theory, vol 32 (2004). Pp. 186-206. A similar the Sage figure appears in *Somnium Scipionis* for guiding Scipio Aemilianus through a fictional dream vision. See http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/cicero_dream_of_scipio_02_trans.htm.

Sage and the King, and not of "زن" *a woman* or "شهوت" *lust* (lns. 352-362). As the next king to rule "یونان" *Ancient Greece*, Salāmān's virtues are set (before his birth) in the same manner as the King is made aware that he must neglect women and forsake lust altogether to be the leader. Nevertheless, Jāmī also gives a more human reason for the King's wish to have "یک پسر" *a son* "کز جمال او شود روشن بصر" *from whose beauty my eyes become brightened* (ln. 331). Here, once again, we see hints of Platonic thoughts on the importance of physical beauty as a form of sublimation into the love, which is the love that the King experiences with the birth of Salāmān, who is also to reflect the King's good virtue and moral excellence.[456] Salāmān is born a sheer moral and virtuous being, while his existence is given an immortal substance in relation to the King. Evidence for Salāmān's immortality is described later in the poem during his release from the fire intact, the fire in which Absāl burns and from which Salāmān is saved due to the King's interference and "سوخت او را و سلامان را گذشت" *he* [the King] *burned her and left Salāmān* (ln. 916).[457]

It is important to note, however, that above the King's wish and the Sage's intellect, is God's creation manifested in its physical form. In the preface of the poem, Jāmī defines the vision itself in the concept "یکتایی" *oneness* or *union* or *becoming one* with the Divine (ln. 19), and the metaphysics of this vision is based on the premise that "گفت و گوی" *the talks* or *the dialogues* on "حسن و عشق" *beauty and love* belong to God. The following lines express Jāmī's explanation of the metaphysics of vision.

۷	گفت وگوی حسن وعشق از توست و بس عاشق ومعشوق نبود جز تو کس	7	The talks on beauty and love belong to You and nothing more, without You, there is no lover nor beloved.
۸	ای به پیشت حسن خوبان پرده ای تو به پرده روی پنهان کرده ای	8	O You are the veil before the beautiful faces, You have concealed Your face with the veil.

This complex poem/story is about the union of the physical (corporal existence) with the spiritual; here the role of the idea of "پرده" *the veil* (ln. 8) is central in definitions of and distinction between

[456] See Plato's *Symposium*, 210a-212a. Hunter, R., 2004, *Plato's Symposium*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[457] Afsaħzod, pp. 438.

visibility and intelligibility. In traditional medieval mystical poetry, the veil is used to describe the in-between-ness or isthmus between the physical world and the imagined world.[458] In Salāmān u Absāl, Jāmī refers to the veil to convey that God has hidden His face behind this veil and projects and manifests His creation and emanation in the physical world in the beautiful faces of the beloved ones (lns. 10-13). And thus, the event of love is inspired by God's creation (ln. 14). Salāmān and Absāl see each other's beauty and fall in love. God, on the level of the intellect, from behind the veil, directs such an event. God's interventions (similar to the First Principle/First Cause/ the One) are prerequisites in human affairs and experiences, especially in the matter of love.

A major idea behind the visible (visibility or sense perception) and intelligible (vision/otherworldly matters) is that one should not lose oneself in the visible. The vision is not external to one's visibility, and thus it can be attained, just as Salāmān attains union (in the act of seeing the intellectual beauty and falling in love) with Venus. Jāmī also suggests that one should not rely solely on vision (the invisible/intelligible) and neglect visibility. Thus, Salāmān's relation with Absāl represents the engagement of the sense of sight and visibility. This is the path through which Salāmān's intellectual relation with Venus, which depends on vision, can ultimately be attained. This is expressed in the Sage's guidance to Salāmān in his speech on Venus: [the Sage] "شهد های حکمتش درکام ریخت" *he poured the honeycomb of wisdom onto his sense of taste* (ln. 1000).

Jāmī's complex allegorical references throughout the poem introduce this vision of union. The next section will attempt to answer how he describes this vision and will identify the factors that contribute to or employ such a vision in the poem, what is the invisible or the unseen in the poem and how he introduces the measure of that which is unseen.

---

[458] See Salman H. Bashier. *Ibn al-'Arabī's Barzakh: The Concept of the Limit and the Relationship between God and the World*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004. And William Chittick. *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabī's Metaphysics of Imagination*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989. And ibid, *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn al-'Arabî and the Problem of Religious Diversity*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994a.

The Poetics of Vision

In Chapter III, "Poetry of the Eye," I examined Jāmī's use of images and tropes related to sight in order to explore the sense of vision, the philosophy of visibility and the aesthetics of the visual. In this section, entitled 'Poetics of Vision,' I examine Jāmī's reference to the phenomenon of a beauty that is invisible to the eye, but instead enthralls the viewer by engaging his intellect. I show how Jāmī elevates the impact of the vision above the visual by way of juxtaposition and by engaging the reader's attention to details. In the process, Jāmī shows how the intellect offers the way beyond what can be seen to more encompassing knowledge about the unseen. This happens in a vision, which is in contrast to the kind of knowledge we attain from the visible (the seeing/sight), through sense perception. Thus, the manifestation of Venus is experienced only when Salāmān's intellect is illuminated by listening to the heavenly music of Venus; this stands in contrast to his heart and body being illuminated by the physical sight of Absāl. I examine how Jāmī's poetics of vision is intertwined with a discussion of the intellect as it pertains to an engagement with the physical world through sense perception. In particular, I will discuss Jāmī's allegory of Yusof and Zoleyk̲ā in chapter 41 of the poem. The allegory explains the experience of and encounter with the vision, which results from an engagement with intense visual beauty as it is presented to the eye.

This allegory serves three main purposes. First, it shows how Jāmī depicts the power of visibility and its impact on the senses, especially the sense of sight. Second, it shows how the vision manifests itself in the intellect in a non-visual form. And, third, this vision comes from "غیب" *the unknown* and is only attainable (or becomes clearer) in the presence of the visual/visibility (ln. 613).

Jāmī begins the allegory by commanding that the reader "بین" *observe* Zoleyk̲ā, who is the active seer/sight and madly in love with Yusof, who is initially the passive seer. In order for Zoleyk̲ā to win Yusof's heart, she builds a white palace and fills it with paintings of herself, so that Yusof will witness her beauty. Jāmī suggests that Zoleyk̲ā not only presents herself as a beautiful sight in these paintings,

but also embellishes her sight by portraying herself (perhaps looking at Yusof) in all colors to enchant Yusof's sight/eyes. My analysis of the passage is as follows:

Jāmī, without passing judgement upon Zoleyk̲ā, begins by describing her hope of achieving Yusof's affection and love through actions she takes as a seer to get him to love her.

605	Observe Zoleyk̲ā whose heart was filled with hope and built a palace as white as the heart of a Sufi [saint].	۶۰۵	بین زلیخا را که جان پر امید ساخت کاخی چون دل صوفی سفید
606	There was not any painting nor any single color in it, like the surface of a mirror, not even a single rusted spot in it.	۶۰۶	هیچ نقش و هیچ رنگی نی در او چون رخ آیینه رنگی نی در او
607	She asked for a skilled painter [naqshbandī], to paint her portrait in every place.	۶۰۷	نقشبندی خواست آنگه چیره دست تا به هر جا صورت او نقش بست
608	No place remained empty from her portrait, so contentedly she sat and summoned Yusof.	۶۰۸	هیچ جای از نقش او خالی نماند شادمان بنشست و یوسف را بخواند

The palace with its white walls, empty and unblemished, can accommodate and invite new forms of "نقش" [naqsh] *painting* and "رنگ" *color*. When Zoleyk̲ā summons a skillful painter, it indicates the belief that a skillful painter is knowledgeable about the power of her/his art as to visually depict the un-experienced fantasy into reality.[459] This task of a painter to do "نقشبندی" [naqshbandī] *painting/engraving/embroidery*[460] is etymologically associated with the Naqshbandīya Sufi order to which Jāmī devoted himself intellectually.[461] That said, Jāmī's reverence for the skillful painter, whose work is about to entice Yusof through her/his prints, is to elevate the role of the naqshbandī and to enhance Jāmī's own dialectics on the One as a Naqshbandīya Sufi adherent.[462] Nonetheless, oscillating between the physical beauty and the power of the visual forms, as Jāmī progresses his dialectics on the manifestation of the unseen One, Yusof perceives the vision via his intellect.

[459] For an interesting study of the symbolic meaning of paintings and the role of the painters within Sufi literature see Christine van Ruymeke's "Nezami's giant brain tackles Eskandar's Sharaf Nama: The authorial voice of the poet-scholar-rewriter", *The Coming of the Mongols, The Idea of Iran* vol. 7, David Morgan and Sarah Stewart eds, I.B. Tauris, London, New York, pp. 69-94 (2018).
[460] Steingass, 1419.
[461] See Najib Māyel-Heravi, Sheyk̲ ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān Jāmi, (1998), pp. 231.
[462] On the importance of dialectics within Neoplatonic tradition see Plotinus. *Enneads I*. Trans. A. H. Armstrong. Pp. 150-165.

Zoleyk̲ā's physical beauty does not have any immediate effect on Yusof; nonetheless, the paintings, which imitate her beauty entice Yusof at first sight.

609	She removed the veil from her beautiful face, and thus, started telling him about her desire.	پرده از رخسار زیبا بر گرفت وز مراد خود حکایت در گرفت	۶۰۹

The sight of Zoleyk̲ā's beauty and her speech of desire for Yusof do not create the response she longs for, until Yusof turns his face away from her and sees the paintings.

610	When Yusof turned his face away from what she said and what he heard, he saw her appearance/face in every direction he turned to.	یوسف از گفت و شنیدش رو که تافت صورت او دید رو هر که سو که تافت	۶۱۰
611	When he saw her image one by one, a yearning for union with her came upon him.	صورت او را چو پی در پی بدید آمدش میلی به وصل وی پدید	۶۱۱

Interestingly, Zoleyk̲ā's static "صورت" *painting*(s)/*face*(s)/*image*(s) capture Yusof's eyes and create yearning, thus effectively functioning far more powerfully than the active sight or the actual beauty of Zoleyk̲ā. In other words, Yusof sees not her portraits, but what is projected in the images in those portraits. The power, attractiveness, richness, and evidence of the paintings create in Yusof "میلی" *a yearning* for "وصل وی" *union with her* (ln. 611).

Nonetheless, the impact of the portraits is undone when the vision is manifested from the world of the unseen.

10	Yet a proof from the world of the unseen manifested itself, he quickly found his chastity bestowed by the Divine.	لیک برهانی ز غیبش رو نمود عصمت یزدانیش دریافت زود	۶۱۳

The Divine intervention in the form of "برهانی ز غیبش" *a proof/demonstration* from the world of the unseen reverses the situation. This proof is "غیب" unseen, and Yusof receives it in his mind, grasping its significance in his intellect. He suddenly distances himself from desiring Zoleyk̲ā for her physical beauty. Jāmī informs us that with the Divine intervention, "دست خویش از کام او ناکام داشت" *he* [Yusof] *kept his hand from attaining the desire* and thus "کامگاری را به هنگامش گذاشت" he left the time to accomplish that desire to its moment (ln. 614). Here, Jāmī suggests Yusof has received a vision, which was

manifested by the Divine to replace Yusof's carnal desire for Zoleyk̲ā. Another way to look at it is that the manifestation might have revealed the vision of the future for Yusof and Zoleyk̲ā's union for "هنگامش" *its right moment/time* as a future event. Either way, the main purpose of this divine intervention is to emancipate at that moment Yusof from Zoleyk̲ā's seduction and what is visible becomes unreliable and unreal in the presence of such a manifestation.

Jāmī's "بر هان" *proof/demonstration* from "غیب" *the unknown/the unseen* connotes a thought or idea (vision) grasped by the intellect/mind that changes the course of actions. In the penultimate chapter of his poem, Jāmī highlights the intellect as the faculty most capable of attaining the knowledge of the unknown. Here the intellect functions as an entity in which the Rational Soul (Salāmān), through the King's *himmat* and due to the Sage's guidance, ends up becoming knowledgeable. Venus, as the knowledge, is portrayed to have the quality and predisposition of intelligence, for she upholds the quality of the (celestial) light which enlightens the intellect or the heart as a result of the experience of divine love. Alexander Treiger makes a distinction between intelligence and intellect based on al-Ghazāli's work that intelligence is the "quality of the heart," while "the heart corresponds to what philosophical tradition calls the rational soul (al-nafs al-nāt.iqa) or intellect ('aql)" for both intelligence, the rational soul, and the heart are identical for they are immaterial and immortal.[463] A good illustration of this amalgamate idea of intelligence as a feature of the heart is when the King (the Active Intellect) who uses his *world-displaying mirror* (employing his heart or his intelligence) to become knowledgeable about Salāmān and Absāl's whereabouts. Only in seeing their presence (through the mirror as an analogy for the heart) can the King's intelligence comprehend Salāmān's state of being in love with Absāl. The King's mirror orchestrates a poetics of vision, where the knowledge of the unknown is

[463] See Alexander Treiger's *Inspired Knowledge in Islamic Thought: Al-Ghazali's Theory of Mystical Cognition and Its Avicennian Foundation*. Pp. 17-20.

derived from witnessing. Another course of action that follows this event is how the King (who might have foreseen the future through the mirror) projects his intellectual power over Salāmān's soul in order to bring him back to the Kingdom where the process of intellection is going to take place. Since the vision is imbedded in making Salāmān a king with a parallel intellectual power, this process of intellection requires Salāmān's journey through the fire as a form of *severe spiritual training*. Only after this experience does Salāmān become capable of acquiring intelligence for his heart is cleansed and is ready to comprehend the eternal beauty and love of Venus.

The Penultimate Chapter of *Salāmān u Absāl*

The authorial voice in the penultimate chapter confirms the interpretation of *Salāmān u Absāl* as a narrative-poem that explores the inter-related themes of love, knowledge, and vision in the Neoplatonic philosophical tradition—specifically the theory of emanation.[464] Once Jāmī explains the Neoplatonic principle that underlines the story, the poem can be read as a philosophical discussion on the topic of intellect. In what follows I examine how Jāmī discusses the intellect in relation to the above themes of love, knowledge and vision and how this discussion proceeds through the characters and their representations. In doing so, I will show how Jāmī's embrace of one Neoplatonic tradition (the theory of emanation) allows *Salāmān u Absāl* to become relevant for its broader hermeneutic possibilities.

As with the dialectical preface, Jāmī's penultimate chapter not only functions as the epilogue, but also provides a systematic summary of the philosophical meaning of the poem. The Divine like a fallen shadow in the world is explained as "صانع" *the Creator* in Jāmī's "مختصر" *summary* of the

[464] The Neoplatonic framework and terminology in the poem are borrowed from the Ṭūsī's commentary, *Sharh Ishārāt, on Ibn Sina's al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbihāt. See Ṭūsī's Sharh Ishārāt, v. III. For an English translation see Kevin Brown, "*A Translation of Nasir al-Din Tusi's Commentary upon Ibn Sina's al-Isharat wa'l-Tanbihat, al-Namat al-Tasi' fi Maqamat al-'Arifin: Namat Nine on the Stations of the Mystics." (*International Journal of Shi'I Studies 5(1)*, 2007). Pp. 185-238.

Neoplatonic contents of the poem (lns. 2, 1084).

1084	When the incomparable Creator created the universe, He created the First Intellect before all else.	۱۰۸۴ صانع بی چون چو عالم آفرید عقل اول را مقدم آفرید

The Creator is the only ontological creator of the First Intellect. He is the One with eminence, who is "بی چون" *without likeness* and *is incomparable*,[465] as Plotinus explains, "the absolute self-sufficiency of the One is beyond the need for thinking."[466] On the concept of the One, Ibn Sīnā presents his theory of emanation in his metaphysics of Šefā "Healing" and in al-Ishārāt as follows:

> "Because the Necessary Existent or First Principle is absolutely one in all respects, and since from a cause which is absolutely one only one effect can proceed or emanate, the first effect or first emanation of the Necessary Existent must be numerically one… The first effect must, therefore, be an intelligence, and from this first intelligence both a celestial sphere and a second intelligence emanate" (112).[467]

Following Ibn Sīnā, Jāmī in his turn considers "عقل اول" *the First Intellect* to be "مقدم" *the superior* creation above all other creation (ln. 1084), and thus in the closest possible proximity to the One. Then, from the realm of the First Intellect, ten intellects emanate.

1085	The chain of intellect comprises ten, oh acute-knower, and that the tenth one is the effector in the world.	۱۰۸۵ ده بود سلک عقول ای خرده دان وان دهم باشد موثر در جهان

In the poem, we are not given details about what structure/spheres these intellects belong to or how they act, yet within the structure of the poem, Jāmī explains the emanating form as projecting essence in all forms (similar to the idea of light).[468] But we are told that the One is the First and Primary Cause

---

[465] Steingass, 403.

[466] Plotinus. *Enneads VII.* Trans. A. H. Armstrong. Pp. 301.

[467] Nicholas Heer. "Al-Razi and al-Tusi on Ibn Sina's Theory of Emanation," in *Neoplatonism and Islamic Thought: Beyond Transnational Globalization.* Ed. Parviz Morewedge. (State University of New York Press, 1992). pp. 111-123.

[468] On the discussion of light see Plotinus' *Ennead* IV.3.17, tr. A.H. Armstrong, 1984. "All souls then illuminate the heaven and give it the greatest and first part of themselves, but illuminate the rest of the world with their secondary parts; those which come down further throw their light lower, but it is not to their advantage to have gone on so far. For there is a kind of center, and around this a circle shinning out from it, and beyond these another, light from light: but outside these there is no longer another circle of light but this next circle through lack of its own light needs illumination from another source."

of the First Intellect, and thus the ten intellects are also cosmologically higher than human existence. And the one that is the "موثر در جهان" *effector in the world* of humans is the tenth intellect (ln. 1085). Jāmī explains that due to its effect in this world, the tenth intellect is called the Active Intellect.

1086	Because it is him [who is] the actor (worker) in the whole world, they have named it the Active Intellect.	۱۰۸۶ کارگر چون اوست در گیتی تمام عقل فعالش ازان کردند نام

The Active Intellect "در عالم مفیض خیر و شر" *emanates good and evil in the world*, and is responsible "در گیتی کفیل نفع و ضر" *for abundance and deficiency on earth* (ln. 1087). Jāmī says of the Active Intellect that "نیستش پیوند جسمانی و جسم" *it is not a link to corporality and to the body* and that "او به ذات و فعل خویش زینها جداست" *in essence and activity, it is separate from all these things* (lns. 1088-89). Moreover, this Active Intellect has impact upon both humans and the animals. Jāmī says that "روح انسان زاده تاثیر اوست" *the spirit of man is born of its* [the Active Intellect's] *effect* and "نفس حیوان سخره تدبیر اوست" *the soul of the ridiculous animal is his* [the Active Intellect's] *plan* (ln. 1090). Jāmī gives the Active Intellect the characteristics of "شه فرمانده" *a commanding king* and "نعت شاهی" *the praise of kingship* (ln. 1093).

The cognitive awareness that the world receives from the One is due to this intermediary and emanating force of the Active Intellect. Jāmī relates the character of the King, Salāmān's father to the Active Intellect, for "راهدان از شاه او را خواسته است" *the Guide has bestowed this* [epithet] *on the King* (ln. 1093). Yet, for the sake of the narrative, in Jāmī's adaptation of this emanation theory, the character of the Sage is portrayed to be superior in intellect to the King.

1095	In front of the wise, the knower of the wonders of the world, the superior emanation was given the title the Sage.	۱۰۹۵ پیش دانا راهدان بوالعجب فیض بالا را حکیم آمد لقب

The Sage is "حکمت شناس" *the knower of philosophy/wisdom* and in him, "کاخ حکمت را قوی کرده اساس" *the palace of wisdom had built a firm foundation* (ln. 279). The Sage is "فیض بالا" *the superior emanation* (in intellect after the first intellect), and thus the most important figure in the entire Kingdom. It is the Sage who determines the purest way to grant the King's wishes is by way of his intellect, and thus the Sage

stipulates that the son should be conceived without involving any woman and without lust, and instead decides to grow the baby in a plant.[469]

In most of the traditional Sufi and mystical discourses, the Sage (seer) is, as Lingwood takes Ibn Sīnā's Ḥayy b. Yaḳẓān to be, an example of "the mediator figure," who "knows whatever will happen as there is nothing hidden from [him]. This wise angel is named 'the active intelligence'."[470] Yet the claim is that "[m]ost Muslim philosophers write extensively on political philosophy. [And that] [t]he most remarkable thinkers in this respect…thought that philosophical knowledge is in fact nurtured in a social community,"[471] Jāmī can be regarded as one of those thinkers who combined the settled political and mystical elements in order to portray the role of the King and the Sage in a more nuanced way. Most importantly, it is unique to Jāmī that the King bears the title of the Active Intellect and has an emanation of intellect much superior to that of the Sage. As an effluence of higher intellect, the Sage's intellect is an emanation of the Active Intellect. The Active Intellect is also called the "Giver of Forms." In this specific case in the poem, the role of the King (the Active Intellect) seems to be operating as "the theoretical intellect," which deals with the higher matters of intellection or visionary experiences. The Sage, taking commands from the King, sanctions "the practical intellect," in the Salāmān's soul "in order to manage the function of the external and internal senses and to process the preliminary abstraction of the particulars."[472] Based on Ibn Sīnā's explanation in his *Psychology*, this "process of acquisition or reception [is] a 'contact' (*itti.sa'l*) between the human and active intellects…[the Sage refers] to the flow of knowledge from the supernal world to the human intellect as 'divine effluence' (*al-fayd. al-ilaʔhī*). The reason that this is possible at all is again the consubstantiality

[469] See Henry Corbin's description of the symbolic meaning of Salāmān's (the psyche's) birth in the mandragora plant in the footnote no. 14, in "The Hermetistic Visionary of Salāmān and Absāl", pp. 211.
[470] Heer, 1992, pp. 68-9.
[471] ibid
[472] See Domenico Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty*. pp. 316. For a complete description and levels of intellection see Jon McGinnis, *Avicenna*. pp. 118-123.

of all intellects, human and celestial alike."[473] In doing so, the Sage "seeks the intercession of the divine effluence (*fayẓ*) to visualize the intelligible that are eternally thought by the Active Intellect," and the King has a *thought* in the form of a vision for Salāmān to become the intellectual king and his successor.[474] In elaborating the role of the Sage, Jāmī substitutes "فیض الهی" (*al-fayḍ. al-ilaٰhī)* 'divine effluence' with "فیض بالا" (*fayẓ bala*) 'the superior emanation' or 'higher effluence' to convey an identical implication that the Sage is the only one who can make the visionary experiences possible for the soul.

This also means that the leadership is elevated to the level of philosophy and intellect. It is through this integration of philosophy and leadership (by closely associating the King and the Sage) that Jāmī gives the character of Salāmān a philosophical role to play.

Following the Sage's spiritual advice, Salāmān is born out of a thought and intellect.

1096	His pure spirit was called, the rational soul, he is born of this intellect, without relation to the physical body.	روح پاکش نفس گویا گشته اسم زاده زین عقل است بی پیوندی جسم	۱۰۹۶
1097	The intention was to have his existence without ties to the body, when that one said: this one [will be] born of a mate-less father.	هست بی پیوندی جسمش مراد آن که گفت این از پدر بی جفت زاد	۱۰۹۷

The Sage's advice is taken, "زاده ای بس پاکدامان آمده ست" *the baby is to be born clean-skirted* [without involving sexual intercourse with any woman] (ln. 1098). Nonetheless, in their unexplained desire to eliminate the female part of human conception, the two intellects have not fully examined the feasibility of their plan. The infant Salāmān like any normal human being is in need of nurture and nourishment by a female breast.

408	Since he did not have a share in mother's milk, they selected a wet-nurse for him.	چون نبود از شیر مادر بهره مند دایه ای کردند بهر او پسند	۴۰۸

[473] Dimitri Gutas. "Avicenna's Philosophical Project." *Interpreting Avicenna: Critical Essays*, edited by Peter Adamson, Cambridge University Press, 2013. pp. 28–47.
[474] Domenico Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty*. pp. 316.

The emergence of the wet-nurse functions to criticize the superiority of two intellects, who thought they could create a baby solely by way of intellect, when in fact this is the prerogative of the Divine. The biggest hitch in their plan is that they are unable to bring up the baby in the physical world without female intervention. A wet-nurse is needed to feed the baby's body, and as a consequence, the boy will attain physical maturity, which exposes him to physical attraction. In Jāmī's plan, Salāmān must experience physical love in order to progress towards intellectual love, therefore in witnessing the beauty of Absāl the unexpected event of love unfolds. Salāmān falls in love with Absāl, who is a representation of the body, even though he was born in the absence of any woman.

1099	Who is Absāl, that body worshipping lust, despicable according to the laws of nature.	۱۰۹۹ کیست ابسال این تن شهوت پرست زیر احکام طبیعت گشته پست

Absāl is described to have a body and thus a corporeal existence. She also represents lust and is lower in her intellect. A more philosophical reading of the role of Absāl (her external sense) would justify Jāmī's later claim that the body (Absāl) and soul (Salāmān) are inevitably in need of one another (for pleasure and experience) in the process of intellection (internal senses). Absāl in her foremost role is the sensory form. She possesses all the active sensory (corporeal) forms, which also activate sensory forms in the beholder of her female beauty. Jāmī describes her sensory forms to be equivalent to material substances, for it has been emphasized that she beautifies herself via material objects. "That sensible form, then, impresses itself [herself as becoming a beautiful sight] on the correlative sense organ [to Salāmān's eyes], where the corresponding act of sensation is nothing more than that organ's being so impressed."[475] Here Salāmān, when he witnesses Absāl's beauty, is awestricken. Despite intellectualizing the outcome of such love for a much older woman as being hopeless, he still cannot hold back but to give into her.[476] As an "object of perception," Absāl is "immediately grasped by the

[475] McGinnis, *Avicenna*. pp. 103.
[476] Ibid.

external senses and then, through the intermediacy of the external senses, [is] perceived by the internal senses."[477] According to Ibn Sīnā *Psychology*, Salāmān is a passive faculty for perceiving what is presented to him, and only in becoming an active faculty can Salāmān "alter what has been presented" to him and then undergo a visionary experience.[478]

Absāl is to remain as the external senses, but she is capable of impacting the process of intellection of Salāmān, who is to remain detached from the external senses. One can assume that because she is not related to the King or the Sage, she is not an emanation of intellect. Thus, Salāmān's falling in love creates a hostile situation in the Kingdom, for Salāmān is an emanation of the Active Intellect. The King (the Active Intellect) and the Sage (the superior emanation) divine planning is disturbed and even threatened, because of Salāmān's love for Absāl. Yet Jāmī explains the necessarily connection between the body and the soul:

1100	The body lives by way of the soul, and through the body the soul derives his knowledge by way of senses.	۱۱۰۰ تن به جان زنده ست وجان از تن مدام گیرد از ادراک محسوسات کام

Absāl is existent for as long as her body is alive. Absāl possess sensuality and can satisfy the senses. In contrast, Salāmān is a living soul, and he achieves "ادراک محسوسات" *knowledge by way of senses* (sensual pleasure) though the body (Absāl). In other words, neither the body nor the soul can survive without interacting with one another. Jāmī thus suggests that they are dependent on each another. Due to this inter-dependency of the body and the soul, "هر دو زان رو عاشق یکدیگرند" *for that reason, they are in love with one another*, and "جز به جبر از صحبت هم نگذرند" *only compulsion* [through the King's interference] *keeps them away from mingling together* (ln. 1101).

[477] Ibid. pp. 112.
[478] Ibid. pp. 113.

Jāmī's use of the sea and the fire in two distinct passages is symbolic. While these events in the physical world impact "محسوسات" *the senses*, to understand their impact on the soul, we need to turn to philosophy.

1102	What is that sea, in which they both were and because of their mutual union, in which they were in peace.	۱۱۰۲ چیست آن دریا که در وی بوده اند وز وصال هم در او آسوده اند
1103	That is the sea of sensual animality, that is the abyss of carnal pleasures.	۱۱۰۳ بحر شهوتهای حیوانیست آن لجه لذات نفسانیست آن

The sea in which Salāmān and Absāl travel to the Island is actually a space of physical pleasure; a metaphor for their sensual lovemaking. Jāmī conveys the message that the sea provides "آسوده" *peace/rest* for Salāmān and Absāl and is a peaceful space, which enables their "وصال " *union* (ln. 1102). This union of the Salāmān with his physical reality represented by Absāl as the body is made possible because the sea is a metaphor for "لجه لذات نفسانی" *the chasm of carnal pleasures* (lns. 1103). The sea, with its constant movement and far-reaching aspect, is described to be all-consuming, as if " عالمی در موج او مستغرنند" *a whole world is drowned in its waves*, and "و اندر استغراق او دور از حقند" *submerged into its waves, they remain far from the Truth* (ln. 1104). The activity of the sea seems to have engaged both Salāmān and Absāl through their imagination and to have engaged them through their senses, especially through their sense of sight.

A second intention of Jāmī in this penultimate chapter is to explain, in all its complexity, the migration of Salāmān's physical experience into a spiritual one. earlier on, as the lovers are on the Island, Salāmān becomes impotent, "با وصلش نیارستی رسید" *he is not able to unite with her* (ln. 870). Jāmī informs the reader that Salāmān becomes "روشن" *illuminated* that "که آن هست از پدر" *it was all on account of his father* (the King) (ln. 876), and thus must return to the Kingdom. Now, in his authorial commentary in the penultimate chapter, Jāmī gives a philosophical explanation of this scene. Salāmān after spending a satisfying time on the Island must return to the realm of intellect.

1109	It is the yearning for the intellectual pleasures, to turn the face toward the kingdom of Intellect.	۱۱۰۹ میل لذتهای عقلی کردن است رو به دار الملک عقل آوردن است

Jāmī explains Salāmān's yearning to return to the Kingdom for the intellectual pleasures as his oscillating between the knowledge he gains in the world of physical pleasure with Absāl and the unknown knowledge he might gain in the world of intellect with his father and the Sage. *The Kingdom* "ملک" is where the integration of love, light, and knowledge takes place, and this integration due to intellect stands above all other existent beings, especially women.[479]

Absāl cannot anymore, beyond her one-time role as the wet-nurse, inhabit the Kingdom, because the Kingdom is a space that evokes and pertains to intellect and vision. Upon his return to the Kingdom, Salāmān is separated from Absāl spatially. Though this claim is not evident in the poem, it is implied that Absāl as a woman and especially as Salāmān's now-beloved is not welcomed in the Kingdom. Yet Salāmān's dependency on Absāl's love does not wane so easily. Once again Salāmān's intense desire to unite with Absāl makes him flee the Kingdom for the second time. Rather than going to the sea and the island of pleasure or anywhere else to inspire their passionate love, this time they flee to "صحرا" *the desert/wilderness* (ln. 911). Jāmī explains the reason for Salāmān's escape to the wilderness and his decision to jump in the fire (with Absāl) saying it was due to the King and the Sage's constant counselling to give up on Absāl for the sake of his future Kingdom.[480]

905	Who is in the world more afflicted than the lover, there is not a task as difficult as his task.	کیست در عالم ز عاشق زارتر نیست کار از کار او دشوارتر	۹۰۵
	…	...	
908	When Salāmān heard all those counsels, he rent the garment of repose from his body.	چون سلامان آن نصیحتها شنید جامه آسودگی بر خود درید	۹۰۸

[479] Afsaħzod, pp. 410.

370	What is a woman, deficient in intellect and faith, there is not anything else as deficient in the world.	زن چه باشد ناقصی در عقل و دین هیچ ناقص نیست در عالم چنین	۳۷۰

[480] The King reminds Salāmān that:

894	The Kingdom is your kingdom, seize your kingdom, do not pull away the kingdom from your path of fortune.	ملک ملک توست بستان ملک خویش ملک را بیرون مکن از سلک خویش	۸۹۴
895	Withdraw your hand from the beautiful beloved that you have, kingship and worshipping the beautiful one are not agreeable.	دست ازین شاهد که داری بازکش شاهی و شاهد پرستی نیست خوش	۸۹۵
896	Cast aside the henna of this beautiful beloved from your hand, you must either be a king or a worshipper of the beautiful face.	دور کن حینای این شاهد ز دست شاه باید بود یا شاهد پرست	۸۹۶

909	His thought of living became narrowed, and toward his annihilation he hasted.	خاطرش از زندگانی تنگ شد سوی نابود خودش آهنگ شد	۹۰۹
910	When a life is deserving of death, dying is cheerier than living.	چون حیات مردنی درخور بود مردگی از زندگی خوشتر بود	۹۱۰
911	With Absāl, he turned face toward the wilderness, he set foot on the plain of hard-labor.	روی با ابسال در صحرا نهاد در فضای جانفشانی پا نهاد	۹۱۱

The wilderness is the place of hard-labor[481] and this is where the scene involving the fire takes place. It is a space that evokes an intense force of separation, as well as integration, of the body and soul.

912	He cut a heap of fire-wood from everywhere, he then gathered them together in one place.	پشته پشته هیمه از هر جا برید جمله را یکجا فراهم آورید	۹۱۲
913	The heap gathered to become a lofty mountain, he set fire to heap and mountain.	جمع شد زان پشته ها کوهی بلند آتشی در پشته و کوه اوفکند	۹۱۳
914	They both became happy at the sight of the fire, held each other hand, they entered the fire.	هر دو از دیدار آتش خوش شدند دست هم بگرفته در آتش شدند	۹۱۴

In the 'Poetry of the Eye,' Jāmī uses the image of fire for two main purposes. The poetic image of fire is used to illuminate the extent of pain and suffering caused by falling in love, and the fire is also used as a philosophical symbol to solve the problem of the soul imprisoned by sensual pleasures. For example, in chapter one of the mathnavī, Jāmī uses the poetic image of fire as a metaphor for awakening of a purposeful love.

4	Through the secret of Your beauty manifested in Leyli, could she ignite the fire of love in Majnun.	تا ز لیلی سر حسنت سر نزد عشق او آتش به مجنون در نزد	۴

The image of the fire here is prominent due to its impact on Majnun's heart. The fire's subsequent impact leaves slow-healing burns and scars. Jāmī uses fire as a metaphor in this section for the pain and further suffering caused by love. In a similar manner, Jāmī uses fire to explicate the extent of the misery that the King feels after he hears that Salāmān and Absāl have fled to the faraway island, in their first escape from the Kingdom.

867	Inside [the King] a fire ignited due to this sorrow, time passed unhappily for him on account of this unhappy state.	در درون افتاد ازین غم آتشش وقت شد زین حال ناخوش ناخوشش	۸۶۷

[481] Steingass, pp. 353.

In another instance, Jāmī indicates how the transformation caused by the fire is meant to bring out true qualities. For example, aligned with his speech on the limitations of experiences (through the senses) and of thinking due to old age, Jāmī decides to cast his lute, a metaphor for his poetry, into the fire in order to obtain good fragrance.[482]

146	It is immature to play the lute unpleasantly, it is pleasant [though] to set fire to the immature lute.	۱۴۶ خام باشد عود را نا خوش زدن خوش بود در عود خام آتش زدن

Nonetheless, the fire that separates Salāmān and Absāl is defined from the point of view of Salāmān as a task of "جانفشانی" *hard-labor*, which is a self-inflicting torture as a means to end his existence in a world of reproach.

1110	What is that fire, a difficult spiritual training, in order to set fire to nature with sadness/grief.	۱۱۱۰ چیست آن آتش ریاضتهای سخت تا طبیعیت را زند آتش به رخت
1111	It burned the bodily disposition, and the soul remained, it shed the skirt of animal lusts.	۱۱۱۱ سوخت زان آثار طبع و جان بماند دامن از شهوات حیوانی فشاند

In this particular moment, Jāmī describes the fire as "ریاضت های سخت" *a difficult spiritual training* for Salāmān, who not only jumps into it with Absāl, but also has to witness her death in the fire (ln. 1110). As discussed earlier, Jāmī uses fire as "spiritual training" or "inner/spiritual purification,"[483] which, in the context of Sufi discipleship, is to convey the soul's mandatory training in becoming purified on the path of intellection in order to become aware of the unknown. Through this unusual imagery of the fire to burn the entirety of (bodily) existence, Jāmī refers to the practice of "ریاضت" "inner purification," which entails eliminating Salāmān physical attachment to Absāl by eradicating the external senses.[484]

The fire "سوخت" *burns* the entirety of the bodily disposition (such as pleasures and senses) and thus destroys the existence of Absāl, while Salāmān is saved (ln. 1111). There are a few instances in

[482] For an extensive discussion on Jāmī's poetics of old age and aging refer to Chap V.
[483]See Domenico Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty*, pp. 239.
[484] Ibid. pp. 471.

which Jāmī explains the inevitable dissolving and thus disappearance (of the physical features) of Absāl due to her intense devotion for Salāmān.

917	She was alloy on the gold and he the delicate gold, the delicate gold remained pure; alloy burned away.	بود آن غش بر زر و این زر خوش زر خوش خالص بماند و سوخت غش	۹۱۷
918	When the falsified gold is thrown in the fire, if a crack happens it falls on alloy.	چون زر مغشوش در آتش فتد گر شکستی اوفتد بر غش فتد	۹۱۸

In their union, an alloy on gold, they are separated by the fire. Nonetheless, it seems as the fire once again has a transforming effect on Absāl, like the lute that becomes fragrance, Absāl is to be released from her physical being for Salāmān to experience her through other senses such as smell, rather than just sight or touch. Absāl seems to fulfil her role as the beloved until the ordeal by the fire that causes her annihilation.

1080	Who is Absāl, through whom Salāmān obtained his desires, what is the mountain of fire and the sea of water?	کیست ابسال از سلامان کامیاب چیست کوه آتش و دریای آب	۱۰۸۰

The metaphor of fire has two implications. Fire has both a material existence and a spiritual aspect, and thus it is able to eliminate the body and emancipate the soul. De Vogel cites Plotinus in his explanation of fire that: "[it] 'holds the position of Form in relation to the other elements', though itself a body, and that it is near to the incorporeal inasmuch as it is the subtlest of bodies, that the others receive it into themselves but it does not receive the others" (64).[485] Jāmī's description of the fire could easily be aligned with Plotinus' view that the purpose of fire is to burn the materiality and release the incorporeal form. The fire (as portrayed by Jāmī) burns "سوخت زان آثار طبع" Absāl (the body) to death and releases "جان" *the soul*, in this case Salāmān.

On the one hand, the purpose of fire is to destroy what is not pure; on the other, it is to emancipate the pure from the impure. In both cases, fire is a transformative force. If the fire is not

[485] De Vogel, C. J. "On the Neoplatonic Character of Platonism and the Platonic Character of Neoplatonism" (1953), pp. 43–64.

the gateway that leads to purifying Salāmān's vision, it is the eliminating element that clears the path to seeing the vision. Following the discussion of fire as causing transformation, Jāmī is then able to convey the entwined aspect of love, knowledge and vision through the image of Venus.

1113	Then the Sage told him of the description of the beauty of Venus he united his soul to Venus's affection.	۱۱۱۳ زان حکیمش وصف حسن زهره گفت کرد جانش را به مهر زهره جفت
1114	Gradually, he reposed on (thought of) Venus and he was released from the sorrow of Absāl and her love.	۱۱۱۴ تا به تدریج او به زهره آرمید و زغم ابسال و عشق او رهید
1115	What is Venus, those superior perfections, that, from uniting with these the soul become noble.	۱۱۱۵ چیست زهره آن کمالات بلند کز وصول آن شود جان ارجمند
1116	From that beauty the intellect becomes luminous, and one becomes the king of the kingdom of mankind.	۱۱۱۶ زان جمال عقل نورانی شود پادشاه ملک انسانی شود

The calming effect of Venus is described as a "به تدریج" *gradual process*, for she is the vision attainable only through the intellect. Salāmān gains a new form of peace, which alleviates his struggles and agonized state caused by the death of Absāl. Jāmī interprets Venus as having "کمالات بلند" *superior perfections*, perceivable only through the intellect (ln. 1115). Venus's beauty is an intellectual enlightenment, as "زان جمال عقل نورانی شود" *from that beauty the intellect becomes luminous* (ln. 1116). Through the combination of Venus's love, knowledge, and vision (sight), Salāmān attains a new form of love. And the vision, which was set by the King and the Sage of becoming the next king, is now resumed. Salāmān becomes "پادشاه ملک انسانی شود" *the king of the kingdom of man* (ln. 1116).

Jāmī makes a strong distinction between earthly pleasures and celestial pleasures, between Absāl and Venus. These distinct pleasures are measured with reference to the level of contact between bodies or figures in corporeal and celestial entities, as can be explained using the theory of emanation. Jāmī highlights the intellect as the higher emanation. He refers to his interpretation of this Neoplatonic explanation of the poem as "مجمل این اسرار" *a summary of these secrets* (ln. 1117). Jāmī calls the reader to go beyond superficial reading of the poem, but rather explore in depth, and Jāmī finishes the chapter with the frank statement that he has completed his task of relaying ancient secrets.

1119	With my summary, this discourse is finished, and God knows what is best.	۱۱۱۹ هم بر این اجمال کاری این خطاب ختم شد و الله اعلم بالصواب

The Neoplatonic Eye and Jāmī on Vision

In this section, I first examine how Jāmī entwined the Neoplatonic emanation theory, which involves the intellect, with the Sufi theory of union/integration, which involves the imagination. I then explain how the vision of love, the vision of beauty, and the vision of vision are indications of the intellect, yet accessible only by way of the 'compositive imagination.' So, what kind of imagination is at work for the intellect to become involved in this visionary experience? For that matter, what kind of intellect is activated via the imagination?

As was discussed earlier, the role of the Sage as the mediator or "the divine effluence" between the King (the Active Intellect) and Salāmān (the soul that is associated with the body) is primarily to guide Salāmān in the process of intellection. In doing so, the Sage, first and foremost, must ascertain the degree of impact Absāl (as external senses) has left on Salāmān's soul or intellect or heart, in the matter of love. The Sage realizes that the memory of the deceased Absāl is making Salāmān miserable. Therefore, in creating the 'imaginal form' of Absāl, the Sage must re-activate Salāmān's 'retentive imagination,' because "sensible experience is conveyed to the retentive imagination and stored there until the compositive imagination needs it. Because the retentive imagination bears the sensible forms, it also sometimes goes by the more descriptive name, 'the form-bearing faculty.' This faculty, Avicenna tells us, is arrayed behind the anterior ventricle of the brain."[486]

The memory of Absāl is stored in Salāmān's 'retentive imagination' like any other image, and so the Sage must manipulate this retentive imagination by way of Salāmān's 'compositive imagination.' In doing so, the Sage orchestrates the 'imaginal form' of Absāl that dissolves into nothingness; Salāmān actively witnesses this process of decaying of the image. The Sage then intentionally houses

[486] McGinnis, *Avicenna*. pp. 114.

another image in Salāmān's 'compositive imagination' replacing Absāl's form with Venus. The Sage uses his speech on the form of the unseeable Venus as a mean of control. For Venus, as an image,

> "is a potential intelligible in its most proximate form to actuality. It is at this point that the human intellect [in this case the Sage] can take control of the compositive imagination, turning it into the cogitative faculty. The subsequent manipulation of the image takes the form of separating and dividing the humors in the brain in which the sensible image [such as the memory of Absāl] is impressed, and it is through this activity of the compositive imagination that the human soul is prepared to receive the Active Intellect's emanation so as to turn the potentially intelligible object in the brain into an actually intelligible object impressed upon the intellect."[487]

This 'compositive imagination' under the control of the intellect becomes 'cogitative faculty.'[488] For the 'cogitative faculty' to go through its motion of 'combing and dividing the forms,' the forms, first and foremost, must manifest themselves in the 'retentive imagination.'[489] Therefore, both retentive as well as compositive imaginations are at work here in order to activate Salāmān's 'estimative faculty' in order to awaken his internal senses so as to receive the vision of the unseen. That being said, a suggestion could be drawn that Venus is a form of 'theoretical intellect,' for she is portrayed for all her eternal beauty and love as a supernal existence that can enlighten the intellect and in doing so impact the events of the present by concatenating the reflection of the past and future. She "is turned upward toward the higher principles and causes, which are the source of all knowledge and understanding."[490] In other words, she is the soul of a celestial body, "in particular those of the fixed

[487] Ibid. pp. 134.
[488] Ibid. pp. 117.
[489] Ibid. pp. 136.
[490] Ibid. pp. 96.

stars, [that] contain the reflections of all present, past, and future events taking place on earth," and who has proceeded from "the First Cause by means of emanation."[491]

Jāmī ends the poem with the union of Salāmān (the soul) with the vision of the celestial Venus. So how does Jāmī explain how the soul comes to know and realize this vision? The Sage's promise to bring Absāl back to life convinces Salāmān to submit to him and to listen to "هر چه گفت" *whatever* [the Sage] *has to say* "از جان" *with* (all his) *soul* (ln. 992). The Sage commences his "سحر کاری" *magic* by intoxicating Salāmān with "باده های دولتش" *the wine of his good fortune* and with "شهد های حکمتش" *the honey* [the speech] *of his wisdom* (lns, 998-99). It is through the magic of the Sage's speech that the enchanted Salāmān speaks of his agony for the deceased Absāl and his desire to once again become united with her. In his attempt to heal Salāmān, the Sage activates Salāmān's 'retentive imagination' by way of showing him Absāl's image in order to bring him tranquility before she passes into non-existence.

1001	Whenever he is reminded of Absāl, he starts to cry out his separation from her.	هر گه ابسالش فرا یاد آمدی و ز فراق او به فریاد آمدی	۱۰۰۱
1002	When the Sage came to understand this situation, he created the image of Absāl.	چون بدانستی حکیم آن حال را آفریدی صورت ابسال را	۱۰۰۲
1003	For one or two hours he lingered it in front of his eyes, and sowed the seed of tranquility in his heart.	یک دو ساعت پیش چشمش داشتی در دل او تخم تسکین کاشتی	۱۰۰۳
1004	When his grief and distress found solace, that image went to the non-existing frontier.	یافتی تسکین چو آن رنج و الم رفتی آن صورت به سرحد عدم	۱۰۰۴

This image of Absāl drifting between remaining in front of Salāmān's eyes (in visual form) and going into the realm of non-existing frontier seems to belong neither to the physical world nor to the world of the intellect (where Venus exists). Through this image of Absāl, Jāmī suggests that the soul (Salāmān) can travel in the world of 'compositive imagination, a world which is neither physical nor intellectual in form. If we are to interpret this phenomena within the Sufi tradition that Jāmī propagated during his lifetime, I would borrow a term from Ibn 'Arabî's teachings on the domain of

[491] Domenico Ingenito's *Beholding Beauty*, pp. 351.

the "isthmus" *barzakh*,[492] or the imagination, which "is situated between the spiritual and the corporeal, possessing characteristics of both sides."[493] Though Jāmī never makes any explicit use of the term *barzakh* in the poem, it is suggested due to the eschatological remarks in connection with the death of Absāl and Salāmān's becoming capable of the spiritual attainment of the vision after the experience of the fire, which was his *spiritual training* event. Salāmān enters the world of imagination or *barzakh,* in-between the body and the intellect.

This world of imagination becomes accessible to Salāmān, because of his capacity to move between the purely physical world and that of the intellectual world, as he "در کامل شدن" *becomes the perfect* [man] (ln. 993). It is important to point out that this does not necessarily mean that Salāmān's individual imagination is at play here, but rather it is the Divine Imagination that is invoked. Salāmān is transported to the realm of spirits, where he encounters Absāl in an "صورت" image or an "imaginal form".[494]

As mentioned in Chapter I, Jāmī's mystical knowledge was influenced by Ibn 'Arabî's teachings and especially the ideas in his magnum opus, *al-Futûhât al-Makkîya* "The Meccan Revelations." Throughout his *al-Futûhât al-Makkîya*, Ibn 'Arabî discusses the concept of "imagination" (al-khayâl), and in doing so, he sets out his eschatological metaphysics. The concept of "barzakh" stands for the divine imagination, as well as the spiritual encounters between individuals, who have reached the stage of being the "perfect man," and the One. The knowledge of this concept of "*barzakh,"* is translated to mean the intermediate world, the in-between, or the barrier.[495] This is the intermediary domain

[492] On the concept of *barzakh*, see Ibn 'Arabî, *al-Futûhât*, 1911 edi. 2:313.12. and Henry Corbin*, Alone with the Alone.* Pp. 206, 304. Also see, William Chittick. *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn al- 'Arabî's Cosmology*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.
[493] William Chittick. *Death and the World of Imagination*: *Ibn al- 'Arabî's Eschatology*. 1998. Pp. 53.
[494] Ibid. pp. 54.
[495] See Salman H. Bashier. *(2004).*

where the contrast between the purely physical realm and the purely intelligible realm is readily apparent. This realm of imagination is experienced through the manifestation of its "Light".[496]

Salāmān, when he enters the world of imagination, first witnesses imaginal form of Absāl, which is in-between "پیدا" *evident* or *existent* and "زایل" *non-existent*, and then grasps that Absāl will not return to the world of souls where Salāmān resides (ln. 1006). This world of imagination is what allows Salāmān to achieve the level of the "perfect man," for the "Imagination is the most perfect of worlds…It embodies meanings, and it makes that which does not subsist in itself subsist in itself. It gives form to that which has no form and makes impossible possible…"[497] The realm of imagination "is neither existent nor nonexistent, neither known nor unknown, neither affirmed nor denied."[498] Salāmān gains the knowledge of the unknown (Venus) when the Sage introduces the spiritual/intelligible description of Venus as "شمع انجم" *the candle of gathering* due to its Light (ln. 1008). Salāmān is still lingering in the world of imagination, so he sees these contrasting realms of the spiritual and the physical. Thus, Salāmān becomes knowledgeable about the truly existent (Venus) and the truly non-existent (Absāl), and this is only possible in the realm of (*barzakh*), where both can exist. With the creation of the image of Absāl and her appearance in the (*barzakh*), Jāmī's vision of love, of beauty, and of vision are made possible due to the integration of, and in spite of the contrast or distinction between, these realms of the spiritual and the physical. In the following sub-sections, I illustrate how Jāmī creates an intermediate ground for the hostile/hospitable relationship between love, knowledge and sight using the imagination.

---

[496] See Ibn 'Arabî, *al-Futûhât*, 1911 edition, 3:274.28. also see Chittick, William, "Ibn Arabi", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/ibn-arabi/>.
[497] Chittick. *Death and the World of Imagination.* Pp. 81.
[498] Ibid.

The Vision of Love

Jāmī establishes his articulation on love in the physical world and then gradually transports it into the world of intellect by crossing into the realm of imagination. The event of love between Salāmān (the soul) and Absāl (the body) is extensive given the entwined either hostile (physically) or hospitable relationship (and integration) between human/physical love, knowledge and sight. Jāmī emphasizes the inevitable integration of their becoming one as body and soul in the physical world. In this union of the soul and body, the sea and the Island become hospitable places for Salāmān and Absāl to inhabit. Moreover, only as human lovers could Salāmān and Absāl enter the fire with a hope to be annihilated for the sake of their love. Once Salāmān loses the sight of the physical existence of Absāl (the body), he does not experience her love physically anymore, and this becomes unbearable for his soul. It is this synthesis of the soul becoming-one with the body that poses a threat to the Kingdom. In contrast, when Salāmān (the soul) witnesses Venus (the Celestial Being/the Intellectual beauty), the experience of love is not threatening to the Kingdom – the domain of intellect – because she is invoked and summoned by the Sage.

In the dialectical preface, Jāmī establishes how the knowledge of the Divine is the result of earthly love. This love is derived from the perception of Divine beauty through the sense of sight. Anything seeable or the act of seeing requires light, so whenever there is a mention of love, the images of light or fire are used to designate knowing and knowledge. The kind of love depends on the type of knowledge and beauty (corporeal or spiritual) that inspires that love. For example, Jāmī relates to the "سر حسنت" *beauty of the Divine* that lights up the "آتش" *fire* of Leyli's "عشق" *love* in Majnun's heart (ln. 4). This is an indication of passionate love. In another instance, Jāmī implores God to show His face, to "پرده بگشایی ز پیش" *remove the veil from Your face* (ln. 13), so he can become "افروخته" *luminous* in his love for God. In such a light, he wishes to see only the Divine.

14 So I may become a lover, luminous with You عاشقی باشم به تو افروخته ۱۴

I shall close my eyes to others. دیده را از دیگران بر دوخته

In a similar manner, the Sage creates Absāl's imaginal form, which is neither lightness nor darkness, but is the result of the Sage "بدانستی" gaining the knowledge that Salāmān was "فرا یاد آمدی" *remembering* Absāl and was still loving her. As a result of this knowledge, the Sage introduces Venus, who is pure light. She is described for her luminous qualities: she is "شمع جمع انجم" *the candle in the gathering of the stars*, and her beauty "آفتاب و ماه را شیدا کند" *enchants/maddening the sun and the moon* (lns. 1008-09). The intensity of her light is such that she can cleanse Salāmān's soul from sensory pain and pleasures. Unlike Absāl's mortal existence, Venus's "آهنگ" *song/music* is described to be "دایم" *forever/eternal/immortal* if one is "سماع" *hearing* to "گردون" *the heavens* (ln. 1011). With her luminous presence, Venus "نقش ابسال از ضمیر او بشست" *washed away Absāl's image from his soul*, as " مهر روی زهره بر وی شد درست" *the affection for Venus's face* [became] *complete* or *perfect* or *accurate* (ln. 1016).

The Vision of Beauty

After the Sage introduces Venus, he requests "تا جمال خود تمام اظهار کرد" *that her beauty should appear completely,* and she leaves "در دل و جان سلامان کار کرد" *an impact on Salāmān's heart and soul* (ln. 1015). The Sage creates the vision of beauty that is Venus. This phenomenon of beauty is linked to the main aspiration for knowledge or that of the light associated with Venus. In his dialectical preface, Jāmī initiates a vision of His physical beauty, in the image of the shadow as a result of the Light, " از تو بر عالم فتاده سایه ای" *in the whole world a shadow has fallen from You*, and that "خوبرویان را شده سرمایه ای" *the beautiful faces have earned their treasure* (ln. 2).

In making comparisons between the beauty of Absāl and Venus, Jāmī details the different impacts their beauty has on Salāmān. On witnessing Absāl's beauty, Salāmān suffers agony and restlessness. His "طاقت او گشت طاق" *endurance/power becomes vaulted,* and that even "شد تلخ شهدش در مذاق" *honey tasted bitter in his palate* (ln. 617). He loses sleep and becomes "بی قرار" *restless* "ز آرزوی وصل او" *on*

account of his desire to unite with her (lns. 618, 21). The knowledge of Absāl's physical beauty afflicts Salāmān "در دل" *in the heart* by way of sense perceptions especially sense of sight (ln. 616). This destructive effect/physical focus that prevents him from enjoying the normal physical pleasure of strength, taste and sleep dominates as long as the union of love, knowledge and sight is not achieved. If, in their union, both Salāmān and Absāl become "شادان همچو جان و تن به هم" *contented like the body and the soul together* and "خرم چون گل و سوسن به هم" *delighted like rose and lily together* (ln. 815), in their separation, they, especially Salāmān (Jāmī never mentions the state of Absāl except in the beginning as the wet-nurse desperate to burn like a candle on his head), are tormented. In the aftermath of Absāl's death in the fire, another form of unhappiness falls upon Salāmān (lns. 928-59). Jāmī describes that Salāmān's misery: "هر شب آوردی به کنج خانه روی" *every night* [he] *turned his face to the corner of the house* and "با خیال یار خویش افسانه گوی" *told stories to the imagined form of his friend/beloved* (ln. 947). Salāmān's agony is caused by the "هجر" *separation* from Absāl and not being able to see her beauty, and he acknowledges this saying that:

948	"Oh, you have burned my soul with your abandonment, and from your beauty you have stitched my eyes shut."	کای ز هجر خویش جانم سوخته وز جمال خویش چشمم دوخته	۹۴۸

The Sage hypnotizes Salāmān and creates an imaginal form of Absāl. This form however still remains a source of anguish for Salāmān, because the Sage is only able to keep the image in front of his eyes for one to two hours in order to sow the seed of solace in his heart (ln. 1003). When Salāmān becomes neglected of the image, the image of existence goes to disappearance/non-existence.

1006	Yet whenever for a moment he become unaware of her, the image of existence starts to vanish from him.	لیک چون یکدم ازو غافل شود صورت هستی ازو زایل شود	۱۰۰۶

It is only in the transformation from the image of Absāl to the appearance of Venus, that the vision of an eternal beauty is made possible. The vision of Venus's beauty is available to the intellect only when Salāmān goes beyond physicality and crosses into the realm of imagination, the isthmus

(barzakh), to see the light. The tranquility that Salāmān receives from his union with Venus is unlike what he experienced through his union with Absāl whose, beauty is mortal and temporary, and thus invokes mortal and sensual pleasure. In contrast, Venus's beauty is eternal, and she invokes eternal pleasure.

1017	He saw everlasting beauty and was released from transitory one, he chose eternal pleasure over sensual.	۱۰۱۷ حسن باقی دید واز فانی پرید عیش باقی را ز فانی بر گزید

The Vision of Vision

The world of dreams functions as the realm of the imagination, and this is where the vision of the unknowable takes place. This dream-vision is what constitutes the vision of vision. The intellect is required to accept the vision and gain the awareness of the unknown. There is one instance in the poem where Jāmī's dream-visions function as the isthmus (*barzakh*). In this realm of imagination, Jāmī gains a better knowledge of his task of writing the poem, which he would not otherwise have acquired by simply relying on the physical or intellectual rationality.

In chapter 17, Jāmī recalls a dream: "در میان فکرتم بربود خواب" *in the midst of thinking, sleep overtook me,* and "خویش را دیدم به راهی بس دراز" *I saw myself on a very long path* (ln. 245). And Jāmī describes the path as, "پاک و روشن چون ضمیر اهل راز" *pure and luminous, like the hearts of the people of the secret* (ln. 246). This intersection of vision and light is an indication of knowledge and sight, which is a common theme of medieval Neoplatonic discussions on vision. Jāmī sees himself walking "رهی بی گرد و گل" *on this path of no dust and clay,* as he "در آن ره گام زن آسوده دل" *pacing on the route with a peaceful heart* (ln. 248). Suddenly a disruption occurs as "آواز سپاهی پر خروش" *the noise of an army full of rage approaches him* (ln. 249). Jāmī loses his "هوش" *consciousness* and looks for "چاره" *a solution* (lns. 250-51). He then describes a scene, "اندر چشمم ایوانی بلند" *a lofty portal entered my eyes*, belonging to "شاه زمن" *the king of the age* (ln. 251, 53). The king welcomes Jāmī with "خندان و شاد" *laughter and joy*, and the king "بوسه بر دستم زد" *kissed my hand* (lns. 256, 57). In the morning, when Jāmī wakes up, "از خرد تعبیر این در خواستم" *from the wisdom* [he]

requests its meaning (ln. 260). His wisdom (which also implies intellect and reasoning) tells him that: "یک چون گرفتی پیش در اتمام نفس زین گفت و گو منشین خموش" *for a moment, do not sit silent, from this conversation,* "کوش" *since you started it* [the poem], *endeavor to complete it* (ln. 262). Having listened to his own thinking about the interpretation of the dream, Jāmī says that: "قلم بستم میان تحریر را" *I placed my pen in the center of the document/writing* (ln. 263).

The dream enables Jāmī's conversation with his own intellect and as a result he is inspired to compose the poem. The imaginary approval from the king might be a reference to his position as a court poet. However, what comes from his conversation (with his own intellect) is a work of pure intellectual authority over his own interpretation: "سر چشمه ای کین خواب خاست" *the very source which created this dream/where this dream was awakened*, and "آید این تعبیر از آنجا نیز راست" *from the same place, this interpretation proceeds* (ln. 264). This vision of vision—the interpretation of the dream with the help of the intellect— allows and inspires Jāmī to write the poem. Jāmī reasons well enough that the poem is a work of his "خرد" *intellect* (or a work of wisdom) and requires "فکر" *thinking* by the reader in search of meaning (ln. 1118).

Conclusions

The appearance of Venus awakens a spiritual love in the soul, represented by Salāmān. As he falls in love with the beautiful Venus, he/the soul is transported to the intellectual realm and thus is released from his agony and yearning for Absāl's love in the corporeal realm. The aim of this chapter, "Poetics of Vision:" the Eye in Translation, has primarily been to study Jāmī's concluding the poem by examining his Neoplatonic philosophical interpretation of the story.

I began the chapter by giving a brief history of the Neoplatonic Greek philosophical influences on the early medieval Arabic and Persian scholars and poets like Jāmī. I examined how Jāmī's themes of union and integration are juxtaposed in ways which are similar to those found in the Neoplatonic (and Sufi) idea of the One or the one God/Divine/Creator. I showed how Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl*, like

any other classical and medieval Persian narrative poem, is infused with images and ideas about love, knowledge, and sight (in the physical world), which are allegorically significant and can be translated as themes of love, light and vision using a Neoplatonic lens. I also explained how, in keeping with the theory of emanation, both the worldly matters, such as the intense love experiences between Salāmān and Absāl, and otherworldly matters, such as the appearance of Venus, are part of the One's creation. And thus the emanating intellect of Salāmān (the soul) is dependent on the sensual pleasures of Absāl (the seen/existent/the body) and becomes satisfied with intellectual pleasure only when the vision appears as a beautiful and luminous one, like Venus.

Next, in order to explain the mysterious creation of Salāmān as the soul, I examined the complexities surrounding the phenomenon of 'metaphysics'. I studied how Jāmī explains his theory of causes and principles in the birth of Salāmān as an idea, which first originated in the King's mind, and then was realized through the Sage's intellect, to have Salāmān born without involvement of a woman. Though the whole procedure appears surreal, according to the King and the Sage, Salāmān's creation is about an intellectual vision that he would be born a perfect king so he would rule justly with virtue, like the King himself. Yet, Jāmī interjects the vision is of the inevitable union and integration, in which Salāmān cannot be secluded from interactions with at least the one woman (Absāl as his wet-nurse) and later from other corporeal pleasures, such as passionate love. Salāmān has the ability to learn knowledge (to know) by using his senses as well as his intellect to experience and to be guided in doing so. I showed that Jāmī's metaphysics of vision is that of the Divine's role behind His creation, with the entire conversation on love and beauty belonging only to the Divine; and even the King and the Sage are not able to discount a vision for Salāmān to live a purely intellectual life. That being said, the union between Salāmān and Absāl is the first and utmost necessary step for Salāmān to wish to achieve union with the celestial Venus.

Next, in the discussion on, the "poetics of vision," I explained how Jāmī contrasts knowledge of the vision, which one attains by engaging one's intellect, with the knowledge one gains by engaging one's physical senses, particularly sight. I analyzed how Jāmī introduces the vision as being present invisibly, but only if the intellect is able to comprehend the existence of the vision through the sense of hearing, rather than the sense of sight. In order to explain this Jāmī uses the allegory of Yusof and Zoleyk̲ā. Jāmī makes a distinction between what is visible to one's eyes and what is invisible (voice/revelation of any sort) and only attainable if one, through listening, comprehends the source of the vision. In this case, Yusof receives the vision from the world of "غیب" *the unknown*, and is released from yearning for Zoleyk̲ā, who is a representation of carnal love and pleasure.

Next, I discussed how Jāmī, in his penultimate chapter, offers an interpretation of the poem within the framework of the Neoplatonic emanation theory. In doing so, Jāmī presents his interpretation of the philosophical importance of the story. However, Jāmī by calling his poem a "مختصر سخن" *a summarized speech* invites his readers to engage with more than one interpretation of the poem. My explanation for Jāmī's penultimate chapter is that despite the poem having significant philosophical complexity, the amalgam of themes in the poem keeps the reader engaged: the reader is given a choice: they can opt for a superficial reading, or seek a deeper understanding of the poem by following Jāmī's interpretation, or by seeking their own. I myself have come to regard Jāmī's dialectically structured preface as a guideline, and I have used his indicative method presented in the narrative to examine and better express the un-expressible that Jāmī has veiled in images and metaphors.

In the final section of the chapter, "The Neoplatonic Eye and Jāmī on Vision,' I explained how Jāmī complicates the Neoplatonic emanation theory with the Sufi concept of barzakh, the imagination. By introducing the realm of imagination, Jāmī places the poem within Sufi literature. In order to understand how the role of the imagination impacts Jāmī's discussion on the integration of

love, knowledge and sight, and to evaluate the hostile/hospitable relationship between them, I analyzed the vision of love, the vision of beauty, and the vision of vision on the basis of importance given both to the intellect as well as to the imagination. What one gleans from this analysis is that the vision of vision in *Salāmān u Absāl* is about engaging one's intellect and imagination to understand Jāmī's meaning.

Jāmī knows that he is taking a risk in producing this unusual poem: he is not seeking affirmation from his friends (or within his own Sufi circle), he has his own reasoning for composing *Salāmān u Absāl* which he explains in chapters nine, ten, and eleven of his poem.[499] And he challenges the reader to see more into the poem than an illicit and irrational love affair: it is a philosophical tale, a work of intellect. In order to understand its formidable potential, the thoughtful readers are required to fully engage with the story, using their intellect and imagination.

[499] See Afsaḥzod, chapter nine, (lns. 139-150); ten, (lns. 160-169); and eleven (lns. 170-189) pp. 398-400. In these chapters, Jāmī explains how old age has impacted not only his physical strength but also his speech and thinking. For a deeper analysis of these chapters see my Chapter V: *Salāmān u Absāl*: A Poem of Jāmī's Old Age.

Chapter V: Conclusion: *Salāmān u Absāl,* A Poem of Jāmī's Old Age

Within the larger Sufi tradition, the archetypical master or the Shaikh within the fraternity is an older man.[500] This title is bestowed upon him, because in addition to his relationship with his (most often younger) disciples, it recognizes that his entire life's service, devotion, and practice has been spent within the order.[501] Old age, in this case, is a long, lived experience, which ultimately is recognized with honorary title. Nonetheless, old age can be a significant time for doing something new by accepting that it is a time to discover the importance of philosophy, in contrast to contemplating one's interests in the philosophy of old age. The latter subject is usually projected in the poetry of the majority of poets.[502] To the best of my knowledge, and looking across some of Jāmī other poetry, *Salāmān u Absāl* is a unique case in that Jāmī devotes a few chapters of the poem to discussing his old body and new thinking. Therefore, I find it interesting that Jāmī establishes a theory of senescence based on his experiencing his own body deteriorating with age, while he remains curious about his thoughts and thinking in old age, and as a result composes a poem of such complex philosophical depth that it puzzles the reader. This old age functions as a literary space in which we discover how Jāmī contemplates the philosophy inspired by Ibn Sīnā and the mysticism inspired by Ibn ʿArabî.

Why is this late-age composition of *Salāmān u Absāl* important to our understanding of the poem? Jāmī in this poem focuses mainly on humanistic rather than social gerontology, which is conveyed on a rather personal and subjective note. Jāmī relates to his longevity as an indication of his life's devotion to the art of poetry; nonetheless, he takes the poem as a platform to voice the

---

[500] See Manūchihr Murtaẓavī. *Maktab-i Ḥāfiẓ: Yā Muqaddamah Bar Ḥāfiẓ'shināsī.* pp. 236-256

[501] See Annemarie Schimmel, "Abū'l- Ḥusyan al-Nūrī: 'Qibla of the Lights' in *The Heritage of Sufism: Classical Persian Sufism from Its Origins to Rumi (700-1300) V. 1* edited by Leonard Lewisohn and David Morgan. pp. 59-64. Also, in the same collection see Herbert Mason's "Ḥallāj and the Baghdad School of Sufism." pp. 65-82.

[502] Ibid.

importance of old age for philosophy. For example, in another old age narrative poem, *Ḵerad-nāma-ye Eskandari*, Jāmī voices his notion of old age in juxtaposition to Aristotle, who in old age drafts a new book of wisdom for Alexander.

502	In his turn, on the matter, the wise old man (Aristotle), came forward and requested his desire.	۵۰۲	وزآن پس در آن پیر حکمت شناس رخ آورد و کرد این مراد التماس
503	For the sake of the treasure of wisdom sharpen the pen, [and] elevate a Wisdom Book from anew.	۵۰۳	که ای گنج حکمت قلم تیز کن خرد نامه ای از نو انگیز کن [503]

In this, the final chapter of my thesis, I discuss the significance of the traditional view that *Salāmān u Absāl* was written in Jāmī's old age.[504] What does it mean to write a poem in old age? And to what extent is Jāmī old when writing his *Salāmān u Absāl*? How and why does it matter to Jāmī to address his old age in the poem? The focus of this chapter is the hypothesis that Jāmī's uses old age as a rhetorical device and aging as an attribution of or a gateway into a new mode of thinking (and thus philosophy) to emancipate himself from the poem's aesthetical constraints and to focus on its metaphysical contents. In doing so, Jāmī fashions his (old age) dialectics on the One by giving the most unusual passionate love between Salāmān and Absāl a Sufi-Neoplatonic interpretation of transcendence and sublimation. I discuss how Jāmī reconciles the hostile vs. hospitable experiences of love, knowledge, and sight, which are at stake in the poem, through experiencing old age and writing about aging.

In the following sections, I distinguish the term old age from the condition of aging based on indications by Jāmī of such a distinction between the physical weakness that comes with aging and the maturation of one's thinking that comes with old age. Jāmī indicates that one's weakening physical state is compensated for by an increasing capacity for vision, which is achieved by improved understanding of self-existence and attainment of wisdom. Jāmī's "پیری" *old age* is a state of being old

[503] Afsaḥzod. *Ḵerad-nāma-ye Eskandari*, pp. 441.
[504] Even though we are not very sure about the exact date when Jāmī had composed *Salāmān u Absāl* but one fact that we have in hand is Jāmī's own birthday, which he has indicated in Divan, see footnote no. 3 on page 6.

already, which is different from the process of aging, the state of becoming old and inwardly attesting to and accepting the situation. In the latter case, there is thinking, vision, and contemplation involved. In order to make sense of these distinctions between old age and aging, I draw on my earlier analysis from chapters III and IV on Jāmī's definitions of the poetry of the eye and the poetics of vision. Old age and poetry of the eye are defined on the basis of the mortality of bodily existence (akin to the form of a poem). While aging and poetics of vision are intended to convey the immortal aspects of the soul (akin to the content of a poem, from which the meaning is discerned or interpreted).

I start with a discussion of late-style theory and apply it to *Salāmān u Absāl* as Jāmī's 'late style' poem. One of the major ideas to contest here is Jāmī's sentimental views (the feelings of sadness or nostalgic thoughts?) on his state of being an old (aged) poet. I examine Jāmī's views on the limitation to one's activities in the physical world (such as on the experiences of love and knowledge) due to the weakening of the five external senses (touch, hearing, smell, taste, and sight) in old age in the section called old age and poetry of the eye. I also examine how the notion of sense perception, which is concerned with the nature of perceived information and experience in the brain, also weakens. Subsequently, I examine how Jāmī brings about a reconciliation between physical weakness and inner prowess so as to experience love and knowledge differently, by looking deeper into his inner-self. In the section, aging and the poetics of vision, I draw on Jāmī's idea of self-reflection on aging, which for him was a time of contemplation and thinking about love and a time to sing or compose life anew (in a poem). This is where Jāmī's dialectics on the philosophical vision of the heart (as an abode of love for Divine manifestation) in juxtaposition with his observance of the Sufi practice of *ḏekri* (*remembrance*) can be explained.

Jāmī's Late-Style Poem

> "The concept of 'late writing' also has to be approached with causation. Lateness is obviously a relative thing: 'late Keats' a more limited notion than 'late Dickens' more confined than 'late Beckett'…"[505]

"Lateness" in this chapter is to be understood as Jāmī's old age, the time when Jāmī's body and mind are experiencing finitude and frailty. Jāmī is known to have composed *Salāmān u Absāl* between the years 1480-1484, beginning at the age of seventy, some eight years before his death.[506] In that light, *Salāmān u Absāl* becomes one of his major late works, which include his other six mathnavīs in the *Haft Awrang*. These works inform us about Jāmī's subjective desire and "literary alertness to old age,"[507] an age in which he is willing to take the risk of composing the 'incestuous' provocative tale of Salāmān and Absāl in a Sufi-Neoplatonic poem.

In previous studies on late style work, scholars have argued on the basis of the sentiments that artists have vocalized in their late in life work. For example, in his essay, "Timeliness and Lateness," Edward Said introduces two different outcomes of late style writings. The first is writing as "a new spirit of reconciliation and serenity often expressed in terms of a miraculous transfiguration of common reality."[508] In the second, "late style [writing] involves a nonharmonious, nonsense tension, and above all, a sort of deliberately unproductive production going *against.*"[509] However, none of the above sentiments can explain the old poet Jāmī's state of becoming an old poet or his discontentment about anything. As a late work, *Salāmān u Absāl* is neither a work of positive reaction toward old age nor a negative one. Nonetheless, in this poem Jāmī provides clues (discussed in the subsequent

---

[505] See Helen Small, *The Long Life*, (2010) pp 182.

[506] See Najib Māyel-Heravi, *Sheyk̲ ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān Jāmi*, (1998), pp. 173.
ناظم {جامی} در این دوره از حیاتش چندان شوق واشتیاقی به نظم مثنویهای بلند نداشته است. واین حالت در شاعری پر گوی و پر کار—همچون جامی—دلالت بر آن دارد که نظم مثنوی مورد بحث در سالهای بالاتر عمر او—یعنی چند سال پس از ۶۸ سالگی—صورت گرفته است.
The poet [Jāmī] *at this stage of his life did not have any interest and desire in composing excellent mathnawis. And the reason for such a situation on such a well-said and well-done poet such as Jāmī has to with the composition of this mathnawi late in years of his life that means few years after his 68th birthday.*

[507] Small, pp 182.

[508] See Edward W. Said's "Timeliness and Lateness" in *On Late Style: Music and Literature Against the Grain*, (2007). pp. 6.

[509] Ibid, pp. 7.

sections) that he looks at old age as a stage in life that inevitably causes bodily weakness, yet does not necessarily impact his soul or the heart, which is the abode of love.

Jāmī's reference to the state of duality apparent in old age refers to his idea about the inevitable hostile vs. hospitable relationship between the external and inner worlds. For example, the allegory of the shepherd man, which is introduced toward the end of Jāmī's dialectical preface is about the fearful situation of losing oneself in a state of duality (lns. 22-23).[510] In this allegory, the old shepherd (lost in a state of duality) is on a journey to find a more peaceful city for himself in the external world. In the midst of his journey, at night, as the fright of getting lost (among the people) overwhelms him, he fastens a pumpkin to his foot to remind himself of who he is. That same night another man (possibly also lost in a state of duality) unties the pumpkin from the shepherd's foot and fastens it on his own and sleeps next to the shepherd. Jāmī informs us that in the morning the shepherd finds himself in a state of utter confusion when he sees the pumpkin tied to another man's foot and asks himself *who is who*. The reasoning behind the allegory is that the shepherd has relied solemnly on his eyes to see the pumpkin using the external existence of the pumpkin to affirm his own existence. The allegory is about the man losing himself in a state of "دویی" *duality/two* as opposed to finding himself in "یکتایی" *union/one* with the Divine, in which case he would need an external affirmation (lns. 10-21).

Toward the end of the allegory, we are told indirectly (as an indication of Jāmī's own state) of the shepherd's lack of inward "reconciliation and serenity" with his old age. Jāmī then beseeches God to help him, Jāmī, find his union and oneness with Him by way of his poetry. This is the first time Jāmī offers a reference to (his) old age and unlike the shepherd, Jāmī wishes not to lose himself in a state of duality.

38	"Oh God, I am that worthless shepherd, my rank is lowlier than all other shepherds."	ای خدا آن کرد بی سرمایه ام از همه کردان فروتر پایه ام	۳۸
39	From Your bounty, grant splendor on this shepherd,	ده ز فضلت رونقی این کرد را	۳۹

[510] "Mathnavī Salāmān u Absāl" in Jāmī
Haft Awrang. ed. Afsaḥzod (1997). pp. 392. Lines (22-42).

	with your Grace strain away this affliction.	کن ز لطف راوقی این درد را	

The meaning behind the allegory (of the shepherd tying a pumpkin to his foot) is straightforward yet the allegory is complicated when Jāmī juxtaposes his state (of old age) next to the shepherd's state. On the one hand, it is implied that there is a higher risk of losing oneself by relying on the physical existence (of a pumpkin), while on a more complex level, despite changes in the physical world and the physical body, one's inner-existence can be divinely-inspired and achieve unity with the Divine. Jāmī implies that the inner and outer worlds inevitably become disharmonious in old age. Yet, he suggests that one must find a way to transcend this disharmony. Jāmī decides to transcend this disharmonious and hostile state through his poetry.

40	So that I am purified from all impurities, for the people of the heart, I shall become the healing syrup.	تا ز هر آلایشی صافی شوم اهل دل را شربتی شافی شوم	۴۰
41	Like the goblet, one by one, each I shall make happy in palate, if not jar by jar I will pass cup after cup.	جامی آسا یک به یک را شاد کام خم خم ار نبود رسانم جام جام	۴۱

The duality in line 40 is revealed as oppositions. Jāmī claims his state of "صافی" *purity* as opposed to a state of "آلایشی" *impurity*, and "صافی شوم" *to be purified* means to be freed from duality; only then can he become the healing syrup (poem) and give it to *the people of the heart*. In line 41, duality is revealed in the repetitions of words, such as "خم خم" *jar by jar* and "جام جام" *cup after cup*, but then unity is enforced equally in the phrase "یک به یک" *one by one*, *each* (ln. 41). This way, Jāmī affirms his desire to share his poem *one to one*, and this is an indication that he desires to create unity with his reader initiated by the poet himself.

Jāmī calls his poetry *the healing syrup* for *the people of the heart* perhaps because of its mystical (as well as philosophical) messages. By calling his poetry a *healing syrup*, Jāmī composes his (old age) poetry to grant hospitality to the reader. In this case, Jāmī presents his poetry (perhaps this very poem of *Salāmān u Absāl*) as a syrup extracted from his old age's wisdom and knowledge. Even when Jāmī makes a self-referential point as the poet *Jāmī*, he once again confuses the readers by giving a double

meaning. He uses the word "جامی" *(jāmi) a goblet*, which is a container as well as an indication to himself (the poet), to convey how he gives satisfaction to each reader's palate or appetite with his poetry. His phrase "خم خم" *jar by j*ar is a description of passing his wine or poem in a large pitcher (*kh*um). As an adjective *kham*, it also connotes the stature of his old age as being "bent". This is the first time that Jāmī explicitly draws on how his old age impacts his physical stature. If Jāmī is not able to move around and pour (his poetry) into goblets, he wishes to pass his poem/wine around cup by cup. This is also an interesting pun. Yet, in a more dramatic reading, this pun is directed to Jāmī's self-image as the poet to serve his wine (his poetry) not in bigger quantities to cause people to become drunk slowly, cup by cup.

In chapters nine, ten, and eleven Jāmī exhaustively talks about the physical limitations caused by old age (giving an autobiographical account), despite remaining indecisive and vague about how to make sense of his old age or how to negotiate the main reason behind writing the poem of *Salāmān u Absāl*. First, he expresses old age as an excuse to have caused Jāmī a poor sense of judgement for introducing such unusual subject matter into the context of Sufi literature.

170	The weakness of old age has broken the power of my poetic talent, it has closed down the path of (active) contemplation in my mind.	ضعف پیری قوت طبعم شکست راه فکرت بر ضمیر من ببست	۱۷۰
171	In my heart, the comprehension of eloquence has vanished, on my lips, the art of speech has disappeared.	در دلم فهم سخندانی نماند بر لبم حرف سخنرانی نماند	۱۷۱
172	It is better to draw my head in the pocket of silence, and to set my foot on the skirt of forgetting.	به که سر به جیب خاموشی کشم پا به دامان فراموشی کشم	۱۷۲
173	There is a strong relevance to my situation in the following couplets from the *Masnavī-yi Maulavī*.	نسبتی دارد به حال من قوی این دو بیت از مثنوی مولوی	۱۷۳
174	'How come the art of verse and rhyming come to me, after the foundations of my sanity are destroyed".	کیف یاتی النظم لی و القافیه بعد ما ضاعت أصول العافیه	۱۷۴
175	I think of rhyme, and my beloved says to me, 'don't contemplate anything but the sight of me'.	قافیه اندیشم و دلدار من گویدم مندیش جز دیدار من	۱۷۵

One has difficulty understanding Jāmī's (subjective?) sentiments in the above lines, for he begins by talking persistently about how his frail state of old age impacts his speech. He first considers his old

age to have influenced his temperament, contemplation, comprehension, and speech. Therefore, he suggests to himself that he keep silent.

Jāmī's suggestion of keeping silent is in reaction to his inability to make an eloquent speech. This silence is a deliberate act of "فراموشی" *forgetting*. Jāmī uses *forgetting* as opposed to remembrance in relation to his old age. Either by *forgetting*, Jāmī means to forget his previous or prime age's extent of "فهم سخندانی" *comprehension of eloquence*, his art of speech making, or according to my interpretation, his dialectics on the One (as a union) earlier in life. That said, Jāmī reveals a close connection between his bodily weaknesses and the making of his speech. Along the same line, Jāmī triggers the role of memory in the making of his poem, which corresponds to his dialectics on the One or his message of love for the sake of union/unity. This way Jāmī seems not to admit that he has forgotten his speech on the One. If not in speech, the One is existent in one's memory. Jāmī begins the *mathnavī of Salāmān u Absāl* saying: with "یادت" *Your remembrance* (or with God's remembrance) the tongue (the language) of the lovers (and the poet) is inspired.

۱	ای به یادت تازه جان عاشقان	1 With *Your* memory the souls of lovers are refreshed,
	ز اب لطفت تر زبان عاشقان	with the water of Your grace the tongues of lovers are moistened.

Jāmī remembers God by way of (love) poetry with a reference to lovers having the tongue to speak of their love for each other and for God.

Moreover, Jāmī cites a few lines from Rūmī's *Mathnavī*. In this poetic choice, there is a projection of another old poet's (Rūmī's) reflection on old age, this in itself serves as a token of memory for Jāmī. In doing so, Jāmī makes Rūmī's state of being resonate with his own state of being through the *Mathnavī,* which combinedly reflects the two poets' poetic states of mind in relation to the One. Jāmī's emphasis on a line from Rūmī's *Mathnavī*, "do not contemplate anything but the sight of me," is an indication that Jāmī regards poetry as a means to serve the sight of b/Beloved (ln. 175). On a more technical note, Jāmī's imitation of Rūmī's *Mathnavī* in the form and scheme of "قافیه" *rhyming*

and *cadence* in writing his *mathnavī of Salāmān u Absāl* conforms to his task (as an old age poet) of "reworking an already deliberate and self-conscious career structure: [through] the imitator [Jāmī], like [Rūmī] himself, produces something knowing, something that makes a clear statement to his readers."[511] It is in this art of imitation (as poetics is indeed an art of imitation), Jāmī once again either nullifies his subjective emotion about old age or enhances his message of old age due to his increased wisdom. Jāmī recalls a new sort of Dialectics informed by the love he feels in his heart for the existence of the One, and the main source of affirmation of his love is contemplation. In expressing that contemplation there is the inevitable state of dichotomy of being old yet inflamed with love. These lines (170-175) establish Jāmī's prologue to the poem, *Salāmān u Absāl*. In these lines, I suggest that we should try to understand Jāmī's suggested and all-encompassing philosophical message in *Salāmān u Absāl*, The poem is more than just a poet's sentimental reaction to old age, and his message of love and on the vision of divine beauty never wavers nor does it become weaker, even as his body ages.

Jāmī's Rhetoric on Old Age

Jāmī uses old age as a rhetorical device to negotiate the risk of writing the story of *Salāmān u Absāl* with its subject matter of a passionate love that inspires the vision of Divine. The first bit of evidence of this use of old age as a rhetorical device is found in his choice of the mathnavī form, which is often used for the purpose of sharing wisdom and learnings in a narrative. The second bit of evidence is revealed with references to passages of Rūmī's *Mathnavī,* which might indicate that he planned to lean on that famous work, possibly in order to compensate for his inability to articulate the "فهم سخندانی" *comprehension of eloquence* on his own heart (ln. 171). In the choice of the mathnavī as a form and by citing verses from Rūmī's *Mathnavī*, Jāmī relates to his old age as the main cause for his limitations both physical and intellectual. The third and most important and interesting evidence of

[511] See Gordon McMullan, *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing: Authorship in the Proximity of Death*, (2007), pp. 25.

Jāmī's use of old age as a rhetorical device is the symbolic use of the lute as a metaphor for his own body, which is compared to the form of a mathnavī. It is in the juxtaposition of a poem's form with the human body, that we see another added layer of complexity in *Salāmān u Absāl* with regard to the definition of the poetry's aesthetics and its compatibility with old age. And Jāmī's effort is to transcend aesthetics for metaphysics with old age.

In chapter nine of his poem, Jāmī describes "صفت" *the attribute* of "پیری" *old age* and "ضعف" *the weaknesses* it causes, such as the inability to derive benefits from the senses, especially from his sense of sight. At the same time, Jāmī describes how old age has affected his sense of the aesthetical form of a poem. The reader must resolve this riddle by understanding the metaphor of the lute.[512]

Jāmī begins the chapter with the analogy of "عود" *the lute* to describe the state of his poetry, and then uses this description to draw a parallel to the condition of his physical body. This is the first indication of how Jāmī's uses the metaphor of the lute in order to convey his old age finitude and frailty by way of talking about the state of his poetry.

139	It has been a lifetime since in this ancient abode, the threat of my verse tied to the lute [music] of speech.	عمر ها شد تا درین دیر کهن تار نظمم بسته بر عود سخن	۱۳۹
140	Every time I play a new tune, I breathe in the ancient happenings.	هر زمان از نو نوایی می زنم دم ز دیرین ماجرایی می زنم	۱۴۰

The reader can assume that Jāmī's idea of *this ancient abode* is an indication of the life he has lived prior to his old age. This sense comes from Jāmī's use of the plural "عمر ها" *ages,* which emphasizes his advanced age and that of the world, as if to say that he is as old as the world. In the second half of line 139, Jāmī says that the lines of his poetry are confined to *the speech of the lute*, which can be interpreted to mean that his poetry is dependent on his physical existence and well-being. This

[512] Here I am borrowing the concept of "finitude" from Kaja Silverman's *The Flash of My Flash* (2009) on the basis of an artist or the poet's self-realization of her or his limitedness caused by old age.
"Finitude is the most capacious and enabling of the attributes we share with others, because unlike the particular way in which each of us looks, thinks, walks, and speaks, but connects us to a few other beings, it connects us to every other being…Unfortunately, though, finitude is the most narcissistically injurious of all the qualities we share with others, and therefore the one we are most likely to see in them and deny in ourselves…" pp. 4.

reference to *the speech of lute* can be interpreted to mean that it is his physical body that makes the speech. The playing of the lute/body is tied to its music/poetry vs. the lute not producing good music and thus in need of transformation.

Jāmī's reference to his "نو نوایی" *new playing* or *singing* while breathing in "دیرین ماجرایی" *the ancient happenings* or *the events occurred in the past* indicates his love of poetry despite his old age. It is as though, by way of his poetry, he wishes to compensate for the frailty and finitude caused by old age. In another reading, his use of the verb "دم…می زنم" *I breathe in* (the old happenings) Jāmī measures his mortal existence against his desire for the opportunity to sing again about the old happenings. In doing so, he seems to address his old age as simply a matter of time and thus old age becomes ephemeral, while the memory of old events remains, and his task is to be persistent in the act of writing and reciting the old happenings. Up to this point, we see Jāmī's claim that he has lived a long time in this world, and his poetry (in following the rules of the lute/music of speech) is also as old as his age. However, he wishes to keep playing new tunes on his lute (or the body) despite his old age.

141	My time has passed, yet this tune has not ended my soul is reduced yet this happening has not ended.	رفت عمر واین نوا آخر نشد کاست جان وین ماجرا آخر نشد	۱۴۱
142	My back like a harp has bowed and yet every night I am busy in tuning my lute till daylight.	پشت من چون چنگ خم گشت وهنوز هر شبی در ساز عودم تا به روز	۱۴۲

In these lines, Jāmī suggests that *this tune* (a reference to his poetry) and *this happening* (the events of the world) are never ending, and thus they both survive his own existence. The lines also suggest that in tuning his lute Jāmī captures the worldly events that he previously experienced. We discover Jāmī's definition of poetry in form to resembles his body. Whereas in relation to his soul, poetry (in content) in its "نوا" *tune/music*, is a narrative devise that records the *happening*(s) of the world unlike aging. In content, it is certainly given an immortal disposition. It is fair to say that Jāmī's macrocosmic view of the world as a corporeal as well as eternal existence in poetry explains his own temporality relative to his poetry's eternal quality. And old age (at this stage) serves as a platform to convey this knowledge

of distinctions as well as the integration of the worldly and the otherworldly matters. In spite of the disharmony caused by old age, Jāmī keeps composing new poetry for the sake of his old age.

Jāmī, too, understands old age as an unavoidable episode of life, and he conveys this understanding when he describes his back as having become "خم" *bowed* like "چنگ" *a harp* (ln. 142). However, despite this harp-like form, Jāmī composes music/poetry on the lute, as earlier he suggested that his verses are tied to a *lute of speech* (ln. 139). From a metaphysical perspective, I think the *lute of speech* can also be interpreted as Jāmī's inner thinking, which has a rhythmic motion as he is busy day and night "در ساز عودم" *in tuning my lute* (in composing his thoughts) (ln. 142). In the midst of his intense desire to keep composing poetry, any reader can easily overlook the fact that Jāmī is suggesting a stage of disharmony between his body and his thinking. This ostensible disharmony (dis-order) between the form and the content (the musical instrument and its music composition), is due to the old age of the musician. Jāmī, aware of his frail state, risks playing the lute unharmoniously. Subsequently, Jāmī refers to this disharmony when he describes himself as "مطرب" *the musician* of the lute (ln. 143), whose hand is too weak to play the lute.

The music is a suggestion of the order of the form, which releases the speech in rhythm and rhyme. By *the lute of speech*, I think Jāmī makes a reference to the musicality of his poetry that appears in the form. The form seems to suggest the inscription of the poem on paper that is admirable for its aesthetic qualities, and this quality appeals to the sense of sight. With the deterioration of the sense of sight, this aesthetic quality is reduced. Nevertheless, Jāmī believes that the harmony or the order (and thus beauty) of the poem (music) can also be revealed in the content (ideas), and beauty can be grasped not only through the sense of sight, but also using other senses, such as hearing and smell. A good example of this is when Salāmān, upon hearing Venus' music, instantly falls in love with her. Jāmī is worried that upon losing the harmony, order, and beauty in his poetry (as well as in his body), he could also lose his ability to formulate his dialectics on the One or his speech on the subject matter of love.

So how to restore/recondition the knowledge that triggers the event of love (for the One), if the physical beauty, order, and harmony are disturbed?

Old Age and Poetry of the Eye

In Chapter III, Poetry of the Eye, I examined Jāmī's philosophy of love and knowledge on the centrality of the sense of sight as the most esteemed sense of all. The three kinds of sight (active, passive and guided) were examined as major threads to inform the hostile/hospitable relationship of love and knowledge by magnifying this relationship in connection to the other senses, especially touch and hearing. If the senses are weakened, the (immediate, active, and simultaneous) attainment of knowledge (alongside love) is also challenged and thus the ability to gain knowledge is reduced by implication. Therefore, due to old age, Jāmī projects an increased irreconcilability of love, knowledge, and sight. Despite Jāmī's personal accounting of how old age has limited his senses, the reader will witness how Jāmī nullifies the damage done by and limitations of old age by elevating the vigor and vanity (even pleasure) of (composing) poetry using a new form of transformation [to a poem] he introduces. Here we see how Jāmī plays with the idea of a poem as a lute, with the body to be converted into something everlasting, such as an aroma/the soul.

In his reflective speech on old age, Jāmī evokes his five senses to have been influenced by his old age's "خللها" *defects/damages* (lns. 158-9). By way of listing all the damages, Jāmī indirectly infers the weaknesses that have influenced his body's functionality, and these weaknesses are evaluated on the basis of sense perceptivity. Jāmī refers to his sense of hearing when he writes that he has lost the strength to listen to the music of poetry and to judge its harmonious tone.

143	The lute is discordant and, in this life, old age has caused the hand of the musician tremulous.	عود ناساز است و کرده روزگار دست مطرب را ز پیری رعشه دار	۱۴۳
144	The melody of this lute is harmonious for as long as the musician's chanting is in accordance with the rules.	نغمه این عود موزون چون بود لحن این مطرب به قانون چون بود	۱۴۴

In order to play the lute "موزون" *harmoniously*, the musician must remain "به قانون" *in accordance with the rules* when playing it with his hand (ln. 143). However, the hands are too frail to play the lute. The sense of touch is also triggered when talking about the hands. Through this sense of touch Jāmī narrates a stronger reminiscence of his youth in the stage of his old age. With old age, Jāmī sees the quality of "این عود" *this lute/ his poetry* to have lost its "نغمه" *song/tune* for the musician cannot play it in order. Jāmī confronts this reality of the poetic disharmony and imperfections, and instead of blaming his old age, he uses this disharmony to remake poetry itself. In the following lines, Jāmī symbolically suggests that the lute has the capacity to transform and serve a different purpose.

145	It is time [for me] to happily break this lute, for a pleasant aroma I throw it into the fire.	وقت شد کین عود را خوش بشکنم بهر بوی خوش در آتش افکنم	۱۴۵
146	It would be immature to play the lute unpleasantly, it is pleasant [though] to set fire to the immature raw aloes wood.	خام باشد عود را نا خوش زدن خوش بود در عود خام آتش زدن	۱۴۶

Jāmī is inclined to transcend and transport the function of the lute from a musical instrument to its essential and first stage of existence, which is wood or perfumed-wood. That said, the very physical existence and the functionality of the lute suggests its breakability and transformation. Thus, this disposition of breakability also indicates its self-contained finitude. In this act of breaking the lute and burning it and creating something of a pleasing nature (perhaps first with regard to the old poet and then to his readers), Jāmī takes full agency of his own poetics. He establishes his (re)definition of a poem in the form as being infirm, inconsistent, and even imitable. To break a poem (the lute) apart is to transform/transport it's aesthetics for the sake of metaphysics. By throwing the lute in the fire, Jāmī transcends its physical form and transforms the lute into a pleasing fragrance.

> "Odours are able to penetrate through to the emotional layers in the subconscious realms of the human psyche." [513]

[513] See Cretien van Campen, *The Proust Effect: The Senses as Doorways to Lost Memories*, (2014), pp. 22.

By burning the lute for its smell, Jāmī suggests a creation to reckon eternity and persistence. In doing so, the sense of smell functions as a metaphor for the metaphysical impact of his poetry for its quality of perpetuity and existence beyond pure physicality.

Jāmī's act of burning the lute for its perfume conjures a state of 'timeliness' to his poetry. To quote Edward Said: "both in art and in our general ideas about the passage of human life there is assumed to be a general abiding *timeliness*, by which I mean that what is appropriate to early life is not appropriate for later stages, and vice versa."[514] Jāmī knows that in his old age "وقت شد" *it is time* to break the lute. This conscious and authorial choice of breaking the lute for not having the pleasant tone (to his ears) relates to Jāmī expressing this 'timeliness' akin to his philosophy of oneness and harmony (in the music of lute/poetry). However, for the sake of this oneness, he introduces a continual "renewing art in old age" in his poem.[515] Thus Jāmī's definitional position for *timelessness* is for the sake of a metamorphosis of his poetics into fragrance. The use of fire, once again, is to consume the corporeality of the body/aesthetics/the lute and to release the soul/substance/metaphysics/ poetry from its physical constraints. Jāmī uses the ordeal by fire as a *severe disciplining* element; when Salāmān and Absāl jump into the fire, only the intellectual (metaphysical) soul (Salāmān) is resurrected.

Next, in the poetry, Jāmī talks about his decayed teeth and not being able to chew his food. Even though there is no explicit relation to Jāmī's deteriorating sense of taste, yet he complains about lost sense of taste and pleasure (gaining with food) with a reference to his decaying teeth. Jāmī's following images are quite clear and straightforward about losing one's sense of pleasure in food due to the inabilities caused by old age.

149	There are gaps that have appeared in the row of my teeth, how am I able to chomp down on a morsel of food?	رخنه ها در رسته دندان فتاد کی توان بر خوردنی دندان نهاد	۱۴۹
150	The incisors have become blunt to cut, and so have the molars worn away to grind.	هم قواطع از بریدن کند گشت هم طواحن ز آرد کردن در گذشت	۱۵۰
151	My eating is now infant-like, my bread is chewed with other people's teeth.	خوردنم می باید اکنون طفل سان نان خاییده به دندان کسان	۱۵۱

[514] *On Late Style*. pp. 5.
[515] See *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing: Authorship in the Proximity of Death*. pp, 24-25.

Jāmī's description of his state as that of an "طفل سان" *infant-like* is an intriguing instance. He distinguishes this state of being an infant on the basis of the pleasure of food received from the others as a pleasure not fully experienced.

Jāmī's loss of eyesight is to the extent that he cannot even see with the help of his spectacles.

155	With my two eyes, no task can be done, even if the Frankish glasses have made them four.	۱۵۵ از دو چشم من نیاید هیچ کار از فرنگی شیشه ناکرده چهار

Though one might anticipate Jāmī to give an extended discussion on his loss of sight in relation to how sight plays a critical role in the matter of love and knowledge, he does not offer any further details beyond that his eyes are of little use even with the use of spectacles. His use of the Frankish glasses indicates the prosperity of Herat at the time, as well as the fact that he is now an old man losing his sight. Jāmī's description of his weaker eyes also speaks to his lack of experiences involving physical activities and the world perceivable through the sense of sight. He discusses how in old age, based on his observation of his current state, every (normal) activity conjures hostility, even forcing him to sit on the floor differently due to the pain in his feet.

156	The pain on my foot has reached my knees, therefore, my habit has been to sit on my knees.	۱۵۶ درد پا تا گشت همزانوی من شد پس زانو نشستن خوی من

That said, as discussed elsewhere, the symbolic use of sight is a matter of observation and not necessarily a reference to active seeing with the eyes.

In retrospect, throughout *Salāmān u Absāl*, Jāmī's portrayal of an older person has strong resonances and representations. The older figures are in order, the Sage, the King and the wet-nurse Absāl, even though the discussion on Absāl's (old) age is never explicit in the poem. Jāmī portrays old age to perpetrate the fear of losing power and the vision of one's self. Jāmī's allegory of the shepherd-man sets the stage for an explanation of such fear. Jāmī then relates to the Sage's fear of losing the King (for his desire of a having son) to a woman and to physical pleasures over intellectual one. The

Sage reasons with the King on the dichotomy of "جوان" *young* or *youthfulness* men vs. older men in the following line:

385	When you are old, no doubt she will find another lover a companion, for sure, stronger than you.	گر تو پیری یار دیگر بایدش همدمی از تو قویتر بایدش	۳۸۵

Though the Sage's speech is meant to condemn and degrade women, there is a strong implication that old age is an inevitable course of life that brings frailty and powerlessness and loss of a man's ability to command authority. Aligned with Jāmī's attempt, this is another form of nullifying old age by way of controlling the situation of powerlessness.

Jāmī's allegory of Solomon and Bilgīs is meant to expand the discussion on old age and to insert a man vs. woman's reaction to the state of old age. Solomon and Belgīs are sitting face to face, and each one is about to disclose to one another their "کشف راز" *innermost secret* (lns. 387-397). Solomon relates to having an eye on the person's hand whoever enters his chamber: " کو چه تحفه بهر من آرد به کف" *In order to see what gift he brings to me in his palms* (ln. 391). Belgīs then openly tells Solomon about her desire for "جوانی" *a younger man* "بودیم دمساز جان نا توان" *to become an intimate to my feeble body* (ln. 394). In reference to the main story, we know that Absāl is twenty years senior to Salāmān. That said, the situation of their partnership (in terms of ages) is reversed, and this age difference creates an added irony. By engaging in a passionate relationship with Absāl, Salāmān takes the risk of losing Absāl to death rather than to another man (ln. 624).

Jāmī regards old age as an inevitable part of life. Instead, he regards himself as lucky enough to live long enough to experience *the ancient world* and inscribe it in "نظم" *poetry*. For Jāmī, what is most important is to make sense of the life one has lived, while also welcoming and making sense of what old age offers. In old age, Jāmī observes that his body has become a harp, yet he still wishes to play the lute (to compose poetry as he has throughout his lifetime), even if he is no longer able to guide

his hands to form the sound of a lute (lns. 139, 142). This poet's relationship with his old age body gives rise to the poetry of the eye.

In my discussion of poetry of the eye, I examined Jāmī's discussion of the physical world through the sense of sight, and this sight is defined as either passive, active, or guided. In the interplay of these three types of sight, love and knowledge are experienced, and it is in this situation that poetry happens. One realizes that the three kinds of sights are indistinguishable when examining how Jāmī describes the physical world in old age. However, Jāmī suggests that it does not mean that he must stop writing poetry. Instead, he makes use of (and remembers) all the happenings of the past and writes about them anew. The only type of sight measured here is against one's experiences of the past or the present. It is the sight that has a metaphysical purpose. In other words, it is the experiences of a life lived up to old age that can be used to translate the poetry of eye into a new stage, the poetics of vision, with a more metaphysical intention. Jāmī treats old age as a time and the right moment to craft his art of poetry for conveying greater meaning in the poem, thus *Salāmān u Absāl* is a "celebration of artistic creativity in old age."[516] And this greater meaning is embedded in Jāmī's main theme on the integration and union of body and soul (in the physical world) that ultimately validates his dialectics on the One, through poetry, even in old age. Therefore, the poet Jāmī re-configures his (very old age's) authorial voice to re-define the purpose of poetry/the lute/his old body on the integration through his desire (for poetry) to take on a distinct content that goes beyond mere physical importance. That said, even if death and dying is a concern, in Jāmī's view it is only the physical form that inevitably perishes.

154	Soon shall I be at rest from tribulation, I fall next to my mother in an intoxicating sleep.	۱۵۴ زود باشد کآرمیده ز اضطراب در کنار مادر افتم مست خواب

[516] See *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing: Authorship in the Proximity of Death*. pp. 259-325

His wistful tone in the statement, "*Soon shall I be at rest,*" is an event of the poet's sentiment, but in doing so he elevates the eternal survival of his speech/poetry in contrast to the physical (mortal) death of his body.

Jāmī's Poetics of Aging

In Chapter IV, on the Poetics of Vision, I examined Jāmī's metaphysics of vision and explained his Neoplatonic philosophy that is revealed in *Salāmān u Absāl*. In this section, I examine Jāmī's thinking about aging and how he writes about aging in a way that explains his poetry from a metaphysical point of view and gives his work of poetics a transcendental objective, which is to say that this thinking entails an immortal vision of oneself as the poet. Jāmī elaborates on this process of immortalization, to mean everlasting and undying, as in the act of creating poetry by contemplating the importance of the vision of love, the vision of beauty, and the vision of vision through his poem. In doing so, he makes his heart the abode of transcendence as a solution to the limiting effect of old age on physical experiences and pleasure. Jāmī uses aging as a "literary alert" on the subject matter of love, rather than treating aging or old age as a subject matter. Through his poetry, Jāmī is able "to define the limits of [his] physical experience and to 'rescue' [his] essence from the physical world."[517] He, therefore, esteems the subject matter of love as a phenomenon and regards the event of love as being above all else, for it is love that promises immortality.

Jāmī's interest in metaphysics in writing this love poem reflects his state of thinking about the origin of love and persistence of such love in old age. For example, as discussed in previous chapter, Salāmān's birth exemplifies a metaphysical phenomenon, while the appearance of Venus as the celestial beauty (to transcend Salāmān's physical love for intellectual pleasure) is the vision of an immortal love. Jāmī takes a mere subjective approach to the vision of immortal love, which is his

[517] See *The Long Life*, pp. 178.

contemplation on aging. For Jāmī, this "فکر" *contemplation* means receiving the vision (of the Divine) in one's heart, which is the abode of Divine manifestation.

176	Who is the Beloved? It is He whose abode is [in] the hearts, all of the souls are the treasury of His secret.	کیست دلدار آن که دلها دار اوست جمله جانها مخزن اسرار اوست	۱۷۶
177	He knows of His own abode, you better keep His abode [the heart] vacant.	دارد او از خانه خود آگهی به که داری خانه او را تهی	۱۷۷
178	So when He sees that stranger far from Him, He will make that place of His manifestation.	تا چو بیند دور از او بیگانه را جلوه گاه خود کند آن خانه را	۱۷۸
179	Whoever is a participant in this knowledge, how could any other meaning than this be agreeable? …	هر که را باشد ز دانش بهره مند غیر ازین معنی کجا افتد پسند …	۱۷۹
181	The commemoration of them, in truth is His commemoration, in contemplating their attributes is to contemplate Him.	ذکر ایشان در حقیقت ذکر اوست فکر در اوصاف ایشان فکر اوست	۱۸۱

Jāmī's focus of spiritual contemplation and desire is the heart, where "جلوه گاه" *God's manifestation* is received (ln. 178). Even if the purpose of his speech is to "ذکر" *mention/recall* the (earthly) kings or even to "فکر" *contemplate* "اوصاف ایشان" *their attributes* and "مدحت شاه" *praise the King*, the heart must remain empty for Divine manifestation (ln. 177). It is "معنی" *the meaning* in the heart that Jāmī contemplates, recognizing that he "بهره مند" *has benefited* from this "دانش" *knowledge* (ln. 179). In the world of sense perception, the hostility of love, knowledge, and sight is inevitable. In the realm of intellect, which is accessible by crossing the in-between realm of imagination, Jāmī portrays the illuminated vision on an intellectual level. In contrast to these realms, the heart is the domain of contemplation of Divine manifestation. The domain of the heart is the only hospitable place for Divine manifestation (ln. 179). And the main deriving force for and the subject of this contemplation is love, which is cultivated by individuals in their hearts (ln. 177). But where does aging fit in the dialectics on the heart?

Jāmī's poetics of aging is a reference to his act of writing his dialects on the One in old age by way of contemplating the heart as an abode for love. In the physical world, love is portrayed as the temptation of a physical desire (for a physical beauty) and as a feeling that Salāmān and Absāl cannot resist. Nonetheless, it is this "association of love with physical desire [that] has in any case been

elevated into a vision [on the intellectual level] of the attainment of immortality."[518] Salāmān is to be united with the celestial beauty, Venus, as a result of experiencing Absāl's mortal love. It is in this love for the "حسن باقی" *immortal/eternal beauty* and desire for "عیش باقی" *immortal/eternal pleasure* that Salāmān achieves his union with Venus. In the same manner, Jāmī makes his worldly experiences and interactions an important stage for him to achieve self-unity or oneness through contemplation. Jāmī's own experience of aging results in a narrative of desire for immortality, and love is the guiding principle in this desire. In the *Symposium*, Diotima informs Socrates (in connection to aging and mortality) about the human desire for immortality through love.

> "For among animals the principle is the same as with us, and mortal nature seeks so far as possible to live and be immortal. And this is possible in one way only: by reproduction, because it always leaves behind a new young one in place of the old…And in that way everything mortal is preserved, not, like the divine, by always being the same in every way, but because what is departing and aging leaves behind something new, something such as it had been…because it is for the sake of [desire of] immortality that everything shows this zeal, which is Love".[519]

As discussed earlier, Salāmān's birth is represented as a desire for a successor given that the King realizes he is aging. This realization of aging causes the King "در حال خویش اندیشه" *to think of* [about] *his own state* (ln. 300). This 'reproduction' is procured by the Sage's mediation with his intellect as a vision of immortality, a son, who will become the next King. Salāmān's birth is not 'like the divine' but 'the same in every way.'

403	They royal crown was elevated through his essence/intellect,[520] the royal throne triumphed because of his fortune.	تاج شد از گوهر او سر بلند تخت شد از بخت او فیروزمند	۴۰۳
	…	…	
407	His body and stature free from any calamity, from the sky his name descended as Salāmān.	سالم از آفت تن واندام او ز اسمان آمد سلامان نام او	۴۰۷

[518] Ibid. pp. 25.
[519] *Symposium*, 207c9-208b6.Nehamas, A., and P. Woodruff, trans. 1989. Plato: Symposium, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing.
[520] See Steingass, pp. 1106.

Jāmī describes Salāmān's virtuous birth, in essence, as well as his name to have descended from the heavens. The King's thinking has an immortal disposition and the outcome of that thinking (the birth of Salāmān) entails immortality. Salāmān is a creation based on the King's idea/desire for immortality, and the son is to rule the kingdom of ancient Greece after the King dies. The King is knowledgeable about his state of mortality: "شه شبی در حال خویش اندیشه کرد" *one night the King thought of his own state* (ln. 300). Salāmān is the 'something new', and the King is to transcend his finitude with the birth of Salāmān. In that way, Salāmān is a 'desire for immortality.'

Remarkably, Jāmī writes the poem of *Salāmān u Absāl* as his new creation for the sake of his "desire for immortality." The aging poet, Jāmī also wishes to transcend his physical finitude through the composition of *Salāmān u Absāl,* which he regards as a Neoplatonic emanative vision of love. The poem becomes the "something new" with the zeal of love both as a story as well as a token of the poet's love for his poetry. The love of the One inspires Jāmī to write the story of Salāmān and Absāl, yet Jāmī only gives Salāmān the reward of transcendence subsequent to the experience of his intense physical love for Absāl. In order to establish a progression (a transcendental one) from the physical world to acquiring the knowledge of the unknown, love (through seeing/sight) becomes an important triggering event. This phenomenon of progression and development, between the physical and the metaphysical, is crucial when Jāmī once again refers to his own aging.

In the midst of this process of thinking about aging, the subject matter of love becomes an essential force of unity and integration. And what is more poignant at Jāmī's age than to write about aging and the matter of love. Though Jāmī may not be the first poet to discuss his old age and finitude in this manner, he might be the first to identify old age as a time for poetic innovation. Thus, I suggest that the risk he takes in telling the shocking narrative of Salāmān and Absāl is negated by the knowledge and the wisdom shared in the poem in the discussion of old age and sense perception, which reflects the maturing of the intellect, imagination, and the poetics of vision (the heart).

Aging and the Poetics of Vision

In the previous section, I discussed Jāmī's description of old age as a physical process in which he experiences weakness and finitude. I also showed how Jāmī focuses instead on the mental progression of understanding the world beyond its physical and aesthetic qualities. Jāmī negotiates a more hospitable attainment of love, knowledge, and vision. In other words, Jāmī introduces a new direction to one's thinking, which is about gaining an intellectual understanding of the world beyond its physicality. Aging is also intellectualized as a progression, with Jāmī emphasizing the importance of love as a guide (like a vision) and as the force of reconciliation or integration despite old age and finitude. In this section, I will discuss how Jāmī defines aging as an intellectual process in relation to his poetics of vision.

In harmonizing or bringing hospitality between the physical world and the experiences involved with physical engagement and the frailty of old age, Jāmī transcends the limitedness of his physical experiences in the realm of imagination, by formulating his dialectics on the One in the heart through contemplation. The role of the heart is the abode of Divine manifestation. Imagination is the bridging entity between the spiritual and the corporeal, and enables Jāmī to see what is otherwise not seeable with his physical eyes. In order to activate this imagination, Jāmī regards his aging as a progression that entails thinking (about the Divine), while his heart becomes the main entity for his dialectics on the One. In the transference between the heart and the imagination, Jāmī is able to formulate his poetics of vision on the concept of Divine beauty and love in a nuanced way that still preserve Jāmī's task as a poet-dialectician, even in old age.

Similar to "Plato's view of ageing as a progression,"[521] I find Jāmī's treatment of aging as a stage "to establish thinking about the 'declining' years of life as the best position—actual and

[521] See *The Long Life*. pp. 41.

rhetorical, experiential and imagined—from which to do philosophy."[522] Jāmī accepts that aging impacts the physical well-being of his body, yet he also reflects more or less philosophically on his state of becoming. It is this awareness of becoming that requires philosophical growth. This philosophy entails thinking, which Jāmī clearly inserts through his poetry, particularly in the form of a mathnavī poem. As a result of this thinking, there is an awakening of the inner perceptivity, or "the imaginal perception of God's self-disclosure,"[523] that is beyond human sense perception of the physical manifestation of the Divine. In this progression of thinking, Jāmī activates his imagination.

183	In order to praise Him in this ancient palace, it is necessary for it [this praise] to be done in a vast open space.	۱۸۳	لیک مدحش را درین دیرینه کاخ بود دربایست میدان فراخ
184	I will make a vast space from this mathnavī I will give a new scheme in praising Him.	۱۸۴	می کنم میدان آن زین مثنوی می دهم آیین مدحش را نوی
185	Even though I am capable of making [several] mathnavīs, and to occupy myself with the likes of them.	۱۸۵	و ر نه بودم مثنویها ساخته خاطر از امثالشان پرداخته

Jāmī's promise to write a mathnavī poem about praising the Divine seems to serve as a way of activating his imagination. It is in this activation of his imagination that Jāmī refines his poetics—by giving a more refined definition to the form of a mathnavī poem as "میدان فراخ" *a vast open space* to contain His praise. Jāmī establishes a worldly disposition of the mathnavī as *a vast open space* in juxtaposition with the physical world, which he describes as an "دیرینه کاخ" *ancient palace*. The content of a mathnavī is given a metaphysical quality for its praise of the Divine, and it is fair to say that Jāmī defines the mathnavī as a space to integrate the qualities of both the physical (worldly creation) and the metaphysical ("مدحش" *His praise*). Subsequently, Jāmī uses the form of a mathnavī not just as a *vast open space* to fill in, but also to liberate by praising Him, and thus himself, as the creator of the mathnavī. Therefore, I think, Jāmī's definition and treatment of a mathnavī explains his thoughts about physical aging and his poetics of vision on a metaphysical level.

[522] *The Long Life*, pp. 35.
[523] William Chittick. *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn al-ʿArabī and the Problem of Religious Diversity*, (1994). pp. 77.

Jāmī diligently professes that he could easily be busy in "مثنویها ساخته" *the making of* [several] *mathnavīs* to praise Him, or in other words to fill in the space of the mathnavīs to praise Him. However, he is done "خاطر از امثالشان" *with the likes of them*, by which I think he means that he does not intend to imitate the making of mathnavīs for the mere act of writing mathnavī (ln. 185). Instead, he intends to giving *His praise* something "نوی" *new/fresh/novel* (ln 184). Jāmī's poetics of vision is expressed in this act of giving freshness, newness, or novelty to *His praise*. This image of newness is a derivative of a similar image created when Jāmī wished to burn the lute in the fire for its nuanced smell. This new creation is due to the self-realization of aging, which is expressed in Jāmī's descriptions of living in "دیر کهن" *the ancient abode* (ln. 139) or in this "دیرینه کاخ" *ancient palace* (ln. 183), where he has become into an old poet.

187	So when there is a chance for a ceremonial occasion, I shall fall into His remembrance [*dhikr*].	تا چو تقریبی شود انگیخته باشم اندر ذکر او آویخته	۱۸۷
188	In praising Him I shall form elegant/pure speech, in praying Him, I shall lament and weep.	درثنایش نغز گفتاری کنم در دعایش ناله و زاری کنم	۱۸۸

Nonetheless, this new creation, physically created and existent in the physical world, is not necessarily a work of sense perception. Jāmī's new creation in his mathnavī, in which he elaborates/expresses the vision of the Divine through the "ذکر" *remembrance* of Divine, is his dialectics on the One. This moment of *remembrance* of the Divine is the main triggering event of (otherworldly) love that inspires the writing. This inspiration can be explained in juxtaposition to active seeing (via eyes) of the beautiful face of the beloved that inspires love for Divine beauty and union with Him. In this particular case, the *dhikr* of the Divine in done in one's mind, as Jāmī has experienced weaker eyesight with old age. Therefore, the phenomenon of *remembrance* is given an internal/inner attribute. Even though the concept of "ذکر" *remembrance* has a Sufi conceptualization and practice, which corresponds to "the method of "تخیل" *imagining*,"[524] nonetheless, Jāmī enriches the experience of this

[524] ʿAbd-al-Ḡafur Lāri, *Takmela-ye Ḥavāši-ye Nafaḥāt al-ons*, ed. Bašir Heravi, Kabul, (1964). pp. 28.

new creation by bringing a dialectical/philosophical speech. In other words, in his mathnavī, Jāmī does not just retain a mystical *dhikr* but also presents his dialectics that appears as an "ثنا" *eulogium* as well as "نغز گفتاری" *pure/elegant speech* which are expressed in the forms of "دعا" *invocation* and " ناله و زاری" *lament and weep* respectively (ln. 188).

That being said, there are two trajectories that Jāmī implies in the creation of this (new) poetics (mathnavī). First there is the *remembrance* that is expressed inwardly, and second there is the action of physically writing the poetry. The aging-poet Jāmī (a Sufi dialectician and poet) elevates the outcome of this speech as a dialectical speech by integrating *remembrance* with the act of writing, that way his poetics of the vision (of the Divine) becomes effective in a written form. The outcome of this poetics is that Jāmī in his imagination "corporealizes the spiritual things known (memorized) in the heart by giving them shape and form."[525] For Jāmī, the main sustenance of this shape and form is love.

In examining Jāmī approach to aging and poetics of vision, there are other two trajectories to consider in order to elaborate on his discussion of the heart. First is Jāmī's refinement of his dialectics on the One (in aging) by the contemplation of God in his heart. In doing so, Jāmī formulates the importance of imagination and the imaginal realm, as an intermediary realm between the corporeal and the spiritual, to reconcile his state of becoming old and yet to express his love for Divine.[526] Jāmī confesses that there is no Divine presence in his heart. By employing his imagination to imagine the Divine, Jāmī contemplates His presence through his speech.

189	Since I don't have the hem of closeness to Him, I must sit in conversation with Him.	۱۸۹ چون ندارم دامن قربی به دست بایدم در گفت و گوی او نشست

[525] *Imaginal Worlds*. pp. 72.
[526] *Imaginal Worlds*, pp. 71-72.

The absence of integration and closeness is at issue here. Jāmī's "گفت و گوی" *conversation* within himself serves to replace the hem of closeness, and this *conversation* for Jāmī constitutes "His self-disclosure" in the heart by way of his imagination.[527]

> "Perfect knowledge demands knowing God through reason and seeing Him through imagination. The true nature of God's incomparability and similarity cannot be grasped unless both faculties are employed at once."[528]

The second trajectory is that through this inward thinking (contemplation), Jāmī makes something new despite the event of aging. Jāmī's composition of the mathnavī is to articulate his old age message on the metaphysical importance of God's existence through the act of newness that entails progression through his thinking and creation.

Jāmī portrays the intellectual feature of aging as a state of reasoning and contemplation and a time for a new creation or newness. For example, by breaking the lute, Jāmī introduces a new creation, which in Sufi context would be called "نظریه آفرینش نو" *a thought on the creation of the new*.[529] This metaphysical thought on "خلق جدید=آفرینش نو" *creating new* = *new creation* goes back to Jāmī's theosophical knowledge inspired by Ebn al-'Arabī teachings.

> Based on Ebn al- 'Arabī's teachings, the world is in a constant phase of changing, in other words, the world is always in the process of creation of the new. It means the external world from every appearing aspect goes into extinct, and in there whenever one thing dies, the other (similar to that) on the face of existence emerges. From the point of view of the Great Shaikh (Ebn al-'Arabī) the created and creation, and the formation of the world from its inexistence (or nothingness) and originality is not set in a fixed time, because creation is about the eternal manifestation and in connection with the Divine and for the sake of His manifestation and

[527] Ibid. pp. 73, 70.
[528] Ibid. pp. 72.
[529] Mobaleg, 276.

existence in all things created, in all variants (colors) that cannot (even) be numbered or counted.[530]

Jāmī explains this metaphysical creating *new/newness* using the imagination through Salāmān, whose intellect upon seeing the beauty of Venus is illuminated. Salāmān, as a living being and soul experiences death (Absāl). However, he experiences a metaphysical change in the presence of Venus, and that change is a notion of newness. But how does Jāmī associate this "آفرینش نو" *new creation* with his own aging and imagination?

Jāmī "care[s] to keep old age under control, even as he makes use of it rhetorically."[531] By breaking the "خام" *immature* lute apart, he performs an act of distorting aesthetics, which equates to the inconsistency of the physical body/form/poetry (of the eye) for the sake of metaphysics. As a result, the functionality of the lute (the poem/the body) must be also transformed, and the poetics becomes a work of intellectual pursuit in the process, which serves *Reason and Faith*.

147	It is better if this unripen lute to become a scattered fragrance, from it, Reason and Faith will become nicely perfumed.	بو که عطر افشان شود این عود خام عقل و دین را زان شود خوشبو مشام	۱۴۷
148	It is better to fortify Reason and Faith, because this body faces weakening.	عقل و دین را تقویت دادن به است زانکه این تن روی در سستی نه است	۱۴۸

This sublimation of bodily existence into Reason and Faith corresponds to the kind of development and progression that Jāmī describes in his poetics of vision. With the work of imagination, as the isthmus between the physical and spiritual realms, Jāmī establishes his poetics of aging (as of thinking) to serve as the realm between the purely physical existence of a speech (in form) and non-existence. Jāmī transforms the functionality of his poetry (the lute) when it becomes a non-physical entity of fragrance through being burned in the fire. The fragrance spreads in the air. The scent is experienced through the sense of smell. Unlike the sense of sight, the visual, or touch, the smell becomes a memory similar to the unseen as a vision, and only the intellect and faith can benefit from it.

[530] Mobleg, 276-77, 278.
[531] *The Long Life*, pp. 33.

The trajectory of this metaphysical transformation of poetics can be explained by focusing on Jāmī's subjective desire for this act. First, on the diction of "خوش" *pleasant/happy/agreeing*, which is used four times, a sense of Aristotelian happiness (*eudaimonia*) can be traced to Jāmī's state of mind.[532] In the light of this Aristotelian notion of happiness, Jāmī experiences happiness in the act of transformation. In Jāmī's case, this self-reflexive happiness is achieved not by conforming to the conventional form of a poem, but by transcending it. And this transformation can only be accomplished by way of directing aging into thinking and regarding one's existence beyond mere physicality. It is in this act that we see how rather than being subjectively sentimental about his old age and aging, Jāmī uses his poetry for an objective view to relate to the One. Jāmī's main interest and reason for composing the poem of *Salāmān u Absāl* is for the "دلدار" *the Beloved* (ln. 175).

186	In sum, the composition of this book is for Him, [it is] the manifested signs of His compassion and rage/chastisement. …	خاصه نظم این کتاب از بهر اوست مظهر آیات لطف وقهر اوست …	۱۸۶

Jāmī juxtaposes his continual act of writing "نظم" *poetry/lyric* with his aging as a means to be thinking about the world that exists and is going to exist beyond his physical existence. Jāmī implies that his poetry is not written in vacuum but with a vision that the poem must survive his mortality and continue to convey what is metaphysically the very essence of the creation in the poem, by which he means the idea and the subject matter that give birth to the poem in the first place. Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* has a message that is complex due to both the subject matter of an unconventional passionate love and because this passionate love results in the integration of mystical knowledge and philosophy. It is in this art of integration that Jāmī's voice of aging and poetics of vision is anchored.

In the epilogue of *Salāmān u Absāl,* Jāmī conveys a reconciliation with and ratification of "his lifelong devotion" "to the art" of his poetry.

[532] I follow Hellen Small's discussion on defining *Eudaimonia* to convey the meaning of happiness, see "On Seeing the End" in *The Long Life*. pp. 53-88.

1120	Jāmī, you, who have rolled up the carpet of life, for how long will you remain with your thoughts on poetry. …	جامی ای کرده بساط عمر طی در خیال شعر بودن تا به کی ...	۱۱۲۰
1121	Your hair has turned white by [all this] writing in black, your face (has turned) white from this hopeless art.	موی تو شد در سیه کاری سفید رو سفیدی زین هنر کم دار امید	۱۱۲۲

Jāmī's self-reconciliatory message in his poetry projects the growth and mortality of Jāmī as a human being. Once poetry is written down, time moves on, and the young poet ultimately becomes old. However, despite the poet's old age, his poetry matures in remembrance (or reminiscence) of that one thing that inspires creation and existence, that one thing that never ages or expires, but grows more beautiful and real over time— love. Jāmī's aging and the poetics of vision discusses this metaphysics of love, which is what gave birth to this poem.

Conclusions

Based on my analysis of Jāmī's literary use of and references to old age, I have come to understand that Jāmī keeps his role of a dialectician by making a distinction between old age and aging. Jāmī defines old age (similar to poetry of the eye) in relation to the knowledge perceived via sense perception that is weakened by the impairments of old age. In this state of being old, Jāmī seeks to refine at least one sense (such as the sense of smell) in order to experience the physical world. In contrast, Jāmī thinks of aging and poetics of aging as a form of progression (as of becoming aware of oneself) in relation to the content and the meaning of a poem, and thus analogous to the poetics of vision on a more metaphysical level. In other words, old age is a time in life that is measured against the worldly experiences of the body and its finitude versus aging, which is a measure of progression in thinking that situates the heart as the seeing eye in acquiring knowledge through the intellect and the imagination. And the main task of an aging poet-dialectician is his silent contemplation of the One in the heart.

As a keen reader of Jāmī's poem, I have tried in this chapter to understand Jāmī's intentional references on his limits as a human being in the physical world and how he makes sense of his aging

in the poem. In doing so, I argued that Jāmī transcends his limits by re-defining poetry as a thinking about poetry in a more philosophical way. A good example of such philosophical perspective and change is, indeed, his unusual *mathnavī of Salāmān u Absāl*, which entails an integration of intense physical love with Divine love. Jāmī's choice of the *mathnavī* form for the sake of its form for a narrative, as well as for its didactical content serves the purpose of his poetry for a Neoplatonic vision of Divine—even if this *mathnavī* form is in imitation of his predecessor. Jāmī's "قصه" *story* has a "صورت" *form* or *face* or *surface* that is complete, yet its content, which entails "معنی" *the meaning*, is accessible to "خرده بینان" *the acute-observers* (or the intellects) by way of interpretation (lns. 1075). Jāmī's own interpretation of the story based on his pedagogical method inspired by Neoplatonic and mystical ideas in his penultimate chapter of *Salāmān u Absāl* is one way to understand the *mathnavī of Salāmān u Absāl*. That said, according to Jāmī, the form and the meaning are indivisible, and the form can be complete, while the meaning can be re-interpreted.

Jāmī's use of the analogy of the lute for its corporeal and tangible existence, like the form a poem, serves as the speech or the music of a poem, which is its aesthetic accent. Therefore, to transform the lute into a harp in old age is analogous to think about the intellectual importance of a poem. There is no sense of remaining silent or "emptiness inward" or "sense of abandonment" in Jāmī's language when he suggests his body is a harp. Even the act of breaking the lute is analogous to the subjective and objective aspects of late style work in the breaking of the normal or conventional. In the form of a poem, Jāmī suggests the everlasting fragrance of the lute enlightens the mind.

Therefore, it is fair to think that Jāmī's poetry of the eye and poetics of vision are not limited only to the theoretical. Jāmī's insertion of his own personal experiences on the matter of aging adds yet another complexity to the poem. Jāmī's inclusion of this autobiographical element throughout the poem intrigues us, and encourages us to understand his purpose in narrating the story of Salāmān and Absāl. In addition, his message on his own aging conveys that Jāmī wishes to be more philosophically

invested in poetry and/or that poetry must serve a purpose beyond its form and images. In juxtaposition with the peculiarities of this narrative of Salāmān and Absāl, which deals with questions of mortality and immortality, Jāmī's discussion of his own old age works to minimize the danger that the story will become just about an uncelebrated love theme and instead focuses the reader's attention on the embedded vision of the Divine. Whether studied in light of Sufi literary studies, religious studies, or just as a simple literary trope, Jāmī's literary use of old age and frailty constitutes his views on the impermanence of the body (form of a poem) and the eternity of the soul (the content of a poem). He uses his own aging in order to convey the inevitable deterioration of the human body and contrast it with the immortality of the soul. And what better way to illustrate this point than through the retelling of the story of Salāmān and Absāl, in which Salāmān (with his birth and growth) represents the rational soul and Absāl the mortal body (who experiences frailty and finitude).

At the heart of the *mathnavī of Salāmān u Absāl*, Jāmī's dialectical speech honors the integrated love of humans and the One. His poetry serves the purpose of art in disclosing the reality of the fundamental desire of humans to be remembered, if not to become immortal through miracles. Jāmī starts the *mathnavī* with these lines: *In the memory of love, the memory of God revives*. Despite the universal reality of human aging, with its decay and fragility, what is remembered is love. Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* regards the dialectics on the One to be equal to the dialectics on love. Through poetry, Jāmī proves that the One is not far from our existence, since love inspires knowledge of the physical world in connection with the vision of Divine. Although this love can vary from the most convoluted of loves (hostile), such as that of Absāl's love for Salāmān, or be a growing torturous love, such as Salāmān's love for the deceased Absāl, love still remains hospitable to a *new creation* (such as Venus) for any form of love demands knowledge and sight. Jāmī's *Salāmān u Absāl* recaptures the metaphysical importance (through poetics) of the kind of love that is easily dismissed based on socially constructed norms and

morality, yet if one examines its philosophical and mystical complexity, it leads us to question what sort of love takes us on such an exciting journey that integrates physical and ethereal beings.

Jāmī's emphasis on this dichotomy of the eye and vision, body and soul, mortal and immortal, and external and internal is for the sake of seeking the one hospitable arena where the union/unity can be sought. Whether it is the hostile or hospitable, in this act of oscillation (through the work of imagination and intellect) between these dichotomies, Jāmī refines his dialectics on the One as a union and integration of opposites. If the prime time of life is about the aesthetics of bodily strength and beauty, in old age this aesthetic weakens. For one to reconcile with this aging state, contemplation in the heart becomes the only hospitable state between love and knowledge of the Divine. Due to the consequences of aging, Jāmī understands that his senses have declined, and his intellect and imagination are no longer as sharp. Therefore, in order to attain love and knowledge, Jāmī suggests another mode of fulfilment. This fulfilment is not through conventional learning nor is it acquired through vocalizing one's praise for the One, but instead it is sought by isolating oneself and silently affirming one's love for the One in the heart. Does not Jāmī himself say "گر مفصل بایدت فکری بکن" *if you wish for details, think for yourself* (1118)? The poet-dialectician Jāmī reveals the meaning of life in explaining how the physical world and the world of immateriality are integrated and relevant in his discussions on poetry of the eye and the poetics of vision. In doing so, he makes the unconventional and complex story of Salāmān and Absāl relevant. With any poet's task, it is the substance of his or her thinking and experience that goes into the making of a poem. It is the poet's thinking and experience that gives the reader a chance to interpret life for one's own sake, whether may it be in youth or in old age. Poetry captures a progression of the poet's thinking and a good reader can discover and grasp this progression. Even if "Jāmī embraced the whole of the Persianate literary tradition as it

was known in his time,"[533] his poetry echoes the thought of a person interested in becoming a philosopher in old age, and who like Ibn Sīnā differentiates between the body as the material and the soul/the intellect as an immaterial substance in a beautifully articulated love poem. Last but not least, as we have discussed throughout this thesis, this narrative poem of *Salāmān u Absāl*, which is a poem of about 1,130 lines, is a highly intellectual poem. It is important to reflect on this point that without knowledge of the philosophical tradition (going back to the first Islamic emanationists) used in the making of this poem, the poem would eventually end up being neglected. It is interesting to challenge this point: how is it that a poet as accomplished in old age as Jāmī historizes the character of a ruler as conflicted as Yaʿqūb in this highly intellectual poem. Perhaps it is time in our literary studies that we turn our attention to the poem itself rather than to the patron who received the poem.

[533] Paul Losensky. *Welcoming Fighānī*. pp. 170.

Bibliography

Printed Editions of Primary Sources (in the Persian Language)

ʿAyyūqī, *Varqa o Golšāh*, ed. D. Ṣafā, Tehran 1343 Š. /1964.

Bākarzi, Abd-al-Wāseʿ Neẓāmi. *Maqāmāt-e Jāmī,* ed. Najib Māyel-Heravi, Tehran, 1992.

Dīvān-i Jāmī. Vasitat al-ʿIqd in Divan, II. Edited by Aʿlā-Khān Afṣaḥzād. 2 vols. Zabān va Adabiyāt-i Fārsī, no. 14. Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1378/1999.

Gorgāni, Fakr al-Din Asʿad. *Vis o Rāmin*. Editions: Ed. W. Nassau Lees, Calcutta, 1865.

Ibn Sīnā, Abu Ali. *Dānishnāmah-i ʻalāʾī, Yā Ḥikmat-i Būʾ Alī*. Edited by Aḥmad Khurāsānī. *Shirkat-i Maṭbūʻāt*. Ṭihrān, 1936. Print.

---. *Tarjumah va sharh-I isharat a tanbihat-I Ibn Sina*. Persian translation by Ḥasan Malikshahī. Tehran, 1984.

Jāmī, Nūr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. "Maṯnawi Salāmān u Absal" in *Haft Aurang*. Edited by Aʿlā-Khān Afṣaḥzād, Ẓahir Aḥrārī, Jabilqā Dād ʿAlīshah, Aṣghar Jānfidah, and Ḥusain Aḥmad Tarbiyat. 1st vol. Mīrās-i Maktūb, no. 15. Zabān va Adabiyāt-i Fārsī, no. 58. Tehran: Mīrās- i Maktūb 1376–78/1997–99.

Jāmī, Nūr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. *Haft Aurang*. Edited by Aʿlā- Khān Afṣaḥzād, Ẓahir Aḥrārī, Jabilqā Dād ʿAlīshah, Aṣghar Jānfidah, and Ḥusain Aḥmad Tarbiyat. 2 vols. Mīrās-i Maktūb, no. 15. Zabān va Adabiyāt-i Fārsī, no. 58. Tehran: Mīrās- i Maktūb 1376–78/1997–99.

---. *Bahārestān,* Kabul, 2006.

Kāšefi, Fakr-al-Din ʿAli b. Ḥoseyn Ṣafi. *Rašaḥāt-e ʿeyn al-ḥayāt*, ed. ʿAli-Aṣḡar Moʿiniyān, 2 vols., Tehran, 1977.

Kadkanī, Shafīʻī. *Manṭiq Al-ṭayr*. Print 1.; Chāp-i 1. ed. Tihrān: Intishārāt-i Sukhan, 2004. Print.

Lāri, Abd-al-Ḡafur. *Takmela-ye ḥawāši-e Nafaḥāt al-ons: šarḥ-e ḥāl-e Mawlānā Jāmī*, ed. ʿAli-Aṣḡar Bašir-Heravi, Kabul, 1964.

Lawāyeḥ, in *Majmuʿa-ye Monlā Jāmi*, Istanbul, 1309 A.

Lawāmeʿ, in *Majmuʿa-ye Monlā Jāmi*, Istanbul, 1309 A.H. repr. in *Seh resāla dar taṣawwof* with introduction by Iraj Afšār, Tehran, 1981.

Māyel-Heravi, Najib. *Sheyḵ ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān Jāmī*. Tehran, 1998.

Maḥjub, Moḥammad-Jaʿfar. "*Wāmeq o ʿAḏrā*-ye ʿOnṣori," *Sokḵān* 18, 1968.

Majmuʿa-ye Monlā Jāmi, Istanbul, 1309 A.H. in *Seh resāla dar taṣawwof* with an introduction by Iraj Afšār, Tehran, 1981.

Manūchihr, Murtaẓavī. *Maktab-i Ḥāfiẓ: Yā Muqaddamah Bar Ḥāfiẓ'shināsī*. Tihrān: Kitābkhānah-i 'Ibn Sīnā, 1965. Print.

Mobaleq, Mohmmad Esma'il. *ERfani-e Jami*. Kabul, 1392/2013.

Navāʾi, ʿAlišir. *Ḵamsat al-motaḥayyirin*, trans. (from Chaghatay into Persian) Moḥammad Naḵjavān, ed. Mehdi Farhāni-Monfared, *Nāma-ye Farhangestān*, supplement 12, 2002.

Neẓāmi Bāḵarzi, ʿAbd-al-Wāse. *Maqāmāt-e Jāmi: Gūshahā-yi az tārīkh-i farhangī va ijtimāʿī-yi Khurāsān dar ʿaṣr-i Taimūriyān*. Edited by Najīb Māyil Haravī. Tehran: Nashri Nay, 1371/1992.

Niẓāmī Ganjavī. *Kulliyāt-i Khamsa-i Ḥakīm Niẓāmī Ganjavī*. "Makhzan al-asrār", "Khusrau va Shīrīn", "Lailā va Majnūn", 'Haft paikar", "Iskandar-nāma". Tehran: Muʾassasa-i Āmīr Kabīr, 1351/1972.

Razi, Fakhraddin. *Kitab al-Mobahith al-Mashriqiya*. Qum, 1964.

Sa'dī, Shaikh Moṣleḥ-al-Dīn. *Būstān*. G. -Ḥ. Yūsofī. 2nd ed., Tehran, 1963.

Sanāʾi, Ḥakim Majdud b. Ādam. *Ketāb Ḥadiqat al-ḥaqiqa wa šariʿat al-ṭariqa*, ed. Moḥammad- Taqi Modarres Raẓawi, Tehran, 1950; part. ed. and tr. John Stephenson as *The First Book of the Hadiqatu'l-haqiqat; or, the Enclosed Garden of the Truth*, Calcutta, 1911.

Šarḥ-e Robāʿiyāt, ed. Māyel-Heravi, Kabul, n.d.

Secondary Sources

Abdul Haq, Ansari. "Ibn 'Arabī: The Doctrine of Waḥdat Al-Wujūd." Islamic Studies, vol. 38, no. 2, 1999, pp. 149–192. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20837036.

Adamson, Peter. *Philosophy in the Islamic World*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

--- "Al-Kindi", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2015/entries/al-kindi/

Addey, Chrystal. "In the Light of the Sphere: the 'Vehicle of the Soul' and Subtle-body Practices in Neoplatonism" in *Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West: Between Mind and Body*. Edited by. Geoffrey Samuel and Jay Johnston. (Routledge, 2013).

Ainsworth, Thomas. "Form vs. Matter", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/form-matter/>.

'Aṭṭār, Farīd-al-Dīn. *Manṭeq al-ṭayr* (the Conference of the Birds). Trans. Dick Davis. (Washington, D.C.: Mage Publishers, 2012).

Algar, Hamid. *Jāmī*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

--- "*Jāmī* and *Ibn 'Arabī*: *Khātam al-Shu'arā* and *Khātam al-Awliyā*." *Ishraq. Islamic Philosophy Yearbook 3* (2012). Pp. 138-158.

---"Reflections of Ibn ʿArabī in Early Naqshbandī Tradition." *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ʿArabi Society 10* (1981): 45–66.

---"The Naqshbandī Order: A Preliminary Survey of Its History and Significance." *Studia Islamica*, no. 44, 1976, pp. 123–152. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/1595445. Accessed 12 Mar. 2019.

Arberry, A. J. *FitzGerald's Salámán and Absál: A Study*, 1956.

Aristotle. *The Metaphysics*. Trans. Hugh Tredennick. The Loeb classical library; 271). Harvard University Press, 1933).

--- *On Dreams*. Trans. J. I. Beare. 350 BCE, The Internet Classics Archive. Accessed August 25, 2019. http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/sleep.1b.txt

Bardis, Panos D. "The Concept of Love in Homer." *Social Science*, vol. 53, no. 4, 1978, pp. 220– 231.

Bashier, Salman H. *Ibn al-'Arabī's Barzakh: The Concept of the Limit and the Relationship between God and the World*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004.

Bashir, Shahzad. "Naqshband's Lives: Sufi Hagiography between Manuscripts and Genre," *Sufism in Central Asia: New Perspectives on Sufi Traditions*, 15th to 21st Centuries, edited by Devin DeWeese and Jo-Ann Gross (Leiden: Brill), 2018.

Benjamin, Walter. *Selected Writings v.1: 1913-1926*. edits. Marcus Bullock and Michale W. Jennings. Harvard University Press, 2004.

Bergson, Henri. Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness. Dover Publications,1889. https://philosophynow.org/issues/48/Henri_Bergson_and_the_Perception_of_Time

Bertolacci, Amos. "On the Arabic Translations of Aristotle's Metaphysics". (Arabic Sciences and Philosophy, vol. 15, 2005, online access, *Cambridge University Press*, 2005. Pp. 241-275.

Brewer, Charlotte, and Barry Windeatt, editors. Traditions and Innovations in the Study of Medieval English Literature: The Influence of Derek Brewer. Boydell and Brewer, 2013. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt31nj87.

Browne, Edward G. *A Literary History of Persia,* Vol. 3, 1964.

Brown, Kevin. "Nasir al-Din Tusi's Commentary on Ibn Sina's al-Isharat wa'l-Tanbihat: al-Namat al-Tasi' fi Maqamat al-'Arifin: Namat Nine on the Stations of the Mystics". *International Journal of Shi'I Studies 5(1) 185-238*. 2007.

Bruijn, J.T.P. de, Flemming, B. and Rahman, Munibur, "Mathnawī", in: Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition, Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 06 December 2018. First published online: 2012.

Burgel, J.C. *The Romance* in *Persian Literature*, ed., E. Yarshater, New York, 1988, pp. 164-65. http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/vis-o-ramin.

Chittick, William. *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabī's Metaphysics of Imagination*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

--- *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn al-'Arabī and the Problem of Religious Diversity*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.

--- *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn al- 'Arabī's Cosmology*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.

--- "Death and the World of Imagination: Ibn al- 'Arabī's Eschatology." The Muslim World 78, 1998.

Cicero, *The Dream of Scipio, Somnium Scipionis*. trans. W. D. Peraman. (1883) http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/cicero_dream_of_scipio_02_trans.htm

Cohen, S. Marc. "Aristotle's Metaphysics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/aristotle-metaphysics/>.

Coppens, Pieter. *Seeing God in Sufi Qurân Commentaries: Crossings between This World and the Otherworld.* Edinburgh University Press, 2018.

Corbin, Henry. *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital.* Princeton University Press, 2014.

---. *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi.* Trans. Ralph Manheim. Princeton University Press, 1998.

Davis, Dick. *Panthea's Children Hellenistic Novels and Medieval Persian Romances* (2002).

---translation of *Vis o Rāmin (Penguin Classics, 2009).*

de Blois, François. Persian Literature. A Bio-bibliographical Survey, Begun by the Late C. A. Storey, V/2, London, 1994; V/3, London, 1997.

de Fouchécour, Charles-Henri. "IRAN viii. PERSIAN LITERATURE (2) Classical," *Encyclopædia Iranica, XIII/4. pp. 414-432;* available online at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/iran-viii2-classical-persian-literature (accessed online at 17 July 2020).

Dean, John. "The 'Odyssey' as Romance." *College Literature*, vol. 3, no. 3, 1976. *JSTOR.*

Dehghan, Iraj. "Jāmī's Salāmān and Absāl." *JSTOR*, 1971, pp. 118–126.

Derrida, Jacques. *On Touching—Jean-Luc Nancy.* trans. Christine Irizarry. Stanford University Press, 2005.

DeSmidt, D. Ben. "Horn and Ivory, Bow and Scar: Odyssey 19.559-81." *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 56, no. 1, 2006, pp. 284–289.

De Vogel, C. J. "On the Neoplatonic Character of Platonism and the Platonic Character of Neoplatonism." (1953), pp. 43–64.

d'Hubert, Thibaut, and Alexandre Papas. *Jāmī in Regional Contexts: The Reception of 'Abd Al-Raḥmān Jāmī's Works in the Islamicate World, Ca. 9th/15th-14th/20th Century.* 2018. Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section One, the Near and Middle East; Volume 128. Web.

Dols, Michael. *Majnun: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society*. Ed. Diana E. Immisch. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

Eastmond, Antony. *Viewing Inscriptions in the Late Antique and Medieval World*. Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Earnst, Carl W. "Controversies over Ibn al-'Arabī's Foṣūṣ: the Faith of Pharaoh". http://www.unc.edu/~cernst/pdf/fusus.pdf

Baldick, Chris. "Story". The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (3 ed.). Oxford University Press, 1990.

Boyce, M. M. L. Chaumont, C. Bier, "anāhīd," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, I/9, pp. 1003-1011, available online at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/anahid (accessed on 30 December 2012).

Ebn al-'Arabī *al-Fotuḥāt al-Makkīya* "The Meccan Revelatoins". Trans. William C. Chittick and James W. Morris (Pir Press, 2002).

Fakhry, Majid. *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, 2nd ed, London: Longmans; New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

---*Al-Farabi: Founder of Islamic Neoplatonism: His Life, Works and Influence*. Oxford University, 2002.

--- *Aspects of Avicenna*. edited by Robert Wisnovsky. Princeton University Press, 2001.

Ferdowsī, Abu'l-Qāsem. *Shāh-nāma, The Lion and the Throne, Fathers and Sons,* and *Sunset of Empire*. Translate by Dick Davis, (Washington, D.C.: Mage Publishers, 1997).

Fletcher, Judith. "Women's Space and Wingless Words in The Odyssey." *Phoenix*, Vol. 62, No. 1/2, 2008.

Fulkerson, Laurel. "Epic Ways of Killing a Woman: Gender and Transgression in 'Odyssey' 22.465-72." *The Classical Journal*, vol. 97, no. 4, 2002, pp. 335–350. *JSTOR*.

Gairdner, William. H. Temple. *The Way of a Mohmmedan Mystic: A Contribution to the Study of Esoteric Sufism, Its Theory and Praxis*. Harrassowitz, 1912.

Gorgānī, Fakr-al-din Asʿad. *Vis o Rāmin*. Trans. Dick Davis, (Washington, D.C.: Mage Publishers, 2013).

Glasner, Ruth. *Averroes' "Physics": A Turning Point in Medieval Natural Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2009.

Gutas, Dimitri. *Avicenna and the Aristotelian tradition: Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works*. 2nd edition, Brill. 2014.

---. *Greek Thoughts, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbasid Society*. Brill, 1998.

Hägg, Tomas and Bo Utas. *The Virgin and Her Lover: Fragments of an Ancient Greek Novel and a Persian Epic Poem*. Brill, 2003.

Harsh, Philip Whaley. "Penelope and Odysseus in Odyssey XIX." *The American Journal of Philology*, vol. 71, no. 1, 1950.

Heath, Peter. "Salāmān and Absāl". Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., s.v.

Heer, Nicholas. "Al-Razi and al-Tusi on Ibn Sina's Theory of Emanation," in *Neoplatonism and Islamic Thought: Beyond Transnational Globalization*. Ed. Parviz Morewedge. State University of New York Press, 1992.

---"Allegory and Philosophy in Avicenna. With a Translation of the Book of the Prophet Muhammad's Assent to Heaven". *Middle Ages Series. Philadelphia*: University of Pennyslvania Press, 1992.

Heller, Anges. *The Concept of the Beautiful*. Lexington, 2012.

Homer, *the Odyssey*. Trans. A. S. Kline. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2004.

Ibn al-ʿArabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn. *Tarjumān al-Ashwāq, the Interpretation of Desires*. trans. Reynold A. Nicholson. Royal Asiatic Society, Oriental Translation Series. London, 1911.

---. *al-Fotuḥāt al-Makkīya* "The Meccan Revelations". Trans. William C. Chittick and James W. Morris. Pir Press, 2002.

Ibn Isḥāq, Ḥunayn. *The Book of the Ten Treatises on the Eye*. Government Press, 1928.

Inati, Shams. *Ibn Sina's Remarks and Admonitions: Physics and Metaphysics: An Analysis and Annotated Translation*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Ingenito, Domenico. *Beholding Beauty*. Brill, 2020.

Kakar, Sudhir and John Munder Ross. *Tales of Love, Sex, and Danger*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Kelly, Micheal. R. *Bergson and Phenomenology*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Kjalar Emilsson, Eyjolfur. *Plotinus on Sense-Perception: A Philosophical Study*. Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Klassen, Norman. *Chaucer on Love, Knowledge and Sight*. Boydell and Brewer, 1995.

Lacan, Jacques. "Courtly Love as Anamorphosis," in The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: Book 7: the Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960. (London, 1992). trans. Jacques-Alain Miller, Dennis Porter.

Lane, George E. "Ṭusi, Naṣir-al-Din," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, 2018, available at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/tusi-nasir-al-din-bio (accessed on 19 April 2018).

Landau, Justine. "Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and Poetic Imagination in The Arabic and Persian Philosophical Tradition." *Metaphor and Imagery in Persian Poetry* edited by Ali Asghar Seyed-Gohrab, 2012. Iran Studies 6. Web.

Lewisohn, Leonard and David Morgan. *The Heritage of Sufism: Classical Persian Sufism from Its Origins to Rumi (700-1300) V. 1*. Oneworld Publications, 1999.

Lingwood, Chad G. *Politics, Poetry, and Sufism in Medieval Iran: New Perspectives on Jāmī's Salāmān va Absāl*. Brill, 2013.

--- "The Qebla of Jami is none other than Tabriz: Abd al-Rahman Jami and Naqshbandi Sufism at the Aq Qoyunlu Royal Court. Persianate Studies 4.2. 2011.

---"Jāmī's Salāmān va Absāl: Political Statements and Mystical Advice Addressed to the Āq Qoyūnlū Court of Sultān Ya'qūb (d. 896/1490)." Iranian Studies, vol. 44, no. 2, 2011, pp. 175– 191. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/23033323.

Losensky, Paul E. *In the Bazaar of Love: The Selected Poetry of Amir Khusrau*. Penguin Global, 2013.

---. "Jāmī i. Life and Works" *Encyclopædia Iranica*, XIV/5, p. 469-475; http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jami-i.

---. *Welcoming Fighānī : Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal*. Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda, 1998. Print. Bibliotheca Iranica. Literature Ser.; No. 5.

Luc-Nancy, Jean. *Listening*. trans. Charlotte Mandell. Fordham University Press, 2007.

MacKenzie, D. N. "Constellations," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, VI/2, P. 147-150; an updated version is available online at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/constellations (accessed on 14 October 2019).

"Maqām". *Encyclopædia Britannica*. https://www.britannica.com/topic/maqam-Sufism. Access 14 October, 2019.

McMullan, Gordon. *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing: Authorship in the Proximity of Death*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Meisami, Julie. S. *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*. Princeton University Press, 1987.

Morewedge, Parviz. *Neoplatonism and Islamic Thought*. State University of New York Press, 1992.

Murata, Kazuyo. *Beauty in Sufism: the Teachings of Ruzbihan Baqli*. State University of New York Press, 2017.

Murnaghan, Sheila. "Maternity and Mortality in Homeric Poetry." *Classical Antiquity*, vol. 11, no. 2, 1992, pp. 242–264. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/25010975.

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Three Muslim Sages: Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Ibn 'Arabi*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 1964.

--- *Sufi Essays*. ABC International Group Inc.,U.S, (1999).

--- "Persian Sufi Literature: Its Spiritual and Cultural Significance", in *The Heritage of Sufism*, edited by L. Lewisohn, vol. II, Oxford: One World, 1999.

Nichols, Mary P. "Socrates' Contest with the Poets in Plato's Symposium". Political Theory, vol 32 (2004). Pp. 186-206.

Nicholson, Reynold A. *The Mystics of Islam*. Ancient Wisdom Publications, 2007.

Orsatti, Paola. "Ḵosrow O Šīrin" Encyclopædia Iranica. Accessed on March 13, 2019. http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kosrow-o-sirin.

Parrello, Domenico. "Ḵamsa of Neẓāmi," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, (http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kamsa-of-nezami)

Pinès, Shlomo. "Aristotle's Politics in Arabic Philosophy". *Collected works of Shlomo Pines: Studies in Arabic Versions of Greek texts and in Medieval Science*. 2. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1986. Pp. 146-157.

Plato: *Symposium*. Trans. Alexander Nehamas Paul Woodruff. Indianapolis. *Hackett Publishing Co*. Indianapolis, 1989.

Plotinus, *the Enneads I.* Trans. A. H. Armstrong, Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, 1968–88.

Raffaelli, Enrico G. "Astrology and Religion in the Zoroastrian Pahlavi Texts." *Journal Asiatique* 305.2, 2017.

Rapoport, Michael A. *The Life and Afterlife of the Rational Soul: Chapters VIII–X of Ibn Sīnā's Pointers and Reminders and Their Commentaries*. PhD dissertation, Yale University. 2018.

Rizvi, Sajjad. "The Existential Breath of al-raḥmān and the Munificent Grace of al- raḥīm: The Tafsīr Sūrat al-Fātiḥa of Jāmī and the School of Ibn 'Arabī," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 8:1 (2006).

Roisman, Hanna M. "Eumaeus and Odysseus—Covert Recognition and Self-Revelation?" *Illinois Classical Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1990, pp. 215–238.

--- "Penelope's Indignation." *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, vol. 117, 1987.

Rumi, Jalāl-al-din. The *Maṯnawi* (The Masnavi). Trans. Jawid Mojaddedi. Oxford World's Classics, 2004.

Rūmī, Jalāl al-Dīn. *The Mathnawí of Jalálu'ddín Rúmí*. 8 vols. Edited and translated with commentary by Reynold A. Nicholson. E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Series, n.s., 4, 1–8. London: Luzac, 1925–40.

Rypka, Jan. et al., *History of Iranian Literature*, trans. P. van Popta-Hope. (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1968).

Said, Edward W. "Timeliness and Lateness" in *On Late Style: Music and Literature Against the Grain*, Bloomsbury, 2007.

Sartre, J.-P.: *L'être et le néant*. Paris: Tel Gallimard, 1943/1976; *Being and Nothingness*, trans. by H.E. Barnes. New York: Philosophical Library, 1956.

Sedgwick, Mark J. *Western Sufism: From the Abbasids to the New Age*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2016.

Schreiber, Earl G. "Venus in the Medieval Mythographic Tradition." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 74, no. 4, 1975, pp. 519–535. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/27707955.

Scott, John A. "Eurynome and Eurycleia in the Odyssey." *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 12, no. 2, 1918.

Seyed-Gohrab, A. *Laylī and Majnūn: Love, Madness, and Mystic Longing in Nizāmī's Epic Romance*. Brill studies in Middle Eastern literatures; v. 27. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

--- "Leyli O Majnun," Encyclopædia Iranica. Accessed on March 13, 2019. http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/leyli-o-majnun-narrative-poem

Silverman, Kaja. *Flesh of My Flesh*. Stanford University Press, 2009.

Skjærvø, Prods Oktor, "Marriage ii. Next of kin marriage in Zoroastrianism," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, 2013, available at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/marriage- next-of-kin (accessed on 16 October 2017).

Small, Helen. *The Long Life*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

Smith, David Woodruff. "Phenomenology", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/phenomenology/>.

Summermatter, Ayfer. "Attar of Nishapur's Seven Valleys and the Stages of Human Cravings from a Psychological Perspective". *Spiritual Psychology and Counselling*. 2016.

Steingass, Francis Joseph. A Comprehensive Persian English Dictionary. Asian Educational Services, 1992.

Treiger, Alexander. *Inspired Knowledge in Islamic Thought: Al-Ghazali's Theory of Mystical Cognition and Its Avicennian Foundation*. Routledge, 2011.

Toutant, Marc. "Imitational Poetry as Pious Hermeneutics? Jami and Nava'i/Fani's Rewritings of Hafez's Opening Ghazal." *The Timurid Century: The Idea of Iran*. Ed. Charles Melville. London: I.B.Tauris, 2020. pp. 97–120. *Bloomsbury Collections*.

Utas, Bo. "Did ʿAdhrā Remain a Virgin?" *Orientalia Suecana* 33-35, 1984-86, pp. 429-44. "Vulcan". *Encyclopaedia Britannica, inc.* May 23, 2019. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Vulcan.

van Campen, Cretien. *The Proust Effect: The Senses as Doorways to Lost Memories*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

van Gelder, Geert Jan. "Incest and Inbreeding." *Encyclopædia Iranica, XIII/1*. available online at https://iranicaonline.org/articles/incest-and-inbreeding (accessed online at 18 July 2020).

van Ruymbeke, Christine. "From Culinary Recipe to Pharmacological Secret for a Successful Wedding Night: the Scientific Background of Two Images Related to Fruit in Xamse of Nizami Ganjavi," Festschrift in honour of Professor J.T.P. de Bruijn, Persica, Annual of the Dutch-Iranian Society. pp. 127-136 (2002).

Vlahos, John B. "Homer's 'Odyssey', Books 19 and 23: Early Recognition; A Solution to the Enigmas of Ivory and Horns, and the Test of the Bed." *College Literature*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2007, pp. 107–131.

Wallis, R. T. *Neoplatonism*. London: Duckworth, 1972.

Wildberg, Christian. "Neoplatonism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/neoplatonism/>.

Wisnovsky, Robert. Avicenna's Metaphysics in Context. Cornell University Press, 2003.

Whinfield, E. H., Qazwīnī, Muḥammad, and Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Lawa'ih. English and Persian*. 2nd Ed. [3rd Pr.]. ed. London: Theosophical House, 1978. Print. Oriental Translation Fund. New Ser.; Vol.16.

Whitmarsh, Tim. *Dirty Love: The Genealogy of the Ancient Greek Novel*. Oxford University Press, 2018).

Wohl, Victoria Josselyn. "Standing by The Stathmos: The Creation of Sexual Ideology in The 'Odyssey.'" *Arethusa*, vol. 26, no. 1, 1993, pp. 19–50. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/26309575.

Zargar, Cyrus Ali. Sufi Aesthetics: Beauty, Love, and the Human Form in the Writing of Ibn 'Arabi and 'Iraqi. University of South Carolina Press, 2013.