among the elements involved. But it must not be forgotten that Mīr writes about life from personal experience. As Brēlwī puts it (*op. cit.*, 250), his poetry is a perfect amalgam of life and art. As for his short erotic *mathnawīs*, whilst not without narrative, they are far removed from the more familiar long heroic *mathnawī* typified by *Sihr al-bayān* [see ḤASAN, MĪR GHULĀM]. But they are historically important.

High praise of Mīr as a poet has led to a reaction, more especially since Muḥammad Ḥusayn Āzād (*Āb-i-ḥayāt*, 203-31). In his lifetime, critics praised his 72 outstanding verses ("lancets"): but some more recent critics have maintained that "his high is very high, but his low is very low." Writing in 1964, Sadiq (*op. cit.*, 90) complains that there is nothing tragic or heroic about him, and that he is often "morbid, unhealthy and pathological". Even so, in 1973 Ahmed Ali (*op. cit.* in *Bibl.*, 53) could describe him as a great Romantic who reached heights not attained by Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats. However, in 1982, Randhir (*op. cit.*, 60), after describing him as "a poet with a tearful eye...always gloomy... a realist" concludes that "some of his critics have been too generous in praise."

Mīr's Persian *tadhkira* of Urdu poets, *Nikāt al-shuʿarāʾ*, has been described as no less important than his *ghazals* (ʿAbd Allāh, *Shuʿarāʾ-yi-Urdū*, 14). The *tadhkira* form [*q.v.*] may be described as a collection of specimen verses of a number of poets, with very brief biographical information and critical remarks. There was no standard arrangement: poets might be listed alphabetically, chronologically, by "schools", with or without dates. Mīr's *tadhkira* is the oldest extant for Urdu poets, and one of the earliest. It has been strongly attacked for its hostile assessment of poets, especially by Muḥammad Ḥusayn Āzād [*q.v.*] in his *Āb-i-ḥayāt*, which is itself essentially a large-scale *tadhkira*, written, however, in Urdu, whereas originally they were in Persian. Whilst Āzād's criticisms have some substance, they are exaggerated. He also makes a number of statements which are factually erroneous, unless he has had access to some unknown variant manuscript. A more important blemish is Mīr's extraordinary arrangement, which is a mixture of the chronological and alphabetical.

Bibliography: The most recent of several editions of Mīr's collected poetry is *Kulliyyāt-i-Mīr*, ed. ʿIbādat Brēlwī, Karachi-Lahore 1958, with a 100-page introduction. Some, however, prefer the edn. of ʿAbd al-Bārī Āsī, Lucknow 1941, which though less complete, is said to be more accurate. Sayyid ʿAbd Allāh, *Nakd-i-Mīr*, Lahore 1964, is a full study of the poet in 14 essays. Brēlwī's *Shāʿirī awr shāʿirī kī tanḳīd*, Karachi 1965, contains three essays on respectively the poet's *ghazal* (179-212), his thought (213-36) and his art (237-50). The longest and best account of the poet in English is in R. Russell and Khurshidul Islam, *Three Mughal poets: Mir, Sauda, Mir Hasan*, London 1969, 95-277. Farmān Fatahpūrī's *Daryāʾi-ʿishḳ awr bahr al-mahabbat kā taḳābulī muṭālaʿa*, Lahore 1972, compares a *mathnawī* by Mīr with a similar one by Muṣḥafī [*q.v.*] with the full text of each. The following are more general works with useful sections on Mīr: Ram Babu Saksena, *A history of Urdu literature*, Allahabad 1927, 70-80; Muhammad Sadiq, *A history of Urdu literature*, London etc., 1964, 94-101, generally hostile in tone; Ahmed Ali, *The golden tradition*, New York-London 1973, is a general account of Urdu poetry, with many poems in English translation (23-54, 134-76). L.C. Randhir, *Ghazal - the beauty eternal*, Delhi 1982, is also useful, though little is said about Mīr (60-3, 146). All poetical extracts are given in the Devanagari script, Roman Urdū, and English translation. See further Abu 'l-Layth Ṣiddīḳī, *Lakhnāʾū kā dabistān-i-shāʿirī*, Lahore 1955, 140-9. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Āzād, *Āb-i-ḥayāt*,[9] Lahore 19917, 203-31 (N.B. the various editions, or more correctly reprints, seem to be identical in pagination); Ḳāsim (Ḥakīm Abu 'l-Ḳāsim Mīr Ḳudrat Allāh Ḳāsim) *Madjmūʿa-yi-naghz*, Lahore 1933, 229-54. Mīr's autobiography was published as *Dhikr-i-Mīr*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥaḳḳ, Awrangābād 1928. His *tadhkira*, *Nikāt al-shuʿarāʾ*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān Khān Shirwānī, has been published with no date or place of publication. Finally, Sayyid ʿAbd Allāh, *Shuʿarāʾ-yi-Urdū kē tadhkirē awr tadhkira-nigārī kā fann*, Lahore 1952, is a general account of the *tadhkira* form, with references to Mīr at 14-35, 74-5. (J.A. HAYWOOD)

MĪR MUḤANNĀ [see ḲURṢĀN. iii. In the Persian Gulf].

MĪRĀB [see MĀʾ, Iran].

MIRACLE [see KARĀMA, MUʿDJIZA].

MIʿRĀDJ (A.), originally designates "a ladder", and then "an ascent", and in particular, the Prophet's ascension to Heaven.

1. In Islamic exegesis and in the popular and mystical tradition of the Arab world.

The Ḳurʾān (LXXXI, 19-25, LIII, 1-21) describes a vision in which a divine messenger appears to Muḥammad, and LIII, 12-18, treats of a second mission of a similar kind. In both cases, the Prophet sees a heavenly figure approach him from the distance, but there is no suggestion that he himself was carried away to Heaven. However, it is otherwise with the experience alluded to in XVII, 1, "Glory be to Him who transported His servant by night (*asrā bi-ʿabdihi laylan*) from the Masdjid al-Ḥarām to the Masdjid al-Aḳṣā which We have surrounded with blessing, in order to show him one of our signs." For this verse, tradition gives three interpretations:

(1) The oldest one, which disappears from the more recent commentaries, detects an allusion to Muḥammad's Ascension to Heaven. This is the more interesting, as these traditions (al-Bukhārī, Cairo 1278, ii, 185, *Bāb kāna 'l-nabiyyu tanāmu ʿaynuhu wa-lā yanāmu ḳalbuhu*, no. 2; Muslim, Būlāḳ, 1290, i, 59; al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*[1], xv, 3, cf. B. Schrieke, *Die Himmelreise Muhammad's*, in *Isl.*, vi [1915-16], 12, 14) retain also the original signification of the story of Ascension (A.A. Bevan, *Mohammed's Ascension to Heaven*, in *Beihefte zur Zeitschr. für die Alttestam. Wissensch.*, xxvii = *Studien ... Julius Wellhausen ... gewidmet*, Giessen 1914, 56; Schrieke, *op. cit.*). This explanation interprets the expression *al-masdjid al-aḳṣā*, "the further place of worship" in the sense of "Heaven" and, in fact, in the older tradition *isrāʾ* is often used as synonymous with *miʿrādj* (see *Isl.*, vi, 14). One would thus have, in this verse, witness to the nocturnal ascension of the Prophet to the heavenly spheres (Schrieke, *op. cit.*, 13 ff.; J. Horovitz, *Muhammeds Himmelfahrt*, in *Isl.*, ix [1919], 161 ff.), but a witness limited merely to an allusion to the adventure, without saying anything about the manner in which it developed.

(2) The second explanation, the only one given in all the more modern commentaries, interprets *al-masdjid al-aḳṣā* as "Jerusalem" and this for no very apparent reason. It seems to have been an Umayyad device intended to further the glorification of Jerusalem as against that of the holy territory (cf. Goldziher, *Muh. Stud.*, ii, 55-6; *Isl.*, vi, 13 ff.), then ruled by ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr. Al-Ṭabarī seems to

reject it. He does not mention it in his *History* and seems rather to adopt the first explanation (see *Isl.*, vi, 2, 5, 6, 12, 14; al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, i, 1157 ff., a passage which appears to represent the historian's final verdict formed on full consideration of the evidence before him, cf. Bevan, *op. cit.*, 57).

Explanations 1 and 2 concur in interpreting *ʿabd* in XVII, 1, by Muḥammad, and this seems to be right (*Isl.*, vi, 13, n. 6). The *iǧmāʿ* admitted both interpretations and, when the Umayyad version had arisen, harmonised the two by assigning to *isrāʾ* the special sense of night journey to Jerusalem. The Ascension, having lost its original meaning, was altered in date, being made to fall at a later period, as appears, in fact, to have been done previously by Ibn Isḥāḳ in the oldest extant biography of Muḥammad (Bevan, *op. cit.*, 54).

The story of the night journey to Jerusalem runs as follows:

One night, as Muḥammad was sleeping in the neighbourhood of the Kaʿba at Mecca (or in the house of Umm Hāniʾ, *Isl.*, vi, 11) he was awakened by the angel Gabriel who conducted him to a winged animal called Burāḳ [*q.v.*], and with Muḥammad mounted on this animal they journeyed together to Jerusalem. On the way thither they encounter several good and several wicked powers (*Miṯḳāt al-maṣābīḥ*, Dihlī 1268, 521-2; al-Baghawī, *Maṣābīḥ al-sunna*, Cairo 1294, ii, 179, with a harmonising interpolation) and visit Hebron and Bethlehem (al-Nasāʾī, *Sunan*, Cairo 1312, i, 77-8; al-Nuwayri, ms. Warner 2a, p. 93, 11. 7-10). At Jerusalem, they meet Abraham, Moses and Jesus, of whom a description is given (e.g. al-Bukhārī, Cairo 1278, ii, 147). The *ṣalāt* is performed, Muḥammad acting as *imām* and thereby taking precedence of all the other prophets there assembled. This meeting with the prophets at Jerusalem resembles and may well have been modelled on the transfiguration of Jesus on Mount Tabor (Matt. xviii, 1; Mark ix, 1; Luke ix, 28), cf. *Isl.*, vi, 15, and Goldziher, in *RHR*, xxxi, 308.

(3) The third interpretation of XVII, 1, is based on XVII, 62, where *ruʾyā* "vision" is explained as *isrāʾ*. This implies that the night journey was not a real journey but a vision. Standing at the *ḥiǧr*, Muḥammad saw Jerusalem and described it to the unbelieving Ḳuraysh̲ites (al-Bukhārī, ii, 221, iii, 102; Muslim, i, 62; al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, xv, 5, l. 14 ff., etc.). The story is woven into a connected whole as follows: Muḥammad journeys by night to Jerusalem, returns and at Mecca describes his adventures; the Ḳuraysh disbelieve him and Muslims apostasise; Muḥammad seeks to defend the truth of his story, but he has forgotten the particulars; whereupon God causes him actually to behold Jerusalem (see *Isl.*, vi, 15-16).

In the more modern and longer narratives, the story is further amplified (see e.g. A. Müller, *Der Islam in Morgen- und Abendland*, i, 86). The Prophet is said to have held 70,000 conversations with God, although the whole journey proceeded so quickly that, when he returned, his bed was still warm and the water cup which he had overthrown with his foot at his hurried departure, was not yet empty. By Muslim theologians the question has been discussed, whether the *isrāʾ* happened while Muḥammad was asleep or awake and whether it was his spirit or his body which journeyed. The orthodox opinion is that the journey was performed by Muḥammad with his body and awake. Al-Ṭabarī in his commentary (xv, 13) very decidedly supports this meaning for the following reasons: (1) If the Prophet had not been carried away in a corporeal sense, the event would afford no proof of his divine mission and those who disbelieved the story could not be accused of infidelity. (2) It is stated in the Ḳurʾān that God caused His servant to journey, not that He caused His servant's spirit to journey. (3) If the Prophet had been carried away in spirit only, the services of Burāḳ would not have been required, since animals are used for carrying bodies not for carrying spirits (Bevan, *op. cit.*, 60; Schrieke, *op. cit.*, 13; al-Ṭabarī, al-Bayḍāwī, and al-Baghawī, *Tafsīr*, *ad* XVII, 1). Mystics and philosophers often favour an allegorical interpretation (Goldziher, *Geschichte der Philosphie im Mittelalter*, in *Kultur der Gegenwart*, i/5, 319).

The question of the possibility of an ascent to Heaven is several times touched on in the Ḳurʾān. In XL, 38, Firʿawn gives Hāmān orders to build a palace so that he can reach the cords of Heaven and climb up to the god of Mūsā (cf. also XXVIII, 3). In LIII, 38, the calumniators are asked whether they had perchance a ladder (*sullam*) so that they could hear the heavenly voice, and in VI, 35, the consequences are considered which the signs brought by the Prophet with the help of a ladder to Heaven might have on his hearers. The old poets also talk of ascending to Heaven by a ladder, as a means of escaping something one wants to avoid (Zuhayr, *Muʿallaḳa*, 54; al-Aʿshā, no. XV, 32).

Ḥadīṯ gives further details of the Prophet's ascension. Here the ascension is usually associated with the nocturnal journey to Jerusalem, so that the ascent to Heaven takes place from this sanctuary. We also have accounts preserved which make the ascension start from Mecca and make no mention of the journey to Jerusalem. In one of these, the ascension takes place immediately after the "purification of the heart" (see al-Bukhārī, *Ṣalāt*, *bāb* 1; *Ḥaǧǧ*, *bāb* 76; *Manāḳib*, *bāb* 42; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, iv, 207, v, 143; al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, i, 1157-8). In the last-mentioned passage we read: "When the Prophet had received his revelation and was sleeping at the Kaʿba, as the Ḳuraysh used to do, the angels Gabriel and Michael came to him and said: With regard to whom have we received the order? Whereupon they themselves answered: With regard to their lord. Thereupon they went away, but came back the next night, three of them. When they found him sleeping, they laid him on his back, opened his body, brought water from the Zamzam well and washed away all that they found within his body of doubt, idolatry, paganism and error. They then brought a golden vessel which was filled with wisdom and belief. Thereupon he was taken up to the lowest heaven." The other versions of the same story show many additions and variants; according to one, for example, Gabriel came to Muḥammad through the roof of his house which opened to receive him; according to another, it was Gabriel alone who appeared to him and there are many similar variants. All these versions, however, put Muḥammad's ascension at an early period and make it a kind of dedication of him as a Prophet, for which the purification of the heart had paved the way. Ethnographical parallels (Schrieke, *op. cit.*, 2-4) show other instances of a purification being preliminary to an ascension. Similar stories are found in pagan Arabia (Horowitz, in *Isl.*, ix, 171 ff.) and also in Christian legends (*op. cit.*, 170 ff.). Another story (Ibn Saʿd, i/1, 143) says that the ascension took place from Mecca although it does not associate it with "the purification of the heart" which it puts back to the childhood of the Prophet [see ḤALĪMA].

How did it come about, however, that this, obviously the earlier, tradition of Mecca as the starting point of the ascension, was ousted by the other

which made it take place from Jerusalem? The localisation of the Ḳurʾānic al-Masdjid al-Aḳṣā in Jerusalem is by some connected with the efforts of ʿAbd al-Malik to raise Jerusalem to a place of special esteem in the eyes of believers (Schrieke, *op. cit.*, 13; Horovitz, *op. cit.*, 165 ff.; idem, *The earliest biographies of the Prophet and their authors*, in *IC*, ii [1928], 35 ff.), and in any case it cannot be proved that this identification is older than the time of ʿAbd al-Malik. It might all the easier obtain currency as Jerusalem to the Christians was the starting point of Christ's ascension, and from the 4th century Jesus's footprint had been shown to pilgrims in the Basilica of the Ascension; and now, perhaps as early as the time of ʿAbd al-Malik, that of their Prophet was shown to Muslim pilgrims (Horovitz, *Muhammeds Himmelfahrt*, 167-8). The idea of the "heavenly Jerusalem" may have had some influence on the development of the *isrāʾ* legends; when Muḥammad meets Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and ʿĪsā in Jerusalem, the presence of these prophets in the earthly Jerusalem is not at once intelligible, but it loses any remarkable features if Bayt al-Maḳdis (Ibn Hishām, 267) from the first meant the "Heavenly Jerusalem" (Horovitz, *op. cit.*, 168, another explanation, see above). Perhaps also the phrase *alladhī bāraknā ḥawlahu* was taken to support the reference to Jerusalem; when these words occur elsewhere in the Ḳurʾān they refer to sites in the holy land (H. Lammens, *Les sanctuaires préislamites dans l'Arabie occidentale*, in *MFOB*, xi [1926], 72). While the stories quoted above only say that Gabriel took the Prophet up to the heights of Heaven, but are silent as to how, others add that a ladder (*miʿrādj*) was used for the ascent (see Ibn Hishām, 268; al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, xv, 10; Ibn Saʿd, i/1, 143); this ladder was of splendid appearance; it is the one to which the dying turn their eyes and with the help of which the souls of men ascend to Heaven. The ladder is probably identical with Jacob's ladder in Genesis, xxviii, 12; the Ethiopic Book of Jubilees, xxvii, 21, calls this *maʿāreg*, and sūra LXX, 3,4, calls God *Dhu 'l-Maʿāridj* "to whom the angels and the spirit ascend" (*taʿrudj*). According to XXXII, 4, the *amr* rises to God; according to LVII, 4, and XXXIV, 2, God knows "what descends from Heaven and what ascends to it", and in XLIII, 32, there is a reference to steps (*maʿāridj*) in the houses of men. The term was already known, and is presumably taken from Ethiopic (Horovitz, *op. cit.*, 174 ff.). Among the Mandaeans, also, the ladder (*sumbilta*) is the means of ascending to Heaven (*Ginza*, tr. M. Lidzbarski, 49, 208, 490), and there are parallels to the ladder of the dead in the mysteries of Mithras (see Tor Andrae, *Die Person Mohammeds*, 45; Wetter, *Phos*, 114, n. 2); the Manichaean *ʿamūd al-ṣabḥ* (*Fihrist*, 335, 10), by means of which the dead man is taken to the sphere of the moon is a more distant parallel (Bevan, *op. cit.*, 59).

Just as the *miʿrādj* is associated with the ascension, so al-Burāḳ is originally connected with the night journey to Jerusalem; it found its way, however, at an early date into the legend of the ascension (see al-Bukhārī, *Manāḳib*, *bāb* 42; Aḥmad b. Hanbal, *Musnad*, iv, 207; v, 387; al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, xv, 12).

At the gate of each of the seven heavens through which he wanders with the Prophet, Gabriel is asked for his own name and that of his companion (al-Bukhārī, *Ṣalāt*, *bāb* 1; al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, xv, 4; idem, *Annales*, i, 1157). After he gives these, he is next asked if Muḥammad has already been sent as a prophet (*a-wa-ḳad buʿitha ilayhi*, correction for the original *a-wa-ḳad buʿitha* found in al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, i, 1158; see Snouck Hurgronje, in *Isl.*, vi, 5, n. 4); this also indicates that the ascension originally belonged to the period immediately after his call (Schrieke, *op. cit.*, 6). In each heaven they meet one of the earlier messengers of God, usually Adam in the first, Yaḥyā and ʿĪsā in the second, Yūsuf in the third, Idrīs in the fourth, Hārūn in the fifth, Mūsā in the sixth and Ibrāhīm in the seventh heaven; there are also variations and Adam appears as judge over the spirits of the dead (Andrae, 44-5; Schrieke, 17; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, v, 143; cf. *Apoc. Mosis*, 37). Of the other messengers of God we are only told—in addition to being given a description of their personal appearance—that they greeted Muḥammad; Mūsā is an exception, who expressly says that Muḥammad is higher in the esteem of God than himself and that the number of his followers surpasses his own (al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, xv, 11). On another occasion, Muḥammad engages in a conversation with Mūsā after God had imposed upon him 50 *ṣalāts* a day as obligatory prayers for the faithful. On Mūsā's advice, Muḥammad asks several times for an alleviation, and each time God grants it; but when Mūsā says 5 *ṣalāts* are still too many, the Prophet refuses to ask for less (on *Genesis*, xviii, 23 ff., as the prototype of this episode; cf. Goldziher, *Muh. Studien*, i, 36; Schrieke, 19; Andrae, 82). According to some versions, Mūsā dwells in the seventh heaven and the conversation seems to be more natural there. To the ascension belong the visits to Paradise and to Hell. Paradise, according to others in the first; in some it is not mentioned at all. The statements about its rivers are contradictory (Schrieke, 19; cf. KAWTHAR), the *sidrat al-muntahā* is usually placed in the seventh heaven (Bevan, 59; Schrieke, 18). In one description, Hell is put below the first heaven (Ibn Hishām, 269; al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, iv, 10). According to another, the place of punishment of the damned is on the way between Heaven and earth, and Muḥammad sees it on his journey to the Bayt al-Maḳdis (al-Ṭabarī, xv, 101, also Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, i, 257; ii, 353; iii, 120, 182, 224, 231, 239). On the punishment in Hell, cf. Schrieke, 17; Andrae, 44; Horovitz, 173; Reitzenstein, *Das mandäische Buch der Grösse*, 81 ff.; Lidzbarski, *Johannisbuch*, 98 ff.; *Ginza*, 183.

That Muḥammad appeared before God's throne in the seventh heaven and that the conversation about the obligatory prayers took place there, is already recorded in the oldest stories (see above), but only rarely do they extend the conversation between God and the Prophet to other subjects (al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, xxvii, 26; *Musnad*, iv, 66, as a dream; Andrae, 70). But objection was raised to the assertion that Muḥammad on this occasion saw God face-to-face (Andrae, 71 ff.), and the question was also raised at an early date whether the ascension was a dream or a reality, whether only the soul of the Prophet was carried up or also his body (L. Caetani, *Annali*, Intr. § 320; Andrae, 72; Bevan, 60; Schrieke, 13, n. 1).

The *ḥadīth* contains, besides these, other details which Asín (*Escatologia*, Madrid 1919, 7-52; idem, *Dante y el Islam*, Madrid 1927, 25-71) discussed. In developing the story of the Prophet's ascension, Muslim writers have used models afforded them by the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses. A few features may also come from the Zoroastrians from the *Arda Viraf*; cf. the works already mentioned by Andrae, Bevan, Schrieke, Horovitz and W. Bousset, in *ARW*, iv, 136-69.

Later accounts (see section 2 below).

The ascension of the Prophet later served as a model for the description of the journey of the soul of the deceased to the throne of the divine judge (Asín, *Escatologia*, 59-60); for the Ṣūfīs, however, it is a sym-

bol of the rise of the soul from the bonds of sensuality to the heights of mystic knowledge. Ibn al-ʿArabī thus expounds it in his work *Kitāb al-Isrāʾ ilā maḳām al-asrā* (Asín, 61 ff.; Andrae, 81-2), and in his *Futūḥāt*, ii, 356-75, he makes a believer and a philosopher make the journey together but the philosopher only reaches the seventh heaven, while no secret remains hidden from the pious Muslim (Asín, 63 ff.). Abu 'l-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī's *Risālat al-Ghufrān* is a parody on the traditional accounts of the *miʿrādj* (Asín, 71 ff.). Asín in his two books quoted has dealt with the knowledge of Muslim legends of the ascension posssessed by the Christian Middle Ages and their influence on Dante. In a separate work (*La escatologia musulmana en la divina comedia*, Madrid 1924), he has collected and discussed the literature produced by his *Escatologia* down to 1923; on later works, see M. Rodinson, *Dante et l'Islam...*, in *RHR*, lxxxix (1951), 203-35.

According to Ibn Saʿd, id1, 147, the *isrā*ʾ took place on 17 Rabīʿ I, the ascension on 17 Ramaḍān. For centuries, however, the night before 27 Radjab—a date also significant in the history of Mecca (see C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, ii, 71)—has been regarded by the pious as the *Laylat al-Miʿrādj*, and the eve is, like the *Mawlid al-Nabī*, devoted to reading the legend of the feast (see al-ʿAbdarī, *Madkhal*, i, 143 ff.; G.A. Herklots, *Qanoon-e Islam*², 165; E.W. Lane, *Manners and customs*, London 1896, 474-6; Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, i, 219; Asín, *Escatologia*, 97).

Bibliography: Given in the article. See also R. Hartmann, in *Bibliothek-Warburg, Vorträge 1928-1929*, Leipzig 1930, 42-65; Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar, *Muhammad the Holy Prophet*, Lahore 1967, ch. viii; Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions of Islam*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1975, 219-21; eadem, *And Muhammad is His Messenger*, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1985, 159-75. (B. Schrieke-[J. Horovitz])

2. In Arabic literature.

In writing as well as in speech, the miraculous apocalyptic phenomenon has undergone a development which it is not always convenient to confine within the limits of theological analysis. The literature of the *miʿrādj* must be understood as meaning all the accounts by known or unknown authors devoted to Muḥammad's ascension.

Unlike the idea of the *isrā*ʾ, recorded as being in a horizontal plane, the idea of the exaltation of a non-angelic being is not attested in the Ḳurʾān. Thus it was at a later date that the miracle came to be recounted. We are not in a position to establish the chronology of this process. Study of the portrayals of the nocturnal journey remains to be done. Analysis of *ḥadīths*, disentangled from theological refutation, could provide an interesting contribution to the study of the imaginary in Islam.

Some accounts of the *miʿrādj* are by known authors, but the most widely circulated, attributed to the *Imām* Ibn ʿAbbās, cousin of the Prophet, has often been regarded as apocryphal. It remains nevertheless a decisive text. Ibn ʿAbbās, at once a historical and a mythical personality, has indeed become "the interpreter of the community, the prototype of its expounder, since he is assigned to the origins of the group, at the moment of its foundation" (Cl. Gilliot, *Portrait "mythique" d'Ibn ʿAbbās*, in *Arabica*, xxxii [1985], 127-84).

This account must be viewed as "a text which combines an openness to the depictions of the imagination with a respect for the basic provisions of the Law" (J.E. Bencheikh, *Le voyage nocturne de Mahomet*, Paris 1988).

The other authors are scholars who took over the literature of the *Miʿrādj*, probably so as not to allow it to develop embarrassing efflorescences. The following list enables us to verify this:

— al-Ḳushayrī, Abu 'l-Ḳāsim ʿAbd al-Karīm, d. 465/1073 [*q.v.*], whose *Kitāb al-Miʿrādj* was published in 1964. He was actually an Ashʿarī Shāfiʿī theologian and author of the famous *Risāla*.

— al-Bakrī, Abu 'l-Ḥasan Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh [*q.v.*], a highly controversial personality who appears to have lived in the last half of the 7th/13th century. It was allegedly forbidden to read his *Life of the Prophet*. The manuscript of his *Kitāb Ḳiṣṣat al-miʿrādj* offers a version very close to that of Ibn ʿAbbās.

— al-Ghayṭī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿAlī, d. 984/1576, Shāfiʿī traditionist, author of *al-Ibtihādj bi 'l-kalām ʿalā 'l-isrā*ʾ *wa 'l-miʿrādj*, printed in 1970.

— al-Barzandjī, Shāfiʿī *muftī* of Medina and preacher, author of a *Ḳiṣṣat al-Miʿrādj*. His grandson, Djaʿfar b. Ismāʿīl, d. 1317/1899), jurisconsult and specialist in the *Sīra* of the Prophet, was also Shāfiʿī *muftī* in Medina; he is the author of *Tādj al-Ibtihādj ʿalā 'l-nūr al-wahhādj fi 'l-isrā*ʾ *wa 'l-miʿrādj*, printed in Cairo in 1314 with the *Ḳiṣṣat al-miʿrādj* of his grandfather in the margin. Al-Barzandjī's version differs perceptibly from that of Ibn ʿAbbās both in its very mannered language and in the structure of the account. We are dealing here with a very dry, spare version, which is clearly that of a scholar anxious to contain imagination within acceptable bounds.

— We cannot supply dates for Muḥammad Ẓalām al-Bābilī al-Ḥalabī, author of *al-Sirādj al-wahhādj fī laylat al-isrā*ʾ *wa-ḳiṣṣat al-miʿrādj*, printed at an unspecified date in Aleppo, which its author holds to be better than any version that had ever been made before. He states that, out of a concern to lighten the text, he omitted every *isnād*. He adds nevertheless that he composed it by relying on "works held in esteem and famous versions of the *miʿrādj*". According to all the evidence, it is in fact a late version which retains the essentials of Ibn ʿAbbās, enriching them with details. Furthermore, we can easily understand why the author neglects to supply his references: he is handling narratives which are, in a sense, public property. He expresses the imaginary vision of the group and stretches its credibility.

The literature of the *miʿrādj* develops into an amalgamation of three miraculous accounts concerning the Prophet:

(a) That of his purification by the angels, who open his chest and cleanse his heart of all sin. It was at a late date that this act was sometimes regarded as a kind of preparation for the ascension. The idealisation of his personality was carried to its limit. Only al-Barzandjī's version mentions the opening of his chest. The other authors confine themselves to an ablution.

(b) That of the nocturnal journey from Mecca to Jerusalem on al-Burāḳ [*q.v.*]. This account was subjected to a process of amplification before being attached to the *miʿrādj*, although different dates were cited for the two events. In some accounts, Muḥammad actually meets on his journey some of those being punished in Hell (cf. al-Ṭabarī's commentary on sūra XVII).

(c) Finally, that of the ascension properly so-called which includes the visit to the seven heavens, with a glimpse of Hell, the arrival at the Throne, the dialogue with God, the visit to Paradise and the return to Mecca.

A narrative organisation was progressively established according to four essential sequences: an initial miraculous union, an initiatory raising to Heaven, a

glorifying appearance before God and a return to mankind. Elucidating the series of sequences could be of help in the search for an underlying plan providing the background for the imagination of the text. It happens that some works of a varied nature depict the same subjects as the *miʿrādj* account; those depictions are concerned with the constitution of the heavens and the fringes of Hell, description of the Throne, the dwellings in Paradise and angelology.

These are to be found in three categories of works:
(a) The *Ḳiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* [*q.v.*] or legends of the prophets, the first of which are devoted to the origin of the universe.
(b) General histories, whose first chapters contain numerous elements of cosmology and cosmogony. A comparative study of the use that is made of certain themes by historians and *miʿrādj* accounts would be very significant.
(c) The resurrection literature, which brings together the texts devoted to the *ḳiyāma* [*q.v.*]. This literature of "news purveying" consists of edifying opuscula which make no precise reference to canonical texts and provide an account of what happens to the believer from the time of his death until his appearance before God. We find here descriptions of the angels, Paradise and Hell. Some descriptive and narrative elements, independent of one another in their origin, are joined together. The Prophet himself is included in this universal destiny and, awakened from the rest of death, "he mounts al-Burāḳ a second time to head for the Rock at Jerusalem and finally appear before the Lord" (Bencheikh, *op. cit.*).

The accounts of the *miʿrādj* and *ḳiyāma* are clearly related. The same working of the imagination, the same process for setting the portrayals, led to the production of the two texts.

One should mention here besides that the frontiers of writing have not prevented the migration of legends. The *Kitāb ʿAdjāʾib al-makhlūḳāt* of al-Ḳazwīnī [*q.v.*] devotes a long section to angelology; the story of Ḥāsib Karīm al-Dīn in the *Thousand and one nights* contains the cosmogonic account of Bulukiyya possibly borrowed from al-Thaʿlabī's *Ḳiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*. We are dealing here with what we should call preconstituted bodies of writings regarding Heaven, Hell, Paradise, the Throne and angels. Each of these bodies of writings has been given an independent setting following a long process of elaboration during which all kinds of pre-Islamic and Islamic themes have been gathered together. Only detailed analysis of this process will allow us to establish a reliable chronology for this literature.

One should note in addition that we cannot totally isolate the *miʿrādj* accounts from the great visionary texts of Ibn ʿArabī, Ibn Sīnā and al-Suhrawardī [*q.vv.*]. The remarkable *Kitāb al-Tawahhum*, if it is the work of a mystic, al-Muḥāsibī, preserves just as many of these themes as are connected with the literature with which we are concerned (French tr. Roman, Paris 1978).

But one must realise that the imaginary aspect of the *miʿrādj* is also nourished by the pronouncements of speech. The *ḳāṣṣ* [*q.v.*] or preacher is to be found at the heart of religious observance. "With him we leave learned discourse and mystical meditation to follow the dialogue between a desire and a function: the desire of the believer who needs to believe, the function of the one who gives him something to believe and undertakes to supply him with imaginative depictions in order to do this" (Bencheikh, *op. cit.*, Introd.).

The oral legend of the *miʿrādj* has not been collected. The narrative structure laid down in the texts considered to be canonical has taken over depictions of diverse origin. The texts have been given an iconography to respond to the need of their listeners for marvels. This need the theologians regard with suspicion. The inventors of fabulous tales were pursued and treated severely by Ibn Ḥanbal, Ibn al-Djawzī, al-Ghazālī and al-Suyūṭī. The establishment of collections of apocryphal *ḥadīths* for the denunciation of forgeries, if it is informative on the orthodoxy of their thought, is just as helpful in interpreting the ramblings of the imagination.

In fact, the same questions posed by the theologians on the subject of the *miʿrādj*, have determined the direction of the flow of the imagination. There has been lively argument concerning the idea which it was necessary to have of the ascension. We must also review the possible interpretations of this miraculous deed:
(a) The ascension took place in spirit; it is a question of a vision that occurred during the Prophet's sleep. In a sense it was Heaven that visited Muḥammad. It was an illumination, and the physical person was not concerned: the *miʿrādj* annuls the human condition and registers itself in an unhinging of the intellect. The soul, purified, traverses Heaven as far as God in a trajectory of which the traces remain only in the Prophetic witness. The outburst of faith on the part of the Believer will repeat the movement.
(b) The *isrāʾ* was really performed by Muḥammad while awake, but the ascension took place only in the spirit. This artificial distinction is useful: it bears witness to a process of linking the *isrāʾ*, at first independent, with the *miʿrādj* (cf. H. Birkeland, *The legend of the opening of Muhammad's breast*, Oslo 1955).
(c) The ascension was really effected, body and soul, by a Prophet who was in a full state of consciousness. This interpretation lays the foundations of the miracle, which becomes a theological argument.

In this way there becomes authenticated a willingness to attribute to the Prophet a dimension which goes beyond his historicity: progressively, the opening of the breast at the end of the purification, the *isrāʾ* and the *miʿrādj* constitute a unique account which offers the advantage of crossing important zones of the religious imagination.

This interpretation de-spiritualises the ascension, without removing its character of a supreme initation. Whilst refusing to see in it an internal impetus, a wandering of the spirit, it affords free range to imaginative portrayals. The account gives formal licence to imagine the unthinkable. Revelation triumphs out of ecstasy. The brilliant but solitary illumination of an individual is abandoned for the benefit of the communal initiation of a prophet. The latter is charged to inform his people of the answers that, in the course of his journey, he is entrusted to communicate.

From that time on, the difference can be seen between Ḳurʾānic utterance reduced to a mention and the speech of "literature" charged with illustrating the former. A modern application of this splitting of writings is attested; in Radjab 1387/October 1967 Egyptian State Television broadcast a film on the *isrāʾ* and *miʿrādj* under the responsibility of the al-Azhar authorities. The process of image production is allowed, but controlled.

The literature of the *miʿrādj* is then embodied in an act of adoration. For one who takes neither the path of thought nor that of spirituality, there remains the portrayal, at the risk of blasphemy. Behind Muḥammad, the only one authorised to travel to the forbid-

den space, imagination is set free. A whole community accompanies its prophet on his initiatory journey. Thus the act of faith is progressively established in an account destined to arouse visions. The image here is effective; it revives confidence and provokes fear. In this way the delights of Paradise materialise and the tortures of Hell are displayed to view at the cost, furthermore, of a decisive anticipation of theology, since God will only deliver His sentences on the Day of the Last Judgment.

Here appear the two essential functions of the *miʿrādj* literature: it verifies in advance divine justice, and it responds to a deep-seated need for the marvellous. The image goes beyond efficacy in order to touch on the aesthetic. Happiness lies not only in the distant reward of virtue, it also finds its source in the spectacle offered. The text is adorned with illuminations: from al-Burāḳ to the Throne of God, from the seven heavens to the sojourn in Paradise, then to Hell; the marvellous spans the space that separates thought from desire.

But it asserts its humanity and does not profane the sacred. In addition, imaginative use is made of the real. The topography of the places uses language without any surprises: we climb to Heaven with a ladder, we skirt the walls, we pass through doors: here mountains, rivers, seas, gardens are lost to view. "The highest place is just a throne, a common attribute of sovereignty, men's destinies are written with a pen, an ordinary instrument for writing. Gold, silver, pearls, gems abound in our markets, darkness, smoke, ice have their place in our environment" (Bencheikh, *op. cit.*).

It was probably difficult to represent the unimaginable without profaning it. Only the obligation of reserve ensured the survival of the myth. The encounter with the Creator shows us how blasphemy was avoided; all the dialogue between God and Muḥammad is made up of the last verses of *Sūrat al-Baḳara*, put alternately into the mouths of the two interlocutors. Furthermore, this is not the only way of using verses or *ḥadīth*s which are often solicited. The text then becomes a commentary full of their imagery and is legitimised. It is woven into an irrefutable writing and takes on the authenticity of a sacred iconography. For the listener, the *miʿrādj* celebrates the prophetic mission and offers the account of an apocalypse populated with Ḳurʾānic resonances.

Called to appear before God, the Prophet receives along his way the homage due to the last of the Messengers. Islam relies on and celebrates at the same time its primacy. It lays hold of the future and reconquers time past; Muḥammad passes through the heavens accompanied by all the great witnesses of the universal faith.

The ritual of adoration is then written down in an outburst of beauty! The heavens are successively of smoke, copper, silver, corindum and pearl. The trajectory of the symbol accompanies the ascension journey; the beauty of the spectacle declares the proximity of God. Each year millions of Muslims devote themselves to the spectacle of their faith.

Finally, how can we forget that the *miʿrādj* has entered into universal literature, thanks to the *Book of Mahomet's Ladder*. This translation in Latin of a text in Castilian, itself translated from Arabic, had indeed become famous, thanks to the furious polemic to which it has given rise; and indeed, Dante was actually able to be inspired by it for his *Divine Comedy*.

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(J.E. BENCHEIKH)

The Editors regret that they have failed to provide for a section on the *miʿrādj* in Persian literature. Whilst they anticipate that they will be able to repair this omission, they would refer the reader to the article by A.M. Piemontese, *Una versione persana della storia del "Miʿrāǧ"*, in *OM* lx/1-6 (1980), 225-43, which offers a translation of a passage of the Shīʿite commentary of sūra xvii by Abu 'l-Futūḥ al-Rāzī (ca. 480-525/1087-1131).

3. *Miʿrādj* literature in East and West Africa.

The celebration of the *miʿrādj* has here given rise to an extensive popular literature. Among the Shāfiʿī communities, from Egypt down to the East African coastlands, the most widely-used text is al-Barzandjī's *Kiṣṣat al-miʿrādj* or, in a later edition, *al-Isrāʾ wa 'l-miʿrādj*, available in Haji Mohamed's bookshop in Mombasa together with the same author's *Mawlid* [see MAWLID. 2. In East Africa].

In Swahili, there are two translations in prose and several versified elaborations; for the oldest known version in the *ukawafi* metre usually reserved for liturgical hymns, and which can still be sung, see Knappert, *Swahili Islamic poetry*, iii, Leiden 1971, 227-75; the same text but with long comments and notes, is given by idem, *Miiraji, the Swahili legend of Mohammed's Ascension*, in *Swahili, Jnal. of the Inst. for Swahili Research* (Dar es Salaam), xxxvi (1966), 105-56. A different poem, written before 1922, is given by idem, *Utenzi wa miiraji by Mohamed Jambeini*, in *Afrika und Uebersee*, xlviii (1966), 241-74, and another by Yusuf Ulenge (perhaps from an older oral text) is printed in *Swahili*, xxxviii (1968), with the title *Utenzi wa Miraji*.

A much longer poem, published by E. Dammann in his *Dichtungen in der Lamu Mundart des Suaheli*, Hamburg 1940, 1-72, was written down for Dammann by the poet Muhammad b. Abubakari Kijuma, who was probably also its author; see Muhammad b. Ibrahim Abou Egl, *Life and works of Muhammad Kijuma*, Ph.D. thesis, London Univ., 1984, unpubl.

In the mosques of East Africa, the *laylat al-miʿrādj* is celebrated after the night worship by singing these hymns, after which the *imām* explains its significance to the congregation.

In Hausaland (Northern Nigeria), poetic versions of the *miʿrādj* narrative were first discovered by M. Hiskett, see his *A history of Hausa Islamic verse*, London 1975, 48-62. Here the theme of the *miʿrādj* is part of the *muʿdjizāt* literature, poems written by scholars in praise of Muḥammad which can be sung or read. These are called *madahu*, from *madḥ* "praise". They are very popular and often recited during Ramaḍān when the people are in a receptive mood. A detailed description can be found in the thesis of Abdullahi Bayaro Yahya, *The Hausa verse category of Madahu, with special reference to theme, style and the background of Islamic sources and belief*, Univ. of Sokoto, Nigeria 1987, unpubl.; it includes Hausa texts and translations, and the place of the *miʿrādj* as one of the themes of *madahu* is comprehensively discussed.

In Ghana, the *miʿrādj* theme forms part of the *Mawlid* (as it does in East Africa) and is celebrated in the north of the country, in Kumasi and along the coast.

In the Gambia, the theme of the *miʿrādj* appears to have penetrated into the pre-Islamic Mandinka epic of Sunjata. In G. Innes' edition (*Sunjata*, London 1974, 156-7, l. 287), the diviner Siise, before answering the king's question, "goes into retreat" like a shaman, and states that "for forty days I saw the seven layers of the sky." This is clearly taken from the *miʿrādj*, in which Muḥammad himself claims the same; see Knappert, *Traditional Swahili poetry*, Leiden 1967, 152.

In Peul or Fulani [see FULBE], there is a long section on the *miʿrādj* in an important long poem edited by J. Haafkens in his *Chants musulmans en Peul*, Leiden 1983, 193-203. The long poem *Busarau* (from Arabic *bushārā*ʾ, pl. of *bashīr*, "bringers of good tidings", *ibid.*, 144-335), was heard sung and recorded from manuscripts by Haafkens in northern Cameroon, where it is extremely popular.

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(J. KNAPPERT)

4. *Miʿrādj* literature in Indonesia.

In West Java the celebration of the *miʿrādj* is still very popular; it takes place in the mosque, in the home or in the *langgar*, the little prayer-cabin near the house. On the eve of 27 Radjab, or in some places even on the preceding evening, people come together in families, or invite friends, usually the men and the women separately. The men do not smoke, since

smoke is disliked by the angels. The proceedings begin after the *ṣalāt al-maghrib* and are concluded by a *selataman*, a festive meal, around midnight, after the *ṣalāt al-ʿishā*ʾ. "Those who know stories" will tell them, about the life of Muḥammad and his night journey. Customarily, one who is qualified reads from *al-Zahr al-bāsim fī aṭwār Abi 'l-Ḳāsim*, by Sayyid ʿUthmān b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿĀḳil b. Yaḥyā (Jakarta 1342/1924, pp. 80), in Malay. During the reading *gaharu* or aloes wood is burnt as incense. If someone is present who can read Arabic (normally only in the towns), he will be asked to read the *Ḥāshiyat al-imām al-ʿārif biʾllāh taʿālā Abi 'l-Barakāt Sayyidī Aḥmad al-Dardīr ʿalā Ḳiṣṣat al-Miʿrādj liʾl-ʿallāma al-hammām barakat al-anām Nadjm ad-Dīn al-Ghaytī*, Cairo n.d., pp. 27. This work is known generally as *Dardīr*. A poetic rendering of the *miʿrādj* was written in Malay by Hadji Adam b. Hadji Kasman, the *Syair Mi'raj Nabi Muhammad*, Jakarta 1926. Another very popular Arabic booklet here is al-Barzandjī's *Ḳiṣṣat al-miʿrādj*.

In the mosque, the preacher will begin with prayers, then launch into a *naṣīḥa*, an admonishing sermon. He will explain the passages Ḳurʾān XVII, 1, and LIII, 9, in the light of the well-known commentaries. He may also quote the even better known *Mawlid* of al-Barzandjī, usually referred to as *Sharaf al-anām* (see MAWLID, and C. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, Leiden 1906, 209-14). In this *Mawlid* (as in most) there is a section on the *miʿrādj*, section XIV (see for a translation, J. Knappert, *Swahili Islamic poetry*, Leiden 1971, i, 57-8). The recital is terminated with the salutation to the Prophet, again from the *Mawlid* of al-Barzandjī; it begins: *Yā Nabī, salāmu ʿalayka*... (for a translation see Knappert, *op. cit.*, iii, 322, v. 31). All the worshippers present sing this passage with the preacher, while standing up, as the text prescribes, out of respect for Muḥammad. It is customary for the *imām* to commemorate the *miʿrādj* also in his *khuṭba* on the Friday before as well as the Friday after 27 Radjab. In some districts of West Java, gambling is strictly prohibited during the entire month.

At night the mosque may be illuminated, and even fireworks are set off by some; houses, too, keep a lamp burning all night. The celebration may last until the *ṣalāt al-ṣubḥ*; this is doubtless in memory of Muḥammad's return from the heavens before dawn (Knappert, *op. cit.*, iii, 271, v. 96). The religious teacher (in West Java, the Kiyai) will embellish the legend, weaving moral lessons into it for the edification of his flock. In the Periangan, he will speak in Sundanese, after the prayers in Arabic; there is a Sundanese poem describing the *miʿrādj* which can be sung that night. Some people fast during 27 Radjab, others fast for nine days, not consecutively but in sets of three at the beginning, middle and end of Radjab, which was already a holy month in ancient Arabia. Between the two World Wars, processions came into fashion, especially among the younger generation in Indonesia. Various Islamic groups have different opinions about the desirability of celebrating the *miʿrādj*. Modernists explain it totally symbolically as a spiritual development. Reformists want to abolish *miʿrādj* celebrations as a *bidʿa* which smacks of worshipping the Prophet rather than God alone. The conservatives however, cling to the *ʿādat* and take the *miʿrādj* literally, namely that Muḥammad saw God "with the eyes of his head" (al-Barzandjī).

Bibliography (in addition to references given in the article): H.H. Juynboll, *Catalogus van de Maleische en Sundaneesche Handschriften der Leidsche Universiteitsbibliotheek*, Leiden 1899, 203 (mentions also mss. in Buginese, Macassarese and Sundanese); Ph.S. Van Ronkel, *Catalogus der Maleische Handschriften van het Koninklijk Instituut v.d. Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, The Hague n.d., 196-7; G.F. Pijper, *Fragmenta islamica*, 1934, 125-55; G.Th. Pigeaud, *The literature of Java*, The Hague 1967, 99.

(J. KNAPPERT)

5. The *Miʿrādj* in Islamic art.

In the spirit of the Second Commandment, strict Muslims have always frowned on the portrayal of humans and other living creatures in painting and sculpture, and this antipathy is naturally strongest when the depiction of the Prophet Muḥammad is in question. But this peculiarly Semitic prejudice was never fully shared by the Aryan Persians, and it is thus primarily in the miniature painting of Persia that we must look for representations of the *miʿrādj*. As Sir Thomas Arnold wrote, "It was a frequent practice of the poets... to include in the Preface... a lyrical outburst on the theme of Muḥammad's Ascension... No incident in the religious history of Islam is more commonly represented in Muslim art than this of the Ascension of the Prophet."

There were, indeed, a number of works, poetical and otherwise, devoted entirely to the *miʿrādj* and its attendant circumstances (see 2. above). These are represented in painting, firstly, by the fragments of a large 8th/14th century manuscript preserved in Topkapı album H. 2154, the miniatures being attributed to Aḥmad Mūsā, and secondly, by the celebrated Paris manuscript of 840/1436 (Suppl. turc 190) written at Herat in the Uighur language, and illustrated by one of the finest and most original sets of miniatures in the whole of Persian painting. But these are special cases, and we are more concerned here with *miʿrādj* miniatures occurring in manuscripts of the classical poets.

The earliest of these date from the opening years of the 9th/15th century. In the *Miscellany* of Iskandar Sulṭān (British Library Add. 27261, dated 813-14/1410-11, fol. 6a) the *miʿrādj* is represented with the Prophet, mounted on Burāḳ, surrounded by angels, and conducted by Gabriel, soaring above the Kaʿba enclosure at Mecca, and this scheme of representation is closely followed in a detached double-page miniature of much the same date in the Chester Beatty Library (Cat. 292. i, ii). In both these (as in the Paris manuscript of 1436) the Prophet is shown unveiled, but in the latter, as in many subsequent examples, the face has been partially obliterated and repainted. This same basic composition, i.e. with the Kaʿba below and the Prophet unveiled, is followed in "main line" Persian painting of the later Tīmūrid period, as in the Niẓāmī of 900/1494 in the British Library (Or. 6810, fol. 5b), and is continued in the Keir Collection miniature (Cat. III. 207) dated 910/1505, which is one of those added under Shāh Ismāʿīl to the Niẓāmī of Yaʿḳūb Beg Aḳ Ḳoyunlu (Topkapı, H. 762), and may well be an early work of Sulṭān Muḥammad. This latter miniature is among the most striking and original treatments of the subject, the ascent, accompanied by innumerable angels and observed by others through a circular "hole in Heaven", being enclosed in a rectangular frame with the Kaʿba enclosure below and little desert villages with palm trees occupying the margins.

The *miʿrādj* is of frequent occurrence in Shīrāz manuscripts of the Tīmūrid period (though, curiously enough, hardly ever found in the mass of manuscripts illustrated in the Commercial Turkman style), but in

these, as in the numerous Ṣafawid examples, the Kaʿba is omitted, only the Prophet, now veiled, and accompanying angels being shown. Perhaps the finest of all is in the great Niẓāmī of Shāh Ṭahmāsp (British Library Or. 2265, fol. 195a) which is almost certainly the work of Sulṭān Muḥammad, and probably represents his swan-song.

Exceptional portrayals are occasionally encountered. Thus in the Topkapı Niẓāmī of 844/1441 (H. 774), probably of western Indian origin, the Prophet is depicted as a golden disc inscribed with his name; and in the British Library copy of 1075/1665 (Add. 6613, fol. 3b) the ascent is made against a background of concentric circles with the symbols of the planets revolving round the sun.

In post-Ṣarawid painting, the theme becomes somewhat vulgarised; Burāḳ may sport a peacock's tail and a clumsy Ḳādjār crown, and the Prophet is sometimes reduced to a sort of shapeless bundle. But on a fine painted lacquer mirror-case of 1288/1871 in the Bern Historical Museum, Muḥammad Ismāʿīl depicts the scene in traditional manner, though on a miniature scale.

Bibliography: Sir Thomas Arnold, *Painting in Islam*, Oxford 1928, chs. vi-vii; Marie-Rose Séguy, *The miraculous journey of Mahomet*, London 1977. Reproductions of *miʿrādj* miniatures are fairly frequent in general works on Persian painting, but see especially: L. Binyon, *The poems of Nizami*, London 1928, pl. xiv; L. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits timurides*, Paris 1954, pl. lxix; B.W. Robinson in *Iran*, *JBIPS*, viii (1970), 47-50, pl. V; idem, *Persian paintings in the India Office Library*, London 1976, 26, 148; idem (ed.), *The Keir Collection: Islamic painting and the arts of the book*, London 1976, col. pl. 19, pl. 32, 47, 95; idem, *Persian paintings in the John Rylands Library*, London 1980, 73; J.M. Rogers, F. Çağman and Z. Tanindi, *Topkapı: the albums and illustrated manuscripts*, London 1986, pl. 45-7. (B.W. Robinson)

MĪRĀN MUḤAMMAD SHĀH I, of Khāndēsh [*q.v.*] in western India, was the eleventh prince of the Fārūḳī dynasty (regn. 926-43/1520-37). He belonged to the younger branch of that line, which had taken refuge in Gudjarāt, and his ancestors had lived in that kingdom and had married princesses of the Muẓaffarī family until Maḥmūd I of Gudjarāt [*q.v.*] had, on the extinction of the elder branch of the Fārūḳīs, placed ʿĀdil Khān III, Muḥammad's father, on the throne of Khāndēsh. Muḥammad, who was, through his mother, the great-grandson of Maḥmūd, and the grandson of his son, Muẓaffar II, succeeded his father in Khāndēsh in 926/1520, and in 933/1527 incautiously intervened in the cause of ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿImād Shāh of Berār [*q.v.*] by aiding him against his enemy, Burhān Niẓām Shāh I of Aḥmadnagar [*q.v.* and NIẒĀM-SHĀHĪS]. He was defeated and driven back into Khāndēsh, but succeeded in persuading his uncle, Bahādur of Gudjarāt, to intervene, and with him invaded the kingdom of Aḥmadnagar. The campaign was only partially successful, but Muḥammad was indemnified by Burhān I for his losses. He accompanied his uncle in the campaign which ended, in 937/1531, in the capture of Māndū [*q.v.*] and the annexation of Mālwa to Gudjarāt, and on Bahādur's death in 944/1537, was summoned, in his mother's right, to the throne of Gudjarāt, but died on his way to Aḥmadābād.

Bibliography: Firishta, *Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī*, Bombay 1832; Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Makkī, *Ẓafar al-wālih*, ed. E. Denison Ross as *An Arabic history of Gujarat*, London 1910-28; T.W. Haig, *The Fārūqī dynasty of Khāndesh*, in *The Indian Antiquary*, xlvii (1918); *Cambridge history of India*. iii. *Turks and Afghans*, ed. Haig, Cambridge 1928, 314, 328-9. See also the *Bibls.* to FĀRŪḲIDS and KHĀNDĒSH and art. *hind.* iv. History, at iii, 422. (T.W. Haig*)

MĪRĀNDJĪ [see MIYĀN MĪR, MIYĀNDJĪ].

MĪRĀNSHĀH B. TĪMŪR (*ca.* 768-810/*ca.* 1367-1408), the third son of Tīmūr [*q.v.*] (Tamerlane), born of a concubine named Mengliček. Due to his marriage to two Činggisid princesses, he bore the title *güregen* ("royal son-in-law"). In 782/1380-1, he was appointed governor of Khurāsān, shortly before its full conquest. He shared power there with several of Tīmūr's senior commanders, and spent much of his time outside the province, accompanying Tīmūr to western Persia in 786-7/1384-5, to Khʷārazm and the Ḳïpčaḳ steppe in 790/1388-9 and 792-3/1390-1, and on the "five-year campaign" to Persia in 794-8/1392-6, returning to Khurāsān only to put down local rebellions.

In 795/1393 Mīrānshāh became governor of Ādharbāydjān and western Persia. He did not immediately transfer his dependents, but first campaigned with Tīmūr in the Ḳïpčaḳ steppe in 797-8/1395-6. As governor, he executed the founder of the Ḥurūfī sect [see ḤURŪFIYYA], Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī, in 796/1394. The Ḥurūfī considered him an anti-Christ and referred to him as Mārānshāh ("snake king"). During Tīmūr's Indian campaign of 800-1/1398-9, Mīrānshāh remained in Ādharbāydjān, and according to the histories, fell from his horse and became temporarily insane; this was probably an attempt at independence. He distributed public money, besieged Baghdād, destroyed buildings in Tabrīz and Sulṭāniyya, and persecuted his wife and *amīr*s. In documents of this period he apparently omitted Tīmūr's name. Tīmūr removed Mīrānshāh from his position, kept him close to himself and meted out severe punishment to his retinue. In Shawwāl 806/April-May 1404, Tīmūr allowed Mīrānshāh to leave for Baghdād with his son Abā Bakr.

Mīrānshāh and his sons were active in the succession struggle after Tīmūr's death. His son Khalīl Sulṭān held Transoxania until 811/1409; Abā Bakr and Mīrānshāh disputed Ādharbāydjān with ʿUmar b. Mīrānshāh and the Ḳaraḳoyunlu Turkmen. Mīrānshāh died fighting with Ḳara Yūsuf Ḳaraḳoyunlu in 810/1408.

Sīdī Aḥmad b. Mīrānshāh married Ruḳiyya Sulṭān bt. Ḳara ʿUthmān Aḳḳoyunlu, and his descendants remained in Ādharbāydjān as the Mīrānshāhī clan, holding an important position within the Aḳḳoyunlu. Mīrānshāh's grandson Abū Saʿīd b. Sulṭān Muḥammad gained power over the northeastern Tīmūrid realm in 855/1451; Abū Saʿīd's grandson, Bābur b. ʿUmar Shaykh [*q.v.*], founded the Mughal dynasty in 932/1526.

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MIRʾĀT (A.) "mirror", pl. *marāʾī*, the noun of instrument from *raʾā* "to see".