



Avicenna's *Šifā'* from Safavid Iran to the Mughal Empire: On Ms. Rampur Raza Library 3476

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ABSTRACT The paper aims at providing a comprehensive description of the manuscript Rampur, Rampur Raza Library 3476 (*hikma* 112), which contains three of the four main parts of Avicenna's philosophical magnum opus, the *Kitāb al-Šifā'* (the *Book of the Cure or: of the Healing*). This manuscript documents important developments in the history of Arabic-Islamic philosophy. First, it attests a precise intellectual genealogy within the influential Daštakī family from Shiraz, several exponents of which can be identified as successive owners of this manuscript at the turn of the ninth/fifteenth and tenth/sixteenth centuries, among whom one should mention Šadr al-Dīn Moḥammad Daštakī Šīrāzī (d. 903/1498), the founder of the so-called "Šīrāzī school" of philosophy; Ğeyāš al-Dīn Maṣūūr Daštakī Šīrāzī (d. 948/1542), son of the preceding and author of the first extant commentary on the *Ilāhiyyāt* (*Science of Divine Things*, or *Metaphysics*) of the *Šifā'* in Arabic presently known; and Faṭḥollāh Šīrāzī (d. 997/1589), a student and possibly also a relative of Ğeyāš al-Dīn Maṣūūr Daštakī Šīrāzī, one of the main advocates and promoters of rationalism in India. Second, copied in 718/1318, the manuscript at hand highlights a crucial phase of the transmission of Avicenna's *Šifā'*, at the pivotal juncture between the most ancient phase of dissemination of the work (fifth to seventh/eleventh to thirteenth centuries) and the later period of its manuscript production (ninth to fourteenth/fifteenth to twentieth centuries). Third, it offers a concrete and insightful specimen of the intellectual exchanges between the Safavid (1502–1736) and the Mughal (1530–1707) empires in the seminal and formative phase of cultural life in Iran and India in the tenth/sixteenth century, in an itinerary that from Shiraz, the place of origin of the Daštakī family, goes eastward in the direction of the Mughal court of Akbar I (r. 963–1014/1556–1605) until it reaches the Raza Library of Rampur at some point.

KEYWORDS Avicenna, *Kitāb al-Šifā'*, Safavid Iran, Arabic-Islamic philosophy, Daštakī family, Faṭḥollāh Šīrāzī, India, Rampur Raza Library

Introduction

Manuscript Rampur Raza Library 3476 contains a copy of Avicenna's *Kitāb al-Šifā'*, which deserves attention in the history of Arabic-Islamic philosophy for at least three reasons.¹ First, it documents a precise intellectual genealogy within the influential Daštakī family from Shiraz, three generations of which arguably owned this manuscript, at the turn of the ninth/fifteenth and tenth/sixteenth centuries. Although the nisba Daštakī is absent in the ownership statements that can be read in the manuscript, the names mentioned in some of them clearly and coherently hint at members of this family as consecutive owners of the present codex. The correspondence of the names found in the manuscript with those of the Daštakī family members is attested by historical sources.² Second, copied in 718/1318, the manuscript in question highlights a crucial phase of the transmission of Avicenna's philosophical magnum opus, the *Kitāb al-Šifā'* (the *Book of the Cure* or: *of the Healing*), of which it represents a valuable testimony, at the pivotal juncture between the most ancient phase of dissemination of the work (fifth to seventh/eleventh to thirteenth centuries) and the later period of its manuscript production (ninth to fourteenth/fifteenth to twentieth centuries). Third, it offers a concrete and insightful specimen of the intellectual exchanges between the Safavid (1502–1736) and the Mughal (1530–1707) empires at the outset of their historical life span, in the seminal and formative phase of cultural life in Iran and India in the tenth/sixteenth century, in an itinerary that from Shiraz, the place of origin of the Daštakī family, goes eastward in the direction of the Mughal court of Akbar I (reg. 963–1014/1556–1605), until it reaches the Raza Library of Rampur at some point.³ These three reasons of interest in the manuscript can be seen as three concentric stories, in which the reiterated father-to-son handling of a precious codex within an inner family circuit goes hand in hand with the fate of one of the most impactful *summa* of philosophy ever written in the history of *falsafa*, and the personal heritage transactions among the Daštakīs, as well as the specific dissemination routes of the *Šifā'*, enter into the shaping an epoch-making event of cultural transfer in a larger geographical setting and with a wider geopolitical impact.

The manuscript Rampur Raza Library 3476 is well known to scholars of Avicenna and of Islamic philosophy in general. Its importance was recently stressed, among others, by Reza Pourjavady, Sajjad Rizvi, Asad Ahmed, and Sonja Brentjes, after the pioneering mentions by Carl Brockelmann in the supplementary volumes of his *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* [sic], and by Georges Anawati, in his *Essai de bibliographie avicennienne* (Pourjavady 2011, 23; Rizvi 2011, 11; Ahmed 2012, 202; Brentjes 2018, 134–35; Brockelmann 1937–1942, I–III:1:815; Anawati 1950, 74).⁴ A comprehensive description of its transmission history, however, is still lacking, despite the relevance of its possessors. It is hardly necessary to recall the significance of the first attested owner of the manuscript, Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad Daštakī

- 1 The authors are grateful to members of the PhiBor project (Stefano Di Pietrantonio, Silvia Di Vincenzo, Daniele Marotta, Ivana Panzeca), to Reza Pourjavady, Kianoosh Rezaia, Mohammad Hossein Hakim, and two anonymous referees for the precious help received. In the present paper, both Persian and Arabic are transliterated according to the DMG system. The spelling of proper names differs depending on the context.
- 2 See, e.g., Afandī al-Iṣbahānī ([1401] 1980–1981, 67) and al-Mūsawī al-Ḥ'ansāri al-Iṣbahānī ([1391] 2012, 4:372, 394, 7:176).
- 3 Conventionally, the Safavid and the Mughal empires are temporally located between 1501 and 1736, and between 1526 and 1857 respectively, with an intermission in the latter between 1540 and 1555.
- 4 See also Bertolacci (2008, 69 (nr. 88)), with info on the manuscript derived from Anawati's *Essai de bibliographie avicennienne*. This manuscript is neither recorded in Mahdavi's *Fehrest-e noṣṣahā-ye moṣannafāt-e Ebn-e Sīnā* nor in H. Daiber's "New Manuscript Findings from Indian Libraries."

[1]

[2]

Šīrāzī (d. 903/1498), the founder of the so-called “Šīrāz school” of philosophy and one of the most influential intellectual figures of his time.⁵ Equally well-known is that Ġeyāṭ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī Šīrāzī (d. 948/1542), son of the preceding, eponym of the famous Madrasa-ye Maṣṣūriyya founded by his father, and owner of the manuscript after this latter, was the author of the first extant commentary on the *Ilāhiyyāt* (*Science of Divine Things*, or *Metaphysics*) of the *Šifāʾ* in Arabic presently known.⁶ A third owner of the manuscript, Faṭḥollāh Šīrāzī (d. 997/1589)⁷, a student and possibly also a relative of Ġeyāṣ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī Šīrāzī, is credited with being one of the main advocates and promoters of rationalism in India, once he became a member of the court of the Mughal ruler Akbar I. In so far as this codex was arguably among the philosophical works that he brought with him from Iran to India, he can be regarded as one of the fathers of Indian Avicennism (Rizvi 2011, 9–11; Ahmed 2012, 202 (n. 9); Niewöhner-Eberhard 2009, 36, 48 (n. 213), 87). But the list of owners of the present manuscript is not limited to these prime exponents of Safavid and Mughal *falsafa*: They also include other less known figures, who are nonetheless, despite their scarce notoriousness, significant examples of cultural life at the turn between the eleventh/seventeenth and the twelfth/eighteenth centuries. Some of them confirm, for example, the close interaction of philosophy and medicine in the transmission of Avicenna’s work (see Bertolacci 2019): In 1100/1689, a certain Ḥāğğī Moḥammad bequeathed this manuscript to his descendants together with other works, among which a commentary on Avicenna’s *Canon of Medicine*. The inclusion of women in the circuit of knowledge is also attested: The inheritors of this manuscript from Ḥāğğī Moḥammad were not only his son, Mīr Ḥān Moḥammad Ḥādī Ḥosainī, but also his daughter Fāṭema.

Therefore, a more comprehensive codicological description of our manuscript, in which the already known data can be precisely documented and new information may be provided, is recommendable. The present contribution strives towards this aim. Section I proposes an overview of the main features of this manuscript, its copyist, and its owners in the Daštakī family as well as later possessors. Section II pinpoints its significance for the transmission history of Avicenna’s *Šifāʾ*, with particular regard to its final metaphysical section (*Ilāhiyyāt*). The data presented here are the outcome of the research on the manuscripts of Avicenna’s *Šifāʾ* conducted within the ERC funded project “Philosophy on the Border of Civilizations and Intellectual Endeavours” (henceforth: PhiBor), where a selection of its most relevant passages

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5 Niewöhner-Eberhard (2009); Pourjavady (2011, 24–25); Pourjavady-Schmidtke (2015, 254); Aminrazavi (2015, 48–58).

6 See Ġeyāṣ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī Daštakī Šīrāzī, *Šifāʾ al-qulūb* (glosses on *Ilāhiyyāt* I.1–6). This work is integrally available in at least three editions: 1) *Šifāʾ al-qulūb*, ed. Amir Ahari, in *Gaṅḡina-ye Bahārestān (A Collection of 18 Treatises in Logic, Philosophy, Theology, and Mysticism)*, Vol. I, cur. ‘Alī Auğabī, Tehran 1379 Š/2000, 184–276 (based on mss. Tehran, Dānešgāh 6921/9 and Tehran, Mağles, 611/9); 2) *Šifāʾ al-qulūb*, in *Moṣannafāt Ġeyāṣ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Ḥosainī Daštakī Šīrāzī*, ed. ‘A. Nūrānī, Tehran 1386 Š/2007, vol. II, pp. 375–487 (cf. vol. I, p. 110) (based on mss. Tehran, Dānešgāh 6921/9, Tehran, Mağles, 611/9, and a manuscript of the private collection Rawḍatī in Isfahan); 3) *Šifāʾ al-qulūb*, in *Šifāʾ al-qulūb wa-Tağawhur al-ağšām*, ed. ‘Alī Auğabī, Ketābhāna, Mūze va Markaz-e Asnād-e Mağles-e Šūrā-ye Eslāmī, Tehran 1390 Š/2012, pp. 1–132 (based on Mss. Tehran, Dānešgāh 6921/9 and Tehran, Mağles, 611/9). Commentaries on the *Ilāhiyyāt* by previous authors are attested (see the bibliographical information in the section “Commentaries” at <https://www.avicennaproject.eu/#/downloads/indirect>, last accessed: March 27, 2022).

7 A shortly later date of death (998/1590) is given by Asad Q. Ahmed and Reza Pourjavady (Ahmed and Pourjavady 2016, 608), where relevant information on the author can be found (see 993/1585–86 in Pourjavady 2011, 52 [n. 33]).

are visualized.⁸ On account of its importance, as documented in the following pages, the manuscript analyzed here has been selected in this project for the new critical edition of the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Šifāʾ* proposed there (siglum R), together with other fifteen manuscripts, the work of a second-generation disciple of Avicenna (Abū l-ʿAbbās al-Lawkarī’s *Bayān al-ḥaqq bi-ḍamān al-ṣidq*, *Clarification of the Truth with the Guarantee of the Veracity*) in which the *Ilāhiyyāt* is abundantly quoted (fifth to sixth/eleventh to twelfth century), and the Latin medieval translation (sixth/twelfth century).

Description and History of the Manuscript

The Ms. India, Rampur, Rampur Raza Library 3476 A (*ḥikma* 112) is described in at least two catalogues of the library in which it is housed: Moḥammad Aḡmal Khān, *Fehrest-e Kotob-e ʿArabiya-ye maujūda-ye kotobhāna-ye reyāsat-e Rāmpūr*, vol. I, Rampur (1902), p. 397 (where it is labelled *ḥikma* 112)⁹, and in Imtiyāz ʿAlī ʿArṣī, *Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in Raza Library Rampur*, vol. IV: Sufism, Holy Scriptures, Logic & Philosophy, Printed for Raza Library Trust, Rampur, U.P. India (1971), pp. 440–441 (where it is recorded as nr. 3476 *al-ḥikma al-ʿamma*). As to its content, we face a huge manuscript of 431 folios (in fact, of 862 pages, since it is a paginated, rather than foliated, codex) comprising the logic, natural philosophy, and metaphysics of the *Šifāʾ*, according to a very common format of three parts (rather than four) of transmission of Avicenna’s philosophical *magnum opus*.¹⁰ A table of contents precedes each of the three parts.¹¹ In the part on natural philosophy, Avicenna’s medical treatise *al-Adwīya al-qalbiyya* (*Cardiac Remedies*), often incorporated into the *Šifāʾ*, occurs in a very peculiar position, namely at the end of the entire natural philosophy, rather than at the end of *Book of the Soul*, Treatise IV, where it is usually found in the manuscripts of the *Šifāʾ* which contain it (see Alpina 2017). The history of this manuscript is a unique and intriguing specimen of

[4]

8 See www.avicennaproject.eu (last accessed: March 27, 2022). The images of all the passages discussed in section I are available at <https://www.avicennaproject.eu/#/manuscripts/list/154> (last accessed: March 27, 2022).

9 This catalogue is the basis for the references to our manuscript in Brockelmann’s *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*, Anawati’s *Essai de bibliographie avicennienne*, and Ahmed’s “The *Shifāʾ* in India I”. Brockelmann places under Logic what appears to be a cumulative reference to all the Rampur manuscripts known to him as “I, 397/8”, i.e. vol. I, 397–8 of the catalogue. Anawati condenses information on the page and volume of the catalogue at stake and on the century (VIII) of the manuscript’s date of copying in the formula “397/1 (8)”; and Ahmed refers to this manuscript as 397/8, *Ḥikma* 112.

10 Whereas Brockelmann connects this manuscript solely with the Logic of the *Šifāʾ* (see previous footnote), the lack of any annotation about content in Anawati’s *Essai de bibliographie avicennienne* cit. qualifies it—in accordance with the conventions of Anawati’s bibliography—as a manuscript of the entire work. Also, a passage of the description of this manuscript in the Catalogue of 1971, p. 44 (“This copy deals with Logic, Physics, Mathematics & Metaphysics”) conveys the wrong impression that the manuscript also contains mathematics. On the different types of partition of the *Šifāʾ* in manuscripts, see Bertolacci (2017–2018, 280–87).

11 The second table of contents (p. 488), the one preceding the natural philosophy, portrays this latter, in the initial rubric, as a second part (*ḡumla*) of the *Šifāʾ* regarding wisdom (*ḥikma*) in thirteen sections (*funūn*). In the right top margin of the first page of the natural philosophy (p. 496), a note qualifies this latter as the first part (*ḡumla*) of the *Šifāʾ* regarding wisdom (*ḥikma*) in thirteen sections. Strictly speaking, neither description applies to the natural philosophy: Whereas the reference to wisdom (*ḥikma*) rather fits metaphysics, the count of thirteen sections (*funūn*) is compatible with one of the attested formats of copy of three parts of the *Šifāʾ*, in which natural philosophy (eight sections), mathematics (four sections), and metaphysics (one section) are comprised, to the exclusion of logic (nine sections).

intertwined family links and scholarly connections. Ten distinct steps of its transmission can be distinguished on the basis of the colophon and the ownership statements present in it.

Table 1

Step 1	Early Rabī ^c I, 718/10–15 May, 1318	Copied by Maḥmūd ebn ‘Alī ebn Moḥammad ebn ‘Alī Wandgalī, possibly not in Wandgal (Kashan, Iran) but elsewhere
Step 2	845/1441	Collated
Step 3	Before 903/1498	Studied by Ṣadr Moḥammad (i.e., Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad Daštakī Šīrāzī, d. 903/1498)
Step 4	Before 948/1543	Possessed by Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī (i.e., Ġeyās al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī Šīrāzī, d. 948), son of Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad Daštakī Šīrāzī
Step 5	Before 962/1555	Owned by Moḥammad ebn Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī (i.e., Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad II, d. 962/1555), son of Ġeyās al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī
Step 6	Before 997/1589	Presumably owned by Faḥollāh Šīrāzī (d. 997/1589), a student of Ġeyās al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī
Step 7	In the late tenth or early eleventh century	Allegedly owned by an unknown student/ relative of Šāh Faḥollāh Šīrāzī
Step 8	Before 1100/1689	Possessed by a certain Ḥāğğī Moḥammad until 1100/1689
Step 9	1100/1689	Given by Ḥāğğī Moḥammad to his son Mīr Ḥān Moḥammad Ḥādī Ḥosainī and his daughter Fāṭema in 1100/1689
Step 10	?	Lodged at some point in Rampur

Step 1). The copying of the logic part of the manuscript was completed, from an erroneous exemplar (*nusha saqīma*), in the early Rabī^c I, 718/10–15 of May 1318, by a not particularly well-known Maḥmūd ebn ‘Alī ebn Moḥammad ebn ‘Alī Wandgalī.¹² The date of copying of 718/1318 can be taken as representative of the copying of the entire manuscript, which is copied by the same hand, presumably in a continuous span of time. This being the case, our manuscript is, as known at present, the only dated manuscript of the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Šīfā’* that was copied in the eighth/fourteenth century. The place of copying is not specified in the colophon of logic or elsewhere in the manuscript. Nonetheless, the copyist remarks in the colophon of logic that Wandgal, from which his attributive Wandgalī is derived, is a village

[5]

12 al-Qāsānī in the Catalogue of 1971.

near Qāsān (nowadays Kashan), Iran.¹³ This leads us to assume that the immediate readers of the codex were not familiar with the place of origin of the copyist, and that, therefore, the manuscript might have been copied not in Wandgal and Kashan, but elsewhere.

Colophon of Logic, p. 486 (ll. 5–14):

[6]

[7]

فرغ من تسويد هذه المجلدة الداعي لصاحبها أينما كان محمود بن علي بن محمد | ابن علي الوندكلي
وهي قرية من إحدى قرى قاسان حماها الله من طوارق | الحدثان في أوائل ربيع الأول من شهور سنة
ثمان عشر وسبعمائة | وقد كتب من نسخة سقيمة كثيرة التصحيحات قليلة التصحيحات | والكتاب في
أيدي الزمان أسير و في قيد الهوان كسير | ومع ذلك لا يقدر على إدراك معانيها وإبدال ألفاظها وقد
استمسك بالعروة الوثقى أعني الطاف المولى أن يبيل (؟) علي | ذيل الإغماض وإلا فاقض ما أنت
قاض فإنه قد بلغت نفسي | بأقصى غاية جهدها ولا يكلف الله نفساً إلا وسعها | وصلّى الله على خير
الأخيار محمد وصحبه الأبرار.

The one who prays for its owner, wherever he may be, Maḥmūd ebn ‘Alī ebn Moḥammad ebn ‘Alī al-Wandgali, which is one of the villages of Qāsān, may God protect it from the calamities of misfortune, terminated the copying of this volume at the beginning of the month Rabī‘ al-awwal of the year 718. It was copied from a faulty manuscript, full of misspellings, with few corrections. And the copyist is prisoner in the hands of time, and defeated in the chain of disgrace; still, he is not able to grasp its meanings and replace its words, while he held the trustworthy bond, that is, the benevolences of the master to close his eyes to my [faults]; if not, then judge what you <prefer to> judge, for my soul reached the utmost degree of its exertion, and God charges no soul except <what is in> its capacity. God bless the best of the best <men> Moḥammad and his pious companions.¹⁴

[8]

Step 2). The three parts of the manuscript were collated almost a century and a half later (845/1441). The sequence of the collation, however, does not correspond to the order of the parts of the *Šifā’* in the manuscript: The collation of the part on natural philosophy (i.e., the second part) was completed in Muḥarram 845, a few months before the completion of the collation of the part on logic (i.e., the first part) on the 2nd of Ġumādā II, 845. The date of collation of the part on metaphysics (i.e., the third part) is unreadable due to damage: One may speculate that it was done during the four months separating the collations of the other two parts.

[9]

Collation note, Natural philosophy, p. 771 (on the left, below the explicit):

[10]

[11]

تمّ مقابلة هذا القسم الطبيعي وبعد لا تصحّح | وأرجو أن أطلعه مراراً فصحّح في *** | الكتاب واللباب
(؟) في محرّم | سنة ٨٤٥

The collation of this part on natural philosophy is completed, and yet <the text of this part> is not corrected. I hope I will study it several times, so that it will be corrected in *** the writing and the gist. <This happened> in <the month> Muḥarram of the year 845.

[12]

Collation note, Logic, p. 486 (below the colophon):

[13]

13 There are two villages near the present Kashan which could be identical with the ancient Wandgal: Wan and Wandāde. See *Farhang-e ḡōgrāfīyāyī-e Īrān* ([1329] 1950), 322.

14 Here and in what follows, translations are by the authors unless indicated otherwise.

[14] قد تمّ مقابلة القسم (كذا) المنطق وإن كان مع نسخة سقيمة أيضاً | خصوصاً من المغالطة إلى الآخر
لكنّي أظنّ أنّه في المطالعة | يصير صحيحاً في ٢ جمادى الآخر سنة ٨٤٥ الهجرية

The collation of the part of logic is completed, although <it was done> again [15]
with a faulty copy, especially from the <section on> fallacy to the end. I think,
however, that once it is studied it will become correct. <That happened> on the
2nd of Ġumādà II of the year 845 from the Migration.

Collation note, Metaphysics, p. 861 (bottom of page, under the explicit; covered by a tape [16]
and only partially readable):

[17] تمّ مقابلة ***

The collation is completed *** [18]

The reason why the collation of the part on natural philosophy preceded that of the part [19]
on logic (and presumably that of the part on metaphysics as well), if, as it seems, all three
collations were made by the same person, remains obscure.¹⁵

Step 3). The manuscript was studied (*kāna fī muṭālaʿa*) by a certain Ṣadr Moḥammad, who [20]
can be safely identified as Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad Daštakī Šīrāzī, as indicated by the extolling
praise of his intellectual merits in the following ownership statement on p. 495, written by
the hand of his grandson, Moḥammad ebn Maṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī, known as Ṣadr
the Second, i.e., Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad II Daštakī Šīrāzī (see also Step 5, below). The most
relevant passages are marked in red.

Ownership statement, p. 495 (ll. 8–16): [21]

[22] هو إنّ هذا الكتاب كان في مطالعة جدّي وسيدي وإسنادي صدر الحكماء بدر العلماء شمس السماء
| قمر الخضراء النير الأعظم ومنور العالم صدر الحقيقة محمد الماضي عليه من الله السلام ثمّ انتقل
منه إلى ولده | العلامة وهو أبي وسيدي وأستاذي فخر آبائي وأجدادي إمام الحكمة غياث النفوس |
كاشف الغمّة صاحب الهمة الإمام الجامع الغالب على الشيخ الرئيس والحكيم العظيم الفائق على
| أرسطاطاليس أكمل أهل النظر أستاذ البشر العقل الحادي عشر أعني الحضرة العلية البهية | والسدة
السنية الجليلة الفيلسوفية غياث الأنام المنصور كاسمه ناصر الشريعة والإسلام | ثمّ انتقل منه إلى ابنه
وتلميذه بل أقلّ عبد من عبيده الباسط ذراعيه بالوصيد | محمد بن علي (?) منصور بن محمد الحسيني
المشهور بصدر الثاني شرح الله صدره ورفع قدره.

He. This book was studied by my grandfather, my master and my support, the [23]
highest among the wise ones, the full moon of the scholars, the sun of the heaven,

15 Both for the natural philosophy and for the logic, the collator looks to rely on a faulty further copy of
the text. This is expressly stated in the collation note regarding the logic, and it also turns out to be the
most likely interpretation of the collation note regarding the natural philosophy. In this latter, the sentence
wa-baʿdu lā tuṣāḥḥaḥ (according to the most obvious vocalization) means, in all likelihood, “and yet [the
text (*nusha*) of this part] is not corrected,” i.e. “not thoroughly edited through collation,” so as to be in
need of further study for its complete emendation; the alternative meaning “and afterwards the text is not
going to be corrected” looks less plausible, also being in contrast with the collation of the metaphysics, if
this latter occurred later.

the moon of the green [sky], the great star which illuminates the world, the head of truth, the late Moḥammad, may peace be from God upon him. Then it came from him into the possession of his most learned son, who was my father, my lord, and my master, the pride of my grandparents and ancestors, the leader of wisdom, the aider of mankind, the one who removes the grief, and possesses ambition, the universal leader who overshadowed the chief master and the great philosopher [i.e. Avicenna], and surpassed Aristotle, the most perfect among the people of speculation, the master of mankind, the eleventh intellect, namely the high and glorious presence, and the supreme and splendid court, the philosopher, the aider of mankind, the one who was aided as his name indicates, the helper of religion and Islam. Then it came from him into the possession of his son and his pupil, rather of the most humble among his servants, the one who stretched his forelegs at the doorstep, Moḥammad ebn ‘Alī (?) Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī known as Ṣadr II, may God cause him joy and lift his rank.

Step 4). The manuscript then came into the possession of Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī [24] (i.e., Ġeyāṣ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī Šīrāzī), son of the aforementioned Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad I (see Step 3). The following ownership statement was written by the hand of Ġeyāṣ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr himself.

Ownership statement, p. 495 (ll. 1-7): [25]

[26] هو | انتقل هذا الكتاب المشتمل على زيد هي نتائج الأنظار المحتوي على نخب هي أباكار الأفكار | هو بحر فيه درر الدقائق وكنز أودع فيه نقود الحقائق ألفاظه معادن جواهر المطالب | الشريفة وحروفه أكامام (أكاميم؟) أزاهير النكات اللطيفة ففي كل لفظ منه روض من المنى | وفي كل سطر منه عقد من الدرر *** | إلى أحوج الخلائق إلى فضل الله الغني منصور بن محمد الحسيني | ختم له بالحسنى.

He. This book – which contains the quintessences resulting from speculations, embraces selections which are unprecedented thoughts, a sea where pearl-like points exist, a treasure where money-like truths can be found, whose words are mines of demanded and noble jewels, whose letters are calyxes of the flowers of subtle points, so that there are gardens of desires in each of its words, and necklace of pearls in each line of it¹⁶ *** *** – came to the one who needs the favor of God, the Rich, more than any other creature <Ġeyāṣ al-Dīn> Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī <Daštakī Šīrāzī>, may God provide him with a good end. [27]

Ownership statement, again by the hand of Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī, p. 777 (ll. 1-3): [28]

[29] من متملكات الفقير إلى الله الغني | منصور بن محمد الحسيني | متع الله به.

<This is> among the properties of the poor, who needs God, the Rich, Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī, may God grant him enjoyment throughout his life. [30]

Step 5). The manuscript was later owned by Moḥammad ebn Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥo- [31]

16 The end of lin. 5 and the beginning of lin. 6 are deleted, and the words beneath the deletion stripe are barely readable.

sainī, i.e., Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad II (d. 962/1555), son of Ġeyāṣ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī and grandson of Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad I, as indicated in the abovementioned ownership statement on p. 495 (Step 3), as well as in the following one on p. 777 (ll. 3-5):

[32] ثم انتقل منه انتقالاً صحيحاً شرعياً إلى ابنه وتلميذه بل أقلّ عبد من عبده | الباسط ذراعيه بالوصيد
الفقير الغنيّ المستغني من الدنيا الدنيّ والعقبى السنيّ | محمّد بن منصور بن محمّد الحسيني المشتهر
بصدر الثاني متّع الله به آمين.

Then it came rightly and legally from him into the possession of his son and his pupil, or better of the lowest among his servants, the one who stretches his arms at the threshold [see *Qurʾān* 50: 18], the poor <in need of> the Rich, the One who can dispense from the earthly world and the lofty outcome, Moḥammad ebn Maṣṣūr ebn Moḥammad Ḥosainī known as Ṣadr al-Ṭānī, may God grant him enjoyment through it. Amen

[33]

Ṣadr al-Dīn II's ownership of the manuscript is also attested by his stamp on the bottom of the same p. 495.

[34]

Step 6). A possible further owner, Faṭḥollāh Širāzī, a student of Ġeyāṣ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī and member of the court of the Mughal ruler Akbar I the Great,¹⁷ wrote the table of contents and presumably first brought the manuscript to India¹⁸, where at some point it was lodged in the Mughal royal library and later transferred to Rampur.

[35]

Note in Persian, p. 1 (upper-left side of the page):

[36]

[37] فهرست این کتاب شریف نذیر | عديم النظير بخط شاه فتح الله است قدس سره | و باقی حالش معلوم
است که در | مطالعه سلف علما بود و تصحيح و اشارات | و رموزی که ظاهر میشود شاهد است.

The table of contents of this noble, unique, and unparalleled book is by the hand of Šāh Faṭḥ Allāh <Širāzī>, may his soul be sanctified, and the other issues are clear, i.e., it was studied by preceding scholars, a fact that is witnessed by <their> apparent corrections, indications, and subtle points.

[38]

This note, which ascribes to Šāh Faṭḥollāh Širāzī the composition of the index of the manuscript, is written by someone (possibly a student or a relative of Šāh Faṭḥollāh) who was familiar enough to him to recognize his hand in the index of content, or to be informed that the hand in question was his own. This information on the hand was apparently taken as trustworthy by subsequent annotators (see the following note, at point c). The present note is written in a hand different from the hands of the other notes, including the one which follows.

[39]

Note in Persian, p. 9 (center-left side of the page):

[40]

[41] هو | این کتاب جلیل القدر را که از عرایس و نفایس روزگار است | و در مطالعه عالیہ حضرت سیّد
الحکماء و صدر العلماء امیر صدر الدین شیرازی بوده | وظهر ورق اول علم طبیعی و علم الهی بخط
شریف غیاث *** | امیر غیاث الدین منصور و خلف الصدق ایشان میر صدر الدین ثانی علیہ الرحمة

17 For the info on Faṭḥollāh Širāzī, see Kākāyī (n.d., 29–30); Qasemi (2011).

18 Reportedly Faṭḥollāh Širāzī brought some of the works of Ġalāl al-Dīn Davānī (d. 908/1502), Ġeyāṣ al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Daštakī, and Mīrzā Jān Bāġnavī (d. 994/1587) to India and popularized them in the local circles of learning. See al-Ḥusaynī (al-Ḥusaynī [1420] 1999, 4:4:393); Kākāyī (n.d., 29); Pourjavady (2011, 23 [144]). So it is likely that Faṭḥollāh Širāzī brought this manuscript to India together with these other works.

و الرضوان توشیح و تزین یافته و فهرست علم منطوق و طبیعی و الهی آن بخط عالی | علامه دهر
شاه فتح الله شیرازی است رحمة الله عليه حضرت والد | ادام الله سبحانه عزه و شأنه بتاريخ نهم
 جمادی الأولى سنه ۳۳ جلوس الهی | مطابق سنه ۱۱۰۰ هجری بافقر احقر آرزومند مغفرت و نیازمند
 شفاعت کمتترین | فرزندان باخلاص مخدومی (!) محرّر این سطور هبه فرمودند **حزّره ابن حاجی محمد** |
 المخاطب **بمیرخان محمد هادی الحسینی** شرح الله صدورهما و یسرّ لهما أمورهما | *** ربّ العالمین
 سیّد المرسلین و آله و صحبه علیه و علیهم | الصلوات و التحیّات.

He. This is a noble book which is regarded among the most precious objects of [42]
 <this> time. The book was studied by the majesty, master of the philosophers
 and chief of the scholars Amīr Ṣadr al-Dīn Ṣirāzī. And the back of the first page
 of the science of physics and of metaphysics is endorsed and adorned by the hand
 of Amīr Ġiyāt al-Dīn Maṣṣūr <Daštakī Ṣirāzī> and his true successor Mīr Ṣadr
 al-Dīn Tānī, may <God> grant peace upon him and be satisfied with him. And
 the table of contents of its logic, physics, and metaphysics is by the noble hand
 of the most learned of this time Ṣāh Faṭḥ Allāh Ṣirāzī, peace be upon him. My
 father, may God, the Glorious, prolong his honor and position, gifted it to the poor
 and humble who wishes <God's> forgiveness and needs <His> intercession, the
 most humble among <his> children by showing honesty, the writer of these lines,
 on 9th Ġumādā al-ūlā of the year 33 of the Divine accession¹⁹ corresponding to
 year 1100 of the Migration. It was written by the son of Ḥāġġī Moḥammad called
 Mīr Ḥān Moḥammad Hādī Ḥosainī, may God expand their breasts and make their
 affairs easy for them *** Lord of the worlds, lord of the messengers, his family and
 his companions, peace and salutation upon him and upon them.

This second note indicates that: a) the manuscript was studied (and owned) by Amīr Ṣadr [43]
 al-Dīn [Daštakī] Ṣirāzī (see also Step 5); b) the front side (recto) of the first pages of the
 physics (p. 495) and the metaphysics (p. 777) is adorned (*tazyīn*), namely contains ownership
 statements, by the hand of Amīr Ġeyās al-Dīn Maṣṣūr [Daštakī Ṣirāzī] and his true successor
 (*ḥalafo l-ṣedq*) Mīr Ṣadr al-Dīn [i.e. Ṣadr II] (see also Steps 3 and 4); c) the tables of contents
 of the physics and of the metaphysics were written by the noble hand (*ḥaṭṭ-e šarīf*) of the
 most learned of our time (*‘allāma-ye dahr*), Ṣāh Faṭḥollāh Ṣirāzī (see previous note); d) the
 manuscript was donated by Ḥāġġī Moḥammad to his son, who wrote the note (see also Steps
 8 and 9) on 9th Ġomādā I of the year 33 (of the *ġolūs-e elāhī*, “divine accession,” i.e., of the
 reign of Akbar I the Great) corresponding to 1100H; e) the writer of the note was the son of
 Ḥāġġī Moḥammad, Mīr Ḥān Moḥammad Hādī Ḥosainī (see also Step 9).

Step 7). The manuscript was possibly owned by a student or a relative of Ṣāh Faṭḥollāh [44]
 Ṣirāzī, the person who wrote the Persian note on p. 1 (see the first note of Step 6 above),
 when Ṣāh Faṭḥollāh Ṣirāzī had already passed away, because of the formula “*quddisa sirruhū*”
 (may his soul be sanctified) which follows his name in the note.

Step 8). As indicated in the note above (Step 6, note on p. 9), the manuscript was in the [45]

19 By *ġolūs-e elāhī* (“divine accession”), he means Akbar Ṣāh’s accession in 992/1584, after which the Mughal
 era was fixed to begin. This era, also known as *Ta’rīḥ-e elāhī* (“Divine Era”), was introduced by the Mughal
 Emperor Akbar I the Great in 992/1584. The first year of this era was the year of Akbar’s accession,
 963/1555-6, and it was a solar year beginning with Naurūz (the day of vernal equinox, about 20 March).
 The names of the months were the same as those of the ancient Persian calendar. The number of days in
 a month varied from 29 to 32. The calculations were made and rules for the era drawn up by Faṭḥollāh
 Ṣirāzī (Athar n.d.).

possession of Ḥāğğī Moḥammad until 1100/1689. Possibly a physician himself, he looks to have been interested in philosophy and medicine, since he possessed books in these two fields (see Step 9, the note in Persian on p. 1).

Step 9). The manuscript was given by Ḥāğğī Moḥammad to his son, Mir Ḥān Moḥammad Ḥādī Ḥosainī²⁰ (see Step 6, the note on p. 9), and to his daughter, Fāṭema, together with seven other books, among which a commentary on Avicenna's *Canon of Medicine* by Ḥakīm 'Alī, in 1100/1689.²¹

Note in Persian, p. 1 (lower part of the page):

[48]

مخفی و مستور نماند که این کتاب شریف با کتب مفصله ذیل الکتاب که عدد آنها مجموع با کتاب شفاء مزبور هشت جلد است سوی قرآن که با قرآن نه مجلد *** | میانه حضرت سیادت و افادت پناه حقایق و معارف آگاه عمده اجلة السادات و النخب العظام نوراً للسیادة و الفضیلة و العز و الدین محمداً حسیناً | الشهیر بمیرزا خان مشترک است و میانه سیادت و عفت دستگاه عمده المخدّرات فاطمه خانم همشیره مشار إليه، للذکر ضعف الأنتی سوی کلام الله مجید | که مختصّ مشار إليه است بعنوان حبه شرعی و مسماة مزبوره را در قرآن حقی نیست و قیمت این کتاب شریف منبع بیست و هشت تومان است | کتاب شرح قانون حکیم علی جلد؛ کتاب رموز الأوراد (؟) جلد؛ کتاب ترویج الأرواح جلد؛ کتاب تلخیص الأمّ جلد؛ کتاب متوسطات جلد؛ کتاب *** جلد؛ کتاب مختصر مخروطات جلد؛ کتاب شفاء مذکور | و قیمت سایر کتب بنوعی است که در ضمن هر کتابی قلمی شده که مجموع آن مبلغ هفده تومان و شش *** هزار دینار رایج (؟) است و چون قرآن حبه است هدیه نشده | و حسب الإرث والد ماجد ایشان منتقل شده بمشار إليهما و سایر ورثه را در کتب مزبوره حقی نیست.

This note can be paraphrased as follows:

It should be clarified that this honorable book, together with the books which are mentioned below in detail and whose number, including the previously mentioned *Šifā'*, is eight, excluding the *Qur'ān*, with which the number [of the books] will be nine, goes into the possession of Moḥammadā Ḥosainā, known as Mirzā Ḥān, and his sister Fāṭema. The *Qur'ān* is only for the former as a legal *ḥabwa* (a gift for the eldest immediate son) and the latter has no right in it. The price of this honorable book is 28 tomans. The commentary on the *Qānūn* by Ḥakīm 'Alī, the *Rumūz al-awrād* [?], the *Tarwīḥ al-arwāḥ*, the *Talḥiṣ al-Umm*, the *Mutawassīṭāt*, the book of ***, the *Muḥtaṣar Maḥrūṭāt*, and the aforementioned *Šifā'*. The price of each book is indicated under its name, and the total sum is 17 tomans and 6000 current dinars [?]. Since the *Qur'ān* is a *ḥabwa*, it has not been gifted [to Fāṭema]. These books are possessed by the two mentioned persons as goods inherited from their father, and the other heirs have no right to possess them.

Note, p. 495 (bottom of page, followed by Mir Ḥān's stamp; the same note is visible on page 777 followed again by his stamp):

20 This Mir Ḥān Moḥammad Ḥādī Ḥosainī possibly corresponds to Moḥammad Ḥādī l-Ḥosainī ebn Mir-Ḥān, owner of another manuscript of the *Ilāhiyyāt*, Azerbaijan, Baku, National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Manuscripts, M-102 (AH), as indicated in one of the ownership statements in f. 2r (see <https://www.avicennaproject.eu/#/manuscripts/list/245>, last accessed: March 27, 2022).

21 The author of this commentary is in all likelihood identical with Ḥakīm 'Alī Gilānī (d. 1018/1609), an Iranian student of Šāh Faṭhollāh Šīrāzī and a physician at the Mughal court. Like Gilānī himself, his son, Ḥakīm Šāleḥ Šīrāzī, and grandson, Moḥsen Šīrāzī, served as royal physicians in India. See Kākāyī (n.d., 30).

[52]

هو | ثم انتقل بالهبة الشرعية من جناب **الوالد** الماجد أدام الله سبحانه | عزّه وشأنه إلى الأحوج إلى
غفران ربّه الغنيّ وشفاعة حبيبه المولى (؟) | **ابن حاجي محمد** المخاطب **بمير خان محمد هادي**
الحسيني عفى عنهما | وتلك الهبة في تاسع جمادى *** خمسة من المائة الأولى | من الألف الثاني
من الهجرة المصطفوية على صاحبها | وعترته وصحبته الصلوة والسلام والتحية.

He. Then < this book > passed by means of a legal donation from the honorable father, may God, the Glorious, prolong his honor, his rank and his condition, to the one who needs very much the forgiveness of his Lord, the Rich, and the intercession of his beloved master, ebn Ḥāḡḡi Moḥammad, called Mīr Ḥān Moḥammad Ḥādī Ḥosainī, may < God > forgive them. And that donation occurred on the 9th of Ḡumādà *** of < the year > 1100 from the Migration of the chosen < Prophet >, may < His > prayer, < His > peace and < His > salutation be upon the one who did < this Migration > and upon his tribe and companions.

[53]

Mīr Ḥān Moḥammad Ḥādī Ḥosainī was well-known to the curator of the 1971 catalogue of the Rampur Raza Library, who reports “Mīr M. Ḥādī (d. 1114/1703)” among the owners of the manuscripts, specifying his date of death. On the bottom of pages 495 and 777, his stamps include the name of Šāh-e ‘Ālamgīr (Aurangzeb), who reigned over a major part of the Indian subcontinent from 1068/1658 to 1118/1707. This inclusion attests Mīr Ḥān Moḥammad Ḥādī Ḥosainī’s close relationship with the court. He likely lived on the Indian subcontinent and was a member of the school of Faṭḥollāh Šīrāzī, since he describes Šāh Faṭḥollāh as “the most learned of [our] time” (*‘allāma-ye dahr*) and computes time by means of the chronological system (*ḡolūs-e elāhī*) current in the Mughal era (see Step 6, note on p. 9 and footnote 20), instead of the *heḡrī* system which was widely used all over the Islamic lands. This hypothesis finds some support in the tenth-to-eleventh-century manuscript of the *Ilāhiyyāt*, Baku, National Academy of Sciences, M-102, which was first in the possession of Mīrzā Ḡān Šīrāzī (f. 2r), a rival and colleague of Faṭḥollāh Šīrāzī, and subsequently came into the possession of a Moḥammad Ḥādī l-Ḥosaynī ebn Mīr-Ḥān, whose name closely resembles that of our Mīr Ḥān Moḥammad Ḥādī Ḥosainī (see footnote 21). Should this identification be tenable, it would imply that Ḥosainī (and presumably his father) were connected, in one way or another, with the intellectual tradition cultivated by Mīrzā Ḡān Šīrāzī and Faṭḥollāh Šīrāzī in the tenth/sixteenth and eleventh/seventeenth centuries in India.

[54]

Step 10). The manuscript was lodged in Rampur at some point.

[55]

Ms. Rampur 3476 from a Chronological Perspective

The number of extant manuscripts of the *Šifā’* presently known greatly surpasses the figures provided in the available bibliographies of Avicenna’s works. Taking the metaphysical part (*Ilāhiyyāt*) of this *summa* as case in point, we observe that this fourth and last portion of Avicenna’s work is preserved in more than 280 codices known to date, whereas Avicennian bibliographies of the twentieth century do not arrive at eighty units. The overall count of the codices increases if we also take into consideration the manuscripts of the Persian translations of the *Ilāhiyyāt* in which the Arabic original text is incorporated, and the Arabic manuscripts

[56]

that are attested by other codices as their immediate or remote exemplars but cannot be presently retrieved.²²

The manuscripts of the *Ilāhiyyāt*—which often also contain some other parts of this summa, as in the case of the manuscript at hand, or even the work in its entirety—were copied uninterrupted throughout ten centuries, since the fifth/eleventh century, a few decades after Avicenna’s death, until the fourteenth/twentieth century, less than one hundred years ago.²³ The geographical dissemination of the depositories embraces libraries in Europe and the United States and a wide array of centers in the Near East and Central Asia, from Morocco to Malaysia. The largest repository of manuscripts is Iran, both in terms of manuscripts preserved (more than 150 extant codices) and of cities and libraries involved, followed by Turkey (more than forty manuscripts) and India (more than twenty codices).

In a chronological perspective, three striking features of the activity of copying of the *Šifāʾ* in general, and of the *Ilāhiyyāt* in particular, can be singled out. First, some ancient exemplars enjoyed wide circulation and were copied in distinct later manuscripts, now preserved in Iraq, Iran, or India, so as to function as “editions” of the work. We can detect at least three ancient exemplars of the *Šifāʾ* of this kind copied respectively in 468-9/1076-7, probably in Nishapur (three later known copies), in 503/1109-10 in Baghdad (seven later copies amenable to it), and in 509/1115, once again in Baghdad (one later known copy). From the temporal distance between these three “editions,” we can observe a sort of intensification of the copying of the *Šifāʾ* over time, since the Baghdad editions of 503 and 509 are much closer temporally to one another than they are to edition 468-9.

The second remarkable trait of the chronology of manuscripts of the *Ilāhiyyāt* is the substantial continuity of the activity of copying over time. The only significant decrease in the number of attested copies of the *Ilāhiyyāt* can be observed from the first decades of the eighth/fourteenth century (after 718/1318-9, date of copying of the present manuscript) until the second half of the ninth/fifteenth century (865/1461), determining for more than a century a real collapse in the activity of copying, with no extant dated manuscript presently known produced in this period. This decrement marks a significant hiatus between the older stage of transmission of the work (fifth to seventh/eleventh to thirteenth centuries) and its later stage (ninth to fourteenth/fifteenth to twentieth centuries). If a similar decrease of the manuscript diffusion in this same period should also affect the other parts of the *Šifāʾ*—as the chronological data that begin to be gathered about the manuscripts of these parts of Avicenna’s work seem to suggest²⁴—we would likely face a repercussion on cultural life of the political and economic decline of the Ilkhanid Mongol power in the area at the time, which apparently had a long-lasting disruptive impact on the circulation even of prime philosophical works like the *Šifāʾ* for more than a century, until the Timurid cultural revival at the turn between the eighth/fourteenth and ninth/fifteenth centuries. Alternatively, this sudden decrease of copies of Avicenna’s work may be explained as a belated effect of the fall of the capital Baghdad—the main center where ancient copies of the work were produced, as we

22 See Bertolacci (2017–2018). See also the section “Manuscripts” in <https://www.avicennaproject.eu/#/manuscripts/list> (last accessed: March 27, 2022).

23 The most ancient extant dated manuscript of the *Ilāhiyyāt* presently known (Najaf, Maktabat al-Imām Amīr al-Muʾminīn, 3070) goes back to 496/1102–3, a decade after the most ancient known extant manuscript of the *Šifāʾ* (London, British Museum, Or. 11190, copied in 485/1092–1093 and containing part of the Mathematics); the most recent one (Qom, ‘Allāma Saiyed Moḥammad Ḥosain Ṭabāṭabāʾī Collection, no number) dates to 1345/1927.

24 See the section “All *Šifāʾ* Manuscripts” in <https://www.avicennaproject.eu/#/downloads/mss> (last accessed: March 27, 2022).

[57]

[58]

[59]

have seen—under the Mongols in 656/1258, if the new political dominion determined an interruption of cultural activities in the main city of the Muslim empire, as one may incline to suppose.

The third noteworthy aspect of the activity of copying regarding the *Ilāhiyyāt* is its exponential increase in the eleventh/seventeenth century, at the heyday of the Safavid era. Whereas the number of known copies produced in previous centuries amounts to at most a couple of tens per century (in the ninth/fifteenth century, for example) and does not exceed the seventy units cumulatively reached (including the non-extant attested exemplars), by the eleventh/seventeenth century we witness the production of more than one hundred manuscripts of the *Ilāhiyyāt* in one single century. Even if we cannot exclude that copies of the *Šifāʾ* antedating the eleventh/seventeenth century might have been lost without leaving any trace, the Safavid period remains the apogee of the copying process of the *Ilāhiyyāt*, which gradually decreases in the following centuries. This fact is, on the one hand, a confirmation of what we presently know about the so-called “Safavid renaissance” (Pourjavady and Schmidtke 2015). On the other hand, it is significant with respect to the diffusion and impact of Avicenna’s philosophy: After the “golden age” of the reception of Avicenna argued in previous scholarship from the fifth/eleventh until the middle of the eighth/fourteenth century, and the later “golden ages” in which the reception of Avicenna is substantiated in a regional perspective by subsequent studies, the eleventh/seventeenth century in Safavid Iran emerges as a real “platinum age” of the production of copies of the *Ilāhiyyāt* and, arguably, of the other parts of the *Šifāʾ* as well. The same applies to the Persian translations of the *Ilāhiyyāt*, which start being produced in this period, and to the commentaries on the work, which only begin gaining literary independence since the Safavid period: At this time the glosses on the *Ilāhiyyāt*—a type of exegetical practice that existed long before—began to circulate as independent works with their own titles, and the commentary activity in this and the following centuries involved an unprecedented number of exegetes.

The manuscript under consideration instantiates these three general features in a remarkable way, showing how the survival and circulation of valuable exemplars helped assure the *Ilāhiyyāt* and other parts of the *Šifāʾ* an uninterrupted and long-lasting transmission in connection with the Safavid renaissance in Iran. First, written at the beginning of the eighth/fourteenth (718/1318–9), the manuscript at hand closes what we have determined above as the older stage of transmission of the work (fifth to seventh/eleventh to thirteenth centuries), and opens the thriving stage of its dissemination under the Safavids, having been copied shortly after the death of Qoṭb al-Dīn Šīrāzī (634–710/1236–1311), one of the last scholars who shared a “dismissive attitude towards Ebn Sīnā and the Peripatetics” in pre-Safavid times (Pourjavady and Schmidtke 2015, 252).

Second, on account of its historical importance, it comes as no surprise that our manuscript was copied afterwards. In fact, it turns out to remain at the origin of a later codex preserved in the Raza Library of Rampur (Ms. Rampur, Rampur Raza Library 3478 ع), which is one of the latest manuscripts of the *Ilāhiyyāt* presently known, having been copied in 1267/1850–51: Like its exemplar, it contains the logic, natural philosophy, and metaphysics of the *Šifāʾ*. Also, a manuscript preserved in Iran might be related with it: Ms. Khoy, *Ketābhāna-ye Madrasa-ye Namāzī* 247, copied in 986/1578, whose patron (ʿAbdolḥāleq ebn Moḥammad Maḥmūd Gilānī) reportedly was a student of the same Faṭḥollāh Šīrāzī who wrote the various indexes

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of contents in our Rampur manuscript, as well as of Mīrzā Ğān.²⁵ Historical sources inform us that ‘Abdolhāleq studied the Khoy manuscript with Faḥollāh Šīrāzī and collated it and corrected it before 988/1580—that is to say, in all likelihood before Faḥollāh Šīrāzī moved to the court of Akbar I in India around 991 H. On the basis of these provisional data, we should expect to see the descendants of Ms. Rampur 3476 disclosed by future philological research and historical evidence to increase in number.

Finally, our manuscript testifies in different ways to the Safavid renaissance. On the one hand, it documents ownership by a handful of the most famous initiators of the cultural efflorescence regarding philosophy within the Iranian intelligentsia of the time. On the other hand, it attests to the energy and attractiveness of this intellectual movement by showing how, through its impulse, relevant textual material seminally spread from Iran to the Indian sub-continent. The manuscript at hand preserves remarkable signs of a continuous scholarly consideration of the *Šifā*’ by a series of distinguished intellectuals. The leg of its ownership history that we can presently identify spans, in fact, from 903/1498, the date of death of its first attested owner Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad Daštakī Šīrāzī, until 1105/1694, date in which its last known owner Mīr/Mīrzā Ḥān Moḥammad Hādī Ḥosainī turns out to have got possession of it; in this way, it covers two full centuries of one of the most important and impactful phases of post-Avicennian philosophy in Iran and India. Within this time framework, three of the most important exponents of intellectual life in the region during the ninth/fifteenth and tenth/sixteenth centuries are involved (Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad Daštakī Šīrāzī, his son Ğeyāš al-Dīn Maṣūr Daštakī Šīrāzī, and this latter student Faḥollāh Šīrāzī). Although their access to the *Šifā*’ was not limited to this manuscript (the glosses on the *Ilāhiyyāt* contained in our manuscript, for instance, are scanty and do not correspond to what we presently know of the commentary by Ğeyāš al-Dīn Maṣūr Daštakī Šīrāzī on this part of the *Šifā*’), their shared ownership of the present codex of Avicenna’s masterpiece in philosophy represent a historical phenomenon of utmost interest.

Other examples of manuscripts which document family and scholarly ties of historical importance have recently been brought to the scholarly attention.²⁶ The codex analyzed in the present contribution deserves to be placed in this prestigious category of historical documents.

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25 Ma’šūm (1938), 215. Interestingly, an ‘Abdolhāleq Ğilānī is also recorded as the copyist of another witness of the *Šifā*’, which does not preserve the *Ilāhiyyāt*, namely MS Qom, Markaz-e Eḥyā’-e Mīrās-e Eslāmī 314, which might therefore be an additional manuscript related to the same intellectual milieu. On Ms. *Khoy, Ketābhāna-ye Madrasa-ye Namāzi* 247, see the section “Manuscripts. Introduction” (“II.3. The *Ilāhiyyāt* in Mughal India”) at <https://www.avicennaproject.eu/#/manuscripts/intro> (last accessed: March 27, 2022), and Di Vincenzo (2021, lxxix).

26 See, e.g., what Witkam noted with regard to the codex of the Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya of Cairo, which is “the authoritative manuscript” of the *Maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī (Witkam 1995, 132). The authors of the present article plan to analyze another fundamental witness of the transmission of Avicenna’s *Šifā*’, Ms. Kabul, Aršif-i Millī Afġānistān, Afghān National Archive, 2295 (ex Private Library of King Zaher Shah 4926) in a forthcoming publication.

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