Planets in Alchemy: 
Commentaries and Glosses on the Opening 
Verses of Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs’s Shudhūr al-dhahab *

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Abstract
The Arabic alchemical poetry collection Shudhūr al-dhahab (“The Splinters of Gold”) by Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs (fl. 12th and/or 13th c.) has engendered a remarkably rich commentary tradition, both in separate works and in manuscript glosses, written and copied from the 12th/13th to the 20th centuries. Of particular interest to the commentators was the first poem of the collection. It was known as al-Kawkabiyya (“The Planetary Poem”) since the seven classical planets are the principal agents in its two opening verses. After providing a survey of all known commentaries on Shudhūr al-dhahab and of the poetry collection’s manuscripts with glosses on the “planetary” verses, this article analyses their explanations, particularly with regard to the interrelations of astrological and alchemical imagery. It also includes an edition of an alchemical poem of unclear authorship, which was probably composed as an imitation of the first poem of Shudhūr al-dhahab by emulating its references to the planets.

Keywords: Arabic alchemy – Arabic astrology – Arabic manuscripts – commentaries – glosses – alchemical poetry

1 Introduction
In the year of 1439, Timurid sultan Ulugh Beg (d. 853/1449), who was famous for his profound interest in astronomy, 1 had a volume with three works by the alchemist Aydamir al-Jildakī (fl. mid-14th c.) copied for his library. 2 Of these three, two are commentaries on the alchemical poetry collection Shudhūr al-dhahab (“The Splinters of Gold”) by Abū l-Ḥasan

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2 MS Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayi Kütüphanesi, Ahmet III, 2111, dated 843/1439. This MS was copied in Herat for the library of Ulugh Beg, according to a declaration on the title page, carefully executed with golden, white, green and blue ink (ḥi-rasm khūzānat al-sulṭān […] Ulugh Bīk Bahādīr Kūrkān).
ʿAlī b. Mūsā al-Andalusī, known as Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, a comprehensive dīwān of around 1400 verses in 43 alphabetically ordered poems. The commentaries are entitled Maṭāli’ al-budūr (“The Places of Rising of the Full Moons”) and al-Durr al-manṭhūr (“The Scattered Pearls”), respectively both fi sharb sadr dīwān al-Shudhūr (“on the Explanation of the Opening of the Poetry Collection ‘The Splinters [of Gold]’”). Both commentaries exclusively discuss the first poem of the collection. It is not surprising that Ulugh Beg as an astronomer took a particular interest in this four-versed poem since the seven classical planets, including the Sun and the Moon, play a prominent role in its two opening verses. Therefore, this poem on hamza in the metre fāwil was also known as al-Kawkabiyya (“The Planetary Poem”).

1. If one lets Mars form a trine with Venus,
   And the Sun conjoin the shining Full Moon,
   And unites benefic Jupiter with Mercury
   Towards Saturn, so that it may gain brightness,
   And solidifies oils and liquefies with wisdom
   Rocks that waters have turned into dust,
   He will be, even if he was very poor in the morning,
   The richest of the worlds in the evening.

The two opening verses on the planets are probably the most famous ones of the entire collection, since they have been commented upon more frequently than any other verse of Shudhūr al-dhahab. In his commentary, the alchemist Abū l-Qāsim al-Sīmāwī (fl. mid-13th

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3 There are two critical editions of Shudhūr al-dhahab, by Ghazzali 2018 (based on 6 MSS) and by Dolgusheva (forthcoming, based on 95 MSS). On the alchemist Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s and his work, see Forster/Müller 2020b. Along with the two commentaries on Shudhūr, the MS from Ulugh Beg’s library contains al-Fīlādī’s Natā’il al-fikr fi l-kashf ‘an alwāl al-bajar (“The Results of the Thoughts on the Revelation of the States of the Stone”) and a praise poem for Ulugh Beg.

4 This title is given in several MSS of Shudhūr: Baghdad, Dār al-makhtūtāt al-ʾIrāqiyya, 2-30654, fol. 53r; Cairo, Dār al-kutub al-Miṣriyya, 177, fol. 1v, (dated 997/1588-9); Cairo, al-Maktaba al-Azhariyya, 5926, fol. 27v; Kabul, Āršīf-i mill-i Afghānīstān, 167 (copied in Kashmir in 1010/1601-2, not foliated); Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Or. 2840, fol. 1v; Rabat, al-Khizāna al-Hasaniyya, 1369, fol. 1v (dated 1301/1883-4); Riyadh, King Abdulaziz Public Library, 681, p. 2 (dated 1057/1647–8) and Riyadh, King Saud University Library, 3571, fol. 1v (ca. 16th c.). The metre of the poem has been identified by Forster 2020a: 41.


6 My translation is based on Forster 2020a: 41, with some modifications.
c.) emphasises that the stylistic skill and uniqueness of these verses stem from the fact that they contain the names of all seven planets.7 Similarly, al-Jildakī comments in al-Durr al-manthūr that in these two verses, Ibn Arfā’ Ra’s has dealt thoroughly with the seven planets and their interrelations.8 As for their alchemical content, the commentary tradition highlights the importance of the first verses within the poetry collection. In Matāli’ al-budūr, al-Jildakī writes referring to Ibn Arfā’ Ra’s: “I looked into his book Shudhūr al-dhahab and I found that he had contained the entire wisdom one aspires to (jami’ al-hikma al-matliba) [...] in the verses on alif that he put at its beginning.”9 According to the anonymous author of a previous commentary called al-Dâ’ira al-hindiyya (“The Indian Circle”), the remaining verses of Shudhūr al-dhahab are nothing but an explanation (sharḥ) of its first verses.10 This resonates with a metaphor in al-Jildakī’s commentary al-Badr al-munir fi ma’rifat asrār al īkṣīr (“The Shining Full Moon on the Knowledge of the Secrets of the Elixir”), where he mentions that his disciples or alchemist colleagues (talāba zamāninā – lit. “students of our time”) consider the first three verses of Shudhūr al-dhahab the “fruit of the poetry collection” (thamarat al-dīwān) and all remaining verses the “peel surrounding it” (qushūr ‘alayhā).11 In al-Durr al-manthūr, al-Jildakī states that a competent (ḥādīq) alchemist would only need these verses of Shudhūr al-dhahab and could do without the rest of the dīwān in theory and practice.12 Similarly, the copyist of a Hyderabad manuscript of Shudhūr al-dhahab informs his readers that Ibn Arfā’ Ra’s has indicated in a succinct and concise way “all methods and techniques of the Art [of alchemy]” (jami’ ṭuruq al-ṣan’a wa-ḥaṭa’ahā) in the opening of the poetry collection, for which the remaining poems serve only as supporting evidence (shavāḥid).13 The alchemist ‘Ali Bek al-Iznīqī comments that, in his two opening verses, Ibn Arfā’ Ra’s has pointed out the entire “science of the stone” (‘ilm al-ḥajār) and the “science of the balance” (‘ilm al-mīzān) likewise.14

There is an alchemical poem of unclear authorship, which shows strong parallels to the first poem of Shudhūr al-dhahab as it also focuses on the planets in four verses on khamza in tawīl, while applying a similar syntactic and semantic structure. It has been attributed to Khālid b. Yazīd (d. 857/704) in some manuscripts, where it is copied together with poetry of...
his,\textsuperscript{15} while another manuscript ascribes it to al-Ťughrāʾī (d. 515/1121).\textsuperscript{16} An anonymous commentator, however, states: “Some learned men composed [these verses] on hamza, imitating the author of Shudhūr.”\textsuperscript{17} This would indicate that the poem was written after Shudhūr al-dhahab and, thus, neither by Khālid, nor by al-Ťughrāʾī.\textsuperscript{18} I propose the following text and translation of the poem, based on the copy from Hamburg\textsuperscript{19} as reference manuscript:

\begin{equation}
\text{إِذَإ زُحَل أَحْرَقْتَهُ بَعْدَ سَبْعَة وَكَََّس ْتَهُ حَتََّّ يَصايرَ هَبَاءَ}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
\text{وَزَوَّجْتَ بِالمارِّإخا شََْساا وَزُهْرَةا كَقاسْمَةا مَيرإثا إلنِّاسَاءا سَوَأءَ}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
\text{وَأَوْدَعْتَ أَصْبَاغَ إلجُسُوما عُطَارادإ لإلثُّبُوتا لاوَإءَ}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
\text{وَأَلْحَقْتَهُ إلبَدْرَ إلمُنايرَ أَقَمْتَهُ وَفازْتَ وَأُعْطايتَ إلغَدَإةَ غَنَاءَ}
\end{equation}

1. If you burn Saturn after seven,
   And calcinate it until it turns into dust,
2. And marry Sun and Venus to Mars,
   Equally, like the share of women’s heritage,
3. And entrust the bodies’ dyes to Mercury,
   For a people that set up a banner for constancy,
4. And attain it as the shining Full Moon, you have resurrected it,
   You were successful and are given wealth in the morning.
Within the transmission history of *Shudhūr al-dhahab*, the third verse of this poem has been added to the “Planetary Poem” of Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s poetry collection in a number of manuscripts, making it a five-versed poem. However, it was changed into the third person (*wa-awda’a* instead of *wa-awda’*, in order to fit the syntax of the opening poem of *Shudhūr*. It appears in different positions of the poem, either after the second, the third or the fourth verse. This insertion must have happened at the beginning of the 14th century or earlier, according to the date of the oldest known manuscript that includes it. In a 16th-century copy of *Shudhūr al-dhahab*, the verse has been added in the margin, with a note ascribing it to Khālid b. Yazīd. In some of the manuscripts of this poem, where it is copied among poetry by Khālid, the poem is introduced with the information that “the author of ‘The Splinters’ took from it.” Obviously, someone who knew a five-versed version of the first poem of *Shudhūr al-dhahab* had concluded that Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s himself had plagiarized the verse from “Khālid’s” poem. This is unlikely, however, since the verse does not appear in Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s’s auto-commentary on *Shudhūr al-dhahab*. Further, its appearance in different positions of the poem indicates that it was not part of the original text. With regard to the stylistic conception of Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s’s opening poem, al-Simāwī explained that it was meant to contain the names of the seven planets. Therefore, it would seem incoherent to add another verse on Mercury, as this planet is already present in the second verse. Compared to the “Planetary Poem” of *Shudhūr al-dhahab*, the poem ascribed to Khālid appears less elaborate, since it does not include all planets, with Jupiter missing. It seems likely that the statement of the St Petersburg manuscript is true and that this poem has been composed as an literary imitation of the famous opening poem of *Shudhūr al-dhahab*. The similarity of both poems then probably inspired an anonymous editor to add the third verse of the imitation poem to the original poem of *Shudhūr al-dhahab*. Imitations of Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s’s poetry collection were not uncommon, as al-Jilḍākī knew not only “many commentaries” (*shurūḥ kathīra*) and “pentastichic poems” (*takhmīṣāt*) on *Shudhūr al-dhahab*, but also “imitations” (*muḍāḥāt*) of its poetry. Apart from *Shudhūr al-dhahab*, Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s’s “Stanzas Poem on the Art of Alchemy” (*Muwashshah ṣanʿawī*) has also served as a model for at least one anonymous imitation poem.

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21 Cf. ed. DOLGUSHEVA (forthcoming).
22 MS Tinduf, Zāwiyat Sīdī Be‘āmaš, 31 (dated 704/1304), cf. ed. DOLGUSHEVA (forthcoming).
23 MS Istanbul, Körprülî Kütlüphanesi, Fazıl Ahmed Paşa, 1295, fol. 1v (dated 926/1519-20): *tabayyana annahā min kalām Khālid*. I wish to thank Svétana Dolgusheva for this information.
24 MS Beirut, Université Saint-Joseph, Or. 255, fol. 18r (ca. 15th c.): *min ḥādhīlī l-maqtī‘a akhḍadha sāḥib al-Shudhūr*. MSS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, Kīmiyā‘ 107, p. 103 (copied 1312/1894-5) and Mecca, Umm al-Qurā 237, p. 30: *wa-qāla ayyān ḥādhīlī l-qāṣidā [...] wa-minhā akhḍadha sāḥib al-Shudhūr*.
25 MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2111, fol. 63v.
2 Commentaries on Shudhūr al-dhabab

The meaning of the verses of Shudhūr al-dhabab must have been rather obscure to their readership, such that various alchemists felt compelled to compose explanatory commentaries on them. It appears that Ibn Afā’ Ra’s was aware of the difficulty of his poetry, since he himself commented upon his diwān in a dialogue with his disciple Abū l-Qāsim.27 In total, there are thirteen known commentaries on Shudhūr al-dhabab, of which twelve are extant in manuscripts and not less than five have been written by al-Jildakī.28 It seems that commentaries on Shudhūr al-dhabab were mainly, if not exclusively, composed in the Islamic East. We have information on certain commentaries having been written in Alexandria, Baghdad and Cairo, but no hints at any with Maghrebi origins. The commentaries were written between the 12th/13th and 15th centuries and manuscript evidence suggests that their reception in different parts of the Islamicate world, from India to Morocco, continued until the late 19th century. Short versions (mukhtaṣārāt) of several commentaries, redacted by later editors, were also in circulation.29 It is noteworthy that the commentaries differ in the selection of verses they comment on. While some discuss the entire poetry collection, most of them only choose to explain certain poems and verses, showing different degrees of selectivity. Almost half of the thirteen extant commentaries are dedicated exclusively to the first poem. The two opening verses on the planets which constitute the focus of this article, are explained in eleven commentaries, of which ten were available for analysis in manuscript sources. The following table shows the commentaries on Shudhūr al-dhabab in a mostly chronological order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Time / Place</th>
<th>Comments on</th>
<th>Number of known MSS</th>
<th>Short version(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

27 See Müller in IBN AFĀ’ RA’S (forthcoming).
29 Of those, one short version of Ibn Afā’ Ra’s’s auto-commentary has been printed as a lithograph in late 19th-century India (Mumbai 1298/1888), cf. Müller in IBN AFĀ’ RA’S (forthcoming).
30 The numbers in parentheses include MSS which I have not seen, but which are indicated in manuscript catalogues. For detailed lists of all MSS, see FORSTER 2020b and 2020c.
31 For detailed lists of short versions and their MSS, see FORSTER 2020b and 2020c. On short versions of Hall, see Müller in IBN AFĀ’ RA’S (forthcoming).
Further research is needed in order to determine whether all poems, all verses (?) are erroneously written. The copyist states that al-Irbilī’s commentary had four parts, but that is was only transmitted until the part on the poems on dād. Indeed, in all extant MSS, the end of the text is lacking and in most MSS, the commentary ends after the poems on dād. Yet, it seems that it originally discussed all verses of Shudhūr.

34 Reference text: MS Tehran, Majlis, Sinā 1562. The title of this commentary is only given by the copyist, who has added an introduction to the text. In the other MSS, the commentary itself does not have a specific title neither. On the author al-Irbilī (d. 655/1257), see IBN AL-SHĀʿĀR AL-MAWṢĪLĪ 2005, I: 268–9, and al-ṢAFĀDĪ 1969, VII: 296. For further information on the commentary, see the introduction in MS Tehran, Majlis, 1562, Sinā, pp. 1–2.

35 Reference text: MS Mashhad, Āstān-i quds-i Radawi, 5767. On the author, see ULLMANN 1972: 235–7. On the authenticity of this commentary, see FORSTER/MÜLLER 2020b: 377–379, and Müller in IBN ARFĀ’I’s (forthcoming). In the reference MS, the title is given as Shahr dīwān Shudhūr al-dhahab in the illuminated headpiece, and as al-Durr al-manṭhūr fī Shahr al-Shudhūr in the colophon (with برہن being erroneously written بریسن). It seems that the latter was the original title of al-Simāwī’s commentary, but there is also another anonymous commentary on Shudhūr associated with the same title (no. 5 of this list), as well as a later commentary by al-Jildakī (no. 9). Al-Jildakī might have copied this title from al-Simāwī, since he knew his commentary under this title, as he writes in Ghāyat al-sūrūr about “the commentary on this poetry collection by the author of al-Muktasah, which is called ‘The Scattered Pearls’” (shahr sāḥib al-Muktasah li-hādhā l-dīwān al-musammā bi-l-Durr al-manṭhūr), MS Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, 836, fol. 31r (this sentence is not extant in MS Leiden, Universitätsbibliothek, Or. 118). Shaban Salim (Cairo) is preparing a critical edition of al-Simāwī’s commentary.

36 Reference text: MS London, British Library, Add 22756 (dated 706/1306). This commentary is related to al-Simāwī’s commentary, for both texts are identical in their discussion of certain poems of Shudhūr, i.e. from the poem on dhāl until poem on sād, and from the first poem on jā’ until the end of Shudhūr. Further research is needed in order to determine whether al-Simāwī has copied these texts from the author.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Copyists</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Reference Text</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>al-Simāwī, Abū l-Qāsim Ahmad b. Muḥammad al-ʻIrāqī</td>
<td>al-Durr al-manṭhūr fī sharḥ al-Shudhūr</td>
<td>mid-13th c.?</td>
<td>most poems, selected verses</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Sharḥ aḥyāʾ al-maʿānī li-dīwān Shudhūr al-dhahab</td>
<td>before 706/1306</td>
<td>most poems, selected verses</td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
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</tbody>
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33 Reference text: MS Tehran, Majlis, Sinā 1562. The title of this commentary is only given by the copyist, who has added an introduction to the text. In the other MSS, the commentary itself does not have a specific title neither. On the author al-Irbilī (d. 655/1257), see IBN AL-SHĀʿĀR AL-MAWṢĪLĪ 2005, I: 268–9, and al-ṢAFĀDĪ 1969, VII: 296. For further information on the commentary, see the introduction in MS Tehran, Majlis, 1562, Sinā, pp. 1–2.

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Juliane Müller

<table>
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<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>al-Dā‘īra al-hindiyya</td>
<td>before 737/1337, before al-Jildakī</td>
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<td>–</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“The Indian Circle”</td>
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<td>or</td>
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<td></td>
<td>al-Durr al-manṭūr fi sharḥ ṣadr dīwān al-Shudhūr</td>
<td>before 737/1337, Cairo</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>“The Scattered Pearls: Commentary on the Opening of the Poetry Collection ‘The Splinters’”</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>al-Jildakī, ʻIzz al-Dīn Aydamir b. ʻAlī</td>
<td>Maṭālī’ al-budūr fi sharḥ ṣadr dīwān al-Shudhūr</td>
<td>before 737/1337, Cairo</td>
<td>41&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>“The Places of Rising of the Full Moons: Commentary on the Opening of the Poetry Collection ‘The Splinters’”</td>
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<td>al-Jildakī, ʻIzz al-Dīn Aydamir b. ʻAlī</td>
<td>al-Badr al-munṣūr fi ma‘rifat āsrār al-ikṣīr</td>
<td>before 737/1337, Cairo</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>–</td>
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<td>“The Shining Full Moon on the Knowledge of the Secrets of the Elixir”</td>
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37 Reference text: MS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 128. The title of this commentary is unclear. In the only known MS, it is called Kitāb al-Dā‘īra al-hindiyya (“The Indian Circle”) on the title page and in the beginning of the text written by the copyist (ḥadhā al-kitāb al-mawsūm bi-l-Dā‘īra al-hindiyya, fol. 1v), whereas within the introduction on the same folio, the author declares: “I called it ‘The Scattered Pearls: Commentary on the Opening of the Poetry Collection ‘The Splinters’’” (wa-sammaynā fī l-Durr al-manṭūr fi sharḥ ṣadr dīwān al-Shudhūr). In the colophon, there is a combination of both titles: al-Dā‘īra al-mawsūma bi-l-Durr al-manṭūr fi sharḥ ṣadr dīwān al-Shudhūr (fol. 7v). Al-Jildakī knew this commentary and cites it in Maṭālī’ al-budūr as al-Dā‘īra al-hindiyya al-mawsūma bi-l-Durr al-manṭūr fi sharḥ ṣadr ʻaydār al-Shudhūr (MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2111, fol. 99r; cf. note 173). In his later work Natā‘īj al-fikar, al-Jildakī cites the author of the commentary as sāḥib al-Dā‘īra al-hindiyya fi sharḥ ṣadr Shudhūr al-dhahab (MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2111, fol. 30r).

38 Reference text: MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2111, fols. 85v–102v, cf. note 2. The colophon states that this MS was copied from an autograph of the author al-Jildakī (wa-kutub [...] min nuskha kutub min khatt al-musannaf, fol. 102v). This is the earliest commentary on Shudhūr by al-Jildakī. In later MSS, it became also known under the title Qatlī‘ al-muḥājir (“The Necklaces or: Exquisite Poems of the Upper Chests”). It seems that al-Jildakī composed this commentary when he was still a disciple, since there is a note referring to his teacher at the end of the text in one of the MSS: “When I finished this commentary, I informed my master and teacher in this art, Abū l-Qāsim Ahmad b. Shaykh al-Islām al-Tūlūn, about it. He examined it and told me: You have elucidated the secret and almost even unveiled it [...]” (MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Hacı Mahmud Efendi, 6225, fol. 158r).

39 This commentary does not contain explanations on the ‘planetary’ opening verses. It is al-Jildakī’s second commentary on Shudhūr. In the introduction, he mentions that he already wrote a commentary on the beginning of Shudhūr entitled Maṭālī’ al-budūr (MS Tehran, Majlis, 12606, p. 212).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planets in Alchemy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 al-Jildakī, ʿIzz al-Dīn Aydamir b. ʿAlī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before 742/1342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Uncovering of the Veils: Commentary on the Poetry Collection ‘The Splinters’” 40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 9 al-Jildakī, ʿIzz al-Dīn Aydamir b. ʿAlī | al-Durr al-manṭūr fī sharḥ  ṣadr dīwān al-Shudhūr |
| 742–3/1342, Cairo | first poem | 15 (18) |
| “The Scattered Pearls: Commentary on the Opening of the Poetry Collection ‘The Splinters’” 41 |

| 10 al-Jildakī, ʿIzz al-Dīn Aydamir b. ʿAlī | Ghāyat al-surūr fī sharḥ dīwān al-Shudhūr |
| after 742–3/1342 | all poems, all verses | 73 (99) + |
| “The Utmost Joy: Commentary on the Poetry Collection ‘The Splinters’” 42 |

| 11 ʿAlī Bek al-Iznīqī (ʿAlī Çelebî, al-Šarūkhānî) | Tawâliʿ al-budūr li-ṣadr dīwān al-Shudhūr |
| 9th/15th c. | first poem | 7 (9) + |
| “The Risings of the Full Moons, for the Opening of the Poetry Collection ‘The Splinters’” 43 |

40 Of this commentary, no MSS are currently known. Its title is given by al-Jildakī in his commentary al-Durr al-manṭūr, where he states that he had previously written two commentaries on the beginning of Shudhūr, the first being Maṭāliʿ al-budūr and the second Kashf al-satūr fī sharḥ dīwān al-Shudhūr (MS İstanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2111, fols. 43v). Reference text: MS İstanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2111, fols. 43v–84v; cf. note 2. According to the colophon (fol. 84v), this MS was copied in Herat from the autograph, which was finished by al-Jildakī in Cairo in 743/1342. Al-Jildakī started writing this commentary in 742/1342, as he states in the introduction (fol. 44r). This is his fourth commentary on Shudhūr. As it bears exactly the same title as the anonymous al-Dāʿira al-hindiya, it seems very probable that al-Jildakī has taken it from there, or from al-Sīmāwī’s commentary (cf. notes 35 and 37).

41 Reference text: MS Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Or. 118, vol. 1. This is al-Jildakī’s most comprehensive commentary on Shudhūr. It is composed of four parts and comments on every single verse of Ibn Arfaʿ Raʿs’s poetry collection. As the number of extant MSS indicates, this was the most popular and widespread of all known commentaries on Shudhūr. Although its date of composition is unknown, it seems that al-Jildakī wrote it after al-Durr al-manṭūr, since he does not mention it in his former commentaries.

42 Reference text: MS Paris, BnF, Arabe 2624. The title of this commentary seems to be a reference to the earliest commentary by al-Jildakī, Maṭāliʿ al-budūr. On the author, who is also known as the “New Author” (al-Muʿallīf al-jadīd), see Ullmann 1972: 242–244 and Artun 2013: 144–156.
Juliane Müller

12 Anonymous [Sharḥ ba’d al-abyāt al-mawjūda fi awwal dīwān Shudhūr al-dhahab]
   [“Commentary on some Verses from the Beginning of the Poetry Collection ‘The Splinters of Gold’”]44
   ?  first poem  2  –

13 Anonymous [Risāla fī sharḥ al-Shudhūr]
   [“Treatise on the Explanation of ‘The Splinters’”]45  ?  forth poem, selected verses  1  –

The third verse of the above mentioned imitation poem of the first poem of Shudhūr al-dhahab has also entered the commentary tradition, where it is present in the anonymous Sharḥ abyāt al-ma’ānī as the third verse of the first poem.46 Furthermore, there is a short, untitled commentary, allegedly written by al-Jildakī, which is dedicated exclusively to this additional verse.47 It states that the verse had been deliberately removed from the first poem of Shudhūr al-dhahab.48 Although Aydamir al-Jildakī is named as the author of this commentary in the beginning of the text, his authorship is, for various reasons, improbable. First, al-Jildakī does not mention this commentary in his other works on alchemy, nor does he include this additional verse in any of his commentaries on Shudhūr al-dhahab. Even if it were a late work of his, he would probably have referred to his previous commentaries, which is not the case here. Second, the author of the commentary cites al-Jildakī in the third

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44 Reference text: MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye, Bağdatlı Vehbi, 2254. The title has been added with a pencil by a later hand.

45 This commentary does not contain explanations on the ‘planetary’ opening verses. It might be an excerpt from an unknown longer commentary, because in the only extant MS (Tehran, Majlis, Sinā’ī 153), the text starts immediately with the explanation of verses from the fourth poem of Shudhūr, without any introduction or title. Iranian catalogues identify the author of this commentary as being either one Shaykh Ahmad Aḥṣāfī or one Husayn Bahārānī (see, for example, Dirāyatī 2010, VI: 789). This information is probably based on a table of contents which has been added at the beginning of this alchemical MS, apparently by a later hand, and where the commentary is listed as Risāla li-l-Shaykh Ahmad aw li-l-Sayyid Husain (or: Husayn) al-Bahrani fi sharh al-Shudhur. However, these names cannot be found next to the text of the commentary, which is located towards the end of the MS (pp. 219–225).

46 MS London, British Library, Add 22756, fol. 3r (dated 706/1306-7). This is also the case in a later MS of the same commentary: Istanbul, Millet Kütüphanesi, Ali Emiri Arabi, 3205, fol. 3r (copied 1015/1606-7 in Rosetta).

47 This commentary is extant only in MS Ray, Shāh Ṭabd al-ʿAẓīm, 634, pp. 125–129.

48 MS Ray, Shāh Ṭabd al-ʿAẓīm, 634, p. 125: “Know that in the beginning of the master’s [i.e. Ibn Arfa’ Raʾs’s] poetry collection, there is a verse which alchemists (ahl al-waṣūfū) have hidden because it will lead to a quick result (li-mā fīhī min natīja qarība).” The commentary cites the third verse of the imitation poem with the variant al-nujūm (“the stars”) instead of al-jusūm (“the bodies”), which is also extant in several MSS of Shudhūr al-dhahab. Cf. ed. Dolgusheva (forthcoming).
person. And finally, the concise style of writing of this very short commentary does not match al-Jildaki’s rather wordy style, which is especially evident in his later works.

3 Glosses on the opening verses in manuscripts of Shudhūr al-dhahab

Of the more than ninety known manuscripts of Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s’s poetry collection Shudhūr al-dhahab, about one quarter contains explanatory glosses on the two “planetary” opening verses of the first poem. They are written on the margins or between the lines. Several manuscripts also show a combination of marginal and interlinear glosses. The following table shows these manuscripts in, as far as possible, chronological order.

Table 2: Manuscripts of Shudhūr al-dhahab with glosses on the two opening verses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Copied in</th>
<th>Marginal glosses</th>
<th>Interlinear glosses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Manchester, John Rylands Library, 809</td>
<td>ca. 740-1/1350</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tehran, Kitābkhana-yi markazi-yi Dānishgāh, 1205</td>
<td>846/1442-3</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Istanbul, Topkapı Kütüphanesi, Ahmet III, 1718</td>
<td>853/1449-50</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Istanbul, Topkapı Kütüphanesi, Ahmet III, 2572</td>
<td>880/1475-6</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Istanbul, Köprülü Kütüphanesi, Fazıl Ahmed Paşa, 1295</td>
<td>926/1519-20</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cairo, Dār al-kutub al-Miṣriyya, Ṭabīʿa Ṭalʿat 177</td>
<td>997/1588-9</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Riyadh, King Saud University Library, 3571</td>
<td>ca. 16th c.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. O. 33</td>
<td>1063/1652-3</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


50 Cf. ed. DOLGUSHEVA (forthcoming).

51 The interlinear glosses of this manuscript are also present in MS Paris, BnF, Arabe 2623, where they were copied separately without the poems of Shudhūr under the title Hāshiya ‘alā Shudhūr al-dhahab in 1088/1677-8. However, the glosses of the Paris MS have not been copied directly from MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 1718, but from another, apparently lost, copy of Shudhūr from 898/1493 (cf. MS Paris, BnF, Arabe 2623, fol. 1r).

52 This MS seems to be related to MS Cairo, Azhariyya, 5926, since both show the same set of glosses.

53 This MS seems to be related to MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. arab. 881, since both show the same glosses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>City, Library, Location, MS Number</th>
<th>Date/Period</th>
<th>Red</th>
<th>Blue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Riyadh, King Saud University Library, 1716</td>
<td>before 1113/1701-2</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tehran, Kitābkhāna-yi markazī-yi Dānīshgāh, 7207</td>
<td>ca. 18th c.</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cairo, Dār al-kutub al-Miṣriyya, Kīmiyāʾ wa-ṭabiʿa 17</td>
<td>1204/1789-90</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Cairo, Dār al-kutub al-Miṣriyya, 129</td>
<td>1206/1792, Herat</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Rabat, al-Khizāna al-Ḥasanīyya, 2252</td>
<td>1232/1817</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Rabat, al-Khizāna al-Ḥasanīyya, 1109</td>
<td>1303/1885-6</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Hyderabad, Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Institute, Kīmiyāʾ 56</td>
<td>1313/1895-6</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Rabat, al-Khizāna al-Ḥasanīyya, 1116</td>
<td>late 19th c., Cairo</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Qom, al-Maʾhad al-ṭāʿī li-l-ulūm wa-l-thaqāfa al-islāmiyya, 281</td>
<td>1345/1926-7</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Baghdad, Dār al-makhtūṭāt al-ʿIraqiyya, 2-30654</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Cairo, Dār al-kutub al-Miṣriyya, Ṭabīʿiyāt Taymūr 71</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Cairo, al-Maktaba al-Azhariyya, 5926</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Ms. orient. A 1290</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. arab. 881</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Oxford, Bodleian Library, Huntington 405</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Rabat, Private collection</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Tavşanlı, Zeytinoğlu İlçe Halk Kütüphanesi, 631</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

54 The glosses of this MS seem to stem from different hands.

55 In this MS, there are interlinear glosses in blue ink for grammatical explanations and in red ink for alchemical explanations. The MS was copied for the Moroccan sultan al-Ḥasan I by his scribe al-Sībāʿī. It seems that the glosses were written by al-Sībāʿī as well, since the red and blue inks seem to be identical to those used for the diacritics of the text and decoration of the MS. On al-Sībāʿī, cf. BRAUN/FORSTER 2021: 630.

56 The glossist of this MS links his marginal notes to the text with small “footnote” numbers in red ink which he places over the words in the main text. A similar approach was used by the glossist of MS Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyāʾ 56, in one marginal note, which he links to the word ﺔﻠﻮ with a spectacle-shaped symbol (cf. “Signes-de-renvoi” in GACEK 2009: 250–251). The glossist of MS Rabat, Private collection, used a different technique by linking marginal and interlinear glosses to their words of reference with connecting lines, which are sometimes also drawn across the text.

57 This MS contains short interlinear glosses in Turkish and a marginal gloss in Arabic.
In some cases, the glossists have indicated the sources of their explanations, which are mostly commentaries on *Shudhūr al-dhahab*, whose content they have cited or paraphrased. In other cases, glossists have copied explanations from the commentaries without indicating their source. The following table shows the citations I could identify. There may be more alchemical texts that served as unmarked sources for the glosses on these two verses.

**Table 3: Citations from other works in glosses on the opening verses of *Shudhūr al-dhahab***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Manuscript of <em>Shudhūr al-dhahab</em></th>
<th>Indication of the source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jābir b. Ḥayyān</td>
<td>Riyadh, KSU, 1716</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, <em>Hall mushkilāt al-Shudhūr</em></td>
<td>Rabat, Private collection</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Ṣīmāwī, <em>al-Durr al-manṭhūr</em></td>
<td>Rabat, Hasaniyya, 1116</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Jīlākī, <em>Maṭāli’ al-budūr</em></td>
<td>Cairo, Azhariyya, 5926</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Riyadh, KSU, 3571</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Jīlākī, <em>Ghāyat al-surūr</em></td>
<td>Rabat, Hasaniyya, 1116</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tehran, Dānishgāh, 1205</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Jīlākī, <em>al-Mīshāb fi ‘ilm al-miṭāb</em></td>
<td>Qom, Ma’had, 281</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Iznīqi, <em>Ṭawāli’ al-budūr</em></td>
<td>Cairo, Dār al-kutub, Kīmiyā’ wa-ṭabā’a 17</td>
<td>+ / –</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4 Explanations of the two opening verses of *Shudhūr al-dhahab*

#### 4.1 Verse 1

##### 4.1.1 Mars (al-mirrikh)

According to Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, astrologers (*al-nujāmiyyūn* or *aṣḥāb al-nujūm*) consider the planet Mars, which is located in the fifth sphere (*falak*), as malefic, male, eastern (*mashriqī*), of fiery nature and red-yellow, dark colour, and as a blood shedding warrior (*muqātit saffāk al-dimā*). Likewise, al-Ṣīmāwī, the anonymous author of *Sharḥ abyāt* and al-Jīlākī describe Mars as a red, hot, fiery, male planet. In *Ghāyat al-surūr*, al-Jīlākī also refers to

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58 In this MS, all glosses on the two first verses of *Shudhūr* are unmarked citations from Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s *Hall*.

59 Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, *Hall*, forthcoming. The indications of colour are cited from *Hall* in a gloss on *Shudhūr* in MS Rabat, Private collection. Regarding the nature of Mars, Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s remarks that, in reality, planets have no natures (*tabā’t*), since they are outside of the natural world. However, he adds, natures have been attributed to them in accordance with their effects.

60 al-Ṣīmāwī, *Durr*, fol. 6r; *ANON.*, *Sharḥ abyāt*, fol. 3v; al-Jīlākī, *Matāli’*, fol. 87r. The author of *Sharḥ*
the localization of Mars in the fifth “heaven” (ṣamā') and adds more terms associated with this planet, like weapons (silāḥ), wars (ḥurūb) and violence (qahār).61

In alchemy, Mars is used as a metaphor for a substance (jawhar) that shares the characteristics of this planet, as explained by the commentators and glossists of Shudhūr al-

the soul (al-nafs).64 The anonymous author of al-Dā’ira al-hindiyya states that alchemists composed it out of the four natures and that it is only extant by means of preparation (tadbīr). Al-Jildakī has copied this information in two of his commentaries.65 Like planet Mars, the alchemical substance is also associated with the east. Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s calls it the “fighting, eastern mercury” (al-zaybaq al-muqātil al-sharqi) at the beginning of the preparation (tadbīr),66 while other commentators name it the “eastern youth” (al-fatā al-sharqī),67 and two glossists explain it merely as “the east” (al-sharq).68 Another reference to the east might be the codename “Ostanes the Persian” (Uṣṭānis al-Fārisi) used by al-Jildakī.69 Unlike most other commentators, al-Irbīlī identifies Mars as iron (ḥadīd), and al-Jildakī explains in Ghāyāt al-surūr that this is its identification among the metal bodies, because of its red colour.70 Codenames for Mars include, among others, “leaven” (khamīr(a)),71 “crown of

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61 al-JILDAKĪ, Ghāya, p. 6. Like the commentators on Shudhūr, the astrologer Abū Ma’ṣar (d. 272/886) describes Mars as hot and fiery and associates it, among other things, with war, killing, fighting, and violence (YAMAMOTO/BURNETT 2019, I: 806–809).

62 al-SĪMĀWI, Durr, fol. 6r; 8r; ANON., Sharb abyāt, fol. 3v (hot-dry substance); ANON., Dā’ira, fol. 2r (hot-dry, male substance); al-JILDAKĪ, Matāli’, fol. 88r (red, hot-dry substance); Durr, fol. 50v (hot-dry, male substance); Ghāya, p. 5 (red, hot substance); ANON., Sharh, fol. 24r, and glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Baghdad, Dār al-makkījītīsr, 2/30654, fol. 53r, and Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyā, p. 3 (hot-dry male substance). Glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 129 (not foliated) (the dry dye); Istanbul, Köprüli, Fazil, 1295, fol. 1v, and Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2572, fol. 1v (male); Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v (the dry male).

63 al-JILDAKĪ, Matāli’, fol. 87r; Durr, fol. 49r; 51r; cf. Ghāya, p. 7, and a gloss on Shudhūr in MSS Istanbul, Fazil, 1295, fol. 1v. Al-Iznīqī, Tawālī, fol. 3r, calls it the “earth of the stone” (ard al-hajar; this is also cited in a gloss on Shudhūr in MS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 17, fol. 2v) and “the fire” (al-nār).

64 IBN AREF’ RA’I, Hall, forthcoming; unmarked citation from Hall in a gloss on Shudhūr, MS Rabat, Private collection.

65 ANON., Dā’ira, fol. 2v; al-JILDAKĪ, Matāli’, fol. 88r; Durr, fol. 51r.

66 IBN AREF’ RA’I, Hall, forthcoming; cf. unmarked citation from Hall in a gloss on Shudhūr, MS Rabat, Private collection.

67 al-SĪMĀWI, Durr, fol. 6r; ANON., Dā’ira, fol. 2v; al-JILDAKĪ, Matāli’, fol. 87v, Durr, fol. 51r.

68 Glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Geneva, Bibliothèque, Ms. O. 33, fol. 2v; Munich, BSB, Cod. arab. 881, fol. 2r.

69 al-JILDAKĪ, Matāli’, fol. 87v; Durr, fol. 51r; Ghāya, p. 7.

70 al-Irbīlī, Sharh, p. 11; al-JILDAKĪ, Ghāya, p. 6f. The explanation of Mars as iron in Arabic alchemy has also been recorded by SIGGEL 1950: 88; 1951: 10–11; 51 and ULLMANN 1972: 267.

71 al-Irbīlī, Sharh, p. 11; ANON., Dā’ira, fol. 2v.
4.1.2 Venus (al-zuh[a]ra)

Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s’s commentary presents the meanings of Venus in astrology and in alchemy. He describes the planet as being located in the “fifth” sphere, counted downwards from above, i.e. from the sphere of the zodiac (jalak al-burūj), as opposed to planet Mars, which is located in the fifth sphere, when counted upwards from the earth. In astrology, it is considered benefic and associated with pleasure, dance, and beauty. Its nature is cold-moist, it is female, western (gharbiyya), and of pure, shiny white colour. In Ghāyat al-surūr, al-Jīldākī counts the spheres upwards and indicates that Venus is located in the third “heaven” (samāʿ). He gives a similar astrological description of Venus as a white, bright planet, associated with women and girls, to which is attributed love, beauty, passion and joy. Al-Sīmāwī states that planet Venus represents femininity, whiteness and moisture, and al-Iznīqī adds that the astrological house (bayt) of Venus is Libra (al-mīzān) and its exaltation (sharaf) in Pisces (al-hār).

In alchemy, Venus refers to a substance that shares the characteristics of this planet. Most commentators describe it as cold-moist and female. According to al-Sīmāwī and al-Jīldākī, it is white. It is also identified with water. Like Mars, this substance is said to be

72 al-Jīldākī, Maṭālī, fol. 87v; Ghāya, p. 7. Gloss on Shudhūr in MS Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyāʾ 56, p. 3.
73 al-Jīldākī, Maṭālī, fol. 87v.
74 al-Jīldākī, Durr, fol. 51r.
75 Anon., Dāʾira, fol. 2v; al-Jīldākī, Maṭālī, fol. 87v; Durr, fol. 51r.
76 Ibn Arfa’ Raʾs, Hall, forthcoming. Most of this information on Venus is cited from Hall in a gloss on Shudhūr in MS Rabat, Private collection, without indication of the source.
77 al-Jīldākī, Ghāya, p. 7.
78 al-Sīmāwī, Durr, fol. 6r; al-Iznīqī, Ṭawwālī, fol. 5v; 6v. Within the astrological concept of houses (buṭāt), each of Sun and Moon rule over one sign of the zodiac, while the remaining five planets rule over two signs each. Libra is the day-house of Venus. The exaltation (sharaf) of a planet is the sign in which it attains its highest astrological influence (Hartner 1991: 85). The astrologer Abū Māʿṣar also describes Venus as cold-moist and benefic, and associates it, among other things, with women, joy, dance, love, beauty, femininity, and passion (Yamamoto/Burnett 2019: 810–811).
79 al-Sīmāwī, Durr, fol. 6r; Anon., Sharḥ ʿabyāt, fol. 3v; Anon., Dāʾira, fol. 2v; al-Jīldākī, Maṭālī, fol. 88v; Durr, fol. 54r; Ghāya, p. 7; Anon., Sharḥ, fol. 24r. Glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Baghdad, Dir al-makhtūtāt, 2-30654, fol. 53r; Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyāʾ 56, p. 3; Istanbul, Köprüli, Fazl, 1295, fol. 1v; Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v; Riyadh, KSU, 1716, fol. 1v.
80 al-Sīmāwī, Durr, fol. 5r; Anon., Dāʾira, fol. 2v; al-Jīldākī, Maṭālī, fol. 88v; Durr, fol. 55r; Ghāya, p. 7; Anon., Sharḥ, fol. 24r. Glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Baghdad, Dir al-makhtūtāt, 2-30654, fol. 53r; Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyāʾ 56, p. 3; Istanbul, Köprüli, Fazl, 1295, fol. 1v; Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2572, fol. 1v.
81 al-Sīmāwī, Durr, fol. 6r; al-Jīldākī, Maṭālī, fol. 88v.
82 al-Jīldākī, Durr, fol. 54v: “eternal water” (al-māʿ al-khāliḍ), al-Iznīqī, Ṭawwālī, fol. 2v: “triplicated water” (al-māʿ al-mathallath), fol. 3v: “liquit water” (al-māʿ al-halāl). Glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Cairo, Dir al-kutub, 17, fol. 2v: “the stone’s water” (māʿ al-hajār); Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyāʾ 56, p. 3:
a part of the stone. According to Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, Venus is the spirit (rūḥ) and the fugitive, western mercury (al-zaybaq al-hārib al-gharbi) at the beginning of the preparation (tadbīr).

Similarly, two glosses on Shudhūr al-dhahab define Venus as “the west” (al-gharb). In Ghāyat al-surūr, al-Jilḍākī states that, while among the metals, Venus is copper, it also represents the “(slave) girls” (al-banūt wa-l-jaawārī), which are the “moistures” (al-rutūbār) that enter the parts of the stone. Al-Irbīlī understands Venus as a shiny earth or powder: “starry earth” (al-arḍ al-najmiyya), “earth of gold” (ard al-dhahab), “golden talcum” (al-taq al-dhahabi). Other codenames for Venus in al-Iznīqī’s commentary refer to femininity: “daughter of the Sun” (bint al-shams) and “mother of natures” (umm al-tabā’īn).

### 4.1.3 tathlīth

Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s explains that there are different meanings to tathlīth in astrology (fi l-nujūm), in natural science (fi l-tabā’īn), and in alchemy (fi l-ṣinā’īn). While in natural science, it refers to tertiary fever (al-ḥumūmā al-muthallatha), in astrology it means that two planets are located at a distance of three signs of the zodiac (burūj).

Most commentators define astrological tathlīth as two planets being located at a distance of four signs, which corresponds to one third of the ecliptic (fālak or niṭāq fālak al-burūj). Al-Jilḍākī specifies that two planets at this distance are at an angle of 120° to each other. What the commentaries describe is the astrological aspect (shakl) of the trine (tathlīth, gr. τρίγωνον, lat. trinus aspectus). The diverging definitions of the distance of the planets as three or four signs refer to the same phenomenon. Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s obviously did not include into his count the signs in which the planets are located, but only those that lie between them. Within the zodiac, there are four possible groups of three signs that are at a distance of 120° and form equilateral triangles. These are the four triplicities (muthallathāt), which are associated with the four elements.

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83 “divine water” (al-mā’ al-ilāhī); Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v “water” (al-mā’).
84 al-Jilḍākī, Matālī’, fol. 88v; Ghāya, p. 7. Gloss on Shudhūr in MS Istanbul, Köprüülü, Fazıl, 1295, fol. 1v. Al-Slmāwī (Durr, fol. 6r) says that Venus itself is a stone.
85 Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, Hall, forthcoming. A gloss on Shudhūr in MS Riyad, KSU, 1716, fol. 1v, also defines Venus as the spirit.
86 MSS Geneva, Bibliothèque, Ms. O. 33, fol. 2v; Munich, BSB, Cod. arab. 881, fol. 2r.
87 al-Jilḍākī, Ghāya, p. 7. The explanation of alchemical Venus as copper has also been recorded by Sīgēl 1950: 81; 1951: 10–11; 41 and ULLMANN 1972: 267.
88 al-Irbīlī, Sharḥ, pp. 11–12.
89 al-Iznīqī, Tawâlī’, fol. 7v.
90 Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, Hall, forthcoming. Al-Iznīqī (Tawâlī’, fol. 2v) does also mention the meaning of tathlīth in geometry (handasa), where it refers to an equilateral triangle.
91 al-Slmāwī, Durr, fol. 8r; ANON., Dā’ira, fol. 2r; al-Jilḍākī, Matālī’, fol. 89v; Durr, fol. 48v; Ghāya, p. 5; al-Iznīqī, Tawâlī’, fol. 2v. Al-Jilḍākī gives the same explanation in his Sharḥ Risālat Biyūn al-Barham (Commentary on ‘The Epistle of the Brahman Biyūn’), where he cites the first verse of Shudhūr and states that, according to Biyūn and Hermes Abūdāshīr, tathlīth is “one third of the zodiac, i.e. four signs” (MS London, British Library, Or 11608, fol. 31v).
93 HARTNER 1991: 84f.
In *Ghāyat al-surūr*, al-Jīldākī gives a detailed survey of trines of Mars and Venus in the four triplicities (*muthallathāt*) and their astrological implications.  

1. Triplicity of the fiery signs (*al-burūj al-nāriyya*): When Mars is in Aries, Venus has to be in Leo or Sagittarius. This results in joy, well-being and the flowering of red flowers, by means of the power of Mars, who is in his house (*bayt*). In alchemy, this corresponds to the appearance of the red elixir (*al-iksīr al-ahmar*). If Venus is in Aries, Mars has to be in Leo or Sagittarius. This is the detriment (*wabāl*) of Venus.

2. Triplicity of the airy signs (*al-burūj al-hawāʾīyya*): In Gemini, Venus is in its apogee (*awj*) and Mars has tiring movement (*haraka mutʿiba*). Libra is the house of Venus and the detriment of Mars.

3. Triplicity of the watery signs (*al-burūj al-māʾīyya*): Cancer is the dejection (*hubūṭ*) of Mars, Scorpio is the detriment of Venus, and Pisces is the exaltation (*sharaf*) of Venus. If Venus connects to Mars from Pisces or Cancer, while Mars is in Scorpio, this results in happiness.

4. Triplicity of the earthy signs (*al-burūj al-turābiyya*): Taurus, the house of Venus, is the detriment of Mars. Virgo is the dejection of Venus. Capricorn is the exaltation of Mars. If the trine occurs with Mars in Capricorn and Venus in Taurus, it brings joy (al-Jīldākī, *Ghāya*, pp. 7–9). On houses and exaltations in astrology, see note 78. The sign located opposite to the house (*bayt*) of a planet is its detriment (*wabāl*), while the sign located opposite to its exaltation (*sharaf*) is its dejection (*hubūṭ*) (Ullmann 1972: 353).
Al-Jīlākī emphasises the auspicious character of the trine in astrology\(^9\) and informs his readers that alchemists consider it to be the “aspect of perfect love” (šakl al-mawadda al-tāmma).\(^9\) In this context, alchemical *tāthlīth* is described as loving connection.\(^9\) In al-Durr al-manthūr, al-Jīlākī explains that Mars and Venus are in love with each other (mutahālbān) due to the position of their spheres.\(^9\) Ibn Arfa’ Ra’ā does not provide the same interpretation for *tāthlīth*. In al-Durr al-manthūr, Venus is described as the sphere of the female and Mars is described as the sphere of the male. This is also the case in the *Mirror of Wonders* (Izdiwāj). The Sun in the fourth sphere is the centre, around which circles are drawn. Each of these circles crosses the spheres of two planets, which share the same distance from the Sun and form couples of lovers. These four female parts of moisture are called “wives” (zawjāt).\(^9\) According to several commentators and glossists, *tāthlīth* means that one part of Mars is entered successively by four parts of Venus – just as the distance of two planets in a trine is four signs of the zodiac, as al-Jīlākī remarks.\(^9\) These four female parts of moisture are called “wives” (zawjāt).\(^9\)

Al-Jīlākī describes them also as “divine water” (al-mā’ al-ilāhī) entering the “thirsty sacred earth” (al-`ād al-muqaddasa al-`āshā).\(^9\) When the mixture of Mars and Venus is completed inside a glass vessel on a mild fire, the resulting compound (murakkab) turns black.\(^9\) The author of al-Dā’ira al-ḥindiyya specifies that this process takes forty days and results in the “first blackness” (al-sawād al-`āwwal), also known as “magnesia” (magnisīyā), “tree” (shajār), or “olive tree” (zaytūn), while another anonymous commentator calls it the “newborn” (al-mawliūd).\(^9\) In *Hall mushkiliūt al-Shudhūr*, Ibn Arfa’ Ra’ā explains that the

\(^{95\text{ }}\) al-Jīlākī, Durr, fol. 48r: “the most bountiful aspect” (absaṣṭ al-`ashkāl); Ghāyya, p. 5: “benefic” (sa’d).

\(^{96\text{ }}\) al-Jīlākī, Ghāyya, p. 6.

\(^{97\text{ }}\) al-Simāwī, Durr, fol. 6r; ANON., Sharh aḥyāt, fol. 3v; al-Jīlākī, Ghāyya, p. 6.

\(^{98\text{ }}\) The Sun in the fourth sphere is the centre, around which circles are drawn. Each of these circles crosses the spheres of two planets, which share the same distance from the Sun and form couples of lovers. These are Saturn and the Moon (spheres 7 and 1), Jupiter and Mercury (spheres 6 and 2), and Mars and Venus (spheres 5 and 3). Therefore, in the realm of metals, lead loves silver, and iron mixes with copper without separating itself from it (al-Jīlākī, Durr, fol. 54r).

\(^{99\text{ }}\) Ibn Arfa’ Ra’ā’s, Hall, forthcoming; unmarked citation from *Hall* in a gloss on Shudhūr, MS Rabat, Private collection. The same process is represented in the first symbol of the alchemical treatise “The Mirror of Wonders” (Mir‘āt al-`ajāb) by the hot-dry soul and the cold-moist spirit are depicted as a male and a female figure embracing each other inside an equilateral triangle (tāthlīth al-shakl), cf. Müller 2021: 706–708.

\(^{100\text{ }}\) Tāthlīth: al-Jīlākī, Ghāyya, p. 10. muzāwaja: ANON., Dā’ira, fol. 2v; izdiwāj: ANON., Sharh, fol. 24r.

\(^{101\text{ }}\) al-Simāwī, Durr, fol. 11r; al-Jīlākī, Maṭālī‘, fol. 89v; Ghāyya, p. 10; al-Iznijū, Tawālī‘, fol. 3v. Glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyā, 56, p. 3; Rabat, Hasaniyya, 1116, fol. 1v; Tehran, Dānishgāh, 1205, fol. 2v. The glossist of MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v, gives a diverging explanation of *tāthlīth* as meaning for the male to be one third of the compound (murakkab).

\(^{102\text{ }}\) al-Jīlākī, Maṭālī‘, fol. 89v; Ghāyya, p. 10.

\(^{103\text{ }}\) al-Jīlākī, Durr, fol. 49r; unmarked citation from Durr in a gloss on Shudhūr in MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2572, fol. 1v.

\(^{104\text{ }}\) al-Jīlākī, Maṭālī‘, fol. 90r. Al-Jīlākī writes that this substance is called “Saturn” (zuhāf). This seems contradictory, since he does also – like most other commentators – define Saturn as the “second blackness”, which is the result of the union of Jupiter and Mercury (cf. 4.2.3 and 4.2.4).

\(^{105\text{ }}\) ANON., Dā’ira, fol. 2v; ANON., Sharh, fol. 24r. This black substance corresponds to the second symbol
process of “division” (tafṣīl), which includes the “marriage” (tazwīf), is also known as destruction, death, exit of spirits and souls, calcination (taklīf), and solution (ḥall) and is composed of three stages.106

Al-Jildakī shows an inconsistent understanding of this hemistich in different commentaries of his. In Maṭāliʿ al-budūr, he explains that the process here described is the beginning of the alchemical work (ʿamal) and preparation (tadbīr). Later in al-Durr al-mantḥūr, however, he writes that only ignorant people think Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs would start his poetry collection with the beginning of the preparation (tadbīr), and that, in reality, he has omitted the entire tafsīl. Therefore, Shudhūr al-dhahab would be useful only for learned people and alchemists.107 Given that Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs himself identifies the process of tatḥilīḥ as tafsīl and Mars and Venus as substances “at the beginning of the preparation” (cf. 4.1.1 and 4.1.2), al-Jildakī seems to be wrong in his later interpretation.108

Apart from the content-related explanations, al-Jildakī provides syntactical information on this hemistich. In Ghāyat al-surūr, he defines idḥā as conditional particle (ṣhart), thalatha as verb (jīl), mirrīkh and zuhara as objects (mafʿūl) and imruʿ as subject (jīl).109 These definitions have been copied as interlinear glosses in several manuscripts of Shudhūr al-dhahab.110

4.1.4 The Sun (al-dhukāʾ)

The most common explanation of dhukāʾ, both in the commentaries and in the glosses, is its, at times implicit, definition as a synonym of shams ("Sun").111 Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs probably chose dhukāʾ instead of shams in this verse for poetical and metrical reasons.

As for its alchemical meaning, almost all commentaries and glosses agree on the Sun being a symbol for the soul (al-nafs).112 Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs specifies that it is the soul at the beginning of the “second preparation” (al-tadbīr al-thānī), when it has reached its utmost

in the “Mirror of Wonders” (Mīrāṭ al-ʿajāb), cf. MÜLLER 2021: 708.

106 Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs, Hall, forthcoming; unmarked citation from Hall in a gloss on Shudhūr, MS Rabat, Private collection.
107 al-Jildakī, Maṭāliʿ, fol. 87r; Durr, fol. 48v, 49r.
108 This might indicate that al-Jildakī did not know Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs’s commentary, which he never cites in his works.
109 al-Jildakī, Ghāya, p. 5. According to al-Iznīqī, Tawālīʾ, fol. 2r, the subject of this verse, “someone” (imruʿ), can be either an experienced alchemist (ḥukim māhir) or a disciple (ṭālib).
110 MSS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 17, fol. 2v; Rabat, Hasaniyya, 1116, fol. 1v; Tehran, Dānishghā, 1205, fol. 2v.
111 Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs, Hall, forthcoming; al-Simāwī, Durr, fol. 11r; Anon., Sharḥ abyāt, fol. 4r; al-Jildakī, Maṭāliʿ, fol. 94v; Durr, fol. 44v; 62v; Ghāya, p. 5; glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyāʾ, 56, p. 3; Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v; Rabat, Hasaniyya, 1109 (not foliated); Rabat, Hasaniyya, 1116, fol. 1v; Rabat, Hasaniyya, 2252, p. 1; Riyadh, KSU, 1716, fol. 1v; Tehran, Dānishghā, 1205, fol. 2v; Tehran, Dānishghā, 7207, fol. 1v. Some glossists specify that dhukāʾ is vocalized with damma: MSS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 17, fol. 2v; Cairo, Dār al-kutub, Taʿmīr 71, p. 2, Manchester, John Rylands, 809, fol. 1v. Al-Iznīqī, Tawālīʾ, fol. 3r, defines dhukāʾ as “Sun of wisdom” (shams al-hikma).
112 Ibn Arfaʿ Raʾs, Hall, forthcoming; al-Simāwī, Durr, fol. 11r; Anon., Sharḥ abyāt, fol. 4r; al-Jildakī, Maṭāliʿ, fol. 94v; Anon., Sharḥ, fol. 24r; glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Baghdad, Dār al-makhṭṭat, 2-30654, fol. 53r; Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyāʾ, 56, p. 3; Rabat, Private collection.
“division” (tafsīl) and purity and is therefore compared to one of the “two luminaries” (al-nayyiran).\(^{113}\) Al-Simāwī explains that it is the dissolved soul (al-nafs al-munḥalla) of the male, which is carried by the Full Moon and concealed (mustajanna) inside of it.\(^{114}\) Similarly, an anonymous commentator defines it as the “dissolved soul inside the water” (al-nafs al-mahliqa fī baṭīn al-mā).\(^{115}\) The comments disagree about the properties of the Sun: while the anonymous author of Sharḥ abyāt and a glossist of a Riyadh manuscript of Shudhūr al-dhahab state that it is hot-dry, al-Jilḍākī describes it as hot-moist and the glossist of a Cairo manuscript defines it as “moist dye”.\(^{116}\) According to al-Jilḍākī, it has several codenames, such as “shadowless copper” (al-muḥās alladhī lā zill laḥū)\(^{117}\), “golden talcum” (al-ṭalq al-dhahabī),\(^{118}\) “red sulphur” (al-kibrīt al-aḥmar) and “new earth” (al-arḍ al-jadīda).\(^{119}\) Al-Iznūqī defines it as “fire” (al-nār).\(^{120}\)

### 4.1.5 The shining Full Moon (al-badr al-munīr)

In Matāliʿ al-budūr and al-Durr al-manṣūr, al-Jilḍākī points to the fact that the Full Moon is described as “shining” (munīr). As he explains, this would not be the case during a lunar eclipse (khusūf), when it darkens due to its position in the cone shadow of the earth (zill makhruṭ al-arḍ). In alchemy, this means that, in order for the Moon to leave the shadow, receive the light of the Sun, and become shining again after its eclipse, it has to be washed with sieves (manākhiḥ) and purified from the “cone shadow of the philosophers’ earth” (zill makhruṭ arḍ al-falāṣifa).\(^{121}\)

Ibn Arfāʾ Raʾs explains that, at the beginning of the “second preparation” (al-tadbīr al-thānī), alchemists call the spirit (ruḥ) Moon, i.e. one of the “two luminaries” (al-nayyiran), because the spirit has been washed and reached its utmost purity, after its marriage (tazwīj) to the soul (nafs) has been completed at the stage of “division” (tafsīl).\(^{122}\) The definition of the Moon as spirit is given in other commentaries as well.\(^{123}\) The author of Sharḥ abyāt al-maʿānī describes the Full Moon as a pure substance which carries the light provided by the

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113  Ibn Arfāʾ Raʾs, Hall, forthcoming; unmarked citation from ʿHall in a gloss on Shudhūr, MS Rabat, Private collection.
114  Al-Simāwī, Durr, fol. 11r.
115  Al-Simāwī, Durr, fol. 24r.
116  Anon., Sharḥ abyāt, fol. 4r; al-Jilḍākī, Durr, fol. 49r; glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 129 (not foliated); Riyadh, KSU, 1716, fol. 1v. In astrology, the Sun is hot-dry, according to Abī Māʾshār (YaMAMOTo/BUrNETT 2019, I: 808f).
117  In the same commentary, al-Jilḍākī had already mentioned this codename as a synonym for Mars, cf. 4.1.1.
118  This codename was used for “Venus” by al-Irbīlī, cf. 4.1.2. Apart from this codename of “golden talcum,” the explanation of the alchemical Sun as gold, as recorded by SIGGEL 1950: 83; 1951: 10–11; 43 and ULMANN 1972: 267, is not present in the commentary tradition of Shudhūr.
119  Al-Jilḍākī, Durr, fol. 62v.
120  Al-Iznūqī, Tawālib, fol. 3r.
121  Al-Jilḍākī, Matāliʿ, fols. 94v–95r; Durr, fol. 64r.
122  Ibn Arfāʾ Raʾs, Hall, forthcoming; unmarked citation from ʿHall in a gloss on Shudhūr, MS Rabat, Private collection.
123  Anon., Sharḥ abyāt, fol. 4r; al-Jilḍākī, Matāliʿ, fol. 95r.
Sun and is luminous due to the alchemical preparation (*naysir bi-l-tadbīr*). Al-Jildakī also remarks that the Moon in itself is not luminous, but becomes a Full Moon only when filled with the light of the Sun. Similarly, a glossist explains the Full Moon as moisture filled with the heat of the Sun, which is the soul. In several commentaries and glosses, the Full Moon is defined as cold-moist and as water. Al-Sīmāwī describes it also as female and silvery (*warazī*) while al-İrbilī and al-Jildakī identify it with Venus, and al-Iznīqī calls it the “alchemists’ dye” (*ṣibgh al-qawm*).

### 4.1.6 *muqârana*

As Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s and other commentators point out, *muqârana* means to astrologers that two planets are located in the same sign of the zodiac, i.e. a conjunction of these planets. Some commentators specify that, within the sign, the planets have to be on the same degree (*daraja*). Al-Jildakī explains the concept of conjunction by means of an imaginary straight line that passes through the centre of the earth and the lower one of both planets, and which, in the case of conjunction, will also pass through the upper planet before reaching the sphere of the zodiac. In *Ghāyat al-surūr*, he identifies the conjunction in this verse as the New Moon (*maḥāq al-qamar*), because, as he explains, a conjunction of Sun and Moon can only happen at the end of the lunar month, when the Moon appears as a waxing crescent. It only becomes a shining Full Moon in opposition (*muqâbalat*) to the Sun. Al-Jildakī presumes that it is for secret reasons that Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s called the New Moon in this verse a shining Full Moon. Al-Iznīqī also points to this contradiction, probably inspired by al-Jildakī, and writes that a Moon in conjunction with the Sun is not a shining Full Moon, but a New Moon.

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124 ANON., *Sharḥ abyāt*, fols. 3v–4r.
126 MS Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyā‘ī, p. 3.
130 al-Jildakī, *Maṭā‘i*, fol. 94v; *Durr*, fol. 62v; al-Iznīqī, *Tawālī‘*, fol. 3r. Each sign of the zodiac is divided into 30 degrees of the total of 360 degrees of the ecliptic (Ullmann 1972: 347). According to Abū Ma’shar, the strongest indication of the conjunction of two planets is “when there are 15 degrees or less between them in front of or behind them” (Yamamoto/Burnett 2019, I: 741).
133 al-Iznīqī, *Tawālī‘*, fol. 3v.
In alchemy, *muqārana* is said to mean marriage (*muzāwaja*) or union (*ittikād*).\(^{134}\) Al-Jildaki comments that alchemists have compared the union of Sun and Moon to sexual intercourse and pregnancy, with the conjunction of these planets resulting in the birth of the crescent Moon.\(^{135}\) Within the alchemical work, the union of Sun and Moon makes blackness appear on the compound (*murakkab*), which al-Jildaki identifies with Saturn (*zuhal*).\(^{136}\) He also writes that the union of Sun and Moon, i.e. soul and spirit, is invisible to the eye and only perceptible through intellect (*‘aql*) and science (*‘ilm*).\(^{137}\) A glossist defines the alchemical *muqārana* in this verse as “second watering” (*tasqiya*).\(^{138}\)

Grammatical explanations of this hemistich are provided by the glossist of a Rabat manuscript of *Shudhūr al-dhahab*: *wa-* is a conjunction (*‘aff*) that relates to *thallatha* in the former hemistich, *bi-l-badr* is linked (*muta‘allaq*) to *qārana*, *al-munīr* is an adjective (*ṣīfa*) and *dhukā* is an object (*maf’al bihi*).\(^{139}\)

### 4.2 Verse 2

#### 4.2.1 Jupiter (al-mushtari)

In this verse, Jupiter is referred to as benefic (*sa‘d*), in accordance with its quality in astrology.\(^{140}\) Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s and al-Iznīqī provide additional astrological information on the planet: it is more benefic than Venus, eastern (*mashriqī*), male and hot-moist,\(^{141}\) its exaltation (*sharaf*) is in Cancer (*al-saraṭān*) and its house (*bayt*) is Sagittarius (*al-qaws*).\(^{142}\) In *Ghāyat al-surūr*, al-Jildaki specifies that Jupiter is located in the second sphere, below Saturn.\(^{143}\)

As for the alchemical meanings of Jupiter, Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s explains that it is the soul (*al-nafs*) and the dye (*al-sībgū*).\(^{144}\) Likewise, al-Irbilī and various glossists of *Shudhūr* consider Jupiter the soul.\(^{145}\) Al-Jildaki and three anonymous commentators present a diverging

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\(^{134}\) Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, *Hall*, forthcoming; unmarked citation from *Hall* in a gloss on *Shudhūr* in MS Rabat, Private collection; al-Simāwil, *Durr*, fol. 11r; al-Jildaki, *Ghāya*, p. 6; unmarked citation from *Ghāya* in a gloss on *Shudhūr* in MS Tehran, Dānishgāh, 1205, fol. 2v.


\(^{136}\) Anon., *Dā‘ir*, fol. 3r; al-Jildaki, *Ghāya*, p. 14; paraphrases from *Ghāya* in glosses on *Shudhūr* in MSS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 17, fol. 2v; Tehran, Dānishgāh, 1205, fol. 2v; al-Iznīqī, *Ṭawāli‘*, fol. 3v.

\(^{137}\) al-Jildaki, *Maṭā‘i*, fol. 95r.

\(^{138}\) MS Istanbul, Topkapi, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v.

\(^{139}\) MS Rabat, Hasaniyya, 1116, fol. 1v.

\(^{140}\) Cf. Yamamoto/Burnett 2019, I: 690.

\(^{141}\) Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, *Hall*, forthcoming. The hot-moist nature of Jupiter is also indicated in an interlinear gloss on *Shudhūr* in MS Riyadh, KSU, 1716, fol. 1v, while a marginal gloss in the same MS qualifies Jupiter, being the soul (*al-nafs*), as hot-dry.

\(^{142}\) al-Iznīqī, *Ṭawāli‘*, fol. 4r.

\(^{143}\) al-Jildaki, *Ghāya* I, p. 15; unmarked citation from *Ghāya* in a gloss on *Shudhūr*, MS Tehran, Dānishgāh, 1205, fol. 2v.

\(^{144}\) Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, *Hall*, forthcoming; unmarked citation from *Hall* in a gloss on *Shudhūr*, MS Rabat, Private collection.

\(^{145}\) al-Irbilī, *Sharḥ*, p. 17. Glosses on *Shudhūr* in MSS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 129 (not foliated); Oxford,
interpretation of Jupiter as whiteness (bayād), white earth (al-ard al-baydā') or sieved earth (al-ard al-mankhāla). The anonymous author of Sharḥ abyāt al-maʿānī associates Jupiter with white colour and the absence of impurities (al-nayāʿ min al-awsākh). The same idea is present in “al-Dāʾira al-hindiyya, al-Jildāki’s “Maṭāli’ al-budur and an anonymous commentary, where Jupiter appears as white earth sediment or ash, which has been cleared of dirt. In this context, all three commentaries cite the following verse of Shudūr al-dhahab and identify Jupiter with the earth of Hermes:

إِذَا مَا أَنْتَفَى عَنَْْا غَرايبُ إلحَشَائاشا

Hermes owns an earth that produces power and wealth,
Whenever it is clear of foreign herbs.

In al-Durr al-manthūr, al-Jildāki gives another interpretation of Jupiter as being the union (ijtimāʿ) of the substances of Mars and the Sun, while al-Sīmāwī considers it one of the “two remaining thirds” (al-thulthān al-bāqiyyān) of the moisture (ruṭūba). Other identifications of Jupiter in glosses on Shudūr al-dhahab include the third watering (tasqiya) and the newborn (al-mawliūd).

4.2.2 Mercury (ʿutārid)
Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, al-Jildāki and al-Iznīqī provide astrological information on the planet Mercury, which is considered cold-moist and “mixing” (mumtazj or mumāzj). It is located in the second sphere, above the Moon, and its houses are Gemini (al-jawzā’) and Virgo (al-sunbula).

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Bodleian, Huntington 405, fol. 1v; Riyadh, KSU, 1716, fol. 1v.

146 ANON., Sharḥ abyāt, for 4r.

147 ANON., Dāʾira, fol. 4r: al-ard al-rūsiha idhā byaadat wa-nuqqiyat min al-awsākh; al-Jildāki, Maṭāli’, fol. 87r: al-ramād al-sā’id min al-ramād [ ... ] bīna khullisat min awssākhī; al ard al-mankhāla (the latter was copied in a gloss on Shudūr in MS Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kimiyā’ 56, p. 3); ANON., Sharḥ, fol. 24r: al-ard al-baydā’ [...] nuqqiyat min sā’ir al-adrār. In Maṭāli’ (fol. 95r), al-Jildāki identifies Jupiter not only with ash, but also with the “remains of the eagle” (baqqiyat al-ʿaqāb). This corresponds to the fifth symbol in “The Mirror of Wonders” (Miʾrāt al-aʾjāʾīb), where the eagle is also described as ash, cf. MÜLLER 2021: 711–712. The association of Jupiter with whiteness might be related to its meaning of tin or Weißblei “white lead” (as opposed to Schwarzblei “black lead”, i.e. Saturn) in other alchemical texts (SIGGEL 1951: 10; cf. 1950: 88; 1951: 51; ULLMANN 1972: 267).

148 Poem 18, verse 1, in ed. DOLGUSHEVA (forthcoming).

149 al-Jildāki, Durr, fols. 49v; 65v; al-Sīmāwī, Durr, fol. 11r.

150 MSS Cairo, Dāʾir al-kutub, 129 (not foliated) and Istanbul, Topkapi, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v.

151 IBN ARFA’ RA’S, Hall, forthcoming; al-Jildāki, Ghāya, p. 15. The astrologer Abū Maʿshar explains Mercury’s “mixing” (mumāzj) characteristic as follows: “Mercury is a benefic with benefics and a malefic with malefics, masculine with masculine (planets), feminine with feminine (planets) [...]. In each sign and with each planet, it is like the nature of that sign and planet [...]. When Mercury is alone [...], it shows its property and it becomes a benefic” (YAMAMOTO/BURNETT 2019, I: 389).

152 al-Iznīqī, Tawālī’, fols. 4r; 5r.
According to Ibn Arfā' Ra’s and the author of Sharḥ abyāt al-ma’ānī, Mercury represents the spirit (rūḥ) in the alchemical meaning of this verse. At the same time, it is the water (mā‘), which carries the dye (ṣīṯgh) and the soul (nafs). In his different commentaries, al-Jildākī calls it either the “triplicated water” (al-mā‘ al-muthallath), the “cold-moist water” (al-mā‘ al-bārid al-raḥf), or the “divine water” (al-mā‘ al-ilāhī). Other commentators describe it as “moisture” (raṯūba). As the planet Mercury “mixes” with other planets, the alchemical Mercury is receptive to the dyes and serves as intermediary (murʿawassīt) between the substances. Al-Jildākī points out that this is the alchemists’ mercury (zaybaq al-qawm), not the common mercury (zaybaq al-sūq). Several commentators have identified Mercury with Hermes in another verse of Shudhūr al-dhahab (cf. 4.2.1). One of them also compares it to gold that is sown in the white, silvery earth. A glossist of Shudhūr al-dhahab shows an understanding of Mercury that is contrary to the commentaries, as he explains it as the dry soul and earth.

4.2.3 muwāṣala

According to Ibn Arfā’ Ra’s, muwāṣala refers to the conjunction (muqārana) of two “bright” (nayyir) planets or of a “bright” and a “dark” (muẓlim) one, as opposed to the conjunction of two dark planets. Since Jupiter is considered “bright”, muwāṣala appears as the appropriate term for its conjunction with Mercury. Al-Jildākī defines the meaning of the term in astrology as the connection of one planet’s rays to another one (ittiṣāl shu‘ā‘ kawkab bi-kaskab ākhar).

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153 Ibn Arfā’ Ra’s, Hall, forthcoming; unmarked citation from Hall in a gloss of MS Rabat, Private collection; ANON., Sharḥ abyāt, fol. 4r.
154 Ibn Arfā’ Ra’s, Hall, forthcoming; unmarked citation from Hall in a gloss of MS Rabat, Private collection. Al-Irbīlī, Sharḥ, p. 17 (the water that contains soul and spirit, without it the soul could not reach Saturn); ANON., Sharḥ, fol. 24r (the carrier of the dyes, ḥāmī al-ashbāgh). Glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyā, fol. 3 and Oxford, Bodleian, Huntington 405, fol. 1v (the water); MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v (the fourth watering).
155 al-Jildākī, Maṭālī‘, fol. 98r; Durr, fol. 49r; Ghāya, p. 15; unmarked citation from Ghāya in a gloss on Shudhūr in MS Tehran, Dānishgāh, 1205, fol. 2v.
156 al-Simāwī, Durr, fol. 11r; ANON., Sharḥ abyāt, fol. 4r. Gloss on Shudhūr in MS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 129 (not foliated).
157 ANON., Sharḥ abyāt, fol. 4r. Glosses in on Shudhūr in MSS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, Taymūr 71, p. 2; Qom, al-Ma‘ṣūdī al-‘āfī, 281 (not foliated).
159 ANON., Dā‘irā, fol. 4r; al-Jildākī, Maṭālī‘, fol. 98r; ANON., Sharḥ, fol. 24r.
160 ANON., Sharḥ, fol. 24r.
161 MS Riyadh, KSU, 1716, fol. 1v.
162 Ibn Arfā’ Ra’s, Hall, forthcoming. Or, as he puts it, every muwāṣala is a muqārana, but not every muqārana is a muwāṣala. Likewise, al-Jildākī (Durr, fol. 64v) states that a muwāṣala can only happen as a muqārana (al-muwāṣala lā yakūn illā ‘an muqārana).
163 Ibn Arfā’ Ra’s, Hall, forthcoming.
164 al-Jildākī, Durr, fol. 65v.

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Alchemically, Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s uses the conjunction of the planets as a metaphor for the union of soul (nafs) and spirit (rūḥ), because their union strengthens their dye (ṣibgh), just as the union of the planets strengthens their light.165 As he explains, the alchemical muwāṣala corresponds to the so-called “nine waterings” (al-tasāqī al-tis’a).166 Al-Jildakī gives detailed information on the “waterings” in Maṭāli’ al-budār, which has later been copied by glossists of Shudhūr al-dhahab. The “divine water” (al-mā’ al-ilāhī) is divided into nine parts, three for the whiteness (bayād) and six for the redness (humra). The parts of the whiteness belong to the Moon, to Venus and to Mercury, while four of the six parts of the redness belong to Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and the Sun. The remaining two parts belong to the “head” (al-ra’s) and the “tail” (al-dhanab). During the muwāṣala, the three parts of the whiteness are added to the compound (murakkab) and cause the appearance of blackness.167 With the “head” and the “tail”, al-Jildakī refers to the lunar nodes (al-ʿyuqdatān), i.e., the two points of intersection between the orbit of the Moon and the ecliptic, which were considered invisible “pseudo-planets” in Indian and Islamic astrology. They were imagined as the “head” and the “tail” of the ouroboros (οὐροβόρος), a circular snake or dragon that devours its own tail.170 In the alchemical treatise “The Mirror of Wonders” (Mīrāt al-ʿajāʾīb), this snake or dragon (ṭuḥbān or tinnīn) is a synonym of the “second blackness” (al-sawād al-thānī) and the “human of the philosophers” (insān al-falāṣīfa) and marks the beginning of the “second work” (al-ʿamal al-thānī). The same stage of the alchemical process is described in the second verse of Shudhūr al-dhahab, as Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s explains that it happens during the “second work” (al-

165 Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, Hall, forthcoming. Cf. also al-Jildakī, Maṭāli’, fol. 98r: the muwāṣala between Jupiter and Mercury is their marriage (munnākhah), with Mercury as groom and the earth as bride. On a more detailed level, Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s explains that during muwāṣala, spirit, souls and dyes are extracted and added to the body.

166 Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, Hall, forthcoming. The “nine waterings” are also described in the eighth symbol of “The Mirror of Wonders” (Mīrāt al-ʿajāʾīb), where tasqa is defined as the action of moistening the earth with a liquid that gets divided into nine parts, of which three belong to the Moon and six to the Sun. These are also known under the name of “the seven planets” (al-kavākib al-sab’a). In the illustrations of “The Mirror of Wonders”, the waterings are depicted as crabs (saraṭūnāt), often divided by their colouring in three white, black or blue crabs on the one hand, and six red or golden crabs on the other hand. In an earlier illustration of Ibn Umayl’s Kitāb al-Miṣṣ al-nasā’il wa-l-ard al-najmīyya (“The Silvery Water and the Starry Earth”), the waterings appear as nine “ravens” (ghirbūn); cf. MüLLER 2021: 714.

167 al-Jildakī, Maṭāli’, fol. 98v; unmarked citations from Maṭāli’ in glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Cairo, Azhariyya, 5926, fol. 27v, and Riyadh, KSU, 3571, fol. Iv. Cf. al-Irbīlī, Sharḥ, p. 15f.


169 Anon., Sharḥ, fol. 24v.

170 MüLLER 2002: 1053.

171 MüLLER 2021: 713–714. The snake or dragon is the seventh of the nine symbols of the mirror.
‘amal al-thānī’; and the author of al-Dā‘īra al-hindiyya writes that the mixture of Jupiter and Mercury makes the human of the philosophers (insān al-falāsifa), i.e. Saturn, appear.  

As for grammatical explanations, al-Jīlākī comments that the subject of the verb wāṣala is still imra’, the alchemist.

### 4.2.4 Saturn (zuḥal)

Ibn Arfa’ Ra’ s informs his readers about the astrological characteristics of the planet Saturn, which is located in the seventh sphere and considered male, cold-dry and dark (muzlim).  

In alchemy, it therefore refers to the black, dark earth (ardī); or body (jasadhī); also known as the “second blackness” (al-sawād al-thānī). This blackness appears as a result of the muwāšala or mixture of Jupiter and Mercury. According to al-Jīlākī and various glossists, this happens at the beginning of the so-called “composition” (tarkīb), which was preceded by the “division” (taʃīl). Since, among the metals, Saturn is associated with lead, al-Jīlākī writes that ignorant people thought Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s was referring to common lead (rāsū al-’aima) in this verse of Shudhūr al-dhahab, and then tried in vain to perform the alchemical preparation (taḏhīr) with it.

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172 IBN ARFA’ RA’S, Hall, forthcoming.
173 ANON., Dā‘īra, fol. 5r; cf. ANON., Sharh, fol. 24r. When describing this process in detail, the author of Dā‘īra writes that the appearing blackness could not be reached and washed by the moisture in the first place (lam taʃīl al-rutūba ilayhi ti-taghsulahā fi bad’ al-amr). Al-Jīlākī criticises this passage in Matālī (fol. 99r), as he understands it as a “delusion of those who think that the blackness that appeared would be dirt (wasakh) [...], which the moisture could not reach during the ‘division’ (lam taʃīl al-rutūba ‘ind al-taʃīl ilayhi).” He proceeds: “Many people have made this mistake. I have seen exactly the same statement in The Indian Circle [...]. This is an outrageous mistake (ghalat fākiš)”! Al-Jīlākī also refers to this criticism in his later work Natā’i’ al-fikar (MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 2111, fol. 30r): “The author of The Indian Circle [...] has claimed that the cause of this blackness are the remains of dirt, which the taʃīl could not remove. We have replied to him and explained the incorrectness of his statement (fasād mā dāhaba ilayhi) in our book The Rising Places of the Full Moons [...].”

174 al-JĪLĀKĪ, Durr, fol. 66r.
175 IBN ARFA’ RA’S, Hall, forthcoming. The astrologer Abī Ma’shar also describes Saturn as cold-dry, dark and indicating masculinity (YAMAMOTO/BURNETT 2019, I: 426–427; 802–803).
177 IBN ARFA’ RA’S, Hall, forthcoming; ANON., Sharh abyāt, fol. 4v. Gloss on Shudhūr in MS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 129 (not foliated).
178 ANON., Dā‘īra, fol. 5r; al-JĪLĀKĪ, Matālī, fol. 98v; cf. gloss on Shudhūr in MS Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, A 1290, fol. 1v (“blackness”). One glossist calls it the “first blackness” (al-sawād al-awwal). MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v.
179 al-JĪLĀKĪ, Matālī, fol. 98v; ANON., Sharh, fol. 24r.
180 al-JĪLĀKĪ, Matālī, fol. 98v; Durr, fol. 66r; glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Cairo, Azhariyya, 5926, fol. 27v; Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 177, fol. 2v; Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmīyā’ 56, p. 3; Riyadh, KSU, 3571, fol. 1v. Al-Jīlākī explains in Matālī (fol. 99v) that the “first blackness” occurs at the beginning of taʃīl, while the “second blackness” occurs at the beginning of tarkīb.
Al-Jildakī understands the preposition ilā in this verse as an expression of purpose (ḥarf ghāya), synonym to hattā. This explanation has been copied by several glossists of Shudhūr al-dhahab.\(^1\) Accordingly, ilā zuhal would mean “in order for Saturn to appear.”\(^2\)

The term diyā’ (“brightness”) is mostly explained as white colour or whiteness (bayād).\(^3\) Al-Jildakī specifies that it is the “second whiteness” (al-bayād al-thānī).\(^4\) Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s calls it “the solar colour” (al-lawn al-shamsī), which appears on the body when soul and spirit are added to it.\(^5\) As stated by al-Simāwī, the whitening of Saturn is accomplished through the application of liquids (ruṭūbāt) that wash away the blackness.\(^6\) When it gains brightness, Saturn is transformed into the “white earth” (al-ard bayād), on which one sows the gold.\(^7\) This is when the “elixir of whiteness” (iksīr al-bayād) is complete.\(^8\) Al-Simāwī writes that, after the whiteness, Saturn will eventually turn red. Similarly, al-Irbilī comments that this verse points to the process of reddening (taḥmīr).\(^9\)

5 Conclusion

“Know that the science of the Divine Art [i.e., of alchemy] is based on the knowledge of the science of astrology” (al-Jildakī, Ghāya, p. 11).

As the analysis of commentaries and glosses on the two “planetary” opening verses of Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s alchemical poetry collection Shudhūr al-dhahab has shown, there is certainly some truth to this statement of al-Jildaki. The commentators and glossists explain the verses on different levels, mainly alchemical and astrological, and – to a lesser extent – grammatical. Interrelations between the explanatory texts are obvious, for instance, in the cases of citations from commentaries by glossists in manuscripts of Shudhūr al-dhahab, but also in some references of commentators to former commentaries. Within the commentary tradition, however, direct citations from other commentaries on Shudhūr al-dhahab seem rather rare, or are at least not marked as such. Nonetheless, the different commentaries and glosses provide, as a whole, remarkably consistent explications of the poetry collection’s two

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\(^{1}\) 1951: 10–11; 41 and ULLMANN 1972: 267.

\(^{2}\) 18 al-Jildakī, Matā'ī, fol. 98v; Durr, fol. 66r. Glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Cairo, Azhariyya, 5926, fol. 27v; Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 177, fol. 2v; Riyadh, KSU, 3571, fol. 1v.

\(^{3}\) 183 al-Jildakī, Matā’ī, fol. 99r.

\(^{4}\) 184 Glosses on Shudhūr in MSS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 177, fol. 2v; Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek., Ms. orient. A 1290, fol. 1v.

\(^{5}\) 185 al-Jildakī, Matā’ī, fol. 99r; Gloss on Shudhūr in MS Hyderabad, OMLRI, Kīmiyā’ 56, p. 3. Another gloss in MS Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III, 1718, fol. 2v, defines it as “first whiteness” (al-bayād al-aawal).

\(^{6}\) 186 Ibn Arfa’ Ra’s, Hall, forthcoming.

\(^{7}\) 187 al-Simāwī, Durr, fol. 11v.

\(^{8}\) 188 ANON., Dā’ira, fol. 5v; cf. gloss on Shudhūr in MS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, 129 (not foliated).

\(^{9}\) 189 al-Jildakī, Durr, fol. 66r.

\(^{10}\) 190 al-Irbilī, Shārī, p. 17; al-Simāwī, Durr, fol. 11v.
opening verses on the planets and the alchemical processes implied, with evident parallels to other Arabic texts on alchemy, like “The Mirror of Wonders” (Mirāt al-‘ajā‘ib). In this context, it is noteworthy that the alchemical meanings of the planets in the commentary tradition of Shudhūr al-dhahab go beyond their traditional identification with the seven metals, as described by Siggel and Ullmann, since they are mainly identified with other substances or aspects of the alchemical work. As al-Jildakī indicates with regard to Mercury and Saturn, the metals mercury and lead, which are associated with these planets, should not be understood in their literal sense, but as alchemical codenames. Future research might show to what extent this concept applies to other texts of Arabic alchemy as well.

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Studies


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