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AṬṬĀR, FARĪD-AL-DĪN

ʿ**AṬṬĀR,** SHAIKH **FARĪD-AL-DĪN,** (□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□ □□□) Persian poet, Sufi, theoretician of mysticism, and hagiographer, born ca. 540/1145-46 at Nīšāpūr, and died there in 618/1221. His name was Abū Ḥāmed Moḥammad b. Abī Bakr Ebrāhīm or, according to Ebn al-Fowatī, b. Saʿd b. Yūsof. ʿAṭṭār and Farīd-al-dīn were his pen-names. (B. Forūzānfar, *Šarḥ-e aḥwāl wa naqd o taḥlīl-e āṯār-e Šayḵ Farīd-al-dīn Moḥammad ʿAṭṭār Nīšābūrī*, Tehran, 1339-40 Š./1960-61, repr., Tehran, 1353 Š./1975, pp. 1-3).

Reliable information on ʿAṭṭār's life is scarce. He is mentioned by only two contemporaries, ʿAwfī (d. after 620/1223) and Ḵᵛāja Naṣīr-al-dīn Ṭūsī (597/1200-672/1273); the latter's statement is quoted in a work by his pupil ʿAbd-al-Razzāq b. Fowatī. The next notice of ʿAṭṭār is in Ḥamdallāh Mostawfī's *Tārīḵ-e gozīda*, which was completed in 730/1330 (see M. Qazvīnī's introd. to the *Taḏkerat al-awlīāʾ*, p. *wāw*). In all these sources ʿAṭṭār is described as a man of Nīšāpūr. Ṭūsī visited him there at some time, according to Forūzānfar's reckoning (*Šarḥ-e aḥwāl*, pp. 13f.), between 612/1215 and 618/1221. ʿAṭṭār was then an old man. This fits in with ʿAwfī's placing of ʿAṭṭār in his chapter on poets of the Saljuq period (*Lobāb*, Tehran, pp. 480-82). He must therefore have been in his prime during the second half of the 6th/12th century. Forūzānfar calculates that he was born about 540/1145-46 (ibid., pp. 7-16). The only biographical date which ʿAṭṭār himself mentions in his writings, namely 573/1177 as the year of his completion of the *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*, is consistent with the foregoing but cannot be taken as conclusive evidence because the verse in question does not appear in all the manuscripts.

While ʿAṭṭār's works say little else about his life, they tell us that he practiced the profession of pharmacy and personally attended to a very large number of customers (see especially *Asrār-nāma*, p. 170; cf. Forūzānfar, ibid., p. 39). He evidently started writing certain books—the *Moṣībat-nāma* and the *Elāhī-nāma*—while at work in the pharmacy (2nd introd. to the Ḵosrow-nāma; see H. Ritter, "Philologika X," *Der Islam* 25, 1939, p. 148, verse 40). Anyway he was fortunate in not depending on his muse for his livelihood. He could afford to spurn the art of the court eulogist (see idem, *Das Meer der Seele: Mensch, Welt und Gott in den Geschichten des Farīduddīn ʿAṭṭār*, Leiden, 1955, p. 156). His placid existence as a pharmacist and a Sufi does not appear to have ever been interrupted by journeys. In his later years he lived a very retired life (*Elāhī-nāma*, ed. Ritter, p. 366.11ff.). He reached an age well over seventy (see Forūzānfar, p. 107). The prolificacy sometimes laid to his charge (Qazvīnī, op. cit., p. yāʾ-jīm. 8 from the bottom) was noticed by Ṭūsī, who met him in his old age (see Ritter, "Philologika XIV," *Oriens* 11, 1958, p. 5. 5 from the bottom). He died a violent death in the massacre which the Mongols inflicted on Nīšāpūr in Ṣafar, 618/April, 1221 (see Forūzānfar, p. 91).

It seems that ʿAṭṭār was not well known as a poet in his own lifetime, except at Nīšāpūr. ʿAwfī, who traveled widely, may have heard about him while staying there (*Lobāb*, introd. p. twenty-two), or perhaps from Majd-al-dīn Baḡdādī if this Majd-al-dīn was their common Sufi mentor, though ʿAwfī appears to have only known about ʿAṭṭār's lyric poetry (*Lobāb*, p. 481.3f.). Ṭūsī likewise speaks mainly about ʿAṭṭār's impressive *dīvān* and mentions only one of his narrative poems, the *Manṭeq al-ṭayr* (passage quoted in Ritter, "Philologika XIV," p. 5). From the second half of the 7th/13th century onward, ʿAṭṭār's prose work, the *Taḏkerat al-awlīāʾ*, came to be widely read (list of mss. in Ritter, ibid., pp. 64ff.), but his greatness as a mystic, a poet, and a master of narrative was not discovered until the 9th/15th century. It was then that ʿAṭṭār's career became a matter of interest and was embroidered with fantastic myths, for instance in the biographical notices written by Jāmī and Dawlatšāh and in the inscription in the mausoleum of ʿAṭṭār built at Nīšāpūr, by ʿAlī Šīr Navāʾī.

A favorite theme of this myth-making was ʿAṭṭār's initiation into Sufi faith. Examples have been collected by Saʿīd Nafīsī (*Jostojū dar aḥwāl o āṯār-e Farīd-al-dīn-e ʿAṭṭār Nīšābūrī*, Tehran, 1320 Š./1941, pp. *lām-dāl*ff.). Forūzānfar has convincingly shown that Najm-al-dīn Kobrā cannot have been ʿAṭṭār's spiritual guide, and that the tales of ʿAṭṭār's being a pupil of Qoṭb-al-dīn Ḥaydar, Saʿd-al-dīn b. Ḥammūya, and Rokn-al-dīn ʿAkkāf are inventions which were prompted

by various misunderstandings (*Šarḥ-e aḥwāl*, pp. 20-28; 31.5ff., 34.6ff., 30.7ff.). Of all the famous Sufi shaikhs supposed to have been teachers of ʿAṭṭār, only Majd-al-dīn Bağdādī comes within the bounds of possibility, and the only certainty is ʿAṭṭār's own statement that he once met Majd-al-dīn (*Taḏkerat al-awlīāʾ*, pp. 1, 6, 21). Forūzānfar has also noted that ʿAṭṭār, in the introduction to his Ḵosrow-nāma, extols a certain Saʿd-al-dīn b. Rabīb, the son of a vizier, in terms which normally denoted the relationship of a disciple to his shaikh (ibid., pp. 33.20ff., 37.7ff.) but in the absence of any information about this man's identity and Sufi status, the fact does not bring the problem nearer to solution. There remains the possibility that ʿAṭṭār did not have a shaikh in the literal sense at all, but became a Sufi through an *owaysī* affiliation, i.e., an inward relationship to a (deceased) Sufi, shaikh or the Prophet Moḥammad. Jāmī states in his *Nafaḥāt al-ons* that there were persons who said this of ʿAṭṭār. Forūzānfar substantiates the point by referring to ʿAṭṭār's own acknowledgement of a special spiritual relationship linking him to Abū Saʿīd b. Abi'l-Ḵayr (q.v.), which could indeed be taken to mean an *owaysī* affiliation (ibid., p. 32.8ff.; cf. F. Meier, *Abū Saʿīd Abū'l-Ḫayr*, Acta Iranica 11, Leiden, 1976, p. 464). It must, however, be noted that in certain passages ʿAṭṭār stresses the indispensability of an immediate shaikh (*Manṭeq al-ṭayr*, p. 109.1ff.; *Moṣībat-nāma*, p. 63.2ff.). In any case it can be taken for granted that from childhood onward ʿAṭṭār, encouraged by his father, was interested in the Sufis and their sayings and way of life, and regarded their saints as his spiritual guides (*Taḏkerat al-awlīāʾ*, pp. 1, 55, 23ff.).

The thought-world depicted in ʿAṭṭār's works reflects the whole evolution of the Sufi movement in its experiential, speculative, practical, and educational-initiatory ramifications. The starting point is the idea that the body-bound soul's awaited release and return to its source in the other world can be experienced during the present life in mystic union attainable through inward purification (F. Meier, "Der Geistmensch bei dem persischen Dichter ʿAṭṭār," *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 13, 1945, pp. 286ff.). Aspects and problems of this *via purgativa* form the central theme of ʿAṭṭār's mystic writings. He propounds them in theoretical discussions and exhortatory homilies and through the medium of exemplary facts or events, drawing his material not only from specifically Sufi but also from older ascetic legacies. Although his heroes are for the most part Sufis and ascetics, he also introduces stories from historical chronicles, collections of anecdotes, and all types of *adab* literature. He has no objection to putting his words of wisdom into the mouths of fools and madmen (cf. Ritter, *Das Meer der Seele*, pp. 165ff.). His talent for perception of deeper

meanings behind outward appearances enables him to turn details of everyday life into illustrations of his thoughts. The idiosyncrasy of ʿAṭṭār's presentations invalidates his works as sources for study of the historical persons whom he introduces. As sources on the hagiology and phenomenology of Sufism, however, his works have immense value.

In regard to ʿAṭṭār's general education and culture, no adequate picture can be obtained from his writings. In his riper years he esteemed only the Islamic sciences of *feqh* (jurisprudence), *tafsīr* (Koranic exegesis), and Hadith (*Moṣībat-nāma*, p. 54), while viewing the ancient Aristotelian heritage with skepticism and dislike (*Moṣībat-nāma*, p. 54.6ff.; *Asrār-nāma*, pp. 50, 794ff.).

Significantly, he did not want to uncover the secrets of nature. Although there are some indications that in his younger years he had paid attention to this and other fields of non-religious knowledge (see Forūzānfar, *Šarḥ-e aḥwāl*, p. 42), any traces of such knowledge in his writings are minimal. This is particularly remarkable in the case of medicine, which fell within the scope of his profession. On the other hand, he obviously had no motive for showing off his secular knowledge in the manner customary among court panegyrists (cf. Neẓāmī ʿArūżī, *Čahār maqāla*, ed. M. Moʿīn, p. 56.4f.), whose type of poetizing he despised and never practiced. Such knowledge is only brought into his works in contexts where the theme of a story touches on a branch of natural science, for instance when he describes the constellations at the end of a story about a poor man's impressions of the sky's phases (*Asrār-nāma*, pp. 108f.), or when he cites as an example of a polymath's erudition his skill in removing a brain tumor (*Elāhī-nāma*, ed. Ritter, p. 75.8ff.; tr. Boyle, pp. 72-73).

ʿAṭṭār speaks of his own poetry in various contexts including the epilogues of his long narrative poems. He confirms the guess likely to be made by every reader that he possessed an inexhaustible fund of thematic and verbal inspiration; when he composed his poems, more ideas came into his mind than he could possibly use (*Asrār-nāma*, p. 185, verse 3146, and p. 186, verse 3151). He also states that the effort of poetical composition threw him into a state of trance in which he could not sleep (*Asrār-nāma*, p. 185, verse 3148). He does not seem to have been so aware of his proficiency in the art of narrative or of his peculiar gift of economy in the use of rhetoric combined with mastery of all its potentialities. When he boasts of his ability to conceive and express ideas, he generally does so in ways comparable with those of contemporary panegyrists such as Ḵāqānī. Like the latter, he is not only convinced that his poetry has far surpassed all previous poetry (*Elāhī-nāma*, p. 365.6; *Moṣībat-*

nāma, p. 365.1), but even believes it to be intrinsically unsurpassable at any time in the future (*Elāhī-nāma*, p. 365.8), seeing himself as the "seal of the poets" (*Moṣībat-nāma*, p. 364, line 2 from bottom) and his poetry as the "seal of speech" (*Dīvān*, ed. Nafīsī, p. 361, line 2 from bottom; *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*, p. 288.7). He thinks that he exhausted the entire stock of poetical themes and artifices (*Moṣībat-nāma*, p. 365.5). Ḵāqānī's claims of finding eternally fresh themes and of subtlety in presenting them reappear in verses by ʿAṭṭār (*Asrār-nāma*, verses 3157 and 3164). The model for these shared notions of the two poets may have been provided by Sanāʾī.

A problem which has greatly occupied researchers on ʿAṭṭār is the question whether all the works that have been ascribed to him are really from his pen. It was brought to the fore by the observation of two facts; firstly, there are considerable differences of style among these works, secondly, some of them indicate a Sunnite, and others a Shiʿite, allegiance of the author. Classification of the various works by these two criteria yields virtually identical results. Ritter at first thought that the problem could be explained by a spiritual evolution of the poet; he distinguished three phases of ʿAṭṭār's creativity and surmised that the last phase, that of old age, was coincidental with a conversion to Shiʿism ("Philologika X," pp. 143f.), but in 1320 Š./1941, Nafīsī was able to prove that the works of the third phase in Ritter's classification were written by another ʿAṭṭār who lived about two hundred and fifty years later at Mašhad and was a native of Tūn (*Jostojū*, pp. 145ff.). Ritter accepted this finding in the main, but doubted whether Nafīsī was right in attributing the works of the second group also to this ʿAṭṭār of Tūn. One of Ritter's arguments is that the principal figure in the second group is not ʿAlī, as in the third group, but Ḥallāj, and that there is nothing in the explicit content of the second group to indicate a Shiʿite allegiance of the author; another is the important chronological point that a manuscript of the *Jawhar al-ḏāt*, the chief work in the second group, bears the date 735 (= 1334-35). While ʿAṭṭār of Tūn's authorship of the second group is untenable, Nafīsī was certainly right in concluding that the style difference (already observed by Ritter) between the works in the first group and those in the second group is too great to be explained by a spiritual evolution of the author. The authorship of the second group remains an unsolved problem. Ritter in his first article ("Philologika X," p. 157) thought it possible that a poet with the name ʿAṭṭār lived in the later years of the 7th/13th century; but there is no concrete evidence to identify the poet in question as the author of the second group. As regards Nafīsī's suggestion of a certain Zayn-al-ʿābedīn Moḥammad ʿAṭṭār Hamadānī who died

in 727/1326-27, Ritter demonstrated that this putative individual came into being through a typographical error (“Philologika XIV,” pp. 2f.).

After these subtractions from the huge total (reputedly equaling the number of the Koranic suras) which legend gave to ʿAṭṭār’s works, the next question is the authenticity of the remainder. ʿAṭṭār himself, in the introductions of the *Ḵosrow-nāma* and the *Moḵtār-nāma*, lists the titles of further products of his pen as follows: *Dīvān*, *Asrār-nāma*, *Maqāmāt-e ṭoyūr* (= *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*), *Moṣībat-nāma*, *Elāhī-nāma*, *Jawāher-nāma*, and *Šarḥ al-qalb* (quoted in “Philologika X,” pp. 147-53). He also states, in the introduction of the *Moḵtār-nāma*, that he destroyed the *Jawāher-nāma* and the *Šarḥ al-qalb* with his own hand. Although the contemporary sources confirm only ʿAṭṭār’s authorship of the *Dīvān* and the *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*, there are no grounds for doubting the authenticity of the *Ḵosrow-nāma* and *Moḵtār-nāma* and their prefaces. One work is missing from these lists, namely the *Taḏkerat al-awlīāʾ*, which was probably omitted because it is a prose work; its attribution to ʿAṭṭār is scarcely open to question. In its introduction ʿAṭṭār mentions three other works of his, including one entitled *Šarḥal-qalb*, presumably the same that he destroyed; the nature of the other two, entitled *Kašf al-asrār* and *Maʿrefat al-nafs*, remains unknown (see Ritter, “Philologika XIV,” p. 63). In the rest of this article the authentic works are discussed separately.

Dīvān. This consists almost entirely of poems in the *ḡazal* form, as he collected his *robāʿī*s in a separate work, the *Moḵtār-nāma*. There are also some *qaṣīda*s, but they amount to less than one-seventh of the *Dīvān*; their infrequency can be partly explained by ʿAṭṭār’s abstention from panegyric poetizing. His *qaṣīda*s expound mystic and ethical themes and practical moral precepts, and are to some extent modeled on those of Sanāʾī; the *qaṣīdaČašm bogšā ke jelwa-ye deldār* is a reply to Sanāʾī’s *Konūz al-ḥekma* in exactly the same number of verses. The *ḡazal*s often seem from their outward vocabulary just to be love and wine songs with a predilection for libertine imagery (*qalandarīyāt*; cf. Ritter, “Philologika XV,” pp. 14ff.), but generally imply spiritual experiences in the familiar symbolic language of classical Islamic mysticism (see Forūzānfar, *Šarḥ-e aḥwāl*, p. 82). Incidentally ʿAṭṭār’s lyrics express the same ideas that are elaborated in his epics. Normally the verses in each poem are coherent. In many cases the poem goes into different aspects of a core-theme. The language of ʿAṭṭār’s lyric poetry does not significantly differ from that of his narrative poetry, and the same may be said of the rhetoric and imagery.

Editions are S. Nafīsī, Tehran, 1319 Š./1940, 1335 Š./1956, 1339 Š./1960; T.

Tafażżolī, Tehran 1341 Š./1962, 1345 Š./1966.

Moḵtār-nāma. This is a collection of quatrains arranged by subject. After ʿAṭṭār's friends had complained of difficulty in finding their way through the great store of verses in the *Dīvān*, he picked roughly a third of its 6,000 verses and arranged them in fifty chapters. This was done after the completion of four of his narrative poems, the *Ḵosrow-nāma*, *Asrār-nāma*, *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*, and *Moṣībat-nāma*, but before the composition of the *Elāhī-nāma*. Two-fifths of the chapters (nos. 30-49) are about different aspects of the theme of love, and of these half portray the lover's state and the beloved's bearing, and half describe things used as elements of erotic symbolism such as the beloved's eyes, brows, down, mole, and lips, or rose, dawn, moth, and candle. In chapter 44 some space is given to *qalandarīyāt* on the ground of their connection with erotic themes. Chapters 12-29 are on matters of practical morals and general or Sufi ethics. The specifically Sufi themes of pantheism, self-effacement, and bewilderment (cf. the *Moṣībat-nāma*) are discussed in earlier chapters (4-9). The first three chapters are on *tawḥīd* (God's oneness), *naʿt* (the Prophet Mohammad's glories), and *manāqeb* (merits of the Prophet's companions). In the last chapter, the poet's own hope is expressed.

Text in the lithographed *Kollīyāt*, Lucknow, 1872. M. R. Šafīʿī Kadkanī, ed., Tehran, 1358 Š./1979 (with detailed introduction and notes). Partial tr. H. Ritter, "Philologika XVI," *Oriens* 13, 1961, pp. 195-228.

Taḏkerat al-awlīāʾ. This is ʿAṭṭār's only prose work; it is a collection of biographies dedicated to exponents and pioneers of classical Sufism, beginning with Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādeq, Oways Qaranī, and Ḥasan Baṣrī, and ending with Ḥallāj, whom ʿAṭṭār evidently felt to be the perfector of Sufism. The biographies of later Sufis, including ʿAṭṭār's favorite mentor Abū Saʿīd b. Abi'l-Ḵayr, are not from his own pen. The work gives a sort of hagiographic summary of his career in the ethical and experiential world of the Sufis (see above). It is to be regretted that he hardly ever names his sources. He appears to have relied almost entirely, if not exclusively, on written sources. In his choice and narration of edifying and memorable stories, he shows a distinctive taste of his own. Comparisons with versions of the same material in works by other authors suggest that he presented and interpreted the stories somewhat idiosyncratically (Ritter, "Philologika XIV," p. 63). On the other hand, he translated sayings of his Sufis, which had come down in Arabic, very faithfully into Persian. The work has also interested Iranian scholars as a specimen of early Persian prose (G. Lazard, *La Langue des plus anciens*

monuments de la prose persane, Paris, 1963, p. 121).

Editions are R. A. Nicholson, with introd. by M. Qazvīnī, 2 vols., London and Leiden, 1905-07, repr. without notes, etc, Tehran, 1336 Š./1957; M. Esteʿlāmī, Tehran, 1346 Š./1965; particulars of older eds. in Mošār, *Fehrest*, p. 378. Translations: E. Hermelin, Stockholm, 1931-32; A. J. Arberry, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*, London, 1966, 1973; lives of several saints in *Türkische Bibliothek* 20 and 24; particulars of Turkish tr. in Ritter, "Philologika XIV," *Oriens* 11, 1958, pp. 70-76; Uigur tr., Paris, 1889.

Ḵosrow-nāma. This stands apart from ʿAṭṭār's other works, as it is not a mystic poem but a courtly romance. Being about two lovers named Gol and Hormoz (later renamed Ḵosrow), it also bears the titles *Gol o Hormoz*, *Gol o Ḵosrow*, *Ḵosrow o Gol* (Ritter, "Philologika X," p. 144). Gol is the daughter of the king of Ahvāz, Hormoz is an illegitimate son of the Caesar of Rūm (Byzantium). For protection against the jealousy of the Caesar's wife Hormoz is brought up at Ahvāz in the house of the court gardener. The two see each other and fall in love, but neither knows of the other's love. This situation provides the background for an eventful and exciting story of self denial and self discovery culminating in the marriage of the lovers (abstract in Ritter, "Philologika X," pp. 161-71). ʿAṭṭār's model was a prose work by an otherwise unknown author, named by ʿAṭṭār as Badr Ahvāzī, which one of ʿAṭṭār's friends had asked him to versify. Ritter has noted the significance of this author's surname (Ritter, ibid, p. 161). The location of the romance's opening at Ahvāz and the prevalence of folkloric types of adventure in the episodes suggest that the work was built on a foundation of local legends. Two versions of the *Ḵosrow-nāma* exist: an older one composed by the poet before the completion of his *Manṭeq al-ṭayr* (in 573/1178 or 583/1187), and a later, abridged one, which he brought out after his four mystical narrative poems. No philological investigation of this matter has yet been undertaken. The latest printed edition does not distinguished between the two versions. It is therefore not yet possible to answer the question whether or how far the second version was influenced by Neẓāmī's *Ḵosrow o Šīrīn*, which was composed in the years 573-76. Although certain thematic parallels strike the eye, such as the hero's discomposure at the end of his very stormy courtship (*Ḵosrow-nāma*, pp. 121ff.; *Ḵosrow o Šīrīn*, pp. 142ff.), the wonderful time which the lovers have together after their reunion (*Ḵosrow-nāma*, pp. 231ff.; *Ḵosrow o Šīrīn*, pp. 115ff.), or the heroine's love-distraught death on the tomb of her beloved, the correspondence does not extend to details and cannot therefore be taken as a sufficient argument for

any dependence of ʿAṭṭār on Neẓāmī.

Edition: A. Sohaylī Ḵᵛānsārī, Tehran, 1340 Š./1961.

Asrār-nāma. This is the earliest of ʿAṭṭār's mystical narrative poems (see Boyle, "The Religious *Mathnavī*s of Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār," *Iran* 17, 1979, pp. 9f.); it has attracted less scholarly attention than the other three. This may be partly due to its lack of a frame-story. The contents are arranged in 22 discourses (*maqāla*s) in random order, without regard to sequence of ideas. Each *maqāla* begins with an outline of an idea, which is then developed by means of short anecdotes. Frequently the anecdotes are accompanied by reflections which lead into thematically related fields or, in some cases, stray quite far from the basic idea. The work thus lacks a definite conceptual structure. Its concluding message is the hope of release of man's spiritual substance from the world's grasp. In no other work does ʿAṭṭār propound the gnostic concept of the soul's fall and the duty to free it from worldly and material bonds so comprehensively and forcefully as in the *Asrār-nāma*. The resultant belief that this work influenced the preamble of the *Maṯnawī-e maʿnawī*, probably gave rise to the legend that the aged ʿAṭṭār donated it to the young Jalāl-al-dīn Rūmī as his testament (Ritter, *Das Meer der Seele*, p. 30). The concluding message naturally leads the author into moralizing reflections of the world's transience, vanity, and depravity, which fill whole chapters in the last third of the work (chap. 14 onward). After the three introductory chapters on *tawḥīd*, *naʿt*, and *manāqeb*, the fundamentals of the gnostic concept are expounded; certain aspects are elaborated in chapters 8 and 11, and in chapter 5 the favorite theme of reason and love (*ʿaql o ʿešq*) is introduced. Chapter 12 also seems worthy of special mention, because it is about the impenetrability of celestial and extramundane secrets (*asrār*) and is thus more pertinent to the book's title than the rest.

Editions: Ṣ. Gowharīn, Tehran, 1338 Š./1959 (reviewed in *Rāhnamā-ye ketāb* 25, 1338 Š./1959, pp. 716-24); particulars of older eds. in Mošār, *Fehrest*, col. 95.

Manṭeq al-ṭayr, also entitled *Maqāmāt-e ṭoyūr*. This work has a frame-story, inspired by the *Resālat al-ṭayr* of Aḥmad or his brother Moḥammad Ḡazālī (Ritter, *Das Meer der Seele*, pp. 8f.), which combines two well-known themes, the assembly of birds to choose the worthiest of them as their leader, and the journey of the birds to the distant seat of the bird-king. Forūzānfar (*Šarḥ-e aḥwāl*, pp. 336-45) has traced the second theme back to the *Resālat al-ṭayr* of Ebn Sīnā. ʿAṭṭār embellished and expanded the allegory of Ḡazālī and gave it a

deeper meaning, but kept the frame. The birds acknowledge the Sīmorḡ as their king. Smitten with desire to see him, they decide to set out for his faraway palace. The journey costs the lives of many of them. The few birds, according to ʿAṭṭār only thirty, who survive to reach their goal are made aware of the Sīmorḡ' inaccessibility and self-sufficient majesty. Only after they have apprehended the vastness of the gulf between their own dependence and the Sīmorḡ's independence are they granted admission for an audience. ʿAṭṭār then consummates the epic with an affirmation of his cherished belief that man will find the sought supreme being, within himself, and he expresses his meaning through an ingenious pun: The thirty birds (*sī morḡ*) find to their amazement that the Sīmorḡ is none other than their own selves (*maqāla* 45). In contrast with the birds of Ḡazālī ʿAṭṭār's birds are not an anonymous flock, but often come onto the scene as individuals concerned with problems of the venture (*maqāla*s 3-12 and elsewhere). Their leader, the *hodhod* hoopoe, (mentioned in Qurʾān 27:20 as Solomon's messenger) is the moving spirit of the whole enterprise. ʿAṭṭār also interweaves numerous tales and anecdotes into the frame-story just as he does in his other mystical narrative poems, for the purpose of developing the various themes. Sometimes the role of reciter is given to an actor in the main drama as a means of keeping the plot on course; for example, it is after hearing the hoopoe tell the tale of Shaikh Ṣaṇʿān's fateful love (*maqāla* 14; analysis in Forūzānfar, *Šarḥ-e aḥwāl*, pp. 320-26) that the birds decide to set out on their quest for the Sīmorḡ (*maqāla* 15).

Editions, manuscripts, and translation are described in Ritter, "Philologika XIV," pp. 49-56; to these must be added the eds. by M. J. Maškūr, Tehran, 1341 Š./1962, and Ṣ. Gowharīn, Tehran 1342 Š./1963, am the tr. by R. P. Masani, *The Conference of the Birds: A Sufi Allegory, Being an Abridged Version of Farid-ud-din Attar's Mantiqut-Tayr*, London, 1924, and C. S. Nott, *The Conference of the Birds*, London, 1954 and 1961.

Moṣībat-nāma. This expounds a basic theme of ʿAṭṭār's world of thought, namely the inner restlessness and bewilderment from which deliverance is attainable on the Sufi path (see Ritter, *Das Meer der Seele*, pp. 245ff.). In the *Moṣībat-nāma*, the person who has these experiences is a *sālek* (wayfarer) guided by master. ʿAṭṭār insists explicitly here on the necessity of guidance by a master (ed. Weṣāl, pp. 63.2ff., and passim). He identifies the *sālek* with the ideal mystic and relates this ideal to remembrance of God (ibid., p. 57.2). Mystical experiences in the privacy of vigil probably form the background of the whole work (Ritter, ibid., p. 18), as the forty stages traversed by the *sālek*

apparently correspond to the forty days of religious vigil (*čella*). The idealized *sālek* appeals to forty celestial and terrestrial beings for advice on deliverance from his tormented state of mind: They are Gabriel and the other angels (pp. 1-5), God's throne and its pedestal (pp. 6-7), the tablet and the reed-pen (pp. 8-9), paradise and hell (pp. 10-11), the sky, sun, and moon (pp. 12-14), the four elements (pp. 15-18), the mountains and seas (pp. 19-20), minerals, plants, and different orders of animals (pp. 21-25), demons, spirits, and humans (p. 26-28), Adam and the other prophets to Mohammad (pp. 29-35), the faculties of perception, imagination, reason, and heart, i.e., emotion (pp. 36-39), and finally the universal soul (*rūh*Â¡). All but one give him the same answer in the unspoken language of mood (*zabān-e ḥāl*; ibid., p. 56.4ff.): they are in no better state than he is. Only from the universal soul does he get the salutary advice that he can find the deliverance he seeks nowhere except in himself. He must cast himself into the ocean of the soul and utterly efface himself (*maqāla* 40). From time to time the *sālek*'s appeals to the different beings and their replies lead the poet into rhetorical disquisitions in the panegyric verse style about ideas and themes associated with the particular luminaries. Sometimes the *sālek*, after one of his conversations with a being, gets comments on it from his master; this also probably reflects a practice in Sufi vigils. The various beings are transformed into symbols or occasions for explanation of specific aspects of mystical progress or Sufi ethics. Also instrumental to this end, as in ʿAṭṭār's other mystical narrative poems, are more or less lengthy interposed stories which he explains and discusses as the occasion requires.

Manuscripts and translations are described in Ritter, "Philologika XIV," 36-60. Printed ed. by N. Weṣāl, Tehran, 1338 Š./1959. Particulars of older printed eds. in Mošār, *Fehrest*, col. 1448.

Elāhī-nāma. This work owes its name to the poet's intention that it should open the "door to the divine treasure" (*dar-e ganj-e elāhī*; ed. Ritter, p. 366.5). The frame-story tells of a caliph who has six sons and asks each about his heart's desire. The first son longs for the daughter of the king of the fairies, the second for mastery of the art of magic, the third for the *Jām-e jam*, the world-reflecting cup of Jamšīd, the fourth for the water of life, the fifth for the demon-controlling ring of Solomon, and sixth for knowledge of alchemy. The ruler discusses each son's desire with him, trying to explain to him not only that it is absurd if viewed *sub specie aeternitatis*, but that it may also, if interpreted esoterically, have a deeper meaning and be capable of fulfillment within himself. The fairy princess may be one's own purified soul (p. 76.7ff.), magic

may consist of turning the devil which one carries in one's self (p. 128.3ff.) into a Muslim (p. 139.1ff.). Jamšīd's cup may be the mystic who in the state of union becomes the mirror of reality (p. 185.5ff.), the water of life may be esoteric knowledge (p. 218.15ff.), Solomon's ring may be contentment with one's lot (p. 286.10ff.), and the true elixir may, in ʿAṭṭār's words, be the "light of God" which transforms everything (p. 361.16ff.). In another passage, typical of ʿAṭṭār's reinterpretations, he makes alchemy mean transformation of body into heart and of heart into pain (p. 355.12)—words which echo the theme of the *Moṣībat-nāma*. In substance the *Elāhī-nāma* conveys the same message as the *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*, namely that the goal which man seeks is latent within himself. The outline of this basic idea is enriched with numerous apposite stories of varying length (from 3 to over 400 verses). In other words, a wealth of edifying anecdotal material is fitted into a frame-story, as in the *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*.

Editions: H. Ritter, *Ilahi-Name: Die Gespräche des Königs mit seinen sechs Söhnen. Eine mystische Dichtung von Faridaddin ʿAṭṭār*, Leipzig and Istanbul, 1940 (Bibliotheca Islamica 12); F. Rūḥānī, Tehran, 1339 Š./1960. Translations: F. Rouhani (Rūḥānī), *Le livre divin*, Paris, 1961; J. A. Boyle, *The Ilāhī-nāma or Book of God*, Manchester, 1976 (Persian Heritage Series, 29). For interpretation of the frame-story, see also F. Meier, "Geistmensch," *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 13, p. 346.

Four more *maṯnawī* poems are placed by Ritter in the first group of ʿAṭṭār's authentic works. Two of them, the *Meʿrāj-nāma* and the *Jomjoma-nāma*, are very short and look as if they may be pieces from a larger narrative poem, the former being part of *naʿt*, and the latter being an illustrative story about Jesus's reanimation of the skull of a heathen king who then tells him of the horrors of the tomb and hell's punishments (see Ritter's ed. of the *Elāhī-nāma*, p. 10b). The third poem, the *Bolbol-nāma*, tells how the nightingale, after being hauled before Solomon for singing love-songs to the rose, defends and finally vindicates himself (Ritter, "ʿAṭṭār," in *EI*^{2} I, p. 754, no. 10; Nafīsī, *Jostojū*, pp. 106f.); this work is judged by Nafīsī, on stylistic grounds, to be spurious. On the other hand, Nafīsī surprisingly upholds the authenticity of the fourth of these *maṯnawī*s, the *Pand-nāma* (*Jostojū*, pp. 108f.), even though there are no indications of ʿAṭṭār's authorship in the text of this short work (Ritter, "Philologika XVI," pp. 228f.) and no traces of its existence before the 9th/15th century. In content it does not display any of the characteristically stock of ideas of ʿAṭṭār, being a dry moral rule-book in abrupt and grammatically very simple language with trite wording. Only the nine verses of the conclusion (*Ḵātema*) are worthy of ʿAṭṭār. Nevertheless this work won great popularity,

particularly among the Turks; it has been printed, often with commentaries, and translated into Turkish many times (Ritter, “Philologika XVI,” pp. 228-38).

As for the works in Ritter’s second group, Nafīsī has convincingly shown that they cannot, for reasons of style, be from ʿAṭṭār’s pen (*Jostojū*, pp. 105ff., 114, 128, 132f.). The works in question are entitled *Oštor-nāma*, *Jawhar* (or *Jawāher*) *al-ḏāt*, *Haylāj-nāma*, *Manṣūr-nāma*, and *Bīsar-nāma*. To these must be added the *Maẓhar al-ʿajāʾeb* and *Lesān al-ḡayb* from the third group, in addition to the following which are judged also by Ritter to be indisputably apocryphal: *Ḵayyāṭ-nāma*, *Waṣlat-nāma*, *Kanz al-asrār*, *Meftāḥ al-fotūḥ*, *Waṣīyat-nāma*, *Kanz al-ḥaqāʾeq* (see *EI*^{2} , s.v. ʿAṭṭār).

For a music sample, see Ebrāhīm b. Adham.

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Given in the text. See also *Colloquio italiano-iranico sul poeta mistico Farīd uddīn ʿAṭṭār*, Rome, 1978.

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