



ABU YA'QUB HAMADĀNĪ

ABŪ YA'QŪB YŪSOF B. AYYŪB HAMADĀNĪ (440-535/1048-49 to 1140), important figure in the history of Iranian and Central Asian Sufism (largely neglected by both Iranian and Western scholarship). He was the first of the *Kvājagān*, a line of Transoxanian masters from which evolved the Naqšbandī and Yasavī orders. He was born in Būzanjerd near Hamadān, and left for Baghdad at the age of eighteen. There he studied *feqh* and Hadith under a number of teachers, of whom the principal was Abū Eshāq Šīrāzī, and developed an enthusiastic loyalty to the Hanafite *madhab* which he later transmitted to his spiritual progeny. He also traveled in the course of his studies to places as distant as Isfahan and Samarqand. At about the age of thirty he turned to Sufism and sought out a number of shaikhs, including Ḥasan Semnānī and 'Abdallāh Jovaynī. His chief preceptor was Abū 'Alī Fārmadī, who also guided Abū Ḥāmed Ġazālī on the Sufi path; the concept of Sufism evolved by Hamadānī was indeed essentially similar to that of Ġazālī, with its emphasis on the Qur'ān and Sunna as the source of Sufi practice, and strict insistence on observance of the *šarī'a*.

Hamadānī established a *kānaqāh* at Marv which came to acquire the title of "the Ka'ba of Khorasan;" among those who frequented it were the poet Sanā'ī and his nephew, Shaikh Sa'īd, father of the celebrated Kobrawī saint, Rażī-al-dīn Lālā (Dawlatšāh, ed. Browne, p. 95; 'Alā'-al-dawla Semnānī, *Taḍkerat al-mašāyek*, quoted in F. Meier, *Die Fawā'ih al-Ġamāl wa Fawātiḥ al-Ġalāl des Naġm ad-Dīn al-Kubrā*, Wiesbaden, 1957, p. 41, n. 1). He did not remain constantly in the *kānaqāh*; he traveled twice to Herat, is said to have



performed the *ḥajj* thirty-eight times, and spent some time in Bokhara and Samarqand. It was in these two cities that he acquired his most important followers, whom he later designated to serve in turn as his successors: 'Abdallāh Baraqī, Ḥasan Andaqī, Aḥmad Yasavī, and 'Abd-al-Kāleq Ğejdovānī.

Ğejdovānī left a detailed description of his master, excelling all other sources in verisimilitude, in his *Maqāmāt-e Yūsof Hamadānī*. A copy is contained in the 13th/19th century encyclopedic work on Sufism, Kamāl-al-dīn Ḥarīrī's *Tebyān wasā'el al-ḥaqā'eq wa salāsel al-ṭarā'eq* (ms. İbrahim Ef., 430, fols. 379a-89b). The text published by Sa'īd Nafīsī under the title *Resāla-ye Şāḥebīya* (*FIZ* 1/1, 1332 Ş./1953, pp. 70-101) is approximately the same as the *Maqāmāt*. What is most probably another copy of the work is listed in A. A. Semenov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii Nauk Uzbekskoï SSR*, Tashkent, 1965, III, p. 172. The contents of the *Maqāmāt* have been summarized by V. A. Zhukovskii (*Razvaliny starogo Merva*, St. Petersburg, 1894, pp. 169-72) and by Fuat Köprülü (*Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*, 2nd ed., Ankara, 1966, pp. 52-58). From the *Maqāmāt* emerges the picture of a devout and orthodox ascetic whose spirituality radiated throughout Khorasan and Transoxania.

According to the *Maqāmāt*, Hamadānī died in the Ğātfar district of Samarqand and was buried beneath his own house, but this account is at variance with the testimony of almost all other sources. They record him as having died at Bāmyīn on the way from Herat to Marv; after a temporary burial there, his body was transferred to Marv. The discrepancy has not yet been resolved, but it is certain that a tomb identified as that of Hamadānī existed in Marv by the time of 'Abd-al-Raḥmān Jāmī (*Nafaḥāt*, p. 375); it is still standing at present. The sources also contradict each other with respect to the form of *dekr* practiced by Hamadānī: According to the *Raşaḥāt 'ayn al-ḥayāt* of Fakr-al-dīn 'Alī Şafī (Tashkent, 1329/1911), he practiced vocal *dekr*; according to the *Maqāmāt*, silent *dekr*. He is credited with a number of works, including a commentary on 'Abdallāh Anşārī's *Manāzel al-sā'erīn* (see S. de Laugier de Beurecueil's introduction to his edition of 'Abd-al-Mo'ī Laḳmī Eskandarī, *Commentaire du livre des étapes*, Cairo, 1954, p. 5); but none of them appears to be extant. Certain of his views, however, all marked by the sobriety that came to distinguish the Naqşbandīya, are discussed at some length by 'Azīz Nasafī in his *Kaşf al-şerāt* (ms. Veliyüddin Efendi, 1717, ff. 208a-b, 218a, 221a, 225b-226b, 238a-b, 242b).



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Almost the entirety of Naqšbandī literature contains scattered references to Hamadānī.