

THEORIES AND METHODOLOGIES

Persianate Unfamiliarity: A *Qaṣīda* by Shawkat Bukhārī to Imam al-Rizā

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Modern scholarship has most often employed the concept of the Persianate to designate a transregional ecumene, sphere, or world, as well as the processes that shaped and sustained this ecumene.¹ To be (or become) Persianate was to belong and partake in the Persianate ecumene through forms of affiliation, identification, and exchange that could include language, literatures, and politics, as well as Islamic (and non-Islamic) networks, institutions, and norms.² Many studies of the Persianate focus on the early modern period, since this was the time in which “Persian reached the zenith of its geographical and social reach” (Green 1).³ This “High Persianate period,” as Matthew Melvin-Koushki terms it (355), also featured the development of a Persianate poetic movement that aimed for freshness and novelty; hence, some participants in this movement described it as *tāza-gū’ī* (“speaking afresh”).⁴ One way in which poets claimed to make poetry fresh was through expressing *bīgāna* (“unfamiliar”) ideas: ideas that no poet had yet brought into the bounds of verse.⁵ In turn, they might claim that they themselves, as poets, had become unfamiliar and *gharīb* (“foreign,” “exiled,” or “strange”) to the people and places of home. The poetics of unfamiliarity might appear to be separate from or even opposed to the forms of belonging and exchange that in many ways characterized the Persianate ecumene. Instead, I argue for theorizing the poetics of unfamiliarity as an integrally Persianate phenomenon.

As a way into this question, I focus on the initial section of a *qaṣīda* (“ode”) by the Persian poet Muhammad Ishāq Shawkat Bukhārī (d. 1695 or 1696) in which Shawkat describes both himself and his poetics in terms of their unfamiliarity. To explore what Shawkat means by this, I approach unfamiliarity as a product of

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distance. One meaning of distance in the *qaṣīda* is physical separation: Shawkat's unfamiliarity to the people of his home is achieved in part through his having traveled away from them. Indeed, Shawkat dedicates the *qaṣīda* to Imam 'Alī al-Rizā (d. 818), a revered descendant of the Prophet Muhammad who was buried at Mashhad (in Iran) and to whose shrine Shawkat had undertaken a pilgrimage from his native Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan).⁶ But I suggest that it is also necessary to understand Shawkat's unfamiliarity in relation to a poetics of distance. A distance between verbal expression and meaning is at work; Shawkat communicates new ideas with as little reliance on words as possible. Shawkat leverages the familiarity of the Persianate poetic tradition to generate this distance: assuming the reader's knowledge of this tradition allows him to leave unstated the layers of meaning and chains of metaphorical association that subtend his poetic arguments.⁷ I argue that there is a dialectical interplay between familiarity and unfamiliarity in the *qaṣīda*, since participating in the Persianate poetic tradition is what enables Shawkat's poetics to find fresh and imaginative distance from that tradition.

Persianate Exile

The first thirty couplets of Shawkat's *qaṣīda* constitute a loosely knit thematic unit in which one recurring thread is a multivalent exploration of unfamiliarity. I analyze here couplets that give a sense of the kinds of distances that Shawkat has crossed and that have made him an unfamiliar, foreign figure, including distances in physical space and in his poetics.

The *qaṣīda* describes Shawkat as having become unfamiliar (*biḡāna*) to his own country, vacillating between home (*vaṭan*) and exile (*ghurbat*), as in couplets 10 and 11:

رویم به سوی غربت و دل جانب وطن
افتاد گاه من به میان دو کهربا

خلقى فتاده اند به طعم که از وطن
بیرون چه آمدی و مسافر شدی چرا⁸

(499)

My face, toward exile
and my heart,

toward home—
Between two bits of amber
fell my straw.⁹

People have fallen upon deprecating me,
saying:
“Why did you come out of the homeland,” and
“Wherefore did you become a traveler?”¹⁰

Later, the *qaṣīda* takes up the idea of exile again, characterizing Shawkat as *gharīb*: a foreigner or one who has been exiled (507). The distance between home and exile might be read in terms of Shawkat's “life-truth” of having departed from Bukhara and traveled to Mashhad in pilgrimage to the Imam's shrine.¹¹ This journey took him from the region of Tūrān (roughly, present-day Central Asia), which was then under the neo-Chinggisid Ashtarkhanid dynasty, into Iran, then under the Safavid dynasty.¹² In Mashhad, Shawkat joined a poetic circle patronized by the Safavid official Mīrzā Sa'd al-Dīn.¹³ Although he did eventually continue his travels, he never returned to Tūrān. Shawkat's dedication of the *qaṣīda* to the Imam (to whose praise the poet transitions after couplet 30) lends support to an interpretation of Shawkat's foreignness and unfamiliarity as resulting at least in part from his pilgrimage and the distance—even exile—from home that it entailed.

The unfamiliarity that Shawkat claims as a result of his exile can be described as Persianate in two main ways. First, the Persianate can be conceptualized as an ecumene that encompasses Bukhara and Mashhad: Shawkat has left home but has not left the Persianate ecumene.¹⁴ Second, the distances that Shawkat has traveled and that have made him an exile and a stranger do not make him an unintelligible figure. As Mana Kia has argued, the Persianate entails a shared “hermeneutical ground” (197), and Shawkat's self-characterization as having gone into exile for the Imam reflects his engagements with this hermeneutical ground. For instance, there are rich Persianate poetic precedents for such tropes as suffering out of devotion to the Imam¹⁵ and turning to the Imam as one who has been exiled.¹⁶ This shared hermeneutical ground also allows Shawkat's assertion of being in exile to

connect the poet to Imam al-Rizā himself. The Imam (who was born in Medina) journeyed to eastern Iran, where he died, and he is thus known for having been exiled.¹⁷ To assert the experience of exile in a *qaṣīda* to the Imam links the poet with the target of his praise. Considering the Persianate both as an ecumene and a hermeneutical ground enables us to see that the Persianate not only comprises the familiarity of home and the unfamiliarity of exile but also provides the terms that make the unfamiliar intelligible.

Familiarity with Unfamiliar Meanings

If travel through physical space causes Shawkat's distance from home, it is not the only cause of this distance. Couplet 7 offers an esoteric interpretation of Islamic sacred sites and, by implication, of pilgrimage:

(498) آئینه دار یثرب و بطحا نمی شوم
از دیده و دل است مرا مروه و صفا

To Yathrib and Batha,
I hold up no mirror:
Marwa and Safa come from
my eyes and heart.

Yathrib and Batha refer to Medina and Mecca, respectively; to hold up a mirror to them would be to assume the role of an attendant who makes it possible for them to gaze admiringly at their own reflections. By disavowing this role, Shawkat calls into question the need to seek the sacred in locations outside himself. Similarly, Shawkat claims that Marwa and Safa—the sacred hills at Mecca, between which pilgrims travel—come from the faculties of his eyes and heart. Wordplay strengthens this claimed self-sufficiency, as صفا (*ṣafā*) can also mean “purity,” while (were it not for the meter) مروه could be read as *muruwwa* (“chivalry”); that is, the names of the hills may be reinterpreted as the poet's own qualities. Gleaning a sacred topography in the poet's ethically coded faculties and qualities prompts, in turn, an understanding of pilgrimage beyond exoteric sites. This poetic gesture resonates with couplet 25's claim that poetry has set Shawkat into a kind of motion:

(500) از بس بود مدار من از پهلوی سخن
باشد به خانه‌ام ز نی خامه بوریا

My circling is around the sides of poetry,
so much so
That my house's reed mat is from
the reed of my pen.

The reference to circling around poetry's sides recalls the circumambulation of a shrine (like that of the Imam), offering another way in which the *qaṣīda* imagines forms of pilgrimage—in this case, poeticizing as pilgrimage—that need not involve physical travel.

Couplet 8 attributes Shawkat's distance from home to his familiarity with unfamiliar meanings; the distance is a poetic distance:

(499) بیگانه کرده است مرا از دیار خویش
تا گشته‌ام به معنی بیگانه آشنا

It made me unfamiliar to
my own country
When I became familiar with
unfamiliar meanings.

But what does familiarity with unfamiliar meanings entail for Shawkat? For an answer, it is helpful to consult Shawkat's poetic collection beyond the *qaṣīda*. Shawkat repeatedly emphasizes the distinction and, in fact, the distance between verbal expression (*lafẓ*) and meaning (*ma'nī*); for instance, he contrasts the familiarity of words with the unfamiliarity of meanings (408). In another couplet, Shawkat claims that he has become a foreigner because of the distance that he has crossed from verbal expression to meaning:

(168) ز فکر دور خیالم غریب شد شوکت
میان معنی و لفظم هزار فرسنگ است

My imagination's far-flung thoughts
made Shawkat into a foreigner—
Between my meaning and expression
are one thousand leagues.

Here, Shawkat uses the language of physical distance (leagues) to mark the distance between meaning and expression in a couplet. This distance between

meaning and expression suggests that to attain unfamiliar meanings requires going beyond what is stated explicitly; indeed, for Shawkat, the poetics of unfamiliar meanings resists being heard by any ear (262).

In couplet 28 of this *qaṣīda*, similarly, Shawkat suggests that a poetics of unfamiliarity eludes exoteric expression, since the poet claims to be unfamiliar (*biḡāna*) to (his own) voice:

(500) حیرت ز بس که سرمه‌ی خاموشی من است
بیگانه‌ام چو چینی تصویر از صدا¹⁸

Dazzlement is the collyrium
of my silence—
so much so
That I am, like the porcelain
of a painting,
unfamiliar to my own voice.

In the poetry of Shawkat's time, porcelain was often associated with noise, because it is delicate and makes a sound when breaking.¹⁹ However, the porcelain in couplet 28 is in a painting and therefore silent. At the same time, the couplet describes the poet himself as being in a state of *ḥayrat*: a dazzlement that has plunged him into silence.²⁰ It is fitting that *ḥayrat* acts as the collyrium (kohl) of the poet's silence, because collyrium beautifies and brightens the eye, but it was also thought to cause muteness when ingested. The association of collyrium with beautification links it to painting, while suggesting that the silence here is a bright-eyed, clear-seeing silence. This assertion of collyrium-adorned muteness resonates with Shawkat's desire to inscribe the Imam's threshold with his kisses in couplet 30:

(500) خواهم که نقش بوسه‌ی رنگین خود کنم
گل‌میخ آستان شه کشور رضا

I want to make the inscription
of my colorful kisses
Into the rose-shaped nails
of the threshold
of the country's king, Rizā.²¹

This colorful inscription with the mouth represents a kind of language that does not require being voiced.²²

The idea of a poetics that is unfamiliar to its own voice suggests communication through what is unstated. Two of the poetic devices that Shawkat uses in the *qaṣīda* enable the concision (*ijāz*) of his poetry, communicating as much meaning as possible in as few words as possible and thus maximizing the distance between meaning and expression. The first is *ihām* (literally, “deceiving”), by which the poet plays with two or more of a word's meanings. The second is what Shamsur Rahman Faruqi has described as the strategy of “treat[ing] metaphor as fact”—using a preestablished metaphor as the basis for creating new metaphors, connecting images, terms, and concepts that may appear to be disparate (37).²³ These devices engage Persianate intertextuality to generate unfamiliar meanings by means of the familiar.²⁴

Polysemous Proximity and Distance

Through *ihām*, a single term in a couplet evokes multiple meanings. Conventionally, *ihām* involves tricking the reader by seeming to offer a “close” (*qarīb*) meaning for a term, the meaning that would be likeliest to occur to the reader. However, the intended meaning in *ihām* is more distant (*ba'īd*) and foreign or strange (*gharīb*)—that is, less likely to come to mind.²⁵ Shawkat's uses of *ihām* require that his readers keep the more distant, less obvious meanings of words in mind, along with the meanings that may seem more directly relevant. That is, whereas conventional definitions of *ihām* suggest that the reader should disregard the closer meaning, which is deceptive, in order to discover the more distant meaning, which is what the poet truly intends, Shawkat tends to play with multiple meanings at once. For example, couplet 1 reads:

(498) از بس که ریخت رنگ جنون بر سرم هوا
سودا به پای بست ز مغز سرم حنا

Love laid the foundations of madness
upon my head—
so much so
That, from my head's brains,
melancholy bound henna
upon my feet.

The most immediate meaning of *rang* here appears to be in the sense of the idiomatic expression *rang rikhtan*, or “laying the foundations” (of madness); Shawkat and his contemporaries were fond of employing this idiom in their poetry.²⁶ Initially, the couplet does not seem to intend the more common meaning of *rang* as “color” (a literal translation of the idiom would be “scattering color”). Nevertheless, this meaning remains present, connecting the first and second lines: it is madness as color that enables Shawkat’s brains to dye his feet with henna. The play on color is reinforced by the fact that *sawdā* (“melancholy” or “madness”) also means “black.” The henna that resonates with *rang* as color circumscribes the poet’s feet; in the poetry of Shawkat’s time, to have henna on one’s feet can indicate being slowed down.²⁷ This latter meaning of henna, which conveys the impact that this transfer of color/madness has had on the poet, is equally necessary for the couplet to function.

Bringing out the multiple meanings of these words and idioms reveals the distances that the poet covers in the compressed space of a couplet, enabling a multilayered poetic argument to emerge. Love has set the foundations of madness on the poet’s head while, at the same time, scattering the color of madness upon him. From his head, the color of madness—now in the form of melancholy, which is black—moves down to the poet’s feet. Here, this color of madness appears as henna and, because henna slows down feet, it has the effect of slowing or stopping the poet in his tracks. By maintaining the multiplicity of meanings that a term can evoke, the couplet has the effect of encouraging a kind of reading that is attuned to less obvious, more distant meanings, without discarding those that may be closer at hand.

Inscribing the Mirror

Shawkat also concisely communicates new meanings by taking metaphors from the Persianate tradition as (unstated) poetic facts and using them to create new metaphors and poetic arguments. In this case, the couplet expresses only the conclusions that the poet has reached through engaging with the

poetic tradition and leaves unsaid all the poetic material that supplied the premises of these conclusions. That is, taking the (familiar) metaphor as fact allows the poet to imply, rather than explicitly state, the basis for making an unfamiliar claim, widening the distance between meaning and expression in the couplet. In the *qaṣīda*, Shawkat showcases the capabilities of the hermeneutical ground on which he stands by drawing on preestablished metaphors in order to give different meanings to a poetically elaborated expression. For example, couplets 4 and 5 both reinterpret the expression *jawhar-i ā’īna*, which can refer both to a mirror’s luster and to the marks left on a metallic mirror by polishing it:²⁸

بیرون نمی رود ز دلم ریش های غم
جوهر به تیغ ز آینه کی می شود جدا²⁹

از پیچ و تاب صاف دلان را گزیر نیست³⁰
جوهر بود کتابه‌ی آئینه خانه‌ها

(498)

These wounds of sorrow won’t leave
my heart;
What blade could carve
the polish marks
from the mirror?

The pure of heart cannot escape
twisting and turning—
On the halls of mirrors,
polish marks are
the epigraph.

Couplet 4 draws on the familiar metaphor of the pure heart as a mirror, as well as the notion that suffering offers a means to purity. Taking the heart-mirror metaphor as fact, the couplet then equates the wounds of sorrow in the poet’s heart with the polish marks on a mirror. The metaphor implies that the woundedness of Shawkat’s heart displays his purity. It also underscores that his is no transitory state of sorrow—you could no more pluck the wounds out of his heart than you could carve the polish marks (or the luster) from a mirror. This sense of indelibility is strengthened by another meaning of *jawhar* as “essence,” establishing the polish marks as part of the mirror’s essence.

Couplet 5 offers a new way of understanding the mirror's polish marks as signs of purity. On one level, it reiterates the idea that suffering—twisting and turning (*pīch-u tāb*)—inevitably characterizes the pure of heart, and it continues the association between the pure heart and the mirror. But the couplet imagines the pure of heart as a group, equating them with the *khāna* (“hall” or, literally, “house”) of mirrors. In turn, assuming as fact the metaphor of their hearts as a house of mirrors allows Shawkat to elaborate the image of this house inscribed with an epigraph, which the mirrors' polish marks come to represent.

Understanding *jawhar* as also meaning “pearl” adds another layer to couplet 5, since this association evokes the established trope of a thread's “twisting and turning” (*pīch-u tāb*) as it winds its way through the narrow hole of a pearl. Shawkat and his contemporaries interpret this image in different ways, but one suggestion is that twisting and turning like a thread makes one worthy of a pearl,³¹ as in this couplet by Muhammad 'Alī Sā'ib Tabrīzī (d. 1676), Shawkat's celebrated older contemporary:

سر از دریچه‌ی گوهر بر آوری فردا
اگر چو رشته بسازی به پیچ و تاب اینجا
(1: 282)

Tomorrow you will raise your head
through the narrow gate
of a pearl,
If today you start
twisting and turning
like a thread.

Bearing this association in mind offers yet another interpretation of Shawkat's couplet. On the one hand, the couplet suggests that the pure ones' twisting and turning produces the polish marks on their hearts' mirrors, and that these marks act as an epigraph. On the other hand, considering the pearl as the reward for the twisting thread's pains also suggests that those who are pure have earned this epigraph through their suffering. Indeed, as Prashant Keshavmurthy points out, the pierced pearl can indicate “the bound language of verse” (48), from which it follows that the twisting and turning of

those who are pure makes them into poets. Moreover, the epigraph appears as another form of expression that is available to the poet who is unfamiliar to his voice—in this case, a collectively inscribed writing, multiplied across many hearts.

Some scholars have interpreted the poetic transformations of Shawkat's day as resulting from the innovations of poets' private minds and imaginations. Taking Sā'ib as representative of the broader poetic movement of *tāza-gū'ī*, for example, Alessandro Bausani argues that the protagonist in his lyrical poetry is difficult to identify “a meno che non si voglia dichiarare che qui il protagonista è il ‘cervello’ del poeta stesso che crea un mondo semimitologico di esangui fantasmi” (“unless you choose to declare that here the protagonist is the ‘brain’ of the poet himself who creates a semimythical world of bloodless ghosts”; 299). Similarly, Henry Bowles finds in Sā'ib's poetry the “realism of inner language” and “privatizing of truth” (115, 126). I have argued that the distances that Shawkat's *qaṣīda* cultivates result instead from a shared and communally elaborated poetic imagination: that is, a Persianate imagination. This assertion of cocreation does not take away from Shawkat's poetic power, but suggests that part of this power derives from treating the hermeneutic ground on which the poet draws as unstable, dynamic, and charged with possibility.

Shawkat's poetry shows us that the Persianate can be understood as what the poetic voice speaks in silence. Be it the multiple meanings that the poet generates through *ihām* or the metaphors that the poet takes as fact to make new poetic arguments, what remains unstated arises from and refers back to the Persianate poetic tradition. Geoffrey Hartman argues that figurative phrases “may be characterized by overspecified ends and indeterminate middles,” prompting interpretation so as to reconstruct the middle: “the strength of the end terms depends on our seeing the elided members of the chain . . . the more clearly we see them the stronger the metaphor which collapses that chain” (242). In Shawkat's *qaṣīda*, however, to see what is elided (or unspoken, unfamiliar to the voice) does not cause the figurative end terms to collapse into

each other. Instead, to interpret a couplet in the light of the Persianate poetic tradition is to uncover the imaginative distances that the poet has generated through intertextuality, and to find that these distances may communicate something meaningful in all its newness, freshness, and unfamiliarity.

NOTES

I am grateful for the many insightful comments and suggestions that I received on this article from Sadegh Ansari and Pardis Dabashi.

1. For a characterization of the Persianate “cultural complex,” see Hemmat 633–34. On the Persianate as process, see Green 4.

2. In his discussion of whether the Persianate framework is limited to language and literature, Ashraf calls attention to new studies on topics including “trade, economy, and politics” (9–10). Hemmat stresses the political dimension of the Persianate (634). On the Sufi dimension of the Persianate in the Ottoman Empire, see Inan 89. On “heterogeneity” in the Persianate, including heterogeneity of religion, see Kia 166.

3. On the significance of early modernity to the Persianate, see Hemmat 639. Green notes the relevance of the Persianate beyond the early modern period (4–5), and Amanat offers an approach to the Persianate that is not focused on this period.

4. On the “intellectual circle” that “appears to have been the first to actually begin using the expression *tāza-gūʿī*,” see Kinra 207.

5. Losensky discusses unfamiliarity of meaning as connected to the “emphasis on originality” of what he calls “fresh style poets” and compares this emphasis with “the Russian formalist concept of ‘making it strange’ (*ostranenie*)” (214). A difference that I see between *ostranenie* and *bigānagi* is that the former technique typically enables a new understanding of what is familiar, while the latter may enable new understanding through, and beyond, what is familiar.

6. For a contemporaneous biography of Shawkat that gives an account of his pilgrimage to Mashhad, see Malihā 254.

7. I describe this tradition as poetic in an encompassing sense, without any implied categorical distinction from traditions that might be characterized with other emphases (for instance, Sufi traditions).

8. Page numbers in the extracts from the *qaṣida* refer to Sirus Shamisa’s edition of Shawkat’s poetic collection, *Divan-i Shawkat Bukhari*. In this couplet, a variant has افتاده (“has fallen”) in place of افتاد (Şafak 36).

9. Amber was thought to attract straw.

10. Unless noted otherwise, all translations are mine.

11. I take the term *life-truth* from Pollock’s comparison between the life-truth of an individual poet and that of seventeenth-century Sanskrit culture (409).

12. I take the term *neo-Chinggisid* from McChesney (“Earning” 90).

13. On Sa’d al-Dīn, see Malihā 254 and McChesney, “Barrier” 242–43.

14. Indeed, as Kia has argued, Persianate ideas of home and exile can overlap (32–33).

15. An example is the sixteenth-century poet and musical theorist Mawlana Hasan Kawkabī, whose love for Imam al-Rizā was said to have motivated his pilgrimage to Mashhad from Bukhara and even to have occasioned his martyrdom; see Changī 130b–32a.

16. This is the posture that the Tūrānī poet Mir ‘Ābid Sayyidā Nasafī (d. between 1707 and 1711) assumes in his *qaṣida* to Imam al-Rizā (132).

17. For instance, Parsapajouh notes that Imam al-Rizā is called *Gharīb al-Ghurabāʾ* (in Parsapajouh’s translation, “the stranger among strangers”; 203).

18. One variant switches this couplet’s second line with the second line of the following couplet: از سرمه ریختند مگر رنگ این بنا (“Could they have made this building’s foundations out of collyrium?”; Shawkat Bukhārī, *Divan-i ashʿar* 2).

19. Hence, Shawkat claims:

خاموشی نازک دلانرا پرده پوش راز نیست
خاک چینی گر بود از سرمه بی آواز نیست
(197)

For those with delicate hearts, silence cannot veil secrets
Even when porcelain’s clay is from collyrium, it still cries out.

20. I take the translation of حیرت (*hayrat*) as “dazzlement” from Kovacs 112. For a compelling discussion of *hayrat* and its relation to vision, see Kovacs 113.

21. *Rizā* here works as both a name (referring to Imam al-Rizā) and an adjective (“pleased”).

22. On the prominence of colorfulness as a means of conceptualizing poetry in this time, see Reisner 16–18. On color in early modern Persian poetry, see Mikkelsen.

23. The term for this process is *māzmūn-āfrīnī*, which Pritchett elegantly translates as “metaphorical-equation creation” (*Nets* 93). For more on the early modern Persianate processes of *māzmūn-āfrīnī* and poetic meaning-creation (*maʿnī-āfrīnī*), see Kinra 212 and Faruqi, who stresses the importance of intertextuality to these poetic strategies (25–31).

24. I am using *intertextuality* here to refer to Shawkat’s intensive and deliberate engagements with the Persianate tradition and not in Julia Kristeva’s sense as a feature of all texts, according to which every word, or text, “is an intersection of other words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read” (qtd. in Martínez Alfaro 268).

25. On *ihām*, see Pritchett, “Sky” 56; Chalisova; Bonebakker 31. Chalisova gives an example of *ihām* the polysemous word *lab* in a couplet where the word first appears to mean “slice of bread” (the closer meaning) but also means “lips” (the more distant meaning).

26. On the use of *rang rikhtan* in the poetry of Mirzā Razi Dānīsh (d. 1665), see Faruqī 29–30.

27. For example, Sā'ib Tabrizī writes,

مغیلان پای نازک طینتانا در حنا دارد
(3: 1414) چه غم دارد ز خار آن کس که آتش زیر پا دارد

Thorns keep the fastidious people's feet stuck in henna,
But why should the one who walks with flames underfoot be
concerned with a thorn?

28. On *jawhar* as the luster of the mirror that comes from scrubbing it with dirt or ash, see Shafī'i-Kadkani 325.

29. One variant reads instead جوهر ز تیغ اینه ("the luster from the blade of the mirror"); the couplet would thus suggest that it is impossible to remove the luster from the mirror's blade (Shawkat Bukhārī, *Divan-i Shawkat Bukhari* 498n3).

30. A variant has گریز ("fleeing") in place of گزیر ("escape" or "remedy"; Şafak 36).

31. Keshavmurthy gives a translation and interpretation of another couplet by Sā'ib that plays with this image (45, 48).

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