



## ḤAKIM ATĀ

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**ḤAKIM ATĀ**, a Central Asian Sufi associated with the earliest phase of the Yasavi tradition, whose full identity is not known for certain; he is usually named as a direct disciple of Aḥmad Yasavi, and would therefore have lived in the early 13th century (the date 582/1186-87 mentioned for his death, evidently for the first time in the 19th-century work *Ḳazinat al-asfiā* [lith., p. 534], seems not to have been based on any reliable information). Early references to Ḥakim Atā are sparse; he seems to have been first mentioned in the earliest biography of Bahā'-al-Din Naqšband, the *Anis al-ṭālebin*, which was composed at the very beginning of the fifteenth century, in connection with a dream of Bahā'-al-Din that was interpreted as predicting his association with the “*mašā'ek-e tork*” (Boḳāri, p. 84). A “Ḥakim Solaymān” is also mentioned twice, and linked with Aḥmad Yasavi, in a hagiography from the second half of the 15th century devoted to an “Oveysi” saint (anon, *Hašt ḥadiqa* [ms., fols. 72a, 97b]). The first extensive descriptions of him appear in 'Ali-Šir Navā'i's (d. 906/1500) *Nasā'em al-maḥabba* (p. 384) and the *Rašahāt-e 'ayn al-ḥayāt* (“Šāfi,” I, pp. 20-23), a Naqšbandi hagiography from the beginning of the 16th century. Both accounts affirm that he was Yasavi's disciple, and that he was famed for his verse aphorisms, known as *ḥekmats*, but they agree on little besides that. Navā'i says that Ḥakim Atā's name was Solaymān, and explains that he was called “Ḥakim” because Aḥmad Yasavi praised him for acting wisely (*ḥakimāna*) when he alone among Yasavi's disciples thought to wrap the firewood he had gathered inside his cloak to keep it dry.

The *Rašahāt*'s account is problematic: some versions of the work affirm that



Ḥakim Atā's name was Solaymān and make him the fourth successor to Yasavi (listing Ṣufi Moḥammad Dānešmand as his third *kalifa*), while other versions (including quite early ones) distinguish a Solaymān Atā from Ḥakim Atā, and identify them as the third and fourth successors of Yasavi respectively (omitting Ṣufi Moḥammad Dānešmand altogether). Even though the *Rašahāt*'s account of Yasavi's four successors is contrived to begin with, this discrepancy remains unexplained; other early evidence identifying Ḥakim Atā as "Solaymān" (and attesting to Ṣufi Moḥammad Dānešmand's role as Yasavi's disciple) favors the version naming Ḥakim Solaymān as Yasavi's fourth successor. The "combined" account in the *Rašahāt* adds only that Ḥakim Atā lived in K̄vārazm and was buried there, at a place called "Āq Qurḡān" [*sic*]; the *Rašahāt*'s account of Zangi Atā, cast as Ḥakim Atā's disciple, mentions Ḥakim Atā's marriage to 'Anbar Anā, daughter of "Borāq K̄ān" (or, in another account, of "Boḡrā K̄ān"), and the story of her dislike of his dark skin, which prompted him to predict her marriage after his death to "one darker than me," referring to Zangi Atā. Finally, the *Rašahāt* situates Ḥakim Atā quite precisely in the *selsela* (chain of transmission) of the Yasavi order as the master of Zangi Atā, whose four disciples included Ṣadr Atā, the one through whom was traced the lineage of the entire Yasavi order in the 15th to 18th centuries. That order, insofar as it is known from our sources, was most firmly established neither in K̄vārazm nor in Aḥmad Yasavi's native region of Torkestān, but in Mā-warā'-alnahr, where, like other Ṣufi communities of that region during the same era, it left a legacy of hagiographical literature overwhelmingly in Persian.

Both Navā'i's *Nasā'em* and the *Rašahāt* preserve separate narrative elements about Ḥakim Atā, such as the story of the firewood, which became combined with further narratives in a popular hagiography in Turkic, known as the *Ḥakim Atā ketābī* (Zaleman, 1898). This work affirms that Ḥakim Atā was trained by Aḥmad Yasavi, but implies that Zangi Atā never met Ḥakim Atā, thereby cautioning against the uncritical acceptance of the standard presentation of the Yasavi *selsela* as represented in the *Rašahāt*. Not even the *Ḥakim Atā ketābī*, however, exhausts the body of oral tradition circulated about this saint, as additional narratives are recorded in later Yasavi hagiographies. The Ottoman Turkish *Javāher al-abrār* from the late 16th century includes Ḥakim Atā in several miracle-stories about Aḥmad Yasavi (Ḥazini, pp. 46, 55), and the seventeenth-century *Lamahāt men nafahāt al-qods* echoes those accounts, while adding a remarkable narrative that seems to echo traditions of Mu'tazilite hostility toward Sufis in K̄vārazm (including Ḥakim Atā's demand to the ulama of that region to "sew a boot for the foot of



God” [ms., fol. 39b-40a]). Oral tradition focused on Ḥakim Atā continues to circulate in K̅vārazm.

The minimal attention to *selsela* relationships in the *Ḥakim Atā ketābi*, the relatively poorly developed saintly image of Ḥakim Atā in the hagiography of the Yasavi order, the prominence of his shrine in K̅vārazm, and the existence of “descent groups” there claiming him as an ancestor, all suggest that he was a local saint of K̅vārazm who was later grafted onto the Yasavi Sufi lineage; it is no less plausible, however, that his place in the Yasavi *selsela* reflected an authentic relationship with Aḥmad Yasavi and Zangi Atā, but was simply less important in the public venues of popular hagiography, genealogy, and shrine traditions. Ḥakim Atā’s shrine in the K̅vārazmian locality of “Bāqirgān” (near the town of Qonghirat in Uzbekistan) is mentioned as a prominent pilgrimage place already at the beginning of the 16th century.

As noted previously, both Navā’i’s *Nasā’em* and the *Rašahāt* affirm that Ḥakim Atā was renowned for his *ḥekmats* in Turkic, and each of these works offers a different set of examples of them. Turkic poetry ascribed to Ḥakim Atā is attested at the same time, thus associating him with the composition of aphoristic sayings and verse in Turkic significantly earlier than Aḥmad Yasavi himself. A collection of verse ascribed to Ḥakim Atā, identified as “Solaymān Bāqirgāni,” was in circulation at least by the later eighteenth century, and has been printed several times as the “*Bāqirgān ketābi*.”

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