



JONAYD

JONAYD B. EBRĀHIM B. K̄VĀJA 'ALI B. ŞADR-AL-DIN B. ŞAFI-AL-DIN (d. 1460), a patrilineal descendant of Shaikh Şafi-al-Din (d. 1334), the founder of the Şafaviya order in Ardabil (q.v.). Jonayd played the central role in expanding the membership of the order by incorporating Turkmen devotees from Anatolia and Syria, who would later support revolutionary aspirations of his son Ḥaydar (d. 1488) and his grandson Esmā'il (the future Shah Esmā'il I, founder of the Safavid dynasty, r. 1501-24, q.v.).

Located in northwestern Persia, close to the Caspian Sea, the city of Ardabil lay on important east-west and north-south trade routes traveled by merchants on their way to Anatolia or the Caucasus. Persian- and Turkish-speaking merchants, craftsmen, bureaucrats, and rulers came to it to patronize the holy man Shaikh Şafi-al-Din, after whom the Safavid dynasty (1501-1722) would later be named. Shaikh Şafi-al-Din actively engaged in his followers' conversion, and his mystical teachings and practices introduced them to Islam's basic tenets. Ties between the market place, or bazaar, and the Şafaviya order were strengthened upon Shaikh Şafi-al-Din's death in 1334, when craftsmen built a shrine around the house of their deceased spiritual guide. His death did not discourage believers from venerating him. His sacred abode continued to be revered, and his patrilineal descendants became the living guides (*moršed*), who inherited both Shaikh Şafi-al-Din's charisma and the actual administration (*towliyat*) of the order. Undeterred by the passing of Shaikh Şafi-al-Din's material life, disciples still flocked to Ardabil from Azarbaijan and the Caspian Sea region, turning the pilgrim city into a site



where trade, religiosity, and socialization merged. As a result, there appeared a system of “voluntary” kinship in Ardabil based on the close ties between the Şafaviya order on the one hand and, on the other, laborers and merchants who ran the commercial and religious economy under the patronage of the Şafavi family. In time, this network of kinships facilitated broader regional alliances endowed with political agency powerful enough to support aspirations for messianic rule of Jonayd’s grandson Esmā’il.

Esmā’il’s revolution could not have succeeded without his corps of Turkmen devotees, that is, westward-moving Turks, whom his grandfather, Shaikh Jonayd, had recruited from Ottoman and Du’l-Qadar dominions in Asia Minor and Syria. But well before Esmā’il’s own messianic revolution, Jonayd had altered the character of the Şafaviya from a Sufi order to an Alid messianic movement with far-reaching political aspirations. It was probably during Jonayd’s missionary activities in Anatolia that the figure of ‘Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb (d. 661, q.v.) began to play such a central devotional role in Safavid religiosity. This reorientation of the Şafaviya order most likely coincided with Jonayd’s banishment from Ardabil in 1447-48 due to a dispute with his uncle Shaikh Ja’far b. K̄vāja ‘Ali over the headship of the order (Tehrāni-Eşfahāni, p. 521).

The participation of the Şafaviya order in regional rivalries between the Qarā Qoyunlu and Āq Qoyunlu (qq.v.) Turkmen confederations demonstrates their growing local power and status. The sovereignty of the Qarā Qoyunlu ruler Jahānšāh b. Qarā Yusof (r. 1434-67), whose dominion extended over the territories of Azarbaijan, ‘Erāq-e ‘Ajam, ‘Erāq-e ‘Arab, Fārs, and Kermān, was threatened by his Āq Qoyunlu rival Uzun Ḥasan (r. 1457-78), who dwelled further west in Diārbakr (q.v.). As the ruler of Azarbaijan, Jahānšāh came to exercise his might and will in the politics of the Şafavi family. Jahānšāh backed Ja’far’s claim over both the spiritual and administrative directorship of the Şafaviya order and denied Jonayd’s contest for the order’s headship. To reinforce his patronage for Shaikh Ja’far, Jahānšāh bestowed his daughter in marriage to Ja’far’s son, Shaikh Qāsem, and banished Jonayd from Ardabil. Safavid historiography remains silent about this family hostility between the uncle (Ja’far) and the nephew (Jonayd). In fact, the historiography censors the dispute out of the annals of imperial Safavid history, narrating instead a trouble-free transfer of authority from Ebrāhim b. K̄vāja ‘Ali to Jonayd (K̄vāndamir, IV, p. 425; Zāhedī, pp. 66-67; Eskandar Beg Monši, I, pp. 17-18.). What Safavid historians do write about, however, are Jahānšāh’s fears over Jonayd’s growing popularity and power in Ardabil (K̄vāndamir, IV, p. 425;



Eskandar Beg Monši, I, p. 17).

Exiled from his hometown, Jonayd purportedly traveled west to Diārbakr, where Jahānšāh's rival, the Āq Qoyunlu ruler Uzun Ḥasan, was expanding his dominion to the north, east, and west. In a retaliatory gesture toward Jahānšāh, Uzun Ḥasan supposedly agreed to marry his sister Kādiya Begum to Jonayd, thus restating his affiliation with and support for the rival branch of the Ṣafavi family (Kōnĵi, pp. 255-307). Uzun Ḥasan held Sufi shaikhs in high esteem, and to broaden his political and religious appeal he had patronized other Sufi orders such as the Kobrawiya, Kālwatiya, Naqšbandiya, and Ne'mat-Allāhiya. But none of the orders' shaikhs had had the honor, or perhaps the desire, to join with the Āq Qoyunlu bloodline.

Though Jonayd did marry Uzun Ḥasan's sister and in the alliance placed his bets on the rising fortunes of Uzun Ḥasan, the marriage did not take place before 1456. It is difficult to trace Jonayd's activities during the period from his exile from Ardabil in 1448 and up to his pact of marriage with the Āq Qoyunlus in 1456. Anatolia was just barely recovering from political chaos due to Timur's (1336-1405, q.v.) conquest of the Ottoman core territories in 1402 and the ensuing interregnum. Sultan Morād II (r. 1421-44 and 1446-51) would later set out to recuperate Ottoman territorial losses in the Balkans and in western Anatolia, but for the moment, the area of central and eastern Anatolia was impenetrable for him. The Āq Qoyunlu, Qarā Qoyunlu, Du'l-Qadar, and Mamluk rulers—all attempted to extend their Anatolian and Syrian frontiers that had been made vulnerable by the present turmoil and unruliness. In these decentralized regions inhabited by Turkmen tribes, shifts in political loyalties were a common phenomenon. Through missionary activities Jonayd successfully converted many Turkmen and recruited devotees—later known as Qezelbāš, or Red Heads, because of the color of their high caps—who contributed to his military might and later aided his grandson Esmā'il in founding an empire.

The new character of the Ṣafaviya order reflected the preaching and organizing efforts (*kālifa* system) Jonayd spent in his travels through Qarāmān, the Taurus Mountains, and Kastamonu regions heavily populated by Turkmen tribes. Other areas, which were primarily inhabited by Turkmen and/or experienced much Ṣafavi proselytization, included Teke (where Shah Quli's messianic uprising originated in 1514); the area near Kirshehir—where Ḥāji Bektāš (d. 1270, q.v.) founded his heterodox order in the 13th century—including Amasya, Çorum, Tokat; and Dobruja in Rumelia which,



since Saljuq times, had been dense with Turkmen and their dervish leaders and also famous for popular messianic uprisings. Belief in the imminent appearance of a Messiah who would establish social justice on earth, had been the motivation for many uprisings in Anatolia. From the rebellion led by Bābā Eshāq in 1240 to that of Shaikh Badr-al-Din in 1416, the Turkish- and Persian-speaking populations in Anatolia took part in messianic uprisings, compelled by difficult social conditions and religious beliefs.

It is in the context of this geographical relocation—wherefore Jonayd’s training in the order was deeply influenced by the culture in Anatolia—that the new Alid direction of the Şafavi movement should be understood. Jonayd was the first Şafavi mystic to claim rule. Upon the transformation in the movement, Shaikh Jonayd donned the title of sultan, emphasizing the dimension of temporal sovereignty (*ma’nawī*), besides that of spiritual dominion (*suri*). His claims to legitimacy were similar to those of the Ottoman ruler ‘Oṭmān I Ġāzi b. Ertöğrel (r. 1281-1324), when the latter was consolidating power in western Anatolia. Legends attribute ‘Oṭmān I’s commitment to *ğazā*’ (holy war) to inspiration by a dervish shaikh; other semi-legendary sources celebrate the feats of dervishes in the ranks of the first Ottoman forces fighting the war against infidels (Inalcik, pp. 270-71).

The drama of the martyred family of ‘Ali—portrayed as the chief victims of the aggression perpetrated by the Omayyads, who usurped the right of leading the Muslim community from ‘Ali and his children—had been memorialized by the Anatolian population in the forms of oral narratives and yearly rituals which commemorated the slaughter of Moḥammad’s grandson and ‘Ali’s son, Ḥosayn (q.v.), on the plains of Karbalā’ in Iraq in 680. Jonayd drew on sentiments of revenge and called for justice, identifying his messianic mission with the struggle of those who, despite centuries of Sunni Muslim hegemony, continued to love Moḥammad’s family (*ahl-e bayt*) with unmitigated loyalty. Jonayd’s heroic battles would also be memorialized in a series of epic narratives (*Jonayd-nāma*) that circulated by word of mouth around Anatolia and Azarbaijan. The epic narratives allowed the Şafavi devotee to place himself within a cycle of history; this identification, based on history’s cycles, facilitated the belief that in each age new heroes like Jonayd would uphold similar chivalric ideals and re-enact them so as to personally experience the drama and tragedy of the Alid past.

Jonayd’s Turkmen devotees viewed him as God’s reincarnation. Fażl-Allāh b. Ruzbehān Kōnji (d. 1521), a Sunni historian at the court of the Āq Qoyunlu



ruler Ya'qub b. Uzun Ḥasan (r. 1478-90), captured the reverence that Jonayd's followers had for him: "[His adepts] openly called Shaikh Jonayd 'God' (*Elāh*) and his son [Ḥaydar] 'son of God' (*ebn Allāh*). They praised him thus: "He is the Living One, there is no God but he." Their folly and ignorance were such that, if someone spoke of Shaikh Jonayd as dead, he was no more to enjoy the sweet beverage of life; and if someone said that a part of Jonayd's body went missing, they would give up the threshing ground of his existence to the wind of non-existence" (K̄onji, p. 272). In 1456, the year that Jonayd probably married Uzun Ḥasan's sister, Jonayd fought a holy war (*ḡazā'*) with his Turkmen converts against Byzantine in Anatolia, in the area of Trabezond (Aşikpaşa-zade, ed. Giese, p. 264). He may have mounted the raid with the approval of his patron and brother-in-law, Uzun Ḥasan, for during Uzun Ḥasan's reign (1457-78) the Āq Qoyunlus also waged similar campaigns in Anatolia and Georgia in 1458. During one such raid to the Caucasus (Şervān) in 1460, Jonayd was felled on the battlefield and killed by the troops of the local ruler, Şervānšāh K̄alil I b. Ebrāhim I (r. 1418-63).

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