SCHOOLS OF SUFISM IN THE TENTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURIES

AND THEIR THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS:

EVALUATION OF THE REPORT OF ABŪ AL-ḤASAN AL-HUJWĪRĪ

by

ARASH ABOUTORABI HAMEDANI

(Under the Direction of Dr. Alan Godlas)

ABSTRACT

Modern historians of Sufism have regarded Hujwīrī's account of the Sufi schools in the tenth and eleventh century as being of little value. This is due in part to their skeptical approach to the early sources in general. A careful reading, however, of Hujwīrī with the other compendiums of the period provides us with a living account that reflects the several competing theological schools. This renders Hujwīrī's account of great value for today's research into the formative period of Sufism as well as the history of Islamic theology. Most of the Sufi schools treated by Hujwīrī played a role in highlighting the intra-religious theological boundaries of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Among these Sufi schools, Basṭāmī's idea of spiritual intoxication (*sukr*) has roots in the anti-Muʿtazilaite traditions that allow visual perception of the Divine; Kharrāz's concept of annihilation (*fanā'*) shows some Neo-Platonic and Muʿtazilite traces; and Wāsiṭī-Sayyārī's doctrine of integration (*jamʿ*) supports the Sunnite views of human agency and contrasts with the Malāmatī doctrine of the time.

INDEX WORDS: Sufism; Sufi Schools; Hujwīrī; *Kashf al-maḥjūb*; Basṭāmī; Kharrāz; Wāsiṭī; Sayyārī; Malāmatism; Muʿtazilite; *Sukr*; *Fanā'*; *Jamʿ*

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DEDICATION

To
Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Hujwiri,
who called me into the Path!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

i. Problem

The ultimate objective of Sufism is often said to be the realization of divine unity (*tawḥīd*). Since the objective is one, it may be expected that the path also would be one. Surprisingly, the history of Sufism did not satisfy this expectation and Sufi schools fell in diversity. The current presentation of diversity in Sufism, which is based on the concepts of *ṭarīqah* (lit. path) and *silsilah* (lit. chain),[1] has only been traced to the 12th century and again. However, it does not mean that there was no diversity among the Sufi schools prior to this time.[2]

The oldest elaborate account of diverse Sufi schools in the formative period of Sufism was given by the Sufi writer, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Hujwīrī (d. 1077), in his Persian work, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*. The reports given by earlier Sufis like Sarrāj (d. 988) and Sulamī (d.1021), rather than

1. *Ṭarīqah* (pl. *ṭarā'iq* or *ṭuruq*) is a Sufi community whose identity is based on the alleged continuity of a tradition that consists of distinct bodies of teachings, literature, and lore. The continuity, authenticity, and authority of this tradition are maintained by a chain of masters and disciples (*silsilah*; pl. *salāsil*) in which everyone receives initiation, blessing, and instructions from the preceding member of the order and transmits the same to the following member. This chain has been somehow fashioned after the chain of transmitters of *ḥadith* and likewise is a vessel of authority and authenticity. The terms *ṭarīqah* and *silsilah*, as long as they are meant to denote a communal entity, are often used interchangeably. The concept of *ṭarīqah* found its significance when it started to be taken as an essential means to define Sufi identity. The latter became important in order to determine the legal eligibility for material benefits to that a Sufi might be assigned through an Islamic legal act of pious endowment (*waqf*). Such endowments were not specifically in favor of Sufis earlier than the 5th Islamic century, in which the Seljuks started patronizing Sufism. About the relationship between *waqf* and Sufi identity in the 5th Islamic century see Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *Sufism, the Formative Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 126-7.

2. We are not sure if Qādirīyah is the oldest Sufi *ṭarīqah* but ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 1166) seems to be the earliest Sufi to whom the foundation of an extant *ṭarīqah*, in its current sense, is attributed.

depicting schools or sects, present a rough sketch of regional tendencies and condemned unorthodox deviations. In the writings of Sarrāj and Sulamī, the lack of a comprehensive account of diversity in Sufism is to be expected, because the agenda in the intellectual activities of these writers was to unify the mystical streams that were loyal to the creeds of the Sunni faith, under the umbrella of *taṣawwuf*. On the other hand, there were earlier non-Sufi writers who attempted to classify Sufis from the outside, but their obviously biased approach to Sufism and the possibility that the factor of secrecy, which sometimes develops in mystic disciplines, might have clouded their vision, cause us to evaluate their reports with skepticism.[3]

Hujwīrī's account of diversity consists in an alleged association among three constituents in the case of each Sufi school: 1) a prominent Sufi, such as Abū Yazīd Ṭayfūr of Basṭām, as the founder and the eponym, 2) an eponymous Sufi communal entity, like Ṭayfūrīyah, that identifies itself as the adherent to the teachings of the respective eponym, 3) a distinctive characteristic doctrine, such as the doctrine of mystic intoxication (*sukr*), that is supposed to have been adopted and championed by the eponym (in this example Abū Yazīd), and advocated by the eponymous (in this example Ṭayfūrīyah).

Hujwīrī's account has never been considered seriously. As will be elaborated upon in the next chapter, the critical approach to Hujwīrī's account grew more intense among modern scholars of Sufi studies, until some of them accused him of having fabricated this paradigm of diversity all together. The cause of the latter's suspicion and general lack of interest can be expressed as follows:

1) An external cause: other sources are not sufficiently explicit to support Hujwīrī's presentation of Sufi diversity.

3. See page 24 in this thesis.

2) An internal cause: Hujwīrī by himself falls short of providing evidence to strengthen his classification. For example he doesn't identify the members of the schools he presents and doesn't provide a clear portrait of doxography for each to efficiently make a connection between the doctrinal features of the schools and the Sufi figures to whom the foundation of the schools are attributed by him.

3) A methodological cause: Hujwīrī's paradigm of diversity doesn't help to explain the emergence of the later *ṭuruq* that shape the current communal mapping of Sufism.

Nevertheless, the loftiness, elaboration, and uniqueness of Hujwīrī's account, on one hand, and the lack of evidence for its verification, on the other hand, have left us in a painful position. In order to relieve this pain, the present thesis undertakes to evaluate the honesty and accuracy of Hujwīrī's account in the light of other sources contemporary with or just after Hujwīrī himself.

ii. Scope

Hujwīrī, in his presentation of Sufi schools in the 10th and 11th centuries, categorizes the Sufi communities into 12 groups, out of which ten are supposed to be in accordance with the Sunnite interpretation of Islamic doctrinal principles, and two are criticized for unorthodox deviations they have allegedly taken in terms of advocating the ideas of incarnation (*ḥulūl*) and the merging of spirits (*imtizāj al-arwāḥ*).[4] We have excluded the two unorthodox sects from the scope of this research because, while the period we are concerned with is remote enough to leave us few sources and little information, the unorthodox sects and their associated traditions were uninterruptedly, severely, and systematically suppressed until the 15th century, so that mining

4. "… The Sufis are divided into twelve sects, of which two are reprobated and ten are approved." (Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Hujwīrī, *The Kashf al-maḥjūb*, trans. Reynold Nicholson (London: Luzac, 1976), 176.)

trustworthy information about them would have to be the sole objective of an independent research project.[5]

In chapter 2, the historical method will be briefly applied to all ten orthodox schools. However, as it is going to be explained in the next section of the current chapter, the result of this methodology is not always positive. In the last three chapters, three Sufi schools and three personalities who are suggested by Hujwīrī as being the founders of the schools, namely, Abū Yazīd of Basṭām, Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz, and Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sayyārī (the latter along with his mentor, Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī) are going to be examined in detail.

iii. Methodology

In this research, in order to examine the accuracy of Hujwīrī's paradigm, two methods are used. They will hereafter be referred to as the historical method and the theological method:

A. Employing the historical method we will muster historical evidence and quotations that help to provide answers to the following questions in the case of each of the ten orthodox schools in Hujwīrī's presentation:

a) Was the doctrine concerned advocated by the eponym of the school?

b) Was there any identifiable group of followers associated with the eponym?

c) If the answer to the second question is positive, did they advocate the concerned doctrine as their distinctive feature?

5. The 15th and 16th centuries witnessed the rise of Sufi communities like Ḥurūfīyah, Nuqṭawīyah, and even Bektāshīya and Ṣafawīya, which reflected parts of the doctrines attributed to these unorthodox sects (Ḥulūlīyah and Fārisīyah) and at the same time used to pay special homage to al-Ḥallāj, with whom, according to Hujwīrī's account, these unorthodox sects are associated. This fact shows that these ideas were not completely eradicated.

These questions examine three different aspects of the historiographical accuracy of Hujwīrī's account in the case of each school. However, the third question depends on the second one, so that it would be pointless to ask the third question if the answer to the second question were negative. The first question is completely independent of the last two. It is possible that a doctrine that was particularly propagandized by a Sufi master would not find a central place among his later followers and it is likewise possible that a doctrine advocated by and attributed to a Sufi master by his later followers, was not really considered by the master himself. A positive answer to the first question strengthens Hujwīrī's ground but is not sufficient to defend his accuracy; while a negative answer cannot completely discredit him; it can partially harm his accuracy but not his honesty, since Hujwīrī sounds more concerned with and feels responsible for reporting the Sufi schools rather than the doctrinal positions of their eponyms.[6] On the contrary, positive answers to both of the last two questions are necessary conditions to saving Hujwīrī's accuracy. Making a distinction between the accuracy and the honesty of a historian, we cannot employ the failure to give positive answers to all these questions to refute Hujwīrī's honesty, unless it is established that Hujwīrī claims to report out of his personal observations; because the possibility can still be maintained that he has taken the entire paradigm from an earlier source.

B. By the theological method we try to learn if the concerned presentation of diversity consistently reflects the doctrinal, social, historical, and geographical landmarks of the theological environment of the period in which the Sufi schools supposedly were formed. In order to explain the significance of this method a short historical introduction is necessary.

6. In the next chapter, in order to show Hujwīrī's exclusive responsibility, we will mention his dubious approach to the matter of attribution in the case of the unorthodox schools.

The first three Islamic centuries were centuries of theological schism and discord. The first theological crisis among the Muslims appeared immediately after the Prophet's death. It was mainly about the socio-political affairs of Muslim society in the absence of the Prophet. The first reaction, which was to deny the Prophet's death, and the further disputations about the matter of succession were easily, although not permanently, silenced by the authority and credit of the first Caliph. However, some disagreements, like the disagreement about the possibility of the perception of the Divine in this life, were heard and tolerated among the Companions who lived under the first Caliphs. The problem of succession gravely reemerged in the middle of the first Islamic century and led to a major schism that never healed throughout the later history of Islam. The theological bases of this schism, transformed rapidly from the simple problem of succession to a series of sophisticated and abstract theological problems concerning the very definition of Muslim identity. This crisis of identity, in its turn, would determine the legal qualifications and eligibilities for enjoying the rights of being Muslim.

After the establishment of the caliphate in the Umayyad clan, which was not highly esteemed for piety among Muslims, the theologians, partisans, and critics of the establishment brought the metaphysics of human action to the forefront. Is God the creator of human actions, or does man create them by himself? Does God foresee what man does, or does He come to knowledge of them once man acts? The more established the political power became the more sophisticated and abstract the subjects of the theological disputations became. It is told that the attention that was paid to the problem of the relationship between the divine essence and the divine attributes in the third Islamic century was owed to the presence of foreign theological elements of

Hellenistic philosophy and Christian Christology.[7] However, in the beginning of the third Islamic century, the theological environment of Iraq, the center of the 70-year-old Abbasid caliphate, looked like a battlefield divided between two frontiers: the aggressive Muʿtazilites and the passive traditionists (*ahl al-ḥadīth*), scholars who were so concerned with the textual surface of the authorized Islamic canon that they would not allow for any exegesis, let alone eisegeses, in the favor of reason. The strength of Muʿtazilism, which attracted the attention of the Abbasid court for a period of time and put on the mantle of the official ideology of the caliphate in the first quarter of the third Islamic century, was founded upon its rational arguments for 1) the freedom of man to create his own actions, and 2) identical nature of the divine essence with the divine attributes. The former idea saves God's justice in punishing or rewarding man for his action, and the latter maintains a strict concept of God's unity that doesn't let His attributes have a conceptual, as well as ontological, independent individuality to qualify Him and share His primordial nature. On the other side, *ahl al-ḥadīth* did not embrace these ideas because, 1) the first thesis would harm the concept of Allah as the sole omnipotent and omniscient creator, and 2) the second thesis was not only difficult to be understood, but it would also suspend the denotative dimensions of the attributes ascribed to the Divine in the scriptures.

In the middle of the third Islamic century, *ahl al-ḥadīth* in Iraq were impressively represented by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 855), a celebrated surviving victim of *miḥnah* (lit. tribulation), the inquisition held by Muʿtazilates and supported by the Abbasid caliphs in the first half of the third Islamic century. Ibn Ḥanbal's main method was to aggressively and rigorously avoid rational argumentation and speculation, as a token of Islamic piety, and to hold the articles of faith exactly as they are formulated in the Islamic scriptures regardless of their accordance with

7. See Aḥmad Maḥmud Ṣubḥi, *Fī-ʿilm al-klām*, vol 1 (Beirut: Dār al-Nahḍah al-ʿArabīyah, 1985), 50-9.

reason. At the same time, there were theologians like ʿAbdullāh ibn Kullāb (d. 855), who tried to defend the creed of *ahl al-ḥadīth* if not through elaborate rational argumentations, at least through subtle speculation.[8] These theologians had to fight on two frontiers: on one side with Muʿtazilites, the refutation of whose ideas had been taken by them as a mission, and on the other side with *ahl al-ḥadīth*, who, in spite of their passive position, condemned the rational approach of the theologians like Ibn Kullāb as *bidʿah* (condemned innovation).[9]

In the beginning of the fourth Islamic century, a former Muʿtazilite, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 936), having realized the inability of his fellow Muʿtazilite to reconcile their religious conscience with their rational arguments, fashioned a style of argumentation to defend the articles of the creed of the *ahl al-ḥadīth*. While having pledged to the theological creed presented by Ibn Ḥanbal. In the formulation of his statements, Ashʿarī was inspired by Ibn Kullāb on one hand, and by the semi-rational methodology of the Shāfiʿī school of jurisprudence, which was followed by Ashʿarī and was recognized by a large portion of the supporters of *ahl al-ḥadīth*, on the other hand.[10] In order to formulate and establish the creed of *ahl al-ḥadīth*, Ashʿarī applied

8. "Ibn Kullāb: The chief of the theologians in Baṣrah of his time, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbdullāh ibn Saʿīd ibn Kullāb al-Qaṭṭān al-Baṣrī, the author of treatises in refutation of Muʿtazilites, and sometimes agreed with them. Dāwūd al-Ẓāhirī learnt polemic theology (*kalām*) from him, it is told by Abū al-Ṭāhir al-Dhuhalī. It is told that al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī also learnt the science of speculation and argumentation (*ʿilm al-naẓar wa-l-jadal*) from him. He was titled Kullāb because he used to drag the opponents to his side by the means of his eloquence. Their followers are called Kullābīyah. Some of them joined Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī. He (Ibn Kullāb) used to refute the Jahmīyah." (Abū ʿAbdullāh Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalā'*, ed. Ḥassān ʿAbd al-Mannān (Amman: Bayt al-Afkār al-Dawlīyah, 2004), 2393-4.)

9. "Abū ʿAlī al-Thaqafī asked him (Abū Bakr ibn Khuzaymah), 'O master, which of our tendencies do you detest that we shall withdraw from?' He answered, 'Your inclination to the school of Kullābīyah. Verily Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal was the strictest of people with Ibn Kullāb and his companions such as Ḥārīth [al-Muḥāsibī].'" (Abū ʿAbdullāh Shams al-Dīn al- Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalā'*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Urnuʾūt (Beirut: al-Risālah, 1996), 380.)

10. "We adhere to what was held by Abū ʿAbdullāh Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal … and we avoid what opposes his creed, because he is the virtuous *imām* and the perfect leader through whom God

the same argumentative methods he had practiced as a Muʿtazilite. However, Ashʿarī's pledge to Ibn Ḥanbal didn't prevent the aggressive partisans of the latter from condemning the former. At the same time in Transoxiana another theologian, Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 944), apparently independently undertook the same project as that of Ashʿarī. These two figures finalized the triumph of *ahl al-ḥadith*, then better known as Sunnī, and brought the theological battle of the third Islamic century to a partial conclusion.

The following timeline shows that the Sufis we are concerned with in this thesis, except Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sayyārī and Muḥammad ibn Khafīf, died within an interval between the beginning of *miḥnah* and the death of Ashʿarī. As we will see in the fourth chapter, Sayyārī was a propagandist of the theological views of Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī; therefore, the theoretical foundation of the former's school also falls within the aforementioned interval. Consequently, Ibn Khafīf, who died 45 years after Ashʿarī's death, will be the only anomaly in this statistics. In other words, this timeline indicates that almost all Sufi masters under discussion lived in an era in that the theological environment, at least in Iraq, was suffering from a critical disruption.

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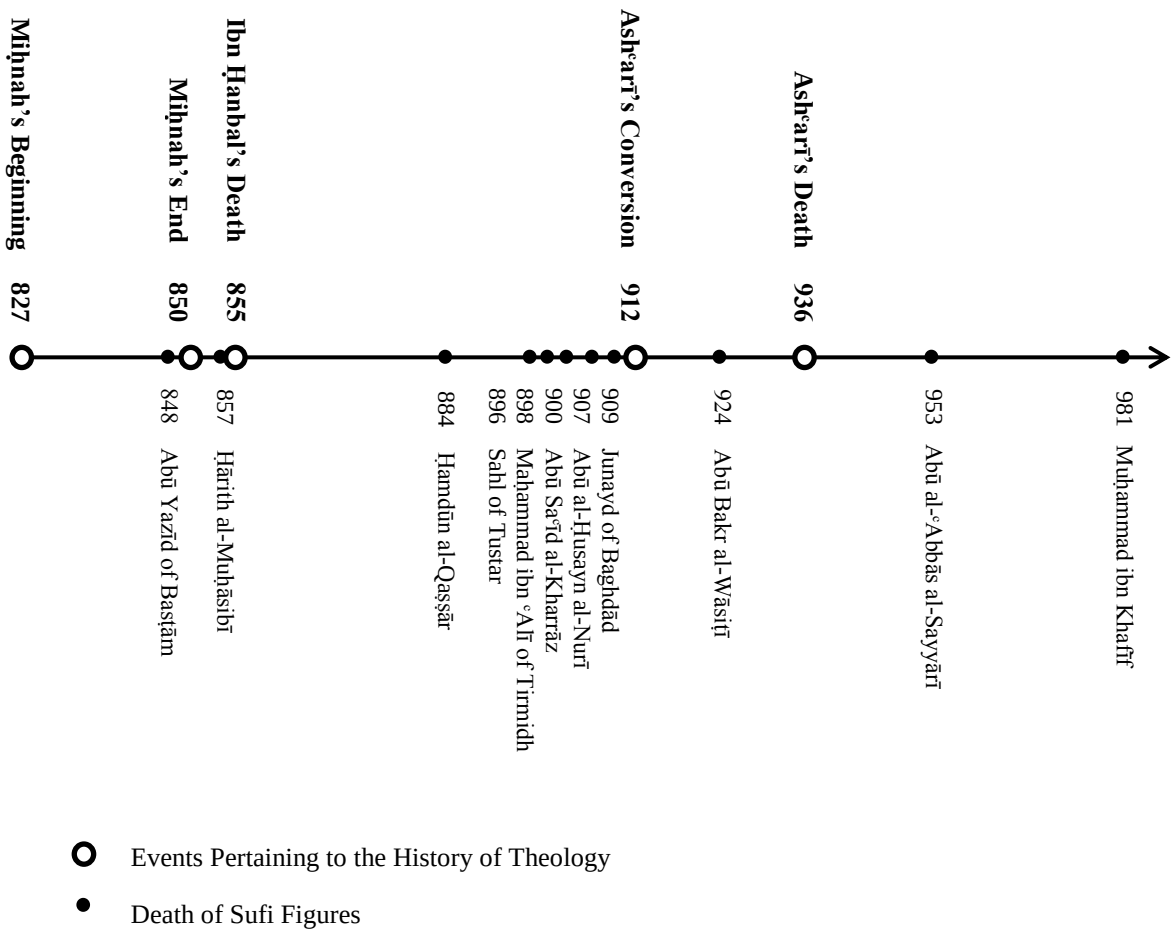
illuminated the truth when error had manifested itself." (Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl al- Ashʿarī, *al-Ibānah ʿan-uṣūl al-diyānah*, ed. Bashīr Muḥammad ʿUyūn (Damascus: Dār al-Bayān, 1990), 43.)



It is difficult to assume that this theological discourse did not influence Sufism and its founders; and even more difficult to assume that Sufism, as a sort of mysticism, is entirely beyond theology. This may be true about the inexpressible aspects of Sufism, but as soon as an aspect of Sufi experience becomes expressed verbally, which is technically called *ʿibārah*, it falls in the domain ambitiously claimed by theology.[11]

11. Here, in order to emphasize the significance of verbal expression in Sufism, I would like to draw the attention of the reader to the categorization of Sufi figures given by Abū Bakr al-Kalābādhī (d. 990). He defines three categories based on the mode of verbal contributions the Sufis have made: 1) the ones

The memory of the *miḥnah* traumatized the Sufis in Iraq and motivated them to react in variety if ways. For example, we can study the diametrically opposing reactions taken by Ḥārith al-Muḥasibī (d. 857), a champion of piety who was so anti-Muʿtazilite that he didn't accept the handsome inheritance left by his father because the latter inclined to Muʿtazilism, on one hand, and Sarī al-Saqaṭī (d. 867), on the other hand.[12] Muḥāsibī joined Ibn Kullāb in order to challenge Muʿtazilites with rational argumentation and Sarī warned his disciples not to involve themselves with rational argumentations lest they become influenced by it even if the argument was in defence of the Sunni faith and given by a champion of piety like Muḥāsibī.[13] It is remarkable that these two, Muḥāsibī and Sarī, were the major mentors of two pillars of the first formally distinct Sufi community in Baghdād, namely Junayd and Kharrāz (the third pillar was Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Nūrī).

The discord within the domain of Islamic theology in the third Islamic century and the fact that even *ahl al-ḥadīth* had not developed a uniform formulation for their creed before Ashʿarī, can be imagined and even demonstrated to have influenced the Sufis of the time in the following ways:

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who spoke their (Sufis') lore and expressed (ʿ*abbara*) their passions (*mawājīd*) and publicized their stations (*maqāmāt*) and described their states (*aḥwāl*) in words and deeds; 2) the ones who published books and epistles on the knowledge of allusions (*ishārāt*); 3) the ones who compiled works on conduct (*muʿāmilāt*). (Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq al-Kalābādhī, *al-Taʿarruf li-madhhab ahl al-Taṣawwuf*, ed. Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 1992) 21-31.)

12. Muḥāsibī justified his rejection with this prophetic tradition: "The followers of two religions don't inherit anything from each other." (Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin al- Qushayrī, *al-Risālat al-Qushayrīyah*, ed. Khalīl al-Manṣūr (Beirut; Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 2001) 33.) It implies that he believed that Muʿtazilites were not Muslims.

13. "We are told about Junayd that he said, 'Once, when I was about to get up [to leave] the presence of Sarī al-Saqaṭī, he told me, 'Whom do you frequent when you leave me?' I said, 'Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī.' He said, 'Good! Take of his knowledge (probably meaning prophetic ḥadith) and his conduct (*adab*) but leave aside his troubles with theology and his refutation of theologians (here he means the Muʿtazilites and the Jahmīs).'" (Abū Ṭālib Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAṭīyah al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb fī-muʿāmilat al-maḥbūb*, ed. Maḥmūd Ibrāhīm Muḥammad (Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, 2001), 437)

a) The heavy atmosphere of theological schism and partisanship might have motivated Sufis to critique and evaluate their spiritual experiences by the measures of their theological orientations. This was reflected in Sahl of Tustar's oft-quoted words: "Whatever spiritual experience (*wajd*) the Book [of God] and the traditions [of the Prophet] don't bear witness to is invalid."[14] This expression excludes the epistemological value of independent sources of knowledge, such as reasoning, whose priority was highly respected by Muʿtazilites.

b) Furthermore, Sufis adopted the argumentative syntax of polemic theology (*kalām*) to formulate and defend their Sufi ideas. An early example can be found in an anecdote, cited by Hujwīrī, of a conversation between Junayd and Aḥmad ibn ʿAṭā' al-Adamī (d. 922): "Ibn ʿAṭā' argued, for the superiority of the wealthy, that at the Resurrection they (the wealthy) will be called to account; and calling to account is to make [the wealthy] hear the word [of God] without mediation, in the form of reproach, and [yet] reproach is [an address] from a friend to a friend. Junayd replied, 'If the wealthy are to be called to account, the poor will be apologized to, and apology is superior to the reproach of calling to account.'"[15] A second example can be seen in the disputation between Junayd and Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj (d. 922) about the nature of the Sufi concepts of *ṣaḥw* (sobriety) and *sukr* (intoxication): "He (Ḥallāj) said, 'O Shaykh, *ṣaḥw* and *sukr* are two attributes of God's servants, and a servant is always veiled from his Lord unless his attributes are annihilated.' … Junayd said, 'O son of Manṣūr, you made a mistake about *ṣaḥw* and *sukr*, because *ṣaḥw* is an expression for the soundness of servant's state in relationship with the Divine and it doesn't fall in the scope of servants' attributes and the achievements of a

14. Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj al-Ṭusī, *al-Lumaʿ fī-l-taṣawūf*, ed. Ṭāhā ʿAbd al-Bāqī Surūr (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthanná, 1960) 146.

15. Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Hujwirī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. V. A. Jukovsky (Tehran: Ṭahūrī, 1992), 27.

created man.'"[16] In both above conversations the arguments are rational and similar to those devised by theologians and it is worthy of note that in none of them a Quranic verse or a Prophetic tradition is cited.

c) Furthermore, different theological orientations could motivate Sufis to set forth different objectives for their spiritual efforts. These different teleological views would diversify the methods as well. For example, as we will see in chapter 5, the conflict between the Malāmatīs of Khurāsān and Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī as a representative of Baghdād's school had roots in their opposing theological views about the agency of man in his deeds. The Malāmatīs, probably influenced by Muʿtazilites, instructed their followers to blame their selves for their deeds. It would require them to consider man as the real agent of his actions. On the other hand, for Wāsiṭī, who adhered to the creed of *ahl al-ḥadīth* and didn't attribute the agency of actions to man, this method would lead a Sufi astray.

The means of influence we mentioned above, at the same time, could be the manners in that the diversity in Sufism might reflect diversity in theology. In other words, the varying influences can be considered as the theological grounds for distinction among different Sufi schools. Having postulated these modes of reflection, the theological method we are going to apply in this research is supposed to answer to the following questions:

a) How does the featured doctrine of each Sufi school (the ones presented by Hujwīrī) consistently accord with the theological frameworks of the founder of the school in any of the three ways we lately mentioned?

b) How can the theological particularities of a Sufi school be considered as the grounds on which the school stands distinct from the other schools?

16. Ibid., 235-6.

The manner in which the theological method serves to evaluate the paradigm of Sufi diversity given by Hujwīrī is the manner in which an "explanation" serves to establish a "hypothesis". A hypothesis will be more likely and credible, if it succeeds to consistently explain already established facts. Now, in this research we deal with two sets of well-established facts: 1) a spectrum of different theological orientations having emerged in the first three Islamic centuries, and 2) a set of Sufi concepts like *fanā'* and *baqā'*, *jamʿ* and *tafriqah*, *ghaybah* and *huḍūr*, *sukr*, *ṣaḥw*, etc., which express different, and sometimes opposing, methodological or teleological ideas. The theological method we apply in this research, revealing the reflection of the first set upon the second one, shows how the postulation of Hujwīrī's account of diversity explains the following facts:

a) It explains the distinct theological foundation of each aforementioned basic Sufi concept. Simply stated, it saves us from assuming that they have emerged out of the blue.

b) It explains how Sufi diversity in the era under discourse was influenced by the unsettlement of the theological environment.

Once the theological method offers us theses explanations, since (and as long as) there is no other hypothesis to explain the aforementioned facts, Hujwīrī's account will be the only plausible thesis in this area.

iv. Achievements

The ambition of attesting to Hujwīrī's account in its totality is beyond the historical evidence we currently possess. There are parts of Hujwīrī's account that none of the methods we mentioned above can verify. For example, none of the sources we found about Ibn Khafīf, including his own writings, give a reference to the terms or the concepts of *ḥuḍūr* (presence) and

ghaybah (absence), which are cited by Hujwīrī as being the basic ideas upon which the school of Ibn Khafīf was founded. The fact that in the most detailed biography of Ibn Khafīf, of which only a Persian translation is extant, these terms cannot be found leads us to despair.[17] The group of Sufis surrounding Ibn Khafīf, as depicted in this biographical source, seems no more than a circle of disciples and companions who celebrate the blessed presence of a mystic who was a *ḥadith* collector and transmitter as well, a group that could be found around many of the spiritual leaders of the time. No Sufi tradition explicitly attributes its foundation to Ibn Khafīf. All these things, in the case of Ibn Khafīf, prevent us from giving a positive answer to the three questions beyond Hujwīrī.

On the other hand, there are parts in Hujwīrī's account that although enjoying the partial support of some historical evidence, are not strong enough to tempt us to jeopardize the credit of our research to attest to them. For example, it is well documented that the concept of *wilāyah* (roughly translated as friendship with God), which is presented by Hujwīrī as the central idea of the followers of Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Tirmidhī, was the core of the latter's teachings; there is no strong evidence to portray Tirmidhī as the central figure of a Sufi tradition or school. However, the fact that Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband, who lived five centuries later than Tirmidhī, gave a distinct place to the latter in his teachings, suggests the likelihood of a continual tradition that had maintained a link between Tirmidhī and Bahā' al-Dīn over five hundred years.[18] It makes us cautiously optimistic about the account Hujwīrī has given of Ḥakīmīyah, which is

17. This biography is: Abūʿ al-Ḥasan al-Daylamī, *Sīrat-i Abū ʿAbdullāh ibn Kafīf al-Shirāzī*, trans. Ibn Junayd al-Shīrāzī, ed. Annemaire Schimmel (Ankara: Ankara University, 1955.)

18. Bahā' al-Dīn said, "When the spirituality of the example of the *awlīyā'*, Khwāja Muḥammad-i ʿAlī Ḥakīm Tirmidhī, was contemplated, the effect of that contemplation would be an absolute attribute-less-ness; and however long that contemplation was surveyed, no trace, no dust, and no attribute would come to attention." (Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Pārsā Bukhārā'ī, *Qudsīyah: kalimāt-i Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband*, ed. Aḥmad Ṭāhirī Irāqī (Tehran: Ṭahūrī, 1975), 25.)

supposed by him to be a group of the followers of Tirmidhī. We say "cautiously" because even if there was a continual tradition in whose teachings Tirmidhī's spirituality had a central place, it doesn't prove that his theory of *wilāyah* was regarded in that tradition as the central teaching.

In spite of all the aforementioned limits, the current research confidently attests to the accuracy of Hujwīrī's account in the case of the following schools: Tayfūrīyah, Qaṣṣārīyah (Malāmatīyah), Sahlīyah, Ṣaḥwīyah (Junaydīyah), Kharrāzīyah, and Sayyārīyah. At the end of the second chapter, the likelihood that this research can assign to Hujwīrī's presentation of diversity in Sufism is quantitatively expressed in a table.

The present research happened to go beyond its initial objectives and to offer a suggestion regarding the probable origin of Hujwīrī's account. This suggestion is based on the clues that reflect a rough and tentative idea of such a classification in *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, the biographical work of Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 1021), who was named by Hujwīrī as one of his sources in writing *Kashf al-maḥjūb*.[19]

v. Structure of the Thesis

In order to give a clear picture of the structure and organization of this thesis, in this section a summary of the topics the following chapters are going to discuss will be given:

Chapter 2 begins with a general introduction to Hujwīrī, his *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, its structure, and the section of the book that is dedicated to the classification of the Sufi schools. It is followed by a more detailed introduction to Hujwīrī's classification and the doctrines and Sufi figures his presentation of the schools consists of. The chapter determines the geographical areas and the temporal intervals in which the founders ascribed to the schools appeared and places the

19. See footnote 29 in this thesis.

latter in two clusters of a master-disciple web, one originating in Khurāsān and the other in Iraq; and then, considering the abovementioned factors, we will situate them among three generations. The next part of this chapter discusses the pre-modern hagiographical work, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, which reflects Hujwirī's paradigm of diversity. The chapter also gives a survey of mostly negative critiques of Hujwīrī's classification given by certain modern scholars of Sufi studies. In the last part, the historical method will be applied to each orthodox Sufi school Hujwīrī asserted to have existed and the result of this application will be quantitatively presented in a table. Finally, the rough and implicit reflection concerning the classification in *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah* of ʿAbū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī will be taken as a basis to suggest a possible origin for Hujwīrī's classification.

Chapter 3 investigates the theological foundations of the school of *sukr* (spiritual intoxication), as attributed by Hujwīrī to Abū Yazīd of Basṭām, and the factors that distinguished this school from the school of *ṣaḥw* (sobriety). It undertakes to show that:

1. The idea of perception of the Divine, which is well intimated in the traditional literature pertaining to the Prophetic experience of ascension as well as the eschatological status of the pious, theoretically motivates and paves the way for the Sufi idea of *sukr* so that the disciplinary basis of the school of *sukr* is the reconstruction of the Prophetic experience, on one hand, and the pre-realization of the ultimate teleological stage of piety, on the other hand.

2. The controversial aspects of the pedagogical contributions of the school of *sukr*, especially the ones that are expressed in terms of the master-disciple relationship, made grounds for distinction between this school and the rival school in Baghdād.

In order to fulfill these tasks, this chapter initially shows the semiotic relationship between *sukr* and *shaṭḥ* (ecstatic utterance).

Chapter 4 aims to locate and explain the theological factors that shaped the theory of *fanā'* (annihilation) as can be found in the extant writings of Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz, who was, according to Hujwīrī, the founder of a distinct Sufi school whose doctrine was based on the idea of annihilation as the ultimate stage in spiritual progress. This chapter shows that Kharrāz introduced the concept of *fanā'* in the context of *qurb* (proximity). The language he used is on one hand Neo-Platonic and, on the other, it makes room to suppose the likelihood of an ontological union between man and the Divine. The chapter concludes asserting that, taking Kharrāz's wording as the genome indicating a family-resemblance, it is plausible to assume a triangular alliance among Kharrāz, Muʿtazilites, and Muslim Neo-Platonists of the time, in which Kharrāz has employed the latters' theological beliefs regarding the Divine's attributes in order to develop a basically anti-Muʿtazilite theory of union between man's attributes and those of God. The last part of the chapter, in order to support the above argument, compares a rare version of a hadith that was cited by Kharrāz, with its common version recorded in orthodox canons, and shows how the wording of the former reflects the Muʿtazilite idea of the divine attributes.

Chapter 5 aims to investigate the theological grounds of the dichotomous concepts of *jamʿ* (lit. integration) and *tafriqah* (lit. differentiation), which, according to Hujwīrī, are the foundations of the featured doctrine of the Sufi school of Sayyārīyah. The foundation of this school is attributed to Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sayyārī. The chapter suggests that since he was a propagandist of the theology of his mentor, Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī, it will be helpful to trace the ideas of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* in the latter's teachings and sayings.

As the result of the abovementioned tracing, the chapter states that the concepts of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah*, in the sense Wasiṭī presented, have been suggested as solutions to the problem of

tashbīh (lit. likening; in theological context: advocating the resemblance between God and the creation) and *tanzih* (lit. purification; in theological context: absolute denial of resemblance between God and the creation), which was an unsettled and noisy controversy in the third Islamic century. The chapter explains that in the early period of Sufism four modes of definitions for the term *jamʿ* could be found, namely, the psychological, the epistemological, the disciplinary, and the ontological modes, among which the last one is the one Wāsiṭī is concerned with. Wāsiṭī's definition of *jamʿ*, as the ultimate mode of realization of existence, leaves no room for acknowledging the human being as the real agent of his actions. This fact, in its turn, would address the old problem of human agency: again an unsettled problem in the theological environment of the first Islamic centuries. The chapter states that the contrast between Wāsiṭī's idea of *jamʿ* and the prevailing Malāmatī doctrine in Khurāsān, made a sufficient ground for the distinction of the former's teaching on the local scales. This distinction later was inherited by Wāsiṭī's chief disciple, Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sayyārī, and set the foundation of the latter's independent school.

CHAPTER 2

DIVERSITY IN SUFISM ACCORDING TO HUJWĪRĪ

i. Introduction

The classification of Sufi communities given by the 11th century Sufi writer, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Hujwīrī, has been the subject of doubt in the opinion of some modern scholars. This dubious approach caused this account not to be taken seriously in modern Sufi studies. The present chapter undertakes to give a brief presentation of Hujwīrī's classification and the opinions of its critics. Further, it tries to evaluate the accuracy of this classification by the means of historical evidence and attempting to find its origin, and shows that some traces of a rough sketch of this classification are present in the works of the 10th century Sufi historian, Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī.

ii. Hujwīrī and *Kashf al-maḥjūb*

Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān ibn ʿAlī al-Ghaznawī al-Jullābī (d. 465/1071-2)[20] was born in Ghaznī, a city in the east of present Afghanistan, in the beginning of the eleventh century. Later, the Sufi writers and hagiographers preferred to refer to him as Hujwīrī, probably after a

20. The problem of Hujwīrī's date is unresolved. The following dates are given in different sources for the death-year of Hujwīrī: 456, 464, 465, 469, 470, 481, and 500. (See Qāsim Anṣārī's introduction to *Kashf al-maḥjūb* in: Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. V. A. Jukovsky (Tehran: Ṭahūrī, 1992), xii-xv.) The year 465 is preferred by Bowering. (Gerhard Bowering, "Hojviri, Abu'l-Ḥsan ʿAli" in *Encyclopedia Iranica*, Colombia University, article published December 15, 2004, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hojviri-abul-hasan-ali)

neighborhood in Ghaznī wherein he was born or raised.[21] Like many Sufis of the time, he spent a good deal of his life traveling. According to allusions given in his *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, he had visited Iraq, wherein, though having already been initiated into Sufism, he engaged in a non-Sufi lifestyle, which put him into debt.[22] In addition he visited Transoxania, Central Asia, Khurasan, Azerbaijan, Syria, and India.[23] He was a follower of the Ḥanafite school of law and in the case of Sufism, along with his masters, he identified himself as a follower of Junayd.[24] He specially named Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Khuttalī as his direct mentor and role-model.[25] Finally, no earlier than 1021, he moved to Lahore.[26]

Kashf al-maḥjūb is the sole extant book written by Hujwīri. Although it is not the oldest extant Persian exposition of Sufism (the credit is usually given to *Sharḥ-i Taʿarruf* by Abū Ibrāhīm Ismāʿīl ibn Muḥammad al-Mustamallī al-Bukhārī (d. 434)) but at least it is certain that *Kashf al-maḥjūb* is the oldest widely celebrated Persian Sufi manual treatise.[27] The book was completed around 450/1058 in Lahore.[28] Dr. Qāsim Anṣārī in his introduction to *Kashf al-*

21. See Bowering, "Hojviri, Abu'l-Ḥasan ʿAli."

22. "Once I was in Iraq and audaciously sought the world and its vanity, and many debts accrued." (Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 449)

23. For Hujwīrī's journeys see Qāsim Anṣārī's introduction to *Kashf al-maḥjūb.* (Ibid., ix-xi)

24. "And all my masters were Junaydī." (Ibid, 235)

25. Ibid., 208.

26. It could not take place earlier than 1021 since at that time Maḥmūd the Ghaznavid, after a long and harsh siege, detached Lahore from the Sikh kingdom and appointed Ayāz, his favorite slave, as the first Muslim governor of the city.

27. See Mujtabá Mīnuwī, "*Kitāb-i sharḥ-i Taʿarruf*," *Yaghmā* 19 (1328/1949): 405-13. Bowering states that, "This work, though perhaps not the 'oldest Persian treatise' on Sufism as claimed by R. A. Nicholson, because of Esmāʿil b. Moḥammad Mostamli's (d. 434/1042) earlier *Šarḥ-e taʿarrof* (5 vols., Tehran, 1984-87), certainly represents the earliest Persian work on Sufism bridging the gap between Abu Saʿid b. Abi'l-Kayr and the writings of Pir-e Herat ʿAbd-Allāh Anṣāri." (Bowering, "Hojviri, Abu'l-Ḥsan ʿAli.")

28. Bowering, "Hojviri, Abu'l-Ḥsan ʿAli."

maḥjūb successfully demonstrates that the book is heavily and directly influenced by Sarrāj's *al-Lumaʿ*, Qushayrī's *al-Risālah*, and Sulamī's *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*.[29]

Kashf al-maḥjub can be thematically divided into four parts. The first part is an introductory section consisting of some discourses on the basic concepts such as "the establishment of knowledge" (*ithbāt al-ʿilm*), "poverty" (*faqr*), Sufism (*taṣawwuf*), "holding patched cloak" (*muraqqaʿah dāshtan*), "the disagreement about poverty and purity" (*al-ikhtilāf fī-l-faqr wa-l-ṣifwah*), and "blame" (*malāmah*).[30] The second part of the book is a long section containing short biographical presentations of the early founders and later representatives of formative Sufism. This part seems to have been fashioned after the bibliographical section of Qushayrī's *al-Risālah*.[31] The third part, with which we are concerned in this thesis, consists of a single long chapter that is titled as "On the Difference among Their Sects and Manners and Signs and States and Stories" (*Fī-farq firaq-him wa-madhāhib-him wa-āyāt-him wa-maqāmāt-him wa-ḥikāyāt-him*).[32] We will study this part more elaborately later in this thesis. Finally, the last part includes eleven chapters, each of which is named "Covering of the Veil" (*Kashf al-ḥijāb*).[33] In the first three chapters of this section, Hujwīrī presents the exoteric and esoteric interpretations of three principles of Islamic faith, namely, gnosis (*maʿrifah*), unification (*tawḥīd*), and faith (*īmān*). In the next five chapters, the principal Islamic practices of purification (*ṭahārah*), prayer (*ṣalāh*), charity (*zikāh*), fasting (*ṣawm*), and the annual pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) are respectively paired with the

29. Qāsim Anṣārī's introduction to Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, xxiii-xxx. Bowering states that: "Though based mainly on first-hand knowledge and oral traditions, the *Kašf al-maḥjub* also draws on written sources, especially on Abu Naṣr Sarrāj's (d. 378/988) *Ketāb al-lomaʿ* (ed. R. A. Nicholson, London, 1963) and, to a lesser degree, on the works of Abu ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān Solami (d. 412/1021) and Abu'l-Qāsem Qošayri (d. 465/1072)." Bowering, "Hojviri, Abu'l-Ḥsan ʿAli."

30. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 11-78.

31. Ibid., 78-217.

32. Ibid., 218-341.

33. Ibid., 341-544.

following Sufi principal practices: repentance (*tawbah*), love (*maḥabbah*), generosity (*jūd*), hunger (*jūʿ*), and intuitive cognition (*mushāhadah*). The ninth chapter of this part explains the normative standards of the correct Sufi conduct on specific occasions such as companionship (*ṣuḥbah*), sojourn (*iqāmah*), traveling (*safar*), eating (*akl*), sleeping (*nawm*), speaking (*kalām*) and silence (*sukūt*), marriage (*tazwīj*) and celibacy (*tajrīd*). The tenth chapter is a descriptive glossary of the major Sufi terms and finally the eleventh chapter deals with the controversial subject of audition (*samāʿ*) and its standards and regulations.

iii. Schools of Sufism According to Hujwīrī

In the third part of his *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, which forms about 23% of the book, Hujwīrī introduced twelve Sufi schools that had allegedly appeared by his time. This part begins with this passage: "I have already stated, in the notice of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Nūrī, that the Sufis are divided into twelve sects, of which two are reprobated and ten are approved… therefore, I briefly divide their sayings in explanation of Sufism and unfold the main principle on which the doctrine of each of them is based…."[34] The phrase "in the notice of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Nūrī" to that the author gives reference is this: "The whole body of aspirants to Sufism is composed of twelve sects, two of which are condemned (*mardūd*) and the remaining ten are approved (*maqbūl*). The latter are the Muḥāsībīs, the Qaṣṣārīs, the Ṭayfūrīs, the Junaydīs, the Nūrīs, the Sahlīs, the Ḥakīmīs, the Kharrāzīs, the Khafīfīs, and the Sayyārīs. All these assert the truth and belong to the mass of orthodox Muslims (*ahl-i sunnat wa-jimāʿat*). The two condemned sects are, firstly, the Ḥulūlīs, who derive their name from the doctrine of incarnation (*ḥulūl*) and incorporation (*imtizāj*), and with whom are connected the Sālimī sect of anthropomorphists (*mushabbihah*); and secondly,

34. ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Jullābī al-Hujwīrī, *The Kashf al-maḥjūb,* trans. Reynold Nicholson (London: Luzac, 1976), 177.

the Hallājīs, who have abandoned the sacred law (*sharīʿat*) and have adopted heresy (*ilḥād*), and with whom are connected Ibāḥīs and Fārisīs."[35]

Reading the latter passage, one can arrive at two important conclusions: first, Hujwīrī claims to give a comprehensive classification that covers all Sufi communities and disciplines of the time; second, at least in the case of the condemned sects, the classification is rather thematic than organic (meaning that the criterion for belonging to a sect is to advocate a relatively general doctrine rather than having a tied organic affiliation with a specific community) and the unorthodox classes spread their umbrellas over several sects each of that might have a solid organic identity. This last conclusion may affect our understanding of the nature of the approved sects and may raise the question whether the nature of the so-called orthodox sects is also thematic (doctrinal) or organic. The answer to this question requires further investigation.

This systematic account of diversity in Sufism is unique: no source prior to *Kashf al-maḥjūb* has given such a clear report. Though an earlier author, Maqdisī (who died in the second half of the tenth century), in his *al-Bad' wa-l-tārīkh* (completed in 355/966) has given a simpler classification of the Sufi sects, his classification cannot be compared with that of Hujwīrī. The four sects spoken of by Maqdisī, namely Ḥusnīyah, Malāmatīyah, Sūqīyah, and Maʿdhūrīyah seem to have been invented by him to make a framework for later criticisms against Sufism. The distinctive doctrine of Ḥusnīyah, according to Maqdisī, is incarnation (*ḥulūl*) of the Divine in the physical world especially in the examples of beauty, such as beautiful young boys, which would justify pedophilia (*al-naẓar ilá-l-murd*), with which the Sufis have been always charged. Likewise, Maʿdhūrīyah is assumed to justify the infidels on the ground of being veiled from the Divine; Malāmatīya to disrespect the *sharīʿah* and to embrace blame; and Sūqiyah to indulge in

35. Hujwīrī, *The Kashf al-maḥjūb*, trans. Reynold Nicholson, 131-2.

extravagate gluttony, which was later called by the critics of Sufism *akl al-ṣūfī* (Sufi's consumption).[36] The insincerity of this classification is obvious since, for example, he has left no place in his classification for Junayd (as well as the majority of the early Sufis), who neither advocated the doctrine of incarnation, nor deviated from the *sharīʿah*, nor justified infidels, nor disgraced the ascetic lifestyle.

Hujwīrī's presentation of the Sufi schools is based on the central (or at least the most distinctive) doctrine of each school. Sometimes his presentation, fashioned after the genre of *firaq* (sectology) as treated by the theologians and heresiologists, has a dialectical arrangement in that the exposition is based upon a framework of confrontations of rival opponents. However, these distinctive doctrines are either disciplinary or theoretical. In order to locate the precise significance of each doctrine, Hujwīrī makes a theoretical framework by the means of the basic concepts he employs to illustrate the doctrine upon which the school is formed. In addition, for each school there is a major Sufi master who is assumed by Hujwīrī to be the founder and eponym of the school. In the following table the founder and the distinctive doctrine of each orthodox school are given.[37]

36. Al-Muṭahhar ibn al-Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī, *al-Bad' wa-l-tārīkh*, ed. Clement Huart (Port Said: Maktabat al-Thaqāfah al-Dīnīyah, 1988), 5: 148.

37. The order of the schools in *Kashf al-maḥjūb* is anachronic. In this table they are sorted according to the order of death-date of the founders.

School	Founder	Doctrine
Ṭayfūrīyah	Abū Yazīd of Basṭām (d. 234/848-9)[38]	intoxication (*sukr*)
Muḥāsibīyah	Hārith al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857-8)	contentment (*riḍā'*) is a state (*ḥāl*) and not a station (*maqām*).
Qaṣṣārīyah	Ḥamdūn al-Qaṣṣār (d. 271/884-5)	blame (*malāmah*)
Sahlīyah	Sahl of Tustar (d. 283/896-7)	self-mortification (*mujāhadah*)
Ḥakīmīyah	Al-Ḥakīm of Tirmidh (d. 285/898-9)	friendship with God (*wilāyah*)
Kharrāzīyah	Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz (d. 286/899-900)	annihilation – subsistence (*fanā'- baqā'*)
Nūrīyah	Abū al-Ḥasan al-Nūrī (d. 295/907-8)	superiority of *taṣawwuf* over *faqr* (poverty); altruism (*ithār*)
Junaydīyah	Junayd of Baghdad (d. 297/909-10)	sobriety (*ṣaḥw*)
Sayyārīyah	Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sayyārī (d. 342/ 953-4)	integration – differentiation (*jamʿ - tafriqah*)
Khafīfīyah	Muḥammad ibn al-Khafīf (d. 371/981-2)	absence – presence (*ghaybah - ḥuḍūr*)

It is important to say about the Sayyāriyah, that although the school was named by Hujwīrī after Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sayyārī, the dichotomy of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah*, as we will elaborate in the fifth chapter, was first propagandized by Sayyārī's direct mentor, Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī (d. 320/924), who with his departure from the Sufi community of Baghdad brought the idea to Khurāsān. Therefore, the foundation of the school can be more precisely dated back to Wāsiṭī's migration from Iraq, which took place before 295/907.

If we ignore Khafīfiyah as an anomaly, the foundations of all these schools refer to the third Islamic century, the century of which the beginning was marked by the announcement of Muʿtazilism as the official theology of the Caliphate, the first half was marked by a chaotic theological inquisition (called by anti-Muʿtazilites *miḥnah*), the middle was marked by the political restoration of Sunnism under the leadership of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) and his partisans; and the end was centered around the project of a rational systematization of the Sunnite faith that was simultaneously, independently, and triumphantly fostered by Abū al-

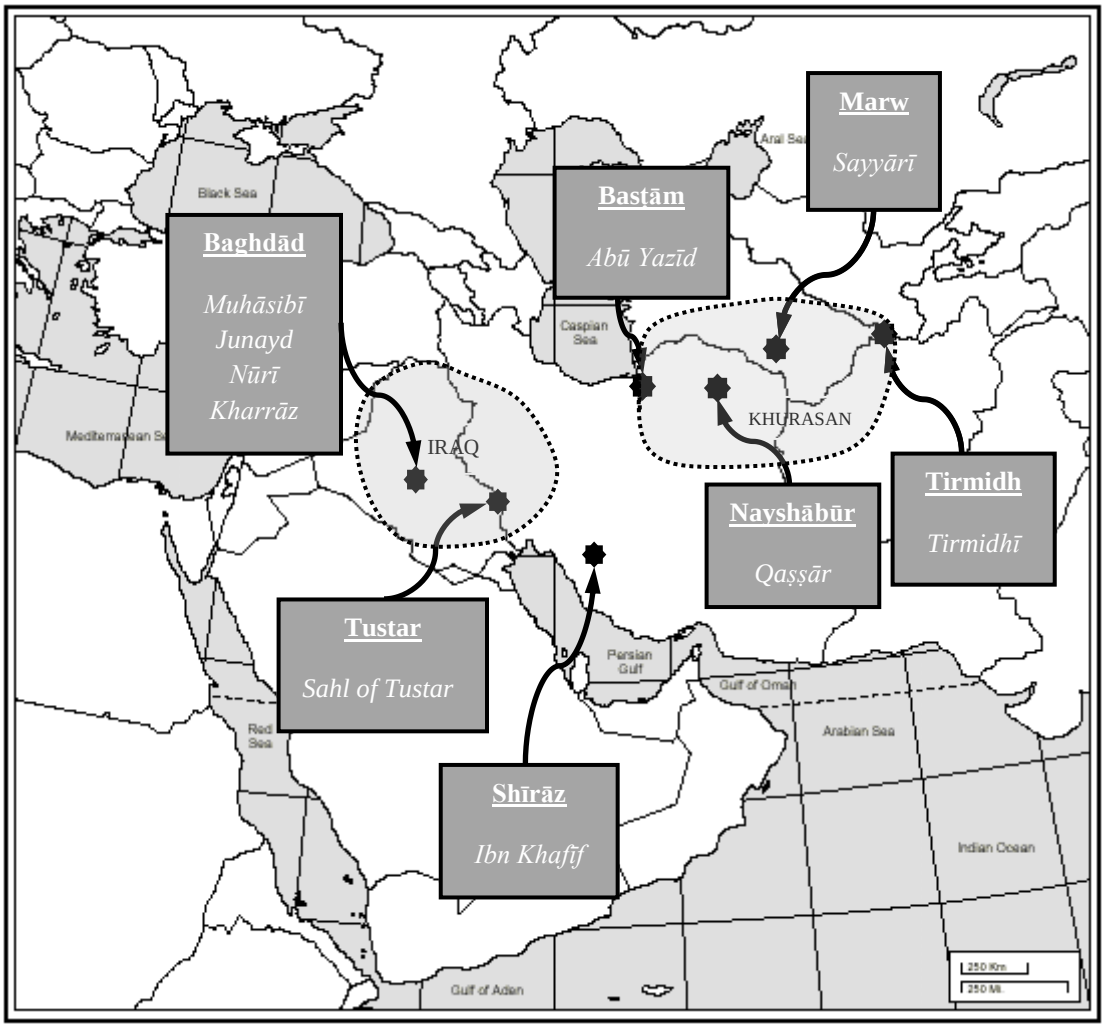
38. For Abū Yazīd's death 261/874-5, which is given by Sulamī, is widely accepted. However, for the reasons I will explain in the next chapter, I prefer the date given in the table above.

Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 324/935-6) in Iraq, Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321/933) in Egypt, and Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944) in Central Asia. These events made the third Islamic century a unique era that deserves to be called the century of theological tensions. The co-occurrence of the emergence of the aforementioned Sufi schools and this century of theological tension legitimates the question whether there was a causal relationship between these two. We will come back to this question later.

The emergence of these schools can be located in two major geographical regions: Iraq and Khurasan.[39] Here, again, we need to consider Khafīfiyah as an exception. Though the founder of the school spent the greater part of his life in Shīrāz, a southern province in modern Iran, he was, according to hagiographers like Sulamī (d. 412/1021), recognized as a disciple of the Sufi community of Baghdad.[40] The following map, which shows the locations where the schools were centered, can be illustrative.

39. By Khurasan I mean, as it used to be referred at least until the beginning of the 16th century, an area much wider than the present Iranian province of Khurasan. Khurasan in the centuries we are concerned with encompassed the northern half of modern Afghanistan, the north-eastern quarter of present Iran, and the entire territory of modern Turkmenistan. The geographer, Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), writes, "Its (Khurasan's) nearest borders are adjacent with Iraq at the villages Juwayn and Bayhaq; and its furthest borders, which are adjacent to India, are Tukhāristān, Ghaznī, Sajistan, and Kirmān, which do not belong to it (Khurasan) but are next to it. It includes some important cities like Naysābūr, Hirāt, Marw, which is its capital, Balkh, Ṭālaqān, Nisā, Abīward, Sarakhs, and whatever cities that are there below the river Jayḥūn (Amu Darya)." (Yāqūt ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1977), 3:350.)

40. "… He (Ibn Khafīf) accompanied Ruwaym and al-Jurayrī and Abū al-ʿAbbās al-ʿAṭā' and Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī and Abū ʿAmr al-Dimashqī, and met al-Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr." (Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyah*, ed. Muṣṭafá ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā' (Beirut; Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 2003), 345).

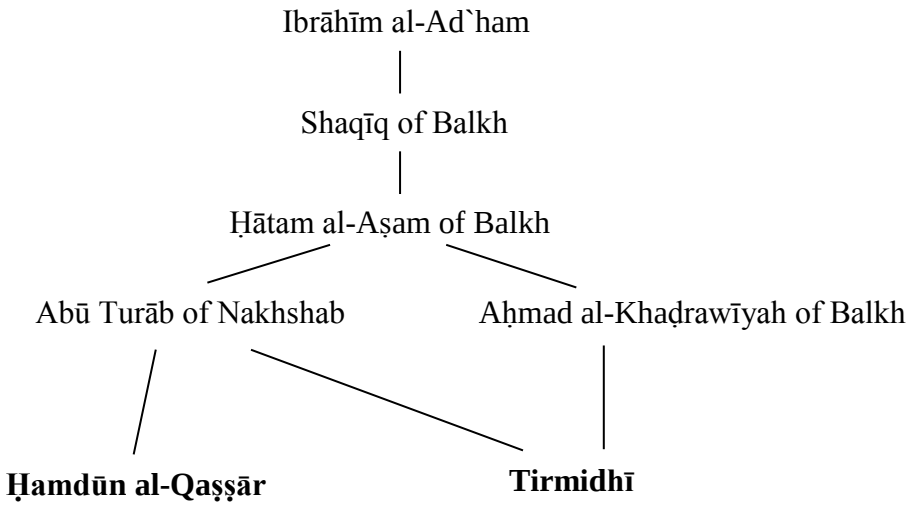


Another consideration, which can be illustrative, concerns the lineage of discipleship of the founders of the schools. Their lineages form two almost separate clusters: the cluster A, originated in the circle of Ibrāhīm ibn Adʿham (a Buddha-like Bactrian prince who had left his principality for a spiritual quest) and spread over Khurasan through his Bactrian disciples; and the cluster B, branched from the Iraqi master, Maʿrūf of Karkh, and the Egyptian master, Dhū-l-nūn. As for Abū Yazīd of Basṭām (d. 234/848-9), it is difficult to locate him in a lineage since we don't know his masters. Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (d. 616/1219) wrote that Abū Yazīd had met one hundred and thirteen masters in Syria. ʿAṭṭār wants us to accept Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765), the sixth leader of the Twelvers, to have been Abū Yazīd's greatest and last

master,[41] while some Sufis of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, who had discerned the nearly one-hundred-year gap between the master and the disciple, preferred to assume that Jaʿfar's spirit, after his death, instructed Abū Yazīd.[42]

The following graphs depict the aforementioned clusters, wherein the names of the eponyms are in black:[43]

Cluster A

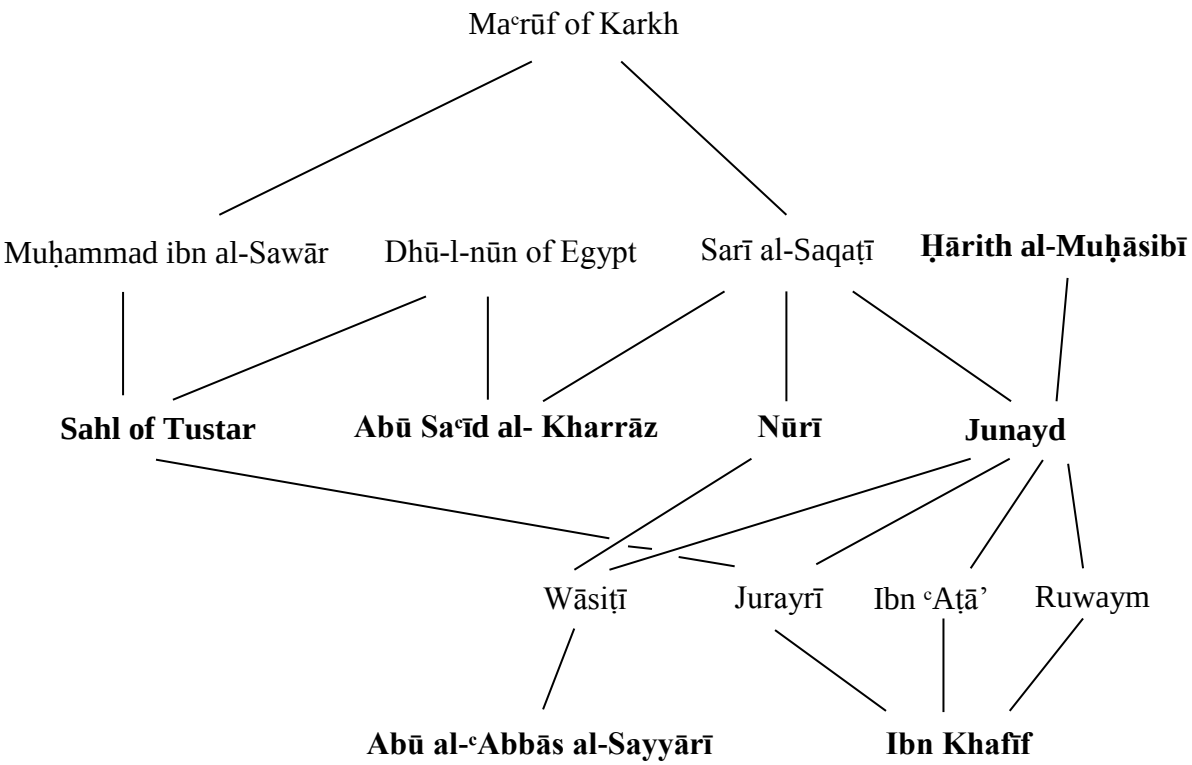


41. Farīd al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭar al-Naysābūrī, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, ed. Muḥammad Istiʿlāmī (Tehran: Zawwār, 2000), 161-2.

42. Fakhr al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Ḥysayn Kashifī, *Rashaḥāt ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt*, ed. ʿAlī Aṣghar Muʿīnyān, (Tehran: Nūryān, 1977), 1: 11-12.

43. These graphs are depicted on the basis of the information given in *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah* by Sulamī, *al-Risālah* by Qushayrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb* by Hujwīrī, and *Tazkirat al-awlīyā*' by ʿAṭṭār.

Cluster B



It is interesting to note that according to Hujwīrī the featured doctrine announced by Hārith al-Muḥāsibī did not find a dedicated supporter in Iraq, Muḥāsibī's homeland, but was adopted by Khurasanians. Considering this point and studying the information given earlier in the table, the map, and the lineage tree, we can place the schools within three generations. The first generation appeared in Khurasan in the first half of the third Islamic century and consisted of the four schools of Abū Yazīd of Basṭām, Hārith al-Muḥāsibī, Ḥamdūn al-Qaṣṣār, and Tirmidhī. The second generation emerged in Iraq in the second half of the third Islamic century and contained the schools of Sahl of Tustar, Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Nūrī, and Junayd of

Baghdad. The third generation, which appeared in the first half of the fourth Islamic century, had a centrifugal tendency: they rooted in Iraq but departed for the eastern regions, Sayyāriyah for Khurasan and Khafīfiyah for Shīrāz.[44] Now, this genealogical classification legitimates the question: were the younger Iraqi Schools a reaction to or a reflection of the older Khurasanian schools? My answer to this question would be affirmative and will be discussed later. But before such a discussion, we need to consider the validity of Hujwīrī's report and this won't be possible unless we study the reaction of the later writers and scholars to Hujwīrī's report.

iv. Reflections of Hujwīrī's Classification in ʿAṭṭār's *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*

Nearly two centuries after Hujwīrī, the famous Persian mystic and poet, Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār of Nayshabūr (d. 1221) presented a partial picture of Hujwīrī's account in his hagiographical writing, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*. However, since the influence of Hujwīrī on ʿAṭṭār is well demonstrated by modern scholars, the former's writing cannot be considered an independent confirmation.[45] To the best of our knowledge, with the exception of *Faṣl al-khiṭāb*, the encyclopedic work of Khwājah Muḥammad Pārsā (d. 1419), where there are a few direct quotetions from *Kashf al-mahjūb* that allude to some parts of Hujwīrī's paradigm, ʿAṭṭār's book is the only pre-modern work written after Hujwīrī that paid attention to the latter's account.[46]

ʿAṭṭār's *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'* (*Memorial of the Saints*), which is written in Persian, consists of 72 chapters, each dedicated to a prominent Sufi. There are 25 additional chapters that were added

44. It may be important that, as we will discuss later, both of these schools had relationships with Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj, who in 309/922 was executed in Baghdad.

45. For Hujwīrī's influence on ʿAṭṭār see Muḥammad Istiʿlamī's notes here: Farīd al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭar al-Naysābūrī, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, ed. Muḥammad Istiʿlāmī (Tehran: Zawwār, 2000), ixx - xx; as well as Qāsīm Anṣārī's introduction here: Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, xxviii.

46. Since the concerning parts in *Faṣl al-khiṭāb* are nothing but direct citations of Hujwīrī, we will not discuss them in this thesis. However those quotes can be found in: Kwājah Muḥammad Pārsā, *Faṣl al-khiṭāb*, ed. Jalīl Misgar-nizhād (Tehran: Nashr-i Dānishgāhī, 1381/2003), 35-102.

to the original version of the book later than the 16th century.[47] Each chapter comprises an opening and a body of biographical, hagiographical, and doxographical materials. The opening, on one hand, is decorative and, on the other hand, highlights the most remarkable and outstanding characteristics of the personality to whom the chapter is dedicated. The openings begin with a highly figurative language that gradually gives its place to explicitness.[48] As an example, here we give the translation of the opening of the chapter dedicated to Ibrāhīm ibn Ad`ham:

"The ruler of the world and the religion, the Sīmurgh of the Cafcuh of certitude, the treasure of the universe of solitude, the treasury of the secrets of prosperity, the king of the most magnificent realm, the one who was nourished by [God's] grace and gentleness, the elder of the world, Ibrāhīm Ad`ham - God's mercy upon him - was the pious one of [his] time and the sincere one of [his] era. He was wealthy of various sorts of practices and classes of gnosis. He was acknowledged by all [the mystics] and saw a multitude of elders and accompanied the greatest leader (*imām*), Abū Hanīfah - God's mercy upon him. Junayd said, 'the key to the [mystic] lore is Ibrāhīm Ad`ham.'"[49]

Here, the words "ruler", "treasure", "treasury", "king", and "realm", in the beginning of the passage, connote the background of Ibrāhīm, who, according to the tradition, before conversion to Sufism was the king of Bactria. Nevertheless, at the end, we have explicit statements that are meant to show that Ibrāhīm was acknowledged and praised by Abū Ḥanīfah, who was the

47. See Dr. Muḥammad Istiʿlāmī's arguments here: ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, ed. Istiʿlāmī, xxv-xxviii.

48. Opening with a figurative and decorative language that at the same time reflects the outlines of the main subject of the treatise or at least alludes to some characteristics of the subject is a well-known style in classical Persian and Arabic literature that is called *barāʿat al-istihlāl* (lit. proficiency at initiation or proficiency at locating the new moon).

49. ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, ed. Istiʿlāmī, 102.

authorized representative of the Law and Junayd, who was the representative of the Sufi path so that the reader can be sure that the ideal of conservative Sufism, in which the Law and mystical approach should be merged into each other, can be found in Ibrāhīm Ad`ham. As we see, despite the rhymed and figurative composition of this opening, it is not merely a euphonic and eulogistic gambit, but on the contrary, the words are deliberately informative.

If being the founder of a Sufi school is a Sufi outstanding characteristic, we shall expect to find some allusions to that in the opening parts of the chapters dedicated to these Sufis. Among the ten Sufi masters who are suggested by Hujwīrī as the founders of the aforementioned orthodox schools, only nine have a chapter in the original part of ʿAṭṭār's hagiography and among them at least seven Sufis are exclusively marked by author as the "doctors of the path" (*mujtahid dar ṭarīqat*).

The term *mujtahid* derives from the infinitive form *ijtihād*, which literally means "to strive and make efforts". Although the infinitive form, in a Sufi context may mean rigorous practice or self-mortification, the active participle *mujtahid*, in Persian Sufi literature, never meant the person who is engaged with self-mortification. In a theological or jurisprudential context, the word *ijtihād* means the independent deliverance of a judgment out of the foundational principles.[50] In the first Islamic centuries, in the latter contexts, the term *ijtihād* would come synonymously along with the term *ra'y*, which means discretion and would stand in opposite to *ʿilm*, which meant judgment as a direct citation of the scriptural sources. This opposition required the advocates of the *usūlī* approach to jurisprudence (the approach based on methodological inference) to make efforts to justify the practice of inference in making decisions about legal

50. "*Ijtihād*: that a jurist makes every effort to make an idea about a legal verdict." (Al-Sayyid al-Sharīf ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Jurjānī, *Taʿrīfāt*, ed. Muḥammmad Ṣiddīq al-Minshāwī (Cairo: Dār al-Faḍīlah, 2004), 12)

issues.[51] The word *mujtahid* commonly indicates a jurist who adopts and justifies an independent and distinct methodology and applies that methodology to already authorized sources to examine judgments made by the other jurists or make new decisions. This sense of the word best manifests in four major jurists, Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, Shāfiʿī, and Ibn Ḥanbal, who are commonly credited for founding (or at least being the eponyms) of four major Islamic schools of jurisprudence. However, a close investigation in the history of these four schools shows that the contributions of these *mujtahids* were more methodological than legislative, although their methodologies, rather than being given abstractly and systematically, were embodied in the jurisprudential cases they treated. By the time of ʿAṭṭār, the semantic halo we briefly explained above had already been formed around the term *mujtahid* and the indication of the title *mujtahid* according to ʿAṭṭār must have been analogous with its general jurisprudential denotation: a Sufi master who has developed an independent methodological doctrine.

In the edition of Muḥammad Istiʿlāmī, which nowadays is considered as the standard edition of the book in Iran, the title "doctor" is not applied to Ibn Khafīf, but in Nicholson's edition (1907) the title is still preserved for him.[52] However, in both editions the foundation of a distinct school is attributed to him. Abū Yazīd also is not referred to as a doctor, maybe because, as we will explain in the next chapter, ʿAṭṭār found it difficult to reconcile holding a "doctrine" with being intoxicated. However, the attribution of a Sufi school to Abū Yazīd has been acknowledged by ʿAṭṭār in another place in the book. Sayyārī and even Wāsiṭī surprisingly have no place in the original part of the book but they are mentioned in the additional part of *Tadhkirah*, which is not written by ʿAṭṭār himself. However, the anonymous writer of the

51. Wael B. Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 15, 19.

52. Farīd al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭar al-Naysābūrī, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, vol. 2, ed. Reynold Nicholson (London: Luzac &Co., 1907), 125.

additional part appointed Sayyārī to be the only Sufi in his portion to be granted the title *mujtahid*.[53] It means that, four centuries after ʿAṭṭār, the criterion he had for granting the title *mujtahid* was still known and observed and the title was exclusively reserved for the founders of the Sufi schools in Hujwīrī's account.

The details of ʿAṭṭār's wording in the case of each Sufi master are given in the following table:

53. Ibid., 777.

Muḥāsibī	"He was a doctor of the path and in his opinion 'contentment' (*riḍā'*) is one of the states (*aḥwāl*) and not of the stations (*maqāmāt*)."[54]
Sahl of Tustar	"And he was a doctor in this manner (*shīvah*, here means Sufism)."[55]
Qaṣṣār	"The doctrine (*madhhab*) of *malāmah* was spread by him in Nayshābur, and he was a doctor of the path and the developer of a doctrine (*madhhab*), and a group of people in this sect (*ṭā'ifah*) adhere to him, and they are called Qaṣṣārī-ān."[56]
Junayd / Abū Yazīd	"And he was a doctor of the path, and the majority of the elders (*mashāyikh*) of Baghdād, both at his time and after him, adhered to his school. His school is the school of sobriety (*ṣaḥw*) unlike [that of] Ṭayfūrīs, who are the followers of Abū Yazīd. The most acknowledged and the most famous school is the school of Junayd."[57]
Kharrāz	"And he was a doctor of the path and first he gave the expressions of *baqā'* and *fanā'* and comprised his school in these two expressions."[58]
Nūrī	"And he was a doctor of the path and the developer of a doctrine (*madhhab*)… the basis of his doctrine is to prefer *Taṣawwuf* to *faqr* (spiritual poverty) and his discipline accords with that of Junayd and a rarity in his manner is to believe that company (*ṣuḥbat*) without altruism (*īthār*) is forbidden."[59]
Tirmidhī	"And he was s doctor of law (*sharīʿah*) as well as the path and the group of Tirmadhī-ān adhere to him. And his doctrine was based on *ʿilm* (roughly translated as knowledge) since he was a divine sage (*ʿālim-i rabbānī*)."[60]
Ibn Khafīf	"And he was a doctor of the path and he had a particular school in the path and a group of Sufis adhere to him."[61]
Sayyārī	"… the doctor of the path (referring to Sayyārī)…. He rose to a degree that became the leader (*imām*) of a class of Sufis who are called Sayyārī-ān."[62]

54. ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, ed. Istiʿlāmī, 270.
55. Ibid., 304.
56. Ibid., 401.
57. Ibid., 416.
58. Ibid., 456.
59. Ibid., 464.
60. Ibid., 524.
61. ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, ed. Nicholson, 125.
62. ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, ed. Istiʿlāmī, 777.

In the following table a statistical summary of the preceding table is given:

	Titled as Doctor	**Founder of a School**	**Advocate of the Doctrine**
Abū Yazīd	×	✓	✓
Muḥāsibī	✓	×	✓
Sahl of Tustar	✓	×	×
Qaṣṣār	✓	✓	✓
Junayd	✓	✓	✓
Kharrāz	✓	×	✓
Nūrī	✓	×	✓
Tirmidhī	✓	✓	✓
Ibn Khafīf	✓	✓	×
Sayyārī	✓	✓	×
Total number in each category	9	6	7

The table shows that there is a 90% correlation between the ʿAṭṭār's distribution of the title *mujtahid* (doctor) and Hujwīrī's attribution of Sufi schools to Sufi masters. This correlation is enough to state that by the application and exclusive distribution of the title *mujtahid*, ʿAṭṭār acknowledged and reflected Hujwīrī's classification of the Sufi schools. This statement will be strengthened if we notice that in the case of 6 Sufis out of 10, the existence of a distinct tradition founded by the concerning Sufi master is clearly mentioned by ʿAṭṭār and in 7 cases, a featured doctrine is attributed to the concerned Sufis.

In spite of the general influence of Hujwīrī on ʿAṭṭār, which can be demonstrated in several places in *Tadhkirah*, in four places the wording of ʿAṭṭār's phrases that attributes the schools or doctrines to the aforementioned Sufis sounds so similar to Hujwīrī's words that no doubt can be

that ʿAṭṭār had *Kashf al-maḥjūb* as one of his sources in this respect. In the table below we will commit a comparison between ʿAṭṭār's and Hujwīrī's words:

	Kashf al-maḥjūb	*Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*
Junayd	طریق وی مبنی بر صحو است بر عکس طیفوریان و اختلاف وی گفته آمد و معروفترین مذاهب و مشهورترین مذهب وی است.[63]	طریق او طریق صحو است به خلاف طیفوریان که اصحاب با یزیدند و معروفتر طریقی در طریقت و مشهورترین مذهبی مذهب جنید است.[64]
Kharrāz	و ابتدا عبارت از حالت فنا و بقا او کرد و طریقت خود را جمله در این دو عبارت مضمر گردانید.[65]	و ابتدا عبارت از حالت بقا و فنا او کرد و طریقت خود را در این دو عبارت متضمن گردانید.[66]
Nūrī	قانون مذهبش تفضیل تصوف باشد بر فقر و معاملتش موافق جنید باشد و از نوادر طریقت وی یکی آن است که اندر صحبت ایثار حق صاحب فرماید بر حق خود و صحبت بی ایثار حرام داند.[67]	و قاعدهٔ مذهبش آن است که تصوف را بر فقر تفضیل نهد و معاملتش موافق جنید است و از نوادر طریقت او یکی آن است که صحبت بی ایثار حرام داند و در صحبت ایثار حق صاحب فرماید بر حق خویش.[68]
Sayyārī	و به درجتی رسید که امام صنفی از متصوفه شد.[69]	و به درجه ای رسید که امام صنفی از متصوفه شد.[70]

All these resemblances render us unable to take the explicit and implicit reflections of Hujwīrī's classification in *Tadhkirah* as an independent testimony for the accuracy of Hujwīrī.

v. Questioning the Accuracy of Hujwīrī's Presentation of Diversity

Reynold A. Nicholson (d. 1945) was the first modern scholar who paid attention to Hujwīrī's paradigm of diversity in formative Sufism. In the presentation Nicholson gave in 1908 at the

63. Hujwīri, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, 235.
64. ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, 416.
65. Hujwīri, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, 311.
66. ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, 459.
67. Hujwīri, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, 236.
68. ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, 464.
69. Hujwīri, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, 198.
70. ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, 777.

Third International Conference for the History of Religions at Oxford, he stated, "The most important and interesting part of *Kashf al-maḥjūb* is the fourteenth chapter, entitled, 'On the Different Doctrines of the Sufi Sects,' in which the author enumerates twelve mystical schools and describes the characteristic doctrine of each."[71] Later, in 1911, Nicholson published his English translation of *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, in his introduction to which he proposed a question that initiated dubiety with respect to the historical value of Hujwīrī's account: "Did these schools really exist, or were they invented by al-Hujwīrī in his desire to systematize the theory of Sufism?"[72] As a tentative answer to this question, Nicholson optimistically expressed his declination to give weight to the latter possibility saying, "I see no adequate ground at present for the latter hypothesis, which involves the assumption that al-Hujwīrī made precise statements that he must have known to be false."[73] However, he reserved a place for the possibility that the exposition of each doctrine assigned to the schools might have been modified by Hujwīrī's personal interpretation of the theoretical concepts of Sufism: "It is very likely that in his (Hujwīrī's) account of the special doctrines which he attributes to the founder of each school he has often expressed his own views upon the subject of issue and has confused them with the original doctrine."[74]

In order to explain the disappearance of these schools in the later phases of the history of Sufism and the absorption of their characteristic doctrines into general Sufi culture and lore, Nicholson made an important and illuminative parallelism between the process of the historical transformation of the schism in Sufism and that of Islamic theology, which has not been

71. Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, "The Oldest Persian Manual of Sufism," in *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions*, vol.1 (London: Oxford, 1908), 294.

72. Abū al-Ḥasan al-Hujwīrī, *The Kashf al-maḥjūb*, trans. Reynold A. Nicholson (London: Luzac, 1976), xii.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.

seriously regarded by later scholars with the exception of Karamustafa, about whom we will speak shortly later. Nicholson writes:

> The existence of these schools and doctrines, though lacking further corroborations, does not seem to me incredible; on the contrary, it accords with what happened in the case of Muʿtazilites and other Muḥammadan schismatics. Certain doctrines were produced and elaborated by well-known Shaykhs, who published them in the form of tracts or were content to lecture on them until, by a familiar process, the new doctrine became the pre-eminent feature of a particular school. Other schools might then accept or reject it. In some instances sharp controversy arose. And the novel teaching gained so little approval that it was confined to the school of its author or was embraced only by a small minority of the Sufi brotherhood. More frequently it would, in the course of time, be drawn to the common stock and reduced to its proper level.[75]

Nicholson here roughly illustrates the typical itinerary of theological doctrines, which, according to him, is analogous to the process of transformation of Sufi doctrines. This depiction can be represented in the following stages:

Stage 1: Individual Advocacy, in which the doctrine is produced or at least exclusively and effectively propagandized by an influential figure.

Stage 2: Collective Advocacy, in which the doctrine finds a strong social voice.

Stage 3: Dialectical Qualification, in which the doctrine undergoes modification in the course of encountering the reactions of the theological environment.

Stage 4: Final Settlement, which may take place in various phases including:

75. Ibid.

4a. Isolation, in which the doctrine, having failed to win a major reception, is confined to a specific minority.

4b. Abstraction, in which the doctrine, having completely lost its supporters, becomes a thesis held by no actual collective advocate and appears in the argumentative literature as a standard antithesis or an imaginary or anticipated opposition, which participates in providing a framework for developing the arguments. Sometimes, in a dialectical genre, they appear preceded by the phrases such as "*wa-in qāla qā'il-un* ..." (and if a proponent propounds that …).

4c. Absorption, in which the doctrine, having been so widely approved that its exclusive advocacy would sound pointless, becomes absorbed in the common body of the theological culture of the entire religious community in its broadest sense.

However, falling within the first two phases doesn't mean that a doctrine will not be occasionally favored by individuals who remain in the mainstream and try to reconcile the doctrines with other trends of orthodoxy.

The methodological significant of Nicholson's remark is that if the available sources show the footprints of a doctrine in one of these stages, it can intimate the historically potential existence of that doctrine in prior stages.[76] Let this pattern be conventionally called Nicholson's pattern. At the end of this chapter we will come back to that and will try to locate therein the Sufi schools with that we are concerned.

In 1969, J. Spencer Trimingham (d. 1987), in his *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, paid brief mention to Hujwīrī's report. His attention was brief because he had correctly realized that the schools

76. One should be cautious applying this method, especially when the doctrine appears to be in the phase of abstraction. There have been scholars like Joseph Schacht, who over-employed this method. In his book, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, Schacht assumed all anticipated objections in al-Shafiʿī's treatises as indicators for the existence of actual jurisprudential doctrines that had appeared by the time of the latter. See Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (London: Oxford University, 1950).

described by Hujwīrī were not of the same nature as the Sufi orders that emerged around the 12th century, with which Trimingham was concerned. He wrote:

> But these (the Sufi schools) are theoretical ways, none of which was developed into *silsila-ṭarīqas*.[77] Their teaching was modified by their pupils in accordance with their own mystical experience. In fact, al-Hujwīrī singles out as exceptional the transmission from Abū 'l-ʿAbbās as-Sayyārī whose 'school of Ṣūfiism is the only one that has kept its original doctrine unchanged, and the cause of this fact is that Nasā and Merv have never been without some person who acknowledged his authority and took care that his followers should maintain the doctrine of their founder.'[78]

Julian Baldick, in *Mystical Islam: an Introduction to Sufism*, published in 1989, pronounced that some schools in Hujwīrī's report had never really existed:

> There has been much uncertainty among modern scholars about whether these groupings really existed, or whether they are arbitrarily delineated for Hujwiri's exposition of aspects of Sufi doctrine. The answer is that sometimes they existed and sometimes they did not: when he speaks of Sufi followers of Muhasibi, clearly there was no such group; when he speaks of followers of Tustari other than the Salimiyya, they no longer existed as a distinct group at this time; when he

77. Literally means "chain-ways," by which he means the orders in that a spiritual transmission from the saint-protector to the disciples, which validates the sanctity and legitimacy of the order and its discipline and fellowship, is maintained by the means of a chain of temporally sequent and successive masters and disciples. Maybe it has been fashioned after the idea of "hadith transmission chain," which determines the validity of prophetic narratives.

78. J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (New York: Oxford University, 1998), 12. The passage quoted by Trimingham can be found here: Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, edited by Jukovsky, 323.

> speaks of followers of Junayd (including his own teacher), there was a school of thought in Sufism in Hujwiri's time which could trace its ancestry back to Junayd; when he speaks of followers of Abu Yazid in the latter's native Bastam, these were people whom Hujwiri met and who presented sayings attributed to Abu Yazid; and sometimes when he speaks of contemporary followers of ninth – and tenth – century figures, we do not know enough to judge.[79]

In the preceding passage, Baldick seems to suggest two possibilities: either there were 'distinct groups' that were marked by a specific doctrine, or Hujwīrī has invented at least some of the schools. However, the concept of 'distinct group' (which is surprisingly transliterated as *giruh* by Baldick) is not clear enough to be an adequate criterion in this argument. It should be determined first what degree of distinction and what degree of group-association can convince that the advocates of a doctrine constitute a 'distinct group'. Only after determining the required shade of the meaning of these terms, we will be able to decide if those two options are sufficient to cover the whole area of possibility or that a third option is possible.

In 2005, Muḥammad Riḍā Shafīʿī Kadkanī, a leading Iranian scholar, declared in a short note that Hujwīrī's report of schools was absolutely fabricated:

> It seems that Hujwīrī had some concepts in his mind such as the nature of contentment (*riḍā'*), blame (*malāmah*), sobriety and intoxication (*ṣaḥw wa-sukr*), altruism (*īthār*), mortification (*riyāḍah*), sainthood (*wilāyah*) and the miracles of saints (*karāmāt-i awliyā'*), attendance and absence (*ḥuḍūr wa-ghaybah*), subsistence and annihilation (*baqā' wa-fanā'*), and was willing to insert his

79. Julian Baldick, *Mystical Islam: an Introduction to Sufism* (Ney York: Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2000), 64. The single paragraph in that Alexander Knysh writes about Hujwīrī's classification is nothing but citing Baldick. See Alexander Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism, a Short History* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 134-5.

> knowledge, readings, and reflections in his book. It occurred to him to invent some schools in the name of some earlier masters in order to affirm each aforementioned concept as the dominant doctrine of one of those schools so that he could discuss in details about the concepts.[80]

His statement is based on the single premise that neither before Hujwīrī nor in the two centuries immediately after him any author has ever mentioned the schools that had been named by Hujwīrī.[81] Even the existence and identity of the school of Malāmatīyah (the school that is also called Qaṣṣārīyah by Hujwīrī),[82] which is well discussed and expounded upon by Sulamī in a generation earlier than Hujwīrī, according to Shafīʿī, was merely a personal assumption of Sulamī: "The school of Malāmat (blame) also, despite the fame it gained later, was most probably invented by Sulamī's assumption and imagination and before Sulamī no one had mentioned a school or an order named Malāmatīyah."[83] Though the word Malāmatīyah is mentioned by Maqdisī in 355/966 (six decades earlier than Sulamī's death in 412/1021), Shafīʿī says, it doesn't pertain to the Malāmatīyah with which Sulamī and Hujwīrī are concerned.[84]

In 2007, Ahmet Karamustafa noticed that the nature of the schools described by Hujwīrī did not match an "actual social entity". Karamustafa held the explanation given by Hujwīrī for Sayyārīyah as the only surviving school at his time as a proof for this statement: "Closer scrutiny of Hujwīri's long discussion of these groupings suggests that he could have hardly meant them as actual social entities, since Hujwīrī explicitly identified and located only one of them, that is

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80. Muḥammad-Riḍā Shafīʿī Kadkanī, "*Mushkil-i Hujwīrī dar ṭabaqah-bandī-i makātib-i Ṣūfīyah*," in *Muṭāliʿāt-i ʿirfānī* 1 (1384/2005): 15.

81. Ibid., 12, 14, and 16.

82. "And his (Ḥamdūn al-Qaṣṣār's) manner was to exhibit and spread Malāmat." (Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovskey, 228)

83. Shafīʿī Kadkanī, "*Mushkil-i Hujwīrī dar ṭabaqah-bandī-i makātib-i Ṣūfīyah*," 15.

84. Ibid.

the Sayyārīs, the followers of the Sayyārī in the towns Nasā and Marw, and he made no historical or social observations on any other group."[85] Regarding the argument held by Karamustafa, It is necessary to note that Hujwīrī's statement about the existence of the Sayyārīyah at his time doesn't imply that the other schools had never, even ephemerally, manifested in the form of "actual social entities." The only thing that we can infer from Hujwīrī's writings is that the Sayyārīyah had continually maintained its social identity until the era of the author. In more precise words, Hujwīrī only speaks about the authenticity and consonance of Sayyārīyah's teachings in the terms of its connection with its eponym Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sayyārī, and explains that on the basis of its geographical concentration and continuity.[86]

Karamustafa's answer to the question of genuineness of Hujwīrī's classification is not as optimistic as that of Nicholson:

> Indeed, it is obvious that he (Hujwīrī) used this system of classification mainly to organize his presentation of diverse Sufi views on such key concepts as 'states and stations' (under Muḥāsibī), 'intoxication and sobriety' (under Bāyazīd and Junayd), 'altruism' (under Nūrī), 'lower soul and passion' (under Tustarī), 'friendship with God and miracles' (under Tirmidhī), 'subsistence and passing away' (under Kharrāz), 'union and separation' (under Sayyārī) and 'the nature of human spirit' (under Ḥallāj)…. Here too 'pairing' functions as an effective

85. Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Formative Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 102.

86. Karamustafa's argument here sounds as if somebody takes the emphasis given by Mālik ibn Anas to the continuity of the tradition in Madina as an evidence for nonexistence of jurisprudential schools in other parts of the Muslim land as distinct social groups.

> organizing tool, which enabled the author to impose some order onta complicated array of subjects.[87]

Karamustafa does, however, acknowledge the attribution of each doctrine to the founder of its correspondent school: "In the light of information available from other sources, Hujwīrī's pairing with major Sufis is on the mark."[88] However, even if we ignore the heterodox schools, about whose founders and the attribution of the respective doctrines Hujwīrī himself was not certain, Karamustafa's last judgment cannot be taken categorically. At least in the case of Ibn Khafīf, the supposedly founder of Khafīfīyah, the first-hand sources such as *Sīrat Ibn Khafīf,* of which only a Persian translation has survived, and *Iʿtiqād Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn Khafīf*, don't give any reference to the idea of "absence and presence" (*ghaybah wa-ḥuḍūr*), which is attributed by Hujwīrī to Ibn Khafīf. No doubt, more research is needed to evaluate the universality of Karamustafa's last statement. For example, studying Ibn Bādkūbah, a disciple of Ibn Khafīf, who migrated to Nayshābūr and took charge of the Sufi community established by Sulamī, may help us on this topic.

Kramustafa's comment is useful to the present discussion, in which he split the question of Hujwīrī's accuracy into two more basic questions: 1) did the Sufi masters to whom Hujwīrī attributes the foundation of the concerning schools advocate the correspondent doctrines? 2) Was any socially identifiable group formed around those Sufi masters? In the next section I will add one more question and examine the accuracy of Hujwīrī's account through providing answers to these questions.

87. Karamustafa, *Sufism: the Formative Period*, 102.
88. Ibid., 102-3.

In summary of scholarly answers to the question of Hujwīrī's accuracy, as has been shown in this section, it is clear that optimism has significantly, though not linearly, declined within the century between Nicholson and Karamustafa.

vi. Arguments for Accuracy of Hujwīrī's Classification

Before going further, we need to make a distinction between the question of one's accuracy with respect to matters of fact on one hand, and the question of one's sincerity and genuineness with respect to the consistence between one's opinion and statement, on the other. Regarding our subject, questioning whether the classification reported by Hujwīrī is an accurate presentation of the Sufi communities at the time of Hujwīrī or shortly earlier is different from questioning whether he has sincerely reported to his best awareness conditioned by his epistemological capacities and limitations. The latter question is not to measure his knowledge upon the scales of the external objective reality, but it is to measure his statements upon the scales of his subjective beliefs. In this section we will attempt to answer the first question, namely the question of accuracy rather than sincerity. However, it is noteworthy that scholars like Shafiʿī Kadkanī attacked both Hujwīrī's accuracy and sincerity.

In order to investigate the accuracy of Hujwīrī's classification, we need to add a further question to the aforementioned questions intimated by Karamustafa, suggesting this triple questionnaire:

Q1. Were the concerned doctrines advocated by the eponyms of the schools?

Q2. Was there any identifiable group of followers associated with the eponyms?

Q3. If the answer to the last question is positive, did they advocate the concerned doctrine as their distinctive feature?

In order to investigate the accuracy of an account about divisions in Sufism at any time, the first question doesn't function as an essential one. In other words, in order to attest the existence of a group of Sufis featured by a certain doctrine who consider a certain eminent Sufi figure as their forerunner, it is not really necessary to prove that the Sufi figure concerned actually has advocated the doctrine under discussion. The attribution of a doctrine to an eminent Sufi may have been a later reflection of disciplinary necessities on the intra-sectarian historiography. Hujwīrī himself is aware of this possibility so that, although he mentions Abū Ḥulmān of Damascus as the founder of an unorthodox Sufi group that advocates the doctrine of incarnation, at the same time he refutes the attribution of the doctrine to Abū Ḥulmān. Hujwīrī writes:

> One of them (the unorthodox schools) follows Abū Ḥulmān of Damascus and transmits some quotes from him that oppose what is recorded of him in the books of the elders. And the experts in this subject (*ahl-i qiṣṣah*) consider that elder (*pīr*) as a master of heart. But those heratics (*malāḥidah*) attribute to him the idea of incarnation (*ḥulūl*), commixture (*imtizāj*), and transmigration of spirits (*naskh-i arwāḥ*).[89]

Further, about the association between the unorthodox school of Farisīyah and Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj, Hujwīrī writes:

> And another group attributes its doctrine to Fāris and he alleges that this is the doctrine of Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr [al-Ḥallāj] and that nobody holds this doctrine

89. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, 334. In the case of Abū Ḥulmān, Khaṭib al-Baghdādī gives an opinion that while reconciling Hujwīrī's paradigm and observations, offers a better weight to his paradigm: "One of them (the three unorthodox Sufis mentioned by Sulamī in his *Tārīkh al-Sūfīyah*) is Abū Hulmān al-Dimashqī. He used to cover himself with Sufism while in fact he was one of the 'advocates of the theory of incarnation' (*ḥulūlīyah*)." (Abū Manṣūr ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn* (Istanbul: Maṭbaʿat al-Dawlah, 1928), 316.)

> except the followers of Husayn. And I met Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṣaydalānī, [who was in charge] with 4000 people scattered in Irāq who were Ḥallajians. All of them damned Fāris for this doctrine…. I, ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Jullābī, don't know who Fāris and Abū Ḥulmān were and what they said, but whoever holds a doctrine against monotheism (*tawhīd*) and true theosophy (*taḥqīq*), doesn't participate in the religion at all.[90]

Here, Hujwīrī declares that in the case of these so-called unorthodox sects his paradigm doesn't accord with his personal observations and the other sources he had access to. Here, he sounds like a transmitter who is not willing to accept the responsibility of the accuracy of what he transmits. There is no reason to prevent us from considering the possibility that this position of Hujwīrī has been extended to the orthodox section of his account. However, although a positive answer to the first question is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the accuracy of the classification, still responding to this question will be useful towards deriving the origin of this classification.

Unlike the first question, the last two are necessary to answer. As for the second question, the term "identifiable" sounds slippery. The concept of identifiability is a subjective concept. Therefore, nothing can help us to answer the second question except testimonies that directly or indirectly verify a sort of considerable distinction between the group of Sufis under discussion and the others.

Unfortunately, the evidence we found by now cannot determine the final answer concerning all these schools. In the case of Muḥasibīyah and Khafīfīyah we found almost nothing in favor of Hujwīrī's classification and in the case of Ḥakīmīyah, though the findings are not as

90. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, 334

disappointing as those of the former cases, still they are not sufficient to provide us with confidence. The cases of Ṭayfūrīyah, Kharrāzīyah, and Sayyāriah, however, are helpful and are going to be fully studied in the next chapters enabling us to provide positive answers to all three questions. Therefore, it doesn't seem necessary to speak about them here. The Malāmatīyah also has been quite thoroughly studied and the case is positively settled. The following are the evidence that determine our answers to the aforementioned questions specifcally regarding Sahlīyah, Ḥakimīyah, Nūrīyah, and Junaydīyah:

Sahlīyah named after Sahl ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Tustarī:

Q1. Were penance and suppression of the lower self (*nafs*) the distinctive features of the teachings and Sufi discipline of Sahl of Tustar? Here, the strongest authority who brings testimony in the favor of Hujwīrī is Sulamī. In the opening of the entry Sulamī dedicated to Sahl of Tustar in his biographical work, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah,* he writes, "And one of them (Sufis) is Sahl ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Tustarī ... [who was] one of the leaders of the group (Sufis) and one of their scholars and their orators in the lore of penance and sincerity and defection of deeds."[91]

Q2. Was there any group of Sufis that referred to Sahl as its forerunner or founder? Shams al-Dīn Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Muqaddasī (d. 991) writes about a group of theologians and ascetics in Baṣrah, who were called Sālimīyah, and were the followers of Ibn Sālim, a servant of Saḥl of Tustar.[92] About Ibn Sālim, who died in 960s, Sulamī writes, "[He was] a companion of Sahl ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Tustarī and a transmitter of his sayings. He didn't adhere to any of elders except him (Sahl) … and his manner was the manner (*ṭarīqah*) of his master, Sahl. And he (Ibn Sālim)

91. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 166.

92. Abū ʿAbdullāh Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī-maʿrifat al-aqālīm*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1906), 126.

has some followers in Baṣrah who adhere to him and to his son, Abū al-Ḥasan."[93] These sentences not only reveal that there was a distinct group of Sufis in Baṣrah that identified themselves as the followers of Sahl, but also implies that the manner (*ṭarīqah*) of Sahl was distinct enough to allow the author to identify that with the manner of Ibn Sālim. In addition to this testimony, Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj gives an account of his debate with Ibn Sālim in Baṣrah, in which the former silenced the latter quoting Sahl of Tustar. In his account, Sarrāj comments, "And He (Sahl) was his (Ibn Sālim's) leader and the most virtuous one in his (Ibn Sālim's) opinion."[94]

Q3. Was the idea of penance adopted by Sālimīyah? The first testimony regarding this question can be drawn on the report Muqaddasī gives of his observations of Sālimīyah in Baṣrah: "And they (Sālimīyah) are a group of people who claim a specific theology and asceticism." This report shows that the Sālimīyah used to insist on asceticism as a crucial component of their teaching. In addition Sulamī singles out Ibn Sālim for his *ijtihād*, which implies that he was an advocate of austerity.

Ḥakīmīyah, named after Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Tirmidhī al-Ḥakīm:

Q1. Hujwīrī says that Tirmidhī held the theory of *wilāyah* (friendship with God) as the center of his teachings. The attribution of the book of *Sīrat al-awliyā'*[95] to Tirmidhī, while the book gives a comprehensive road map for a journey to God employing the concept of *walī*, leaves no doubt that the idea of friendship with God has a central place in Tirmidhī's teachings. The

93. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyh*, 312.

94. Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 476.

95. The book was once edited by ʿUthmān Ismāʿīl Yaḥyá and published by l'Institut de Lettres Oreintals in Beirut with the title *Khatm al-awliyā'* and once it was edited by Bernd Radtke as *Sīrat al-awliyā'* in the collection of *Thalāthah muṣannāfāt li-l-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī* published in Beirut in 1992.

concept assigned to the term *walī* as defined by Tirmidhī is basically different from what Sufis generally consider regarding the term. Tirmidhī introduces two classes of *awliyā'* (the plural of *walī*), namely, *walī ḥaqq Allāh* and *walī Allāh*. The first class covers all believers who sincerely seek God's proximity and the latter class consists of the believers who deeply realize that there is no means for spiritual progress but God Himself so that they don't overestimate the instrumental value of penance, self-mortification, religious optional actions, and even moral purification.[96] However, Tirmidhī's thought was distinct enough from the other Sufis of the early period to cause Jaʿfar al-Khuldī (d. 959), a Sufi of a generation after Junayd and a historian of Sufism, not to consider the former as a Sufi.[97] This exclusion seems more remarkable when Sara Sviri informs us that Tirmidhī is not mentioned in Sarrāj's *al-Lumaʿ* and on the other hand, in the extant writings of Tirmidhī the words *ṣūfī* and *taṣawwuf* are never mentioned.[98]

Q2&3. Sara Sviri also informs us that Tirmidhī criticized the master-disciple relationship as an epistemological methodology. In his autobiography we find no trace of this mode of disciplinary relationship.[99] If it is true, we cannot expect to find a concrete and "identifiable" network of direct disciples, in its traditional sense, around him. Nevertheless, Hujwīrī and ʿAṭṭār identify Abū ʿAlī al-Jūzjānī and Abū Bakr al-Warrāq as the direct disciples of Tirmidhī.[100] This statement in the case of Abū Bakr al-Warrāq is questionable, due to the silence of Sulamī, Qushayrī, and Abū Naʿīm al-Iṣfahānī on the subject. The case of Abū ʿAlī al-Jūzjānī, however, is

96. See Karamustafa, *Sufism: the Formative Period*, 44-7.

97. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 326.

98. Sara Sviri, "Ḥakīm Tirmidhī and the Malāmatī Movement in the Early Sufism," in *The Heritage of Sufism*, vol. I, ed. L. Lewisohn (Oxford Oneworld Publications, 1999)

99. Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Tirmidhī, "*Badw sha'n Abī ʿAbdillāh*," ed. ʿUthmān Ismāʿīl Yaḥyá, *al-Mashrīq* 7-10 (1960) 392-470.

100. For Jūzjānī see Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, 186; and ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, 562 .For Warrāq see Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, 179; and ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat* al-awliyā', 534.

supported by the testimony of Sulamī.[101] Even if these associations can be established well, they are not enough to maintain a positive opinion regarding the existence of a notable and distinct community of the followers of Tirmidhī, which is the concern of the second question.

However, Radtke suggests that Tirmidhī belonged to the tradition of Ḥakīms (sages) in Khurāsān and Transoxiana and tries to show that this tradition was heavily influenced by Neo-Platonism.[102] Unfortunately, Radtke's argument doesn't help us to assert the existence of a group of followers of Tirmidhī. Finally, it is to say that currently we don't have any evidence to support such an assertion.

Nūrīyah, named after Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Nūrī:

Q1. As for the question whether Nūrī advocated the primacy of *taṣawwuf* over *faqr*, no concrete evidence has been found yet. Still, there are pieces of a smashed puzzle that if considered together, improve the likelihood of a positive response to this question. First, it is noteworthy that, although after the 12th century the concept of *faqr* (poverty, sometimes interpreted as nonattachment) has been understood as an attitude or state among several possible attitudes held by Sufis, it seems that till the time of Hujwīrī *faqr* was considered as an independent spiritual method so that it was reasonable to compare that with the methodology of the mystics of Baghdād, who were known as Sufis. Hujwīrī is not the only writer who has spoken about this comparison. Ibn Khafīf (d. 982) also, prior to Hujwīrī, writes in his creed, "*Taṣawwuf* is not identical with *faqr*, and *taqwá* (piety) is not identical with *taṣawwuf*, and a *faqīr* (a practitioner of *faqr*) is not to employ the means while [such] employment is allowed for

101. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 196.

102. I used a Persian translation of Radtke's article in *Maʿārif* 1, 2 (1374/1995) 139-60.

a Sufi."[103] In addition Sulamī informs us that this comparison was important enough to be inquired about of Abū Bakr al-Duqqī (d. 970-2).[104] On the other hand, Sarrāj writes that Muslim mystics, who, according to him, were comparable with Iraqi Sufis, were called *fuqarā'* (the plural of *faqīr*) in Syria.[105] It is interesting that Nūrī had two spiritual lineages: an Iraqi lineage through Sarī al-Saqatī (d. 865) and a Syrian lineage through Aḥmad ibn Abū al-Ḥawārī (d. 844).[106] The relatively high number of quotes transmitted, without exception through one mediator, by Aḥmad ibn Abū al-Ḥawārī from Ibrāhīm ibn Ad`ham, a pioneer of asceticism and mysticism in Syria, shows that the former was heavily influenced by the latter.[107] Nūrī gives the following definition for *faqr*: "The description of a *faqīr* is stillness in want and generosity in availability."[108] This description perfectly accords the famous account given by Ibrāhīm ibn Ad`ham of his manner: "Our principle is that when we are provided for, we prefer others to ourselves; and when we are deprived, we appreciate and praise [God]."[109] All the above information suggests that when Hujwīrī reports that Nūrī was an advocate of primacy of *taṣawwuf* over *faqr*, it is possible to be interpreted as his habit to prefer his Iraqi lineage and tradition over his Syrian lineage, with which he was in touch during fourteen years towards the end of his life, when he was self-exiled in Riqqah, one of the major cities in Syria at that time.

Q2&3. As for the question whether there was any distinct group of the followers of Nūrī, the only positive evidence so far found is what is reported by Sulamī about ʿAbdullāh ibn Khabīq al-

103. Abūʿ al-Ḥasan al-Daylamī, *Sīrat-i Abū ʿAbdullāh ibn Kafīf al-Shirāzī* , trans. Ibn Junayd al-Shīrāzī, ed. Annemaire Schimmel (Ankara: Ankara University, 1955), 305.

104. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 335.

105. Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 46.

106. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqat al-Ṣūfīyah*, 136; Abū Naʿīm al-Iṣfahānī, *Ḥilyat al-awliyā' wa-ṭabaqāt al-aṣfiyā'*, vol. 10, (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1996), 249.

107. See the entry of Ibrāhīm ibn Ad`ham in: Abū Naʿīm al-Isfahanī, *Ḥilyat al-awliyā'*, vol. 7, 367-95 – vol. 8, 1-58.

108. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 30.

109. Abū Naʿīm, *Ḥilyat al-awliyā'*, vol. 8, 37.

Anṭākī: "And his manner in Sufism was the manner of Nūrī since he (ibn Khabīq) had accompanied his (Nūrī's) followers."[110] This account not only indicates that there was a distinct group of the followers of Nūrī, but also indicates that this group had a distinct manner in Sufism that they transferred to Ibn Khabīq. However, we cannot infer on the basis of this account that the aforementioned distinct manner or doctrine pertained to the idea of the primacy of *taṣawwuf* over *faqr*.

Junaydīyah, named after Junayd of Baqdād:

Q1. Was Junayd the advocate of the primacy of *ṣaḥw* over *sukr*? In order to answer this question the following considerations will be illuminative. In the next chapter we will suggest an association between the epistemological state of *jamʿ* (integration) and *sukr* (spiritual intoxication). If such an association can be established, we can infer that there must be a correspondence between the state of *tafriqah* (differentiation) and the state of sobriety or *ṣaḥw*. Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī relates an anecdote on the authority of Saʿīd ibn al-Aʿrābī (d. 952-3) according to that Junayd and his followers, who were not comfortable with holding the state of *jamʿ* as the final epistemological state in the path (which could legitimate its correspondent state, *sukr*, as the ultimate state beyond *ṣaḥw*), suggested the idea of a "second differentiation" further than *jamʿ*:

> I (Saʿīd ibn al-Aʿrābī) saw him (Nūrī) in Riqqah in the year 270 (883-4 CE). He asked me about Junayd. I told [him], 'They (Junayd and his followers) mention something that they call the second differentiation (*al-farq al-thānī*) and sobriety (*ṣaḥw*).' He said, 'Tell me something about that.' I told him and then he laughed.

110. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah'*, 120-1.

> He asked, 'What does Ibn al-Khalanjī say?' I replied, 'He doesn't keep their company.' He said, 'And Abū Aḥmad al-Qalānisī?' I replied, 'He sometimes disagree with them and sometimes agree.' He said, 'What is your opinion?' I said, 'What can I say?' Then I said, 'I suppose what they call a second differentiation is a manifestation among the [other] manifestations of integration (*jamʿ*), at which they incorrectly imagine that they have left the state of integration.' He said, 'So it is ….'[111]

Q2&3. As for the question whether there was a Sufi group that identified itself as the followers of Junayd, in addition to the abovementioned anecdote, there is no reason not to accept the testimony Hujwīrī gives about himself and his masters. He writes, "All my masters were Junaydī."[112] And again, there is no reason to ignore his own advocacy of the idea of primacy of *ṣaḥw* over *sukr* as a Junaydī.

In the following table we can see an overview of the answers we are able to give to the aforementioned questions:

Eponym	**Doctrine**	**Q 1**	**Q 2**	**Q 3**
Abū Yazīd	*Sukr*	+	+	+
Qaṣṣār	*malāmah*	+	+	+
Muḥāsibī	*riḍā'* to be a *ḥāl*	?	?	?
Tirmidhī	*wilāyah*	+	?	?
Tustarī	*riyaḍah*	+	+	+
Nūrī	*taṣawwuf* higher than *faqr*	?	+	?
Junayd	*ṣaḥw*	+	+	+
Kharrāz	*fanā'- baqā'*	+	+	+
Sayyārī	*jamʿ - tafriqah*	+	+	+
Ibn Khafīf	*ghaybah - ḥuḍūr*	?	?	?
Overall		**7/10**	**7/10**	**6/10**

111. Abū ʿAbdullāh Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalā'*, ed. Ḥassān ʿAbd al-Mannān (Amman: Bayt al-Afkar al-Dawlīyah, 2004), vol. 1, 1007.

112. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. Jukovsky, 235.

The table shows that the three aforementioned questions can be positively answered in the case of 6 schools out of ten. In addition, the evidence we have regarding the school of Nūrīyah satisfies at least one of the last two questions. If the first question were taken into account, it would be even more convincing that 7 schools meet the criterion set forth by this question. This consideration, contrary to the opinions of scholars like Shafīʿī Kadkanī, indicates that a remarkable degree of accuracy can be assigned to Hujwīrīs account of diversity in formative Sufism.

vii. A Suggestion for the Source of Hujwīrī's Presentation

The question whether Hujwīrī's paradigm was based on his own observations or was drawn on the authority of an earlier source, is a key question that can help determine the honesty of Hujwīrī in this respect. Earlier we gave some quotes of Hujwīrī wherein he questions the accuracy of his account in favor of his observations and certain written sources he had accessed. This strengthens our suspicion that the paradigm, probably in its entirety, was taken by Hujwīrī from a source with a great degree of authority so that he preferred to project the paradigm despite of its questionability. Hujwīrī himself mentions Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al Sulamī and Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī as two binding authorities who influenced him in writing his *Kashf al-maḥjūb*.[113] In the works of the latter we cannot find a clue about the paradigm under discussion while in the extant hagiographical work of the former there are some hints that, although

113. In order to show the importance of Sulamī and Qushayrī for Hujwīrī, it is helpful to notice that in order to justify the anachronism in the case of the place Hujwīrī gave to Maʿrūf al-Karkhī in the biographical portion of *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, he writes, "This notice of him (Maʿrūf al-Karkhī) should have come earlier in the book, but I have placed it here in accordance with two venerable persons who wrote before me, one of them a relator of traditions and the other an independent authority (*ṣāḥib taṣarruf*) – I mean Shaykh Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī, who in his work adopted the arrangement that I have followed, and the Master and Imām Abū 'l-Qāsim alQushayrī, who has put the notice of Maʿrūf in the same order in the introductory portion of his book." (Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, trans. Nicholson, 113-4.)

implicitly, suggest that at least a rough sketch of the paradigm was known before Hujwīrī. The discussion we are going to give in this section in the favor of the preceding hypothesis will be of a semiotic nature. However, even if Sulamī was the authority on which Hujwīrī drew his presentation, *Tabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, Sulamī's work we mentioned lately, could not be Hujwīrī's source in this respect, because whatever clue we find in this book is too subtle and implicit to have solely provided enough confidence to Hujwīrī to present his paradigm as he did. We know that Sulamī wrote a longer hagiography that is called *Tārīkh al-Sūfīyah*.[114] The book is lost and if we had it we might find a sketch of the paradigm there.

Ṭabaqāt al-Sufīyah is a doxographical work that consists of 104 entries each dedicated to an eminent Sufi figure.[115] The structure of each entry is often formed of three distinct sections: 1) a dense and short biographical section containing geographical (in terms of the place of birth, death, and major travels), ancestral, and contributory (in terms of the particular and noteworthy functions, contributions, and significance of the concerned Sufi) information; 2) one or two prophetic traditions transmitted by the Sufi under discussion with the full citation of the mediatory transmitters between the Prophet and Sulamī (*sanad*); 3) a body of doxographical materials that forms the major part of the entry.

The first section of each entry though not as decorative as the opening portions of *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, is more informative, more explicit, and more precise. While surveying the opening section of the entries in *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣufīyah*, it comes into attention that only nine Sufis are

114. "And the book *Tarīkh al-Ṣūfīyah* by Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Sulamī covers nearly one thousand of Sufi elders …" (Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, 315.) This description doesn't fit *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, therefore it must be a different book that is no longer extant. In addition, Baghdādī has quoted fragments of that work in his *Tarikh Baghdād* under the entry of Ḥallāj, which cannot be found in *Ṭabaqāt*. This makes us certain about our statement. Those quotes were extracted and edited by Massignon. For the fragments see Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī, *Majmūʿah-i āthār-i Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Sulamī*, vol 1, ed. Naṣrullāh Pūr-Jawādī (Tehran: Ḥikmat wa-Falsafah-i Islāmī, 2009) 295-309.

115. There are few entries that cover two Sufis.

marked with descriptions that denote a high level of leadership. To four of them, namely, Sahl of Tustar, Junayd, Kharrāz, and Nūrī a general leadership is ascribed, and the leadership attributed to the other five, namely, Sarī al-Saqaṭī, Muḥāsibī, Qaṣṣār, Sayyārī, and Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Ḥuṣrī (d. 982) is qualified geographically. Here, we will see the titles with that the leadership of the aforementioned Sufis is described by Sulamī:

Sufis marked with general leadership	
Sahl	"[He was] one of the leaders (*a'immah*) and scholars (*ʿulamā'*) of the group [of Sufis]."[116]
Junayd	"[He was] one of the leaders (*a'immah*) and chiefs (*sādāt*) of the group [of Sufis]."[117]
Kharrāz	"[He was] one of the leaders (*a'immah*) and greatest elders (*mashāyikh*) of the group [of Sufis]."[118]
Nūrī	"He was one of the greatest elders (*mashāyikh*) and scholars of the group [of Sufis] and there was no discipline (*ṭarīqat*) better than his at his time."[119]
Sufis marked with local leadership	
Sarī	"[He was] the leader (*imām*) of Baghdad."[120]
Muḥāsibī	"[He was] the teacher (*ustād*) of most of the people of Baghdad."[121]
Qaṣṣār	"[He was] the elder (*shaykh*) of the followers of *malāmah* (the path of blame) in Nayshābūr and he publicized the doctrine of *malāmah* and his discipline was particularly his."[122]
Sayyārī	"[He was] one of the people of Marw and their elder (*shaykh*) and the first one of their city who spoke to them about the true nature of mystic and spiritual states (*aḥwāl*)."[123]
Ḥuṣrī	"… and he was the elder of Iraq and its lingua (*lisān*) and whoever among them (the Sufis of Iraq) is cultured is cultured by him… he was the teacher (*ustād*) of the Iraqi [Sufis]…"[124]

116. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 166.
117. Ibid., 129.
118. Ibid., 183.
119. Ibid., 136.
120. Ibid., 51
121. Ibid., 58.
122. Ibid., 109.
123. Ibid., 330.
124. Ibid., 365.

Among the Sufis masters we are concerned with in this thesis, three are absent from this list: Abū Yazīd of Basṭām, Tirmidhī, and Ibn Khafīf. As far as Ibn Khafīf it is concerned, he was a senior contemporary of Sulamī and they had met each other, so that the phrases like "*akhbar-nā* (informed us) Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn Khafīf" or "*akhbarn-ī* (informed me) Muḥmmad ibn Khafīf" can be found in *Ṭabaqāt*.[125] When Ibn Khafīf died in 982, Sulamī was 46 years old, therefore, it is completely possible that if a distinct community of followers with a distinct central doctrine were left behind by Ibn Khafīf, it would have not been large enough to have been noticed by Sulamī by the time he wrote *Ṭabaqāt*. Ḥuṣrī, likewise, was a senior contemporary of Sulamī and they had met each other. Sulamī writes about him, "We saw nobody of a more perfect state and better expression and more sublime words than him among the elders we have ever seen."[126] Again it is possible that the words with that Sulamī praises Ḥuṣrī had been the expression of the personal impression the latter left on the former rather than being indicators of the contribution the tradition attributed to Ḥuṣrī as a matter of fact.

However, the titles *imām* or *ustād* by themselves don't indicate the role of a Sufī as the founder of a distinct school with a specific doctrine. Here, the importance is laid in the exclusive-ness of these descriptions in Sulamī's work. The statistical fact that, ignoring Ibn Khafīf as an anomaly, the above list covers seven ninth of Hujwīrī's paradigm and, again ignoring Ḥuṣrī, the paradigm under discussion covers seven eighth of the above list suggests to me that a rough and tentative sketch of Hujwīrī's paradigm was known by Sulamīs time and to Sulamī. It must be said that this statistical and semiotic consideration does not reveal anything about the exact role and significance of these Sufi masters in the later Sufi communities, nor does it attest to the existence of a Sufi school acknowledging one of these Sufi masters as its founder, nor does it

125. Ibid., 345-6.
126. Ibid., 365.

prove a doctrine to have been held as a central character by any Sufi school. In spite of this, it does suggest that the position of leadership in the case of a good portion of the set of eponyms in Hujwīrī's paradigm was roughly figured and exclusively acknowledged by Sulamī. Can it lead us to a more specific idea about the origin of Hujwīrī's paradigm? The precise answer depends on the evidence we may find in the future.

CHAPTER 3

THE CASE OF ABŪ YAZĪD OF BASṬĀM AND *ṬAYFŪRĪYAH*

i. Introduction

The concept of *sukr*, which can be translated in a Sufi context as "mystic intoxication" is one of the most controversial and at the same time one of the most defining features in the history of Sufism. S*ukr* and the category of Sufi phenomena it belongs to are the main factors that distinguish Sufism from the other traditions of Islamic asceticism.[127] *Sukr*, on one hand, was one of the main reasons for the popularity of Sufism, and on the other hand, was one of the main reasons for the supporters of what the majority of Muslims perceived as the orthodox version of Islam to condemn Sufi traditions. The concept of *sukr* became so associated with Sufism that several early Sufi writers warned against the pseudo-Sufis who presented Sufism as being identical with its ecstatic manifestations.[128] The conflict between this Sufi phenomenon and the forces of orthodoxy shaped the Sufi polemic literature to a great extent.

The current chapter undertakes to show how Abū Yazīd al-Basṭāmī's approach to the idea of *sukr*, reflected in his ecstatic utterances (*shaṭḥ*), can be considered to have been based on the Islamic traditions that give accounts of the ecstatic dimensions of the prophetic experience of ascension as well as the traditions pertaining to the eschatological modes of ecstasy due to the

127. There were many ascetics who have not been considered among the Sufis. The Karrāmites, for example, though famous for their asceticism and contributing to Sufi culture, were never counted among Sufis. Another example is the early Ḥanbalites. A later class of ascetics and mystics, that refuses to be considered Sufis, is the category of orthodox Shiite mystics.

128. For example Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj wrote: "There are people among them who believe that it (Sufism) is a kind of oblivion and fun and dearth of mindfulness caused by ignorance." (Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj al-Ṭusī, *al-Lumaʿ fī-l-taṣawūf,* ed. Ṭāhā ʿAbd al-Bāqī Surūr (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthanná, 1960), 21.)

vision of the Divine (*al-ru'yah al-ukhrawīyah*). In addition, it will show how the tension between the Sufi school of intoxication and its opponents was partially motivated by pedagogical concerns.

ii. *Sukr* and *Shaṭḥ*

One of the earliest definitions for the term *sukr* was suggested by Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d. 378/988), who was one of the first Sufi writers to give a systematic account of Sufi terminology. Al-Sarrāj defines *sukr* as the highest degree of a human's loss of attention (*ghaybah*) to the objects of touch with his senses, caused by his awareness of the divine presence (*ḥuḍūr*) or by vision of the Divine (*mushāhadah*),[129] provided that it has no outer physical manifestation.[130] Both Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī and Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī followed al-Sarrāj in the definitions they gave for *sukr*.[131]

If *sukr* is something that, according to al-Sarrāj's definition, has no outwardly observable characteristics, how can its occurrence be detected? The answer to this question brings us to another controversial Sufi category of phenomena that is called *shaṭḥ* (pl. *shaṭaḥāt*). A survey of the examples identified as *shaṭḥ* in Sufi texts leads us to define the term as a verbal expression of the ideas the Sufis are concerned with, in a way that contradicts logical, natural, social, theological, legal, or grammatical convictions or conventions. This expression is usually accompanied by an ecstatic realization (*wajd*) of a spiritual idea that causes the Sufi to burst out.

129. In this chapter "vision of divine" is rendered as a translation of *mushahadah* and "perception of divine" stands for *ru'yah*.

130. Al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 416-7.

131. For al-Sulamī see Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al- Sulamī, "*Darajāt al-muʿāmalāt*," ed. Aḥmad Ṭāhirī ʿArāqī, in *Majmūʿah-i āthār-i Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Sulamī*, vol 1 (Tehran: Ḥikmat wa-falsafah-i Islamī, 2009), 493. For al-Qushayrī see Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin al- Qushayrī, *al-Risālat al-Qushayrīyah*, ed. Khalīl al-Manṣūr (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 2001), 106-8.

The word *shaṭḥ*, threrfore, regarding its Sufi sense, has been rendered as "ecstatic utterance." Practically *shaṭḥ* has been an indicator for *sukr* since, as Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī wrote, *sukr* by itself is a case of ecstasy.[132] Furthermore, only the overpowering loss of self-awareness, which is an essential element in *sukr*, could be an excuse for a Sufi to disregard the theological or legal convictions violated in his *shaṭḥ*.

The linguistic explanation of the phenomenon of *shaṭḥ* given by al-Sarrāj is interesting. He explains that when a forceful stream of water overflows the banks of a narrow stream, people say '*shaṭaḥa al-mā'*;" likewise when the divine reality manifests to a Sufi and he has no adequate conceptual or linguistic means to articulate that manifestation (or in other words, his articulatory means are too narrow to give a proper account of the manifestation), the outcome will be an unexpected and often incomprehensible expression that is called *shaṭḥ*.[133]

In the Sufi texts that deal with *shaṭḥ*, Abū Yazīd Ṭayfūr ibn ʿĪsá ibn Surūshān al-Basṭāmī, an early Muslim mystic who lived in the north-east of Iran, is considered as the actual pioneer of the genre, though there have been attempts to attribute certain *shaṭaḥāt* to earlier figures like the Prophet Muḥammad, his companions, and even God himself.[134] However, it sounds rather contradictory to attribute unconventionality to the authorities who were the primary sources of the Islamic conventions. Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Hujwīrī (d. 465/1077) in his *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, states that Abū Yazīd was the founder of a school of Sufism based on intoxication as the ultimate

132. "Only the people of ecstasy (*wajd*) experience *sukr*." (Al-Qushayrī, *al-Risālah*, 107)

133. Al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 453.

134. For the *shaṭaḥāt* attributed to God, the Prophet Muḥammad, and the first four caliphs see Rūzbahān al-Baqlī al-Shīrāzī, *Sharḥ-i Shaṭḥīyāt*, ed. Henry Corbin (Tehran: Ṭahūrī, 2006), 83-92. As an instance of God's *shaṭḥ*, this text suggests the Qur'anic verse "He is the First and the Last and the Outward and the Inward, and He is Knowledgeable in the case of everything," (Qur'an: 57, 3) which contains the apparently contradictory pairs of attributes *al-awwal/al-ākhir* and *al-ẓāhīr/al-bāṭin*.

stage of mystic progress.[135] Whether al-Hujwīrī's statement is plausible or not, holding Abū Yazīd as the pioneer of *shaṭḥ* as well as *sukr* supports our assumption about the tied diagnostic association between *shaṭḥ* and *sukr*.

iii. Abū Yazīd al-Basṭāmī and his *Shaṭaḥāt*

There is a serious disagreement over dating Abū Yazīd's life: the earliest suggested date is 180/796-7, which is argued for by Abbās Zaryāb Khu'ī;[136] Gerhard Böwering, following al-Sahlajī,[137] prefers the later date 234/848-9;[138] and the latest date and the most often cited is, 261/874-5, given by Al-Sulamī.[139]

The fact that may reconcile these assertions is that there were several mystics by the same teknonym (*kunya*).[140] We know of at least two of them. Hagiographers refer to one as "Abū Yazīd the elder," who is the one we are concerned with in this chapter, and the other is his grand-

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135. Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. V. A. Jukovsky (Tehran: Ṭahūrī, 1992), 228-9.

136. ʿAbbās Zaryāb Khu'ī, "Bāyazīd Basṭamī" in *Dāyirat al-maʿārif-i Jahān-i Islām*, http://www.encyclopaediaislamica.com/madkhal2.php?sid=431.

137. His full name is Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad ibn ʿAli ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn al-Sahlajī al-Basṭāmi. He died in 476/1083. Al-Hujwīrī met him and spoke of him as "the leader of the region (Basṭām)." (Al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 205-6) In this chapter we mainly relied on his book on Abū Yazīd's life and sayings along with al-Sarrāj and al-Sulamī, who were prior to him. The advantage of al-Sahlajī's work is his critical and precise approach to the chain of transmission. In addition, as he lived in Basṭām and was in touch with Abū Yazīd's family and tradition that was preached by him, his information is remarkable. The title of his book as recorded by ʿAbd al-Raḥman Badawī is *al-Nūr min-kalimāt Abī al-Ṭayfūr*, which must be a mistake since Ṭayfūr was Abū Yazīd's name and not his teknonym. The correct title must be *al-Nūr min-kalimāt Abī Yazīd al-Ṭayfūr* (*The Light from the Words of Abū Yazīd al-Ṭayfūr*). A good introduction to al-Sahlajī can be found in: Hādī Mīr Āqā'ī, "Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad Sahlagī," Kiyhān-i farhangī, no. 258 (2008): 62-63.

138. For Böwering see Gerhard Bowering, "Besṭāmī, Bāyazīd" in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Colombia University, article published December 15, 1989, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bestami-bastami-bayazid-abu-yazid-tayfur-b. For al-Sahlajī see al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr min-kalimāt Abī Ṭayfūr*" in *Shaṭaḥāt al-Ṣufīyah*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Badawī (Kuwait: Wikālat al-Maṭbūʿāt, n/d), 83.

139. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, ed. Muṣṭafá ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā' (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ʿilmīyah, 2003), 68.

140. Al-Sahlajī speaks about three mystics by the same teknonym. See al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 59-60.

nephew who is usually introduced as "Abū Yazīd the younger."[141] The sayings of these two are so blended in Sufi texts that it is difficult to differentiate between them. However, since Abū Yazīd the younger was a judge and as a judge he would have had to comply with the strict and uncompromisable norms of orthodoxy, it is reasonable to think that the author of the *shaṭaḥāt* must have been Abū Yazīd the elder.[142] Al-Sahlajī asserts that Abū Yazīd the elder was illiterate.[143] If we consider this assertion along with the earliest suggested date 180/796-7 for his death, it will be easy to imagine that a man who was not in direct touch with the various Islamic textual sources, living in a period in which the polished theological and mystic concepts and terminology had not yet been coined, could lack adequate conceptual and verbal means to articulate his unique experience with the Divine. These conditions could meet al-Sarrāj's aforesaid definition of *shaṭḥ*. It is interesting to note that the only master of Abū Yazīd mentioned in his sayings was an Indian who didn't know the ritualistic formulae he needed in order to perform his compulsory prayers.[144] Again, it is interesting to know that al-Sahlajī

141. Ibid., 69. The full name of this Abū Yazīd is Ṭayfūr ibn ʿĪsá ibn Ādam ibn ʿĪsá ibn ʿAlī. See ʿAbbās Zaryāb Khuī, "Bāyazīd Basṭamī."

142. "He was one of the people who took care of judiciary (*qaḍā'*) in Basṭām." Ibid.

143. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr,*" 70. This report is given by Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Dāstānī (d. 417/1026), a prominent representative of Abū Yazīd's school in Basṭām. His Sufi lineage was driven from ʿAmmī al-Basṭāmī, the nephew and disciple of Abū Yazīd. He was the direct master of al-Sahlajī and one of his major sources in his book *al-Nūr min-kalimāt Abī Yazīd al-Ṭayfūr*. (See al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 205-6.) Dr. Kenneth Honerkamp, the professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Georgia, raised a question regarding the interpretation of this report: did the word *ummī* mean "illiterate" in the fifth Islamic century, or could it be understood as "uneducated"? Whatever answer given to this question in the future can influence our understanding of Abū Yazīd. About his illiteracy see a supportive argument held by Dr. ʿAbd al-Husayn Zarrīnkūb in: *Justujū dar taṣawwuf-i Īrān*, (Tehran: Amīrkabīr, 1990), 37-8.

144. Al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 235. His name, as reported by al-Sarrāj, was Abū ʿAlī al-Sindī. A *shaṭḥ* is attributed to him by Rūzbahān al-Baqlī which can be considered to have been a primitive example for Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt*. (Rūzbahan al-Baqlī, *Sharḥ-i shaṭḥīyāt*, 94.) Schimmel questioned the identicalness of Sind with India pointing at another Sind near Basṭām. (Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 47.) Dr. Zarrīnkūb agreed with her. (Zarrīnkūb, *Justujū dar taṣawwuf-i Īrān*, 46.) Unfortunately Schimmel doesn't give any reference or more information to help to locate her alternative suggestion for Sind. Presently there are several villages called Sind in Iran, although I failed to find such a place near Basṭām.

informs us that Abū Yazīd transmitted only one prophetic tradition in his life.[145] Especially the latter fact increases the likelihood of his illiteracy, since any type of intellectual education at the time would involve memorizing numerous prophetic traditions.

Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt* sounded problematic to the Sufis of his era. Many of his contemporaries condemned him. The most tolerant among them refrained from judging and considered him an unintelligible mystic. A certain Abū Ḥafṣ, a contemporary who, if we accept that Abū Yazīd died as late as the second half of the third Islamic century, can be assumed to be Abū Ḥafṣ al-Ḥaddād of Nayshābūr (d. 207/822),[146] complained to Abū Yazīd about his unacceptable *shaṭaḥāt* and expected his excuses. [147] Al-Junayd of Baghdad (d. 297/910) was the first prominent figure who appreciated and revered Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt*. He said, "Some words of Abū Yazid's, due to their strength, depth and extent of meaning, are handfuls taken from a sea that is exclusively his."[148] Al-Sarrāj in his *al-Lumaʿ* included al-Junayd's commentaries on three fragments of Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt*.[149] In these commentaries, al-Junayd tries to give a figurative interpretation that provides the ground for reconciling Abū Yazīd and the version of orthodoxy that had been adapted in Sufi circles of Iraq. Al-Sarrāj himself, in a debate with Ibn Sālim, justified the controversial facet of a famous *shaṭḥ* of Abū Yazīd referring to the possibility of its

145. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 82-3. Al-Sahlajī says that as far as he knows "Abū Yazīd transmitted (*yusnidu*) only one *ḥadīth*." Of course by the word *yusnidu* he must mean relating a prophetic tradition along with the complete chain of its transmitters and not merely citing the text of such a tradition. The transmission of the same tradition with a slight difference in transmitters and the text is attributed to Abū Yazīd by al-Sulamī. (Al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 69.) This *ḥadith* in recorded by al-Suyūṭī as a weak tradition. See Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Ḍaʿīf al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaghīr* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988), 291-2.

146. He lived in Nayshābūr, a city not far from Basṭām. He was one of the founders of the school of Sufism known as Malāmatiyah that was against the exoteric manifestations of the Sufi practices. This fact can make the complaint mentioned above more meaningful. However, this event could take place only if we reject the latest date suggested for Abū Yazīd's death given by al-Sulamī.

147. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 160.

148. Al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 459.

149. Ibid., 459-471.

defective transmission and absence of the actual context.[150] Al-Sulamī didn't report Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt* in his hagiographical work.[151] Al-Sahlajī tried to settle the problem by the means of sophisticating and twisting the grammatical aspects,[152] while Abū Ismāʿīl ʿAbdullāh al-Hirawī basically denied the attribution of such *shaṭaḥāt* to Abū Yazīd.[153]

Those sayings of Abū Yazīd that can be considered as examples of *shaṭḥ* reflect three major themes: 1) the idea of union with God;[154] 2) the accounts of spiritual ascensions (*miʿrāj*) and visual contacts with God (*ru'yah*); and 3) challenging the conventional value of Islamic practices.[155] The first two classes are the principle basis for attributing the school of intoxication to Abū Yazīd, a school whose central tenet, according to al-Ḥujwīrī, was to acknowledge that the state of intoxication (*sukr*) was superior to the state of sobriety (*ṣaḥw*).[156]

The esoteric writings of the Iraqi master, Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz (d. 279/892), reflect the same approach to the state of *sukr* as that of Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt*. If we accept 234/847 as the year in that Abū Yazīd died, al-Kharrāz could be his junior contemporary. In several places in al-Kharrāz's treatises the ultimate state in the mystic path, which is usually called by him the state of proximity (*maqām al-qurb*),[157] is described with the same features that we find in Abū Yazīd's

150. Al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 472-3.

151. See al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 67-74.

152. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 185-6.

153. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmī, *Nafaḥāt al-uns min-ḥaḍarāt al-quds* (Calcutta: 1858), 63.

154. The most famous example of this class is this: "How transcendent I am! How transcendent I am! How my status is great!" (*Subḥān-ī! Subḥān-ī! Mā aʿẓam-a sha'n-ī.*) See al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 143; or this instance: "There is no Truth (*Ḥaqq*) unless I am that," (ibid., 139); or what he says to God: "And I am you and you are me." (Ibid., 153) The first part of the latter phrase reminds us of the Upanishadic catchword: "Tat tvam asi," which means "You are that." (*Chandogya Upanishad*: 6.8.7). Also it could be an example for al-Ḥallāj who said, "I am the one whom I desire and the one whom I desire is me."

155. As an example of this class see the following saying: "In the ritual of prayer, I didn't see but rising up the body and in fasting I didn't see but hunger." (Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 121.) In addition, he is reported to have passed across a Jewish cemetery and described the dead as "excused" and passed across a Muslim cemetery and described them as "deceived." (Al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 473.)

156. Al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 228-35

157. Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz, "*Rasā'il al-Kharrāz*," ed. Qāsim al-Sāmirrā'ī, in *Majallat al-majmaʿ al-ʿilmī al-ʿIrāqī* 15 (1967): 179.

shaṭaḥāt.[158] In order to demonstrate the similarities between the accounts Abū Yazīd gives of the state of *sukr* and the descriptions of al-Kharrāz's state of *qurb*, the following table provides some thematically parallel fragments of these two mystics.

158. For al-Kharrāz and his theory of *fanā'* and *baqā'* see the next chapter.

A Comparative Table of the Quotations by Al-Kharrāz and Abū Yazīd

Common Themes	**Quotations of Al-Kharrāz**	**Quotations of Abū Yazīd**
Dropping the Human Attributes and Taking the Divine Attributes Through Realization of Divine Transcendence[159]	"Their attributes are dropped from them (the mystics); their attributes merged to His (God's) attributes due to their awareness of His transcendence."[160]	"The lowliest characteristic of a mystic is that God's attributes occur in him."[161] "My attributes are concealed in His transcendence."[162]
Loss of Self-Awareness in God-Awareness	"He (the mystic) doesn't know anything except God."[163]	Somebody knocked on the door of Abū Yazīd's house. Abū Yazīd asked: "For whom you are looking?" The man said, "Abū Yazīd." Abū Yazīd replayed: "Go away! There is no one in the house except God."[164]
Loss of Personal Identity	"He (the mystic) is a servant whose name has been terminated so that he has no name."[165]	"I wish I had seen Abū Yazīd."[166]

159. Here, this divine transcendence is the idea whose realization causes the mystic to experience an ecstatic overwhelmed-ness and consequently leads to intoxication.
160. Al-Kharrāz, "*Rasā'il*," 185.
161. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 144.
162. Ibid., 143.
163. Al-Kharrāz, "*Rasā'il*," 181.
164. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 84.
165. Al-Kharrāz, "*Rasā'il*," 179.
166. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 151.

The resemblance between these two Sufi masters is so strong that it seems al-Khrrāz is giving a quasi-systematic theorization of Abū Yazīd's self-expressions.[167] The main difference is that while Abū Yazīd narrates in the first person, al-Kharrāz's narration is from the point of view of the third person. Probably this fact was noted by al-Sulamī when he wrote: "*Shaṭḥ* exclusively belongs to the Sufis of Khurasān, because they express their own experiences while the Sufis of Iraq describe the experiences of others."[168]

It is noteworthy that al-Kharrāz himself didn't gain the reputation of an intoxicated Sufi. In contrast, he was very close to the more conservative school of al-Junayd, who, according to al-Hujwīrī, was the main advocate of a counterview that used to prefer sobriety to intoxication.[169] The state described by al-Kharrāz was soon renamed with an alternative title extracted from his writings: the state of *fanā'* and *baqā'* which can be translated relatively as "passing away" and "subsistence."[170] Apparently al-Junayd was completely aware of the similarity between Abū Yazīd's intoxication and al-Kharrāz's *fanaʿ* and *baqa'* because he not only used these terms in

167. In order to see how al-Kharrāz's account of *qurb* is systematic, see Abū Saʿīd Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsá al-Kharrāz, "*Kitāb al-ṣafā'*," in "*Rasā'il al-Kharrāz,*" ed. Qāsim al-Sāmirrāʾī, *Majallat al-majmaʿ al-ʿilmī al-ʿIrāqī* 15 (1967): 176-183.

168. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī, "*Risālah fī-ghalaṭāt al-Ṣūfīyah*," ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad al-Fāwī Maḥmūd, in *Majmūʿah-i āthār-i Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Sulamī*, vol 3, collected by Naṣrullāh Pūr-Jawādī (Tehran: Ḥikmat wa-Falsafah-i Islāmī, 2009), 469.

169. Al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 235-6.

170. Abū Yazīd has a lengthy account of his spiritual progress that can be assumed as an itinerary to *fanā'* and *baqā'*(al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 175-8) in addition, he says, "He (God) covered me (*jannan-ī*)with me, therefore I died; then covered me with Himself, therefore I revived; then veiled me against me and himself and I lost my attendance (*fa-ghibtu*). Then He put me in the position of sobriety (*ṣaḥw*) and asked me about my situation. I answered, 'Being covered (*junūn*) with me is passing away (*fanā'*) and being covered with you is subsistence (*baqā'*).'" (Ibid., 184.) Here it is noteworthy that the word *junūn* in Arabic also implies the state of madness that connotes the state of *sukr* as emphasized in later Sufi literature. He holds a rhetorical argument for the state of *fanā'* based on this verse "God has bought from the believers their selves." (Quran 9:111) He concludes that the believers don't have their selves any longer because they have sold them to God. (Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 108.)

order to explain Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt*,[171] but also for the same purpose he cited the same prophetic tradition he cited elsewhere to support the idea of *fanā'* and *baqā'*.[172]

iv. *Miʿrāj* as a Theological Support for *Sukr*

The second theme reflected in Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt* is the experience of ascension and direct visual contact with God. These ideas have been controversial in the history of Islamic theology. The role of the Qur'an in this controversy is not negligible. Some scriptural verses give a strongly immaterial and absolutely unperceivable idea of God while some others allude to the possibility of a visual perception of God for the Prophet and the believers.[173] Centuries in the history of Islamic thought were spent on the discourse dealing with this controversy. Extreme rationalists like the Muʿtazilites and philosophers denied the possibility of such a visual perception; some sects like the Karrāmites admitted that Allah was a visible corporal deity, while the schools of theology that were eventually destined to put on the mantle of Islamic orthodoxy cautiously reserved an unqualified possibility of such a vision only for the Hereafter.[174]

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171. Al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 468.

172. For al-Junayd's citation of the tradition regarding Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt* see al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 463. For his citation of the same tradition as a support for the theory of *fanā'* and *baqā'* see Abū al-Qāsim al-Junayd al-Baghdādī, "*Kitāb al-fanā'*" in *The Life, Personality and Writings of Al-Junayd*, ed. and trans. Ali Hassan Abdel-Kader (London: Luzac & Co., 1976), 33-4. The tradition is known as *ḥadīth al-nawāfil*.

173. As an example for the Qur'anic verses supporting the idea of vision see Qur'an, 75:22 and as an example for the verses rejecting this idea see Qur'an, 6:103. Under the former verse al-Bukhārī listed fifteen traditions in his *ḥadīth* collection in order to support the idea of vision of God in the Hereafter. In the most frequently recited among them, the Prophet, according to al-Bukhārī's sources, says, "You will see your Lord as you see this moon." (Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Cairo: Al-Maṭbaʿat al-Salafīyah, 1980), 390-4.)

174. In theological texts this subject usually comes under the title of *ruʾyah* (vision). About the opinion of the Muʿtazilites, see Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt al-islāmīyīn wa-ikhtilāfāt al-muṣallīn*, vol 1, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo: Maktabat al-Nihḍat al-Miṣrīyah, 1950), 264-5. For the Karrāmites there is an elaborate account in: ʿAbd al-Qāhir ibn Ṭahir ibn Muḥammad al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayn al-firaq*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥīy al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Madanī, n/d), 215-25; and Abū al-Fatḥ Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Shahristānī, *al-*

However, in this sensitive theological atmosphere, Abū Yazīd boldly claimed to have had actually visual contacts with God. For example he says, "Moses wanted to see God but I didn't. It was God who wanted to show Himself to me."[175] In these words there is a mention of a story in the Qur'an according to that Moses asked to see God. God rejected the request and instead manifested Himself upon a mountain and the mountain crumbled, and Moses, captured by the awesomeness of the scene, fainted away.[176]

In Sufi didactic literature, the idea of divine vision usually connotes the prophetic ascension, the night journey Muḥammad, the Prophet, had to the heavens, in which he visited hell, paradise, and the angelic realms.[177] While the Prophet's contact with divinity was normally based on the verbal messages conveyed through an archangel, the ascension seems to be the sole occasion in which, as the Islamic sources establish, he had a series of visions of the angelic and divine realms.[178] Did the Prophet see the deity in his ascension or not? This is a question to which even

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Milal wa-l-niḥal, vol. 1, ed. Amīr ʿAlī Mahnā (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1993), 124-31. For the Ashʿarite view see Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ashʿarī, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ fī-l-radd ʿalá ahl al-zaygh wa-l-bidaʿ*, ed. Ḥamūdah Gharrābah (Cairo: Maṭbaʿah Miṣr, 1955), 61-8. Here Ḍarār ibn ʿAmr, a theologian of the second century must be mentioned, who believed that God would create a sixth sense-organ for the believers in the Hereafter by the means of which they would see Him. (Al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn,* vol. 1, 313) Probably this suggestion was adapted by the 13th century mystic and poet, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Balkhī (better known as Rumi in the west) as "religious sensation" (*ḥiss-i dīnī*). Rumi was a great champion of the idea of *sukr* and ecstasy. See Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Balkhī al-Rūmī, *Mathnawī-i maʿnawī*, ed. ʿAbd al-Karīm Surūsh (Tehran: ʿIlmī Farhangī, 1999), vol.1, 18.

175. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 185. In addition, according to al-Sahlajī, Abū Yazīd transmitted an apparently divine tradition (*al-ḥadīth al-qudsī*): "God said, 'When engagement in me overwhelms my servant, I will turn his desire and pleasure to my remembrance and I will lift the curtain between me and him and I will be portrayed (*mithāl*) between his two eyes.'" (Ibid,. 142.) As we see, this tradition also intimates a sort of *ru'yah*, which is a major theme in Abū Yazīd's teaching.

176. Qur'an, 7: 143.

177. A long version of the tradition of the prophetic ascension can be found in: al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, 63-5. In addition several versions are reported in: Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin al-Qushayrī, *Kitāb al-miʿrāj*, ed. ʿAlī Ḥasan ʿAbd al-Qādir (Paris: Biblion, 1964), 27-64.

178. The verse 53: 11 in the Qur'an usually is taken by the commentators as an allusion for the prophetic visions at his ascension: "His heart lies not of what he saw." Al-Ṭabarī in his commentary on this verse gives several traditions that approve the Prophet's visual perception of God. See Abū Jaʿfar

the Prophet's companions didn't give the same response.[179] There are traditions transmitted from ʿĀyishah, the Prophet's wife, that strongly refute such a vision and, on the contrary, there are traditions attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās which assert that Muḥammad saw his God in the heavens. In addition, Abū Dharr, another prominent companion, reported that the Prophet saw the deity as a light.[180]

A debate between Abū Yazīd and a local jurist shows that not only did Abū Yazīd advocate that the Prophet had seen God in his ascension but also it was a well-recognized opinion in the region.[181] It is noteworthy that Abū Yazīd himself is the only early Sufi to whom an elaborate experience of ascension is attributed. The tradition of Abū Yazīd's ascension was so famous, and at the same time so problematic in the fifth century, that al-Qushayrī, while dedicating a chapter in his *Kitāb al-miʿrāj* (*The Book of Ascension*), which is basically an orthodox work, to the reports of mystics who had claimed to have an ascension, mentioned Abū Yazīd's tradition in the initiative query in the beginning of the chapter.[182] However al-Qushayrī accepted the possibility of such an experience provided it had taken place in a dream.[183]

Muḥammid ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān fī-tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, vol. 27 (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1991), 27-9.

179. See al-Qushayrī, *Kitāb al-miʿrāj*, 94 -8.

180. For the tradition of ʿĀyishah see al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, 380; and Abū al-Ḥasan Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Naysābūrī, *al-Musnad al-saḥiḥ al-mukhtaṣar min-al-sunan*, vol. 1, ed. Abū Qutaybah Naẓar-Muḥammad al-Faryābī (Riyadh: Dār ṭayyibah lil-nashr, 2006), 95. For the tradition of Ibn ʿAbbās see ibid., 94; though according to Muslim, ibn ʿAbbas emphasizes that the Prophet saw God through his heart. Al-Qushayrī reports both versions: the vision through the heart and through the eyes (al-Qushayrī, *Kitāb al-miʿrāj*, 94.) For the tradition of Abū Dharr, see Muslim, *al-Musnad al-ṣaḥīḥ*, 96. An illuminative discourse on the prophetic ascension emphasizing the theological aspects as well as its traditional narrations, which can illustrate the background of the Sufi considerations, is given by van Ess in: Josef van Ess, *The Flowering of Muslim Theology*, Trans. Jane Marie Todd (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 45-77.

181. Al-sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 114.

182. "And what do you say about the saints? Is that possible for them to have ascensions -while you believe that miracles are possible in their case? And what do you say regarding what the people of this class allege about Abū Yazīd's ascension and those of the others?" (Al-Qushayrī, *Kitāb al-miʿrāj*, 75.)

183. Ibid., 76.

A long narration of Abū Yazīd's ascension was edited and published by Nicholson. Some fragments also are recounted by al-Sahlajī, which are in accord with Nicholson's version.[184] In addition, all commentaries of al-Junayd on Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt* are about his visual experiences. The version published by Nicholson and several fragments reported by al-Sahlajī obviously reflect how Abū Yazīd's ascension resembled the prophetic ascension in details. It seems that the phenomenon of ascension was not exclusively experienced by Abū Yazīd. Al-Sahlajī gives an account of a female associate of Abū Yazīd's tradition who alleged to have had the same experience.[185] Does this mean that it was a disciplinary experience in that circle?

Is there any relationship between the genre of the traditions of the prophetic ascension and the idea of intoxication so that we can explain how this idea had grounds in Islamic sources? If we admit Abū Yazīd to have died around the middle of the third Islamic century, he could be a junior contemporary of Abū Ḥudhayfah Isḥāq ibn Bishr (d. 206/821). The latter was a propagandist of a rare version of the prophetic ascension in Khurāsān. In this version the prophet allegedly relates the following details about his experience: "… then the light of the divine throne covered my eyes and I saw through my heart and not with my eyes… I was filled with joy… and twisting like a chandelier, leaning to right and left… and something like a slumber fell upon me so that I thought everything in the skies and on the earth had passed away."[186] In

184. For Nicholson's version see this appendix: "*Fī-ru'yā' Abū Yazīd: fī-l-qaṣd ilá-Allāh taʿālá wa-bayān qiṣṣati-hi*" in: al-Qushayrī, *Kitāb al-miʿrāj*, 129-35. For al-Sahlajī's reports see al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 111-2. A Persian version of Abū Yazīd'd ascension is reported in: Farīd al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭar al-Naysabūrī, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā'*, ed. Muḥammad Istiʿlāmī (Tehran: Zawwār, 2000), 202-7.

185. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 157-8.

186. Al-Qushayrī transmitted parts of Abū Ḥudhayfah's narration (see al-Qushairī, *Kitāb al-miʿrāj*, 56-62.) For the passage quoted above, see al-Qushairī, *Kitāb al-miʿrāj*, 58-9. A long narration of the prophetic ascension is recorded and refuted by al-Suyūṭī that resembles Abū Ḥudhayfah's version. See Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *al-La'ālī al-maṣnūʿah fī-l-aḥādīth al-mawḍūʿah*, vol.1 (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, n/d), 63-81. This narration is attributed to al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥm (d. 100/719). It is remarkable that al-Ḍaḥḥāk also spent most of his life in Khurāsān. The quotation in the text, with a slight difference, can be found in this narration too. Therefore, we can conclude that this version existed in Abū Yazīd's region before his birth. See ibid., 70.

another place he says, "Since God honored me with the vision of Him, He sharpened my sight to see the Lord of Glory."[187]

Many scholars of *ḥadīth* criticized Abū Ḥudhayfah for being unreliable as well as for his weak sources of transmission.[188] However, the version of the prophetic ascension narrated by him in the same region as Abū Yazīd's, contains the elements of both intoxication and divine vision and could have provided supports for an illiterate mystic who had a similar experience and probably was not concerned with formal authenticity of the tradition.

In Islamic literature, the experience of ascension in the life of the Prophet is considered as the apex of the orbit of proximity between a human and the divine. In the Quran, which is the core of Islamic literature, this maximum proximity is expressed in the following words: "Then He approached and came closer; and was at the distance of but two bow-lengths or (even) nearer" (Quran 53: 8, 9).[189] On the other hand, The Prophet Muhammad is generally looked at by the Muslims as the closest human being to God. It would be natural for an idealistic and ambitious Muslim mystical discipline, whose objective was the proximity of the divine, to place the reconstruction of the prophetic experience of ascension on the highest disciplinary rank and to strive after that. However, it would be controversial, as it has been in fact, whether the repetition of such an experience is possible for someone other than the Prophet. The defenders of orthodoxy, like Qushayī as we saw earlier, have not been comfortable with such a postulation

187. Al-Qushairī, *Kitāb al-miʿrāj*, 61.

188. See Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Sīyar aʿlām al-nubalā'*, vol. 9, ed. Shuʿayb al-Urnuʾūṭ (Beirut: al-Risalālah, 1996), 478-9.

189. There are disputations about the referent of the pronoun "he" in this Quranic verse. There were major commentators like Qatādah (d. 738 or 747) who assumed him to be the archangel Gabriel (see Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammid ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān fī-tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. Dr. ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muhsin al-Tarakī (Cairo: Dār al-Hijr, 2001) vol. 22, 13-14.) Referring him to God is mainly based on an account of the prophetic ascension related by the companion Anas ibn Mālik (d. 712) (ibid., vol.14: 417-420 and vol. 22: 15; Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al- Bukhārī, a*l-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿat al-Salafīyah, 1980), vol. 4: 407-8.) For an extensive discussion on the theological importance of the disputation see von Ess, *The Flowering of Muslims Theology*, 45-78.

simply because it would be the case of slippery slope that could lead a wayfarer to repeat and reproduce other aspects of prophet-hood like receiving revelation and then claiming to possess a new epistemological source for legislation, while the Islamic orthopraxy based on the Quran and the traditions of Muḥammad was supposed to be the ultimate and unchallengeable way of salvation.[190] The danger of further claims of prophet-hood had been warned against in the prophetic tradition: "Three liars will rise up in my nation. All of them allege to be prophets, while I am the last prophet; there is no prophet after me."[191] But at the same time, the strict boundaries between the exclusively prophetic experiences and the saintly experiences, which were relatively more inclusive, at least in the epistemological zone, had been already loosened by the Prophet himself when he stated that a valid dream is a certain fraction of prophet-hood.[192] Whether enjoying this acknowledgement of partnership or not, the widely spread accounts of Abū Yazīd's experience of ascension show that he had taken the possibility of repetition of the prophetic experiences as postulated. He had an experience and he put his experience above the concerns of the polemic theology of the era.

v. Eschatological Vision and Ecstasy as a Theological Support for *Sukr*

In addition to the prophetic experience of ascension, as we mentioned earlier, the eschatological idea of ecstatic perception of the divine (*al-ru'yah al-ukhrawīyah*), which is

190. Ibn Khafīf says that Abū Muḥammad Khaffāf in Shīrāz was an advocate of the possibility of the perception of God in this world. He was answered by some scholars with a prophetic tradition that introduced the illusion of such a perception as a satanic deceit. (Abū Ḥasan al-Dylamī, *Sīrat al-shaykh al-kabīr Abū ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Khafīf al-Shīrāzī*, trans. Rukn al-Dīn Yahyá ibn Junayd al-Shīrāzī, ed. Annemaire Schimmel (Ankara: Ankara University, 1955), 161-3.)

191. Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Ḥākim al-Nayshabūrī, *al-Mustadrak alá-l-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, vol. 4 (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥaramayn, 1997) 616.

192. Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, 296-7.

radically anti-Muʿtazilite, has a remarkable capacity to have inspired Abū Yazīd and to justify *sukr* as a natural consequence of cultivation of piety.

As we saw earlier, almost all major Islamic sects agree that it is not possible to have a visual perception of God in this world. What about the Hereafter? When the Muslims arrive at this question, a radical schism comes to the scene. The theologians who have admitted the textual authority of the scriptural texts, namely Quran and ḥadīth, had no choice than accepting the occurrence of such a perception in the Hereafter, since it is ascertained in several Prophetic traditions.[193] However, the theologians who had a stronger inclination towards rationalism had a basic problem with this conviction: any imaginable mode of visual perception requires the object of perception to have geometrical dimensions, which, in its turn, requires the object to possess material properties including certain limits. A limited material object could by no means be rationally defensible as the single deity enjoying the transcendental attributes the Islamic creeds had attributed to Allāh.[194] According to the majority of the latter group, the perception mentioned in the scriptures in fact a special sort of gnosis attainable through heart.[195]

The traditionists not only advocate the idea of the visual perception of the divine in the Hereafter but also introduce a prophetic tradition that speaks of an eschatological hierarchy of the pious in which the ranks are marked by the objects of perception and attention: "The lowest person among the people of the Paradise, in the terms of rank, is the one who looks at his [heavenly] property for two thousand years; and the highest of them, in the terms of rank, is the

193. For a plenty of such traditions see al-Bukhārī, al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ, vol. 4, 390-4; and Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUmar al-Dārquṭnī, *Kitāb al-ru'yah*, ed, Ibrāhīm Muḥammad al-ʿAlī and Aḥmad Fakhrī al-Rufāʿī (Zarqā', Jordan: Maktabat al-Minār, 1990), in which one can find around 300 traditions of various degrees of authenticity in this subjects.

194. See al-Ashʿarī, *al-Lumaʿ*, 67-8.

195. "Abū Hudhayl and the majority of the Muʿtazilites say that we see God through our hearts, which means that we know Him by the means of that (heart)." (Al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn*, vol. 1, 265)

one who looks at God's face twice a day."[196] Another tradition that was authenticated by the traditionist attributes the highest degree of pleasure to the visual perception of the divine in the Hereafter: "When the people of the Paradise inter the Paradise, God tells them: 'Do you want me to add anything for you?' They reply: 'Didn't you whiten our faces? Didn't you inter us into the Paradise and rescue us from the Fire?' Then He unveils the veil and nothing bestowed upon them is lovelier for them than looking at their Lord."[197] Furthermore, Hisham ibn Ḥassān (d. 766), a Follower of the Followers (*tābiʿ al-tābiʿīn*) and an often praised and vindicated traditionist,[198] who could have been a senior contemporary of Abū Yazīd, if we admit the earlier date suggested for the latter's death, articulates his idea, which was probably made of materials available from the early Islamic lore of his theological environment, of the psychological effect of the visual perception of God in the following words: "God manifests to the people of the Paradise; and when the people of the Paradise see Him, will forget the pleasures of the Paradise."[199]

Assuming that the three traditions mentioned above were parts of Muslims' holistic understanding of the hierarchy of the pious in the hereafter with respect to the phenomenon of *ru'yah*, the first tradition pictures a hierarchy in that the higher the rank the more often the perception of the divine is possible, while the second one assigns the highest degree of eschatological pleasure to the people who enjoy the perception of the divine, and finally the statement of Hisham ibn Ḥassān, taking the second tradition as a premise, adds an explanation for the first tradition to the picture: the people of the highest rank have no attention for their heavenly properties because they are so possessed by the pleasure of the perception of God that

196. Al- Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalá-l-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, vol. 2, 599

197. Muslim, *al-Musnad al-ṣaḥīḥ*, vol 1, 97.

198. He was one of the main transmitters from Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Ibn Sīrīn. See Shams al_Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-iʿtidāl*, ed. ʿAlīMuḥammad al-Bajāwī (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrafah, no date) vol. 4, 295-8.

199. Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn AbūBakr ibn Ayyūb ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyah, *Ḥādī al-arwāḥ ilá-bilād-i al-afrāḥ*, ed. Zā'id ibn Aḥmad al-Nashīrī (Mecca: Dār ʿĀlam al-Fawā'id, 2007), 696.

they have forgotten the rest. This synthetic picture befits the definition of *sukr* as given in the beginning of this chapter. In other words, the pious of the highest rank in the Hereafter are in a perpetual state of intoxication. Now, If the highest eschatological state is the ideal human state so that all pious actions in this world are accomplished with the goal of this eschatological state, is it not worth considering if this state is attainable in this world? Abū Yazīd's answer to this question seems to be affirmative and becomes the cornerstone of the school attributed to him later on.

Abū Isḥāq al-Thaʿlabī (d. 1036), in his commentary on the Quran, quotes Abū Yazīd as follows: "God has a drink that He has stored for his highest servants, which He undertakes to make them drink, which when they drink, they become lightheaded; and when they become lightheaded, they fly; and when they fly they attain their goal; and when they attain their goal, they become connected; and then they are 'in a sure abode, in the presence of an omnipotent king.'"[200] In another version of the quotation given by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣafūrī, the beginning of the quote is slightly different: "God has a drink in this world that …."[201] In this quotation Abū Yazīd is obviously speaking about the state of *sukr* that God bestows upon the highest rank of servants. The additional phrase of al-Ṣafūrī's version insists that the locus of the event is in this world and a shortened version recorded by Sabṭ ibn al-Jawzīī supports the worldly venue of the incident mentioning that the it takes place at night,[202] while the last part of the quotation, "in a sure abode, in the presence of an omnipotent king" (*fī-maqʿad-i ṣidq-in ʿinda malīk-in muqtadir-*

200. Abū Isḥāq Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Thaʿlabī, *al-Kashf wa-l-bayān*, vol. 10, ed. Abū Muḥammad ibn ʿAshūr (Beirut: Dār iḥyā' al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 2002), 105. There are other versions of this quotation given by later writers, but I prefer this version because the chain of transmitters has been given by al-Thaʿlabī, which is "al-Thaʿlabī from Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥabībī from AbūʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn ʿAlīal-Shāshī from al-Hasan ibn ʿAlawīyah al-Dāmghānī."

201. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣafūrī al-Shāfiʿī, *Nuz`hat al-majālis wa-muntakhab al-nafā'is*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Kastilīyah), 56.

202. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Badawī, *Shaṭaḥāt al-Sufīyah*, (Kuwait: Wikālat al-Maṭbūʿāt, n/d), 210.

in – Quran, 54:55) is a Quranic verse that is generally understood referring to a high ranking of the pious in the Hereafter. Here, Abū Yazīd asserts the possibility of the realization of the eschatological state of *sukr* in this world. It seems that in order to fashion a disciplinary hierarchy for the mystical path, he has drawn his ideals from the well-authenticated eschatological ideas of the Sunnite world. In other words, the school of *sukr* could be an attempt to realize the psycho-emotional properties of the Hereafter in the tempo-spatial framework of here-and-now.

vi. The Temporal Shift: Al-Junayd's Theory of *Mithāq* vs. Eschatological Ecstasy

While Abū Yazīd had been looking towards a world to come to design his spiritual path, al-Junayd, the defender of sobriety, attempted a temporal shift in a different dimension and with different methodological conclusions. While the school of *sukr* progressively aimed to realize an ideal promised future within the present, al-Junayd prefered a regressive move towards the ideal of the primordial covenant (*mīthāq*).[203] The idea of *mīthāq* derives from the following Qur'anic verse: "When the Lord drew forth from Children of Adam – from their loins – their descendants, and made them testify concerning themselves: 'Am I not your Lord?' They said, 'Yea! We do testify;' lest you should say on the Day of Judgment: 'Of this we were not mindful.'"[204] A comparison between these two temporal ideals shows how al-Junayd's theory of *mithāq* could be an attempt to support the superiority of sobriety over intoxication and to avoid the orthodox criticisms that the idea of *sukr* had faced:

1) From the psychological point of view, the concept of eternally valid testimony, as we find in the case of the primordial covenant, requires a fully mindful and sober conversation between

203. For al-Junayd's theory of *mithāq* see al-Junayd, "*Kitāb al-mīthāq*," in *Tāj al-ʿārifīn, al-Junayd al-Baghdādī*, ed. Suʿād al-Ḥikam (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2005) 229-31; and "*Kitāb al-fanā'*," ibid., 247-53.

204. Qur'an 7: 172

man and the divine. On the contrary, the eschatological vision of the divine is a case of unconsciousness and ecstasy. Furthermore, as the verse alludes, the primordial covenant consisted of one's testimony concerning one's self. Such a testimony could not be valid in absence of a sense of self-awareness and self-identity that is irreconcilable with the idea of the loss of identity that we find as an essential component of Abū Yazīd's concept of *sukr*.

2) From the methodological point of view, the primordial covenant is a memory lost in mindlessness. Therefore, the restoration of the primordial mode of human existence must be possible through the act of remembrance: a sober act in its nature.

3) From the epistemological point of view, while in the case the eschatological ecstasy the medium between man and the divine is visual; in the case of the primordial covenant the medium is verbal. The verbal contact between man and the divine in the history of Islamic theology has never been considered as controversial as the visual contact.

vii. Application of the Term *Sukr* to Abū Yazīd's Tradition

After having traced the concept of *sukr* in Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt* and narrations, we will answer the following question: does the term *sukr* occur in his sayings? Surprisingly, in only two places among all accounts of Abū Yazīd reported by al-Sarrāj, al-Sulamī, al-Qushayrī, and al-Sahlajī, we can find words derived from the same root as *sukr* and to both of them reflect a negative association.[205] In one of these places, the Sufi masters of the era are accused of being

205. This statement cannot be certain. If Abū Yazīd was illiterate, he must have spoken in Persian and not Arabic, while all primary sources translated his words to Arabic. Therefore, we cannot be sure that the words mentioned above were uttered by him as they are recorded in those sources. The Sufi term *sukr* must have been coined in the Iraqi Sufi circles whose primary language was Arabic and not Persian. These considerations may reduce the meaningfulness of our search for the occurrence of the word *sukr* and its derivatives in doxographies relating to Abū Yazīd.

confused and bibulous (*sukārá*).[206] The second occurrence especially deserves to be carefully regarded: there exists an account of a correspondence that passed between Abū Yazīd and Yaḥyá ibn al-Muʿādh (d. 258/872) in which Abū Yazīd assumes that Yaḥyá's intoxication is a symptom of his incapacity to consume the wine of divine love, while, Abū Yazīd adds, there are mystics (probably here he is implying himself) who have drunk the oceans of the skies and the earth and still feel thirsty.[207] In this account Abū Yazīd does not sound like someone who identifies himself as an intoxicated mystic. Al-Qushayrī narrates the same story and indirectly favors the view that locates Abū Yazīd in the school of sobriety rather than intoxication.[208] Al-Hujwirī, a Sufi writer a generation after al-Qushayrī, mentions the correspondence and, giving no reference to al-Qushayrī, criticizes his conclusion as a misinterpretation of the case.[209] Al-Hujwirī, who saw himself as a member of the rival school, the school of sobriety, insists on attributing Abū Yazīd to the school of intoxication.[210] This disagreement strengthens the view that the term *sukr* was applied to Abū Yazīd's Sufi tradition by the schools that advocated the necessity and superiority of sobriety in all stages of the Sufi path.

However, the dichotomy of intoxication and sobriety was so sensitive to al-Junayd's mind, and probably to the Sufi environment of Iraq, that allegedly after hearing al-Ḥallāj's commentary on the aforesaid dichotomy, al-Junayd blamed him bitterly.[211] This conversation and some

206. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 98.

207. Ibid., 173.

208. Al-Qushayrī, *al-Risālah*, 108. Here al-Qushayrī speaks of three stages of ecstasy: relishing (*dhawq*), drinking (*shurb*) and irrigation (*rayy*). He states: "The man of relishing pretends to be intoxicated and the drinker is intoxicated and the man of irrigation is sober." In this three-folded hierarchy, he places Abū Yazīd on the third stage.

209. Al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 233.

210. For al-Hujwīrī's self identification as a follower of al-Junayd see the following passages: "… and my sheikh used to say - and he was a *Junaydī* - …. And I, ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Jullābī, say in accordance with my sheikh that …." (Al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 232) and "All my sheikhs were *Junaydī*" (ibid., 235.)

211. Al-Hallāj believed that both intoxication and sobriety were human dispositions and in none of these states the final objective might be attained unless both of them have passed away. Al-Junayd

Ḥallājian hymns show that the terms *sukr* and *ṣaḥw* had become well established in their Sufi sense in Iraq between Abū Yazīd's death and the date of this conversation—a period shorter than one century if we assume the earlier suggested date for Abū Yazīd's death.[212]

viii. The Pedagogical Contribution of the School of *Sukr*

Al-Hujwīrī's judgment, as an advocate of *ṣaḥw*, intimates that one of the main motives behind the critical view taken of the school of intoxication was of a pedagogical nature. If mystic intoxication is an unconscious phenomenon, it cannot be a serious stage in a Sufi pedagogical methodology. In other words, if a process of Sufi training is supposed to be a series of practices under the completely conscious supervision of a trainer in which the practitioner is designated to obtain a promised achievement, it should be an entirely conscious process. It is possible that in some stages of the process the disciple falls into an unconscious spiritual state but such an experience cannot be expected to be the sole cause of a well oriented progress. Therefore an intoxicated mystic like Abū Yazīd is not entitled to function as a mentor.[213] Al-Hujwīrī states:

> The intoxication of love doesn't belong to the category [of qualities] that can be achieved by a human being. It is in vain to propagandize whatever is not included in the class of achievements (*kasb*), and its adoption (*taqlīd*) is impossible, [since] necessarily, intoxication is not a quality of the sober. Human beings have no authority (*sulṭān*) to attract *sukr* to themselves. Intoxicated indeed is overpowered

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blamed him in these words: "O son of Manṣūr, I see many irrelevant and nonsense expressions in your speech." See al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 235-6.

212. This in an example of such Ḥallājian hymns: "O, one who intoxicated me (*askaranī*) with your love, and perplexed me in the fields of your proximity!" See Naṣrābādī, *Akhbār al-Ḥallāj*, ed. Luis Massignon (Tehran: Pursish, 1999.), fragment 5.

213. "And the sheiks of this tradition believe that it is not right to follow but a steady [master] who has been delivered out of the cycle of overwhelming states." (Al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 229.)

and pays no attention to the created world; that is why he cannot commit himself to a quality among the qualities.[214]

On the other hand, the supporters of the school of intoxication argue that a master is not necessarily an active trainer. If a master by himself is an exemplary possessor of spiritual qualities, his passive association with disciples, whether conscious or unconscious, automatically elevates their states. According to the advocates of *sukr*, from the stand point of the disciple, improvement is based on the mystic axiom: if the external symptoms are artificially imitated, the internal states will occur in the practitioner provided he acts with sincerity.[215] Therefore, from the point of view of the school of intoxication a mentor rather than being an active instructor needs to be a passive inspirer. In other words, it is not the master's instructions that work but it is his inner spiritual qualities that lead the disciples by the means of attraction.[216] This unique understanding of the passive function of master-disciple relationship, regardless of the competition between *sukr* and *ṣaḥw*, remained a pedagogical Sufi feature that distinguished Sufism from the other Islamic educational disciplines.

Abū Yazīd, however, as far as we are informed by the sources, never functioned as a disciplinary instructor. While al-Junayd and Sahl of Tustar (d. 283/896) were in the centers of remarkable and well-developed communities in which they figured as instructors, al-Sahlajī only

214. Al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 229.

215. Al-Hujwīrī says that the supporters of *sukr*, as a spiritual method, rely on these two prophetic traditions: "Cry and if you do not cry, pretend to cry." (Canonized in: Ibn Mājah, *Sunan ibn Mājah*, ed. Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Maʿārif, n/d), 697) and "The one who assimilates to a group of people, is one of them." (Canonized in: Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (Riyadh: Bayt al-Afkār, 1999), 441.) See al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 229.

216. There is an anecdote in that Abū Yazīd mentions the passive role of a master as a well-acknowledged pedagogical factor: a young disciple of Abū Turāb al-Nakhshabī (d. 245/859) saw Abū Yazīd while the latter was coming from lavatory. As soon as he saw Abū Yazīd, he died. Abū Yazīd explained the cause of his death to Abū Turāb: "In the nature of this young man there was an affair that it was not the proper time to be revealed to him. Through perceiving Abū Yazīd, that affair suddenly manifested to him." (Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, 169.)

succeeded to list ten Sufis as Abū Yazīd's companions.[217] One of those ten asserted that during thirteen years of accompanying the master, they never spoke to each other.[218] This last report may be exaggerated but all these reports demonstrate that Abū Yazīd didn't undertake the responsibilities of an active instructor.[219]

Abū Yazīd occasionally appears as a preacher who employs emotional means, as a poet does, and prefers to utilize sensible figures of speech rather than abstract concepts such as what we find in the doxographies of early Iraqi Sufis. His rhetoric is experiential, visual and figurative. He is even able to impart a visual experience of an abstract and subtle idea like love, which doesn't necessarily sound to be metaphorical: "I went to the field. It had rained love. And my foot was plunged in love as it would be plunged in snow."[220] He is a master of short and stunning paradoxes. His *shaṭaḥāt*, especially the ones that are considered as the earliest expressions of the experience of passing away (*fanā'*), are the paradoxes that challenge conventional logic,[221] paradoxes which can be solved only considering the possibility of union of man and God.[222]

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217. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 77.

218. Ibid., 178.

219. He seems not to give serious weight to attempts: "Proximity won't be obtained through effort." (Ibid., 122) In addition, he criticizes Sahl of Tustar whose school was based on uninterrupted effort. According to Abū Yazīd, Sahl is attempting to "construct the house" because he is not free from "considering the creatures" instead of the Creator. (Ibid., 98.) Receiving this quotation, we should be cautious. Only if Abū Yazīd has died in 261, would such an utterance seem likely, otherwise, if the date of his death is 234, Sahl must have been a very young and probable unknown ascetic when Abū Yazīd died.

220. Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 182. For a Persian version that can be closer to what Abū Yazīd actually attered, see Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, 183.

221. For example he says, "I am not me. I am me. For verily I am He; I am *me* [only]; He is *He* [only]." (Al-Sahlajī, "*al-Nūr*," 143.) We can reformulate this saying in the language of symbolic logic: ((I ≡ He) & ((I ≡ ⌐ (⌐I)) & (He ≡ ⌐ (⌐He)) → [I ≠ He])) → ((I ≡ ⌐I) & (I ≡ I)). The first parentheses is a synthetic statement and the next two are analytic that result in the absent analytic statement in the brackets. The final consequence is a refutation of the principle of contradiction! I cannot deny that interpreting this statement I was influenced by Ibn ʿArabī. However, the terminology of *jamʿ* and *tafrigah*, that was certainly known to al-Junayd and later propagandized by his disciple al-Wāsiṭī in Khurāsān, thoroughly equips us to understand this quote. "I am *me*" and "He is *He*" in the third sentence of the quote are true statements in the context of *tafriqah*, while "I am He" is a true statement in the

The paradoxical nature of Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt* must have been the factor that induced al-Junayd to employ them as didactic tools. Ahmed Karamustafa states that Sufism, as a distinct tradition, emerged in the middle of the third/nine century in Baghdad.[223] If this statement is accurate, the view that places al-Junayd somewhere in the middle of the lineage of Sufi tradition must be the result of a later inclusive reconstruction of the history of Sufism. Consequently, al-Junayd along with his master, Sarī al-Saqatī (d. 253/867), and his co-disciples, must be considered the founders of Sufism. Therefore, al-Junayd's tradition would not be philologically in debt to a Khurāsānian mystic such as Abū Yazīd, a senior contemporary living in a remote area. It is worth questioning why al-Junayd, instead of ignoring Abū Yazīd's *shataḥāt* tried to adapt them by the means giving commenting upon them. A possible answer to this question refers to the esoteric value of paradox. Paradox in its nature points at the intrinsically disagreeable appearance of reality. This disagreement potentially suggests a radical transmutation of view from the apparent to the unapparent. It can function as a pedagogical push towards esotericism.[224] For an inexperienced disciple the paradoxical nature of Abū Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt*, on one hand, would be extremely attractive, and on the other hand, to the extent of destruction, might be confusing, delusive, or distracting.[225] Al-Junayd's commentaries on Abū

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context of *jamʿ*; likewise "I am me" in the first half of the quote should be considered in the context of *tafriqah* and the statement "I am not me" is true in the context of *jamʿ*.

222. For example, he was told, "It is demonstrated to us that you are one of the seven [arch-saints]." He answered, "I am all of them." (Ibid., 143.) Or, somebody said to him: "People speak about your asceticism and gnosis, but I don't see you worshiping so much." He replied excitedly: "O poor fellow, asceticism and gnosis have branched out of me!" (Ibid.)

223. "However, from the middle of the third/ninth century, the term ṣūfī came to be used increasingly as a technical term to distinguish a group of people who belonged to a clearly identifiable social movement in Baghdad that was based on a distinct type of piety." (Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *Sufism, the Formative Period*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 7).

224. The best classic examples are Zeno's paradoxes that served Parmenides' esoteric doctrine of monism. A good Eastern example is the genre of Zen Koans which are basically paradoxical.

225. Abū Yazīd is aware of this destructive function. According to him it is the natural consequence of gnosis. He nicely recites a part of a Qur'anic verse to justify this destructive aspect when he was

Yazīd's *shaṭaḥāt*, while preserving their paradoxical attraction, modify them to be used as constructive educational tools.

We don't know whether Abū Yazīd was aware of the pedagogical value of his *shaṭaḥāt* or if it was al-Junayd who for the first time discovered this value in them. Nevertheless, most probably due to the same pedagogical concerns, al-Junayd cautiously declared that he had not found any sign of an advanced level of Sufism in Abū Yazīd's sayings.[226] His direct disciple, Abū Bakr al-Shiblī (d. 334/946), audaciously proclaimed that Abū Yazīd could be converted to Islam by the former's disciples.[227] Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥuṣrī (d. 371/981), a direct disciple of al-Shiblī, probably for the first time, explicitly announced al-Junayd's superiority over Abū Yazīd.[228] Al-Hujwīrī, sketching theoretical borders between al-Junayd's school and that of Abū Yazīd, must be located in the same tradition.

ix. Conclusion

Shaṭḥ can be defined as the unconventional expression of an ecstatic realization (*wajd*). It has been considered the diagnostic indicator of the mystic state of intoxication (*sukr*). The intoxicative unconsciousness of *sukr* was employed by the advocates of Sufism to justify the religious and social offences the unconventionality of *sukr* gave rise to. The aforementioned facts supported Sufi historians, such as al-Hujwīrī, who looked at Abū Yazīd al-Basṭāmī as the pioneer of a school of Sufism whose methodology was based on the idea of *sukr* in contrast of sobriety (*ṣaḥw*), especially because Abū Yazīd was the earliest Muslim mystic to whom a remarkable number of genuine *shaṭaḥāt* were attributed.

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questioned about gnosis. He recited: "The kings, while entering a city, disorder it and make the mighty ones of its inhabitants abased." (Qur'an 27:34) See al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 128.

226. Al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 479.

227. Ibid., 479.

228. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmī, *Nafaḥāt al-uns*, 63.

In the Islamic religiosity any practice without a reference to scriptural sources or the prophetic tradition is regarded as an innovation (*bidʿh*), which is only slightly more tolerable than heresy. Therefore, the school of *sukr* naturally needed to find an evidential or exemplary reference in the aforesaid sources. Though the Qur'anic story of Moses' fainting (an awful dimension of *sukr*), due to its frustrative tone, never found a prescriptive status in Sufi didacticism, Muḥammad's ecstatic experience of ascension (*miʿrāj*) along with the ecstasy promised to the pious in Hereafter, provided Sufis with a proper theological ground to develop the idea of *sukr* as a natural and lawful manifestation of spiritual perfection.[229] Sufis noticed that in all these three examples (Moses' fainting, *miʿrāj*, and *al-ru'yah al-ukhrawīyah*) ecstasy and intoxication have a causal association with visual perception of the divine (*ru'yah*). Ascension, especially, is one of the featuring experiences that formed Abū Yazīd's tradition. For centuries his ascension was discussed as an example of saintly ascensions. All these premises intimate to us that *sukr*, as the main theme of Abū Yazīd's school, meant to him a reproduction of the ultimate prophetic experience. The possibility of such a reproduction, though strongly refuted by the Muslim orthodox theologians and jurists of the time, paved the way for later Sufis to push the borders of saintly authority to the extent of legislation and revelation, which are rigorously reserved by orthodox Muslims for the prophets.

The defenders of *ṣaḥw* insisted on applying the term *sukr* to Abū Yazīd's mystical tendency, though Abū Yazīd himself doesn't seem to have acknowledged this application. A major motive for them to contrast their schools with the school of *sukr* was the question of qualification

229. In addition, the well-known ḥadīth of Jabra'īl gives an indirect allusion of the possibility of *ru'yah* in this world defining the state of *iḥsān* (beneficent) as "that you attend God as if you see Him, however, if you do not see Him, He indeed sees you." (Al-Bukhārī, *al-Jamiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 1, 33) The conjunction "as if" (*ka-anna*), which makes the adverbial phrase an unreal condition, furnishes the orthodox theologians to ignore that the tradition may actually suggest the possibility of visual perception of God in this world.

centered in an efficient and trustworthy Sufi mentor that, according to them, required full sobriety to function properly. However, the mode of master-disciple relationship introduced by the school of *sukr*, which was based on passive inspiration rather than active instruction, found a significant place in Sufi pedagogical methodology.

CHAPTER 4

THE CASE OF ABŪ SAʿĪD AL-KHARRĀZ AND KHARRĀZĪYAH

i. Introduction

The dichotomy of *fanā'* (passing away) and *baqā'* (subsistence) has a central place in theoretical Sufism. This dichotomy has been employed to articulate the ultimate objective of the Sufi path since at least the 11th century. The idea is based on the concept of the depersonalization of man in favor of divine perfection. The theological justifications for this idea were so controversial that a serious warning often followed the topic in the Sufi texts that were intended to meet the standards of orthodoxy. The main problem is this: how can humanity, with its essentially defective nature, be replaced with divine qualities without expiration of man as a discrete entity?

Orthodox Sufi writers like al-Sulamī, al-Kalābādhī, al-Sarrāj and al-Qushayrī believed that the terms *fanā'* and *baqā'* expressed a series of moral, psychological and epistemological transformations through which man's will and judgment would come to be governed by God's will and values. Abū ʿAbd al-Rāhmān al-Sulamī (d. 1021) doesn't hide the fact that there was disagreement between Iraqi and Khurāsānian Sufis on the meaning of these terms.[230] Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d. 988) and Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Hujwirī (d. 1073) warned against holding *fanā'* and *baqā'* as an ontological process of replacing human attributes with divine

230. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al- Sulamī, "*Sulūk al-ʿārifīn*," ed. Sulaymān Ibrāhīm Ātash, in *Majmūʿi-ye āthār-e Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Sulamī*, vol 3, collected by Naṣrullāh Pūr-Jawādī (Tehran: Ḥikmat wa-Falsafi-ye Islamī, 2009), 578.

attributes.[231] Their warning doesn't seem to forewarn against an imaginary or anticipated possible misinterpretation but rather aginst an unorthodox interpretation that really had taken place.[232]

When we speak about divine attributes, we cannot historically prevent theological concerns from arising: concerns which generated one of the most serious splits in Islamic theological history; namely the conflict that arose between Muʿtazilism and so-called Sunnite orthodoxy over the nature of God's attributes and His essence. Since the fifth Islamic century, Sufism and Muʿtazilism seemed completely irreconcilable. However, Massignon and Van Ess spoke of Muʿtazilite Sufis though they didn't really identify them.[233] If they were right, lack of a single account of them in the Sufi hagiographies means that the history of the early Sufism had been widely rewritten by the authors who are responsible for standardizing the Sufi teachings whose attempts I like to call "the act of canonization of Sufism." It would be interesting if a researcher undertook the task of bringing to light these Muʿtazilite Sufis as alluded to by those scholars.

ii. *Fanā'* and *Baqā'* in the Works of Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz

Coming back to the dichotomy of *fanā'* and *baqā'*, al-Sulamī and al-Hujwīrī assure us that the Sufi application of the terms was first introduced by Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz (d. 890 or 892),[234] a

231. By the word ontological in this chapter, on contrast with the words psychological and epistemological, I mean the issues that depend on the mode of existence and essence in its Aristotelian sense, in other words: "existential identity."

232. Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al- Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, ed. V. A. Jukovsky (Tehran: Ṭahūrī, 1992), 314.

233. For Massignon see Toby Mayer, "Theology and Sufism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, ed. Tim Winter (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 261, 261. And for van Ess see Josef van Ess, *The Flowering of Muslim Theology*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 149-151.

234. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, ed. Muṣṭafá ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā' (Beirut; Dār al-kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 2003), 183.

Sufi master from Baghdad to whom al-Hujwīrī attributed the foundation of a Sufi school which is distinct from the other schools for its emphasis on the idea of *fanā'* and *baqā'*.[235] However, there is no doubt that the terms *fanā'* and *baqā'*, in the sense of expiration and survival had been already discussed by early theologians.[236] The possible influences of this theological topic on the Sufi application of the terms should be the subject of a further study.

Until 1952 in which Ahmet Ateş discovered a collection of al-Kharrāz's treaties, *Kitāb al-ṣidq* was his only work known to scholars.[237] *Kitāb al-ṣidq*, as al-Kharrāz mentions at its end, concerns the exoteric area of asceticism and was not designated to expose such ideas as *fanā'* and *baqā'*.[238]

In *Kitāb al-ṣafā'* al-Kharrāz introduces the state of proximity (*maqām al-qurb*) as the final state in the spiritual path in which due to awesomeness of God, man loses his mundane consciousness and self-awareness. Al-Kharrāz suddenly switches from this psychological account to a short and ambiguous ontological expression: "Man falls away and God remains"[239]

In *Kitāb al-ḍiyā'*, again concerning the state of proximity and reflective love (*Muḥābbāh*), al-Kharrāz gives this theologically controversial description: "they lose whatever makes them defective … their attributes will be removed. Their attributes will be attached to His (God's)

235. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, 313.

236. Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt al-islāmīyīn wa-ikhtilāfāt al-muṣallīn*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo: Maktabat al-Nihḍat al-Miṣrīyah, 1950), vol. 2, 51-2.

237. Abū Saʿīd Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsá al-Kharrāz, "*Kitāb al-ṣifāt*," ed. Paul Nwyia, trans. Ismāʿīl Saʿādat, *Maʿārif* 15 (1371/1991): 15.

238. Abū Saʿīd Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsá al-Kharrāz, *Kitāb al-ṣidq*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, n/d), 97.

239. "*Fa-saqaṭ al-ʿabd wa-baqiya Allāh*." See Abū Saʿīd Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsá al-Kharrāz, "*Rasā'il al-Kharrāz*," ed. Qāsim al-Sāmirrāʾī, *Majallat al-majmaʿ al-ʿilmī al-ʿIrāqī* 15 (1967): 179-183.

attributes."[240] Here not only he is speaking about a clearly ontological transformation but also the concept of "attribute" (*ṣifah*) has been invited to the scene.

In *Kitāb al-firāgh* he gives a Neo-Platonic explanation of *fanā'* and *baqā'*. The human nature is a mixture of heavenly (*samāwī*) elements which are eternal (*bāqī*) and corporal elements which are impermanent and mortal (*fānī*). The main heavenly element is the soul (*rūḥ*) and the main corporal element is the ego (*nafs*). Man with his heavenly nature will be restored in the realm of eternity if he annihilates the corporal elements.[241] Al-Kharrāz's language, especially employing the word *samāwī*, seems Neo-Platonic and distinct from the standardized language of the Sufis of the next two centuries.

Although al-Junayd's (d. 909) *Kitāb al-fanā'* is apparently the first elaborate treatise on the subject, it cannot challenge the priority of al-Kharrāz. The certainty of this statement is owed to a quotation of al-Junayd reported by Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj in which al-Junayd acknowledges the priority of Sufi application of the term *fanā'*.[242]

Al-Junayd was a junior contemporary of al-Kharrāz. The latter died about two decades before the former. Al-Junayd's interpretation of *fanā'* and *baqā'* is basically ontological. He believes that the state of *fanā'* and *baqā'* is an extraordinary mode of existence in which the definition of individuality and its psychological and epistemological manifestations are directly associated with divinity. His language is not Neo-Platonic but it reflects a primitive version of the standard Sufi language in the two following centuries. He avoids basing his theory of *fanā'* on annihilation of attributes but instead emphasizes annihilation of the traces of individuality

240. Al-Kharrāz, "*Rasā'il al-Kharrāz*," 185.

241. Ibid., 194-6.

242. Abū Naṣr al- Sarrāj al-Ṭusī, *al-Lumaʿ fī al-taṣawwuf*, ed. Ṭāhā ʿAbd al-Bāqī Surūr (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthanná, 1960), 423-4.

(*rusūm*). He is cautious not to mistake this idea for the concept of incarnation and at the same time he does not mind remaining ambiguous.[243]

iii. The Muʿtazilite Footprints

The cautious approach of al-Junayd will be better justified when it is considered that Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj criticized a group of Sufis in Baghdad who believed *fanā'* and *baqā'* to be expressions of a state of existential union with God. He charged them with holding the same view as that held by Christians in their Christology. According to al-Sarrāj their understanding was based on a syllogism of which the minor premise is a saying attributed to a pioneer in Sufism (not identified by al-Sarrāj): "*fanā'* is annihilation of the human attributes and *baqā'* is penetration (*dukhūl*) into God's attributes" and the major premise is that God's attributes are the same as His essence.[244] The minor premise can be meaningfully compared with al-Kharrāz's aforementioned statement in *Kitāb al-ḍiyā'* and the major premise is a Muʿtazilite catchword.[245]

Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 935) to whose apologetic works we owe the little information we have about some of his opponents including Muʿtazilites, alleges that Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf (d. 849) was the first theologian who introduced the theory of identicalness of the divine attributes and essence in the Islamic history of thought.[246] This allegation seems plausible since the Muʿtazilites prior to Abū al-Hudhayl were mostly engaged in discussions about definition of faith, free will, nature of the scripture and divine justice.

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243. Abū al-Qāsim al- Junayd al-Baghdādī, "*Kitāb al-fanā"*" in *The Life, Personality and Writings of Al-Junayd*, ed. & trans. Ali Hassan Abdel-Kader (London: Luzac & Co., 1976), 31-39.

244. Al-Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 552.

245. William Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Oxford: Oneworld Publication, 2006), 245, 246.

246. Al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt al-islāmīyīn*, vol. 2, 158.

Abū al-Hudhayl was a prominent Muʿtazilite who died about half a century earlier than al-Kharrāz. Apparently he led a period of Muʿtazilism in which, Muʿtazilism was the official ideology of the caliphate. He held the opinion that since the attributes and faculties of God are the same as His essence, God doesn't act through His faculties but through His essence. Basically the divine faculties are only verbal attributions.[247] He was the pioneer of Islamic apophatic theology.

Al-Ashʿarī informs us that Abū al-Hudhayl had taken his theory from Aristotle whom al-Ashʿarī quotes as follows: "Aristotle said in a book of his that God is entirely knowledge, entirely might, entirely life, entirely audition, and entirely vision … His might is He Himself and his knowledge is He Himself." [248] Al-Shahristani (d. 1153) also, probably following al-Ashʿarī, asserts that Abū al-Hudhayl borrowed the idea from the philosophers who believed that God's essence is completely unitary and there is no plurality in that by any means and His attributes are not substantially apart from His essence but they are identical.[249]

Richard Frank's assessment of the attempts to identify the aforementioned Aristotelian quotation with phrases in the Metaphysics shows that they were not satisfactory.[250] Of course it could not be successful since the Aristotelian concept of god as an immobile mover does not accord an apophatic theology. For Aristotle an attribute-less entity is the primary matter rather than god. Indeed, the postulation of similarity between cause and effect, which was taken by

247. Ibid., vol. 1, 225 & vol. 2, 157-164.

248. Ibid., vol. 2. 158.

249. Abū al-Fatḥ Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm al- Shahristānī, *Al-Milal wa-al-Niḥal*, 2 vols, ed. Amīr ʿAlī Mahnā (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1993), vol. 1, 64.

250. Richard M. Frank, "The Divine Attributes According to the Teaching of Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf" in *Early Islamic Theology: the Muʿtazilites and al-Ashʿari*, ed. Dimitri Gutas (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 455.

Aristotle to prove the existence of multiple deities, would not allow him to conceive of an absolute actuality of all virtues.[251]

O. Pretzl, probably for the first time, suggested that the quotation must be found in an Arabic pseudo-Aristotelian text namely *Uthūlūjiyā* whose title is usually translated in English as *The Theology of Aristotle*.[252] The book by no means is a genuine work by Aristotle but in fact an Aristotolized and at the same time Islamized selective paraphrase of Plotinus's Enneads. The quote given by al-Ashʿarī can be compared with the following passage in *Uthūlūjiyā*: "its attributes must be the same as it" but here the text is not speaking about God but about the universal intellect, though it immediately concludes that the creator of the intellect also must be so, because the creator is more perfect than the created.[253] Further on, we face another explicitly Muʿtazilite catchword: "a perfect doer is one who works through his essence and not through his attributes."[254] Peter Adamson, a professor of ancient and medieval philosophy in King College at London, assures us that this concept of God is completely foreign to Plotinus's God. Thus, in the Arabic text, we have a deviation from Plotinus and his disciple and commentator Porphyry.[255]

The Arabic translation as we it have now, introduces itself as "a book by Aristotle, the philosopher, which is titled in Greek as *Uthūlūjiyā* that is a discourse on divinity with a commentary by Porphyry of Tyre, translated into Arabic by ʿAbd al-Masīḥ ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Ḥimṣī, edited by Abū Yūsif Yaʿqūb ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī for Aḥmad ibn al-Muʿtaṣim billāh."[256]

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251. Peter Adamson, "Before Essence and Existence: al-Kindi's Concept of Being" in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 40, no. 3 (2002): 302.

252. Frank, "The Divine Attributes According to the Teaching of Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf," 455.

253. Arisṭāṭālīs [pseudo.], *Uthūlūjiyā*, ed. Fredrick Dieterici. (Leipzig: 1882), 61.

254. Ibid.

255. Peter Adamson, "Before Essence and Existence," 301.

256. Arisṭāṭālīs [pseudo.], *Uthūlūjiyā*, 1.

We know almost nothing about the translator; but al-Kindī (d. 873), the editor, was one of the most influential early Arab philosophers and a director in al-Maʾmūn's famous *Bayt al-ḥikmah*.[257] The special type of cooperation between the translators and the editors in *Bayt al-ḥikmah* bring us to assume that the translation was not completed long before its edition. In the case of Greek and Syriac texts, the translator usually had a good command of the original language though not necessarily of Arabic and had to work under the supervision of the editor who was an expert in the subject and skillful in Arabic. The person for whom a translation was done usually was a caliph, a vizier or a prince whose office had funded the project. The *Uthūlūjiyā* was translated for Aḥmad ibn al-Muʿtaṣim, an Abbasid caliph who lived from 832 to 863. Absence of his caliphal title, al-Mustaʿīn billāh, in the introduction of the book indicates that the translation was done before his reign that began in 860. This suggestion is even more likely if we consider that al-Kindī, the editor, had already lost his position in *Bayt al-ḥikmah* by 842.[258] That means the work must have been completed between 832 and 842, an interval in which Abū al-Hudhayl was in the last decade of his 70 year long life. Therefore, Richard Frank is correct doubting the actual influence of the Arabic *Uthūlūjiyā* on Abū al-Hudhayl's thesis. Instead, he suggests that Jahmites, a short lived theological school commonly known as the precursor of Muʿtazilites must have accessed a Neo-Platonic source that shaped both Abū al-Hudhayl's theology and al-Kindī's deviation from historical Plotinus.[259] Frank could not provide his suggestion with further evidence. As an alternative suggestion, I think, it is fairly plausible to suppose Abū al-Hudhayl's apophatic theology to have influenced al-Kindī's interpretation of Plotinus. We should keep in mind that Abū al-Hudhayl was an influential senior contemporary of

257. For al-Kindī and his life, see Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, trans. Liadain Sherrard (London: Kegan Paul International, 1993), 154-8.

258. Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, 154.

259. Frank, "The Divine Attributes According to the Teaching of Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf," 457.

al-Kindī, who was supported by the same patron as the former and frequenting the same court: a court in that Muʿtazilizm was the intellectual ideology and transmission of Hellenistic philosophy was considered a prestigious activity. The importance of the latter hypothesis is that it suggests how the flourishing discipline of the Hellenistic philosophy in the 9th century could be a transmitter of Muʿtazilite theology.

iv. *Ḥadīth al-nawāfil* and the Dilemma of Divine Attributes

In Sufi literature, especially in its later phases, the concepts of *fanā'* and *baqā'* usually are supported by a fragment of a divine tradition (*al-ḥadīth al-qudsī*) commonly known as the *ḥadīh al-nawāfil* (acts of supererogation) that declares when God likes a servant of His, God becomes his faculties by the means of which the servant acts. There are two versions of this tradition cited by Muslim writers and there is a narrow difference in their verbal formulation which I think to be theologically significant. In one of them, which I call version A,[260] the formulation indicates that God will be identical with a certain faculty and the servant acts by the means of God Himself. In the second version, which I call version B,[261] God will be the same faculty of the servant by the means of which he acts. In other words, according to the formulation of version A, the servant

260. لا يزال عبدى يتقرب الى بالنوافل حتى احبه فاذا احببته كنت له سمعا و بصرا و يدا و مؤيدا و لسانا؛ بى يسمع و بى يبصر و بى ينطق و بى يبطش

"Uninterruptedly My servant gets close to Me by the means of the acts of supererogation so that I love him and when I love him I will be for him an ear and an eye and a hand and a intellect and a tong. By the means of *Me* he will hear and by the means of *Me* he will see and by the means of *Me* he will talk and by the means of *Me* he will grip."

261. لا يزال يتقرب الى عبدى بالنوافل حتى احبه فاذا احببته كنت سمعه الذى يسمع به و بصره الذى يبصر به و يده التى يبطش بها و رجله التى يمشى بها.

"Uninterruptedly My servant gets close to Me by the means of the acts of supererogation so that I love him and when I love him I will be his ear by the means of *that* he hears and his eye by the means of *that* he sees and his hand by the means of *that* he grips and his leg by the means of *that* he walks."

acts by the means of God while in the other version the servant still acts through his own faculties.

This nuance, though it may seem a superficial difference, is still able to remind us of a decisive dispute between the Muʿtazilites and their opponents. Muʿtazilites believed that since God is identical with His attributes and faculties, He acts by the means of His essence while their opponents used to assert that He acts by the means of His faculties which are different from Him. It seems that the formulation of version A is more in accordance with the Muʿtazilite theology. It is remarkable that as to the best of my knowledge, the orthodox sources of *ḥadith* like *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*[262] and *al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaghīr*[263] have only recorded the version B and the version A can be found only in the Sufi texts.[264]

Apparently al-Junayd's *Kitāb al-fanā'* was the first text in which the aforesaid tradition is cited as a support for the concept of *baqā'*,[265] but as al-Kharrāz in *Kitāb al-ṣafā'* as well as *Kitāb al-ḍiyā'* gave his account of the concerned states under the title of proximity and reflective love, we can be sure that he had developed his idea with a reference to this tradition which says "uninterruptedly My servant approximates Me by the means of the acts of supererogation so that I love him…." However the formulation of the tradition cited by him in *Kitāb al-ṣidq* is the same as the version A[266] that is more Muʿtazilite while the version cited by al-Junayd is the version B. Does it show a theological disagreement between al-Kharrāz and al-Junayd?

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262. Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ,* ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿat al-Salafīyah, 1980), vol. 4, 192.

263. Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaghīr* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988), vol. 1, 367.

264. As instance see Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin al-Qushayrī, *al-Risālat al-Qushayrīyah,* ed. Khalīl al-Manṣūr (Beirut; Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 2001), 116. And: al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb,* 326, 394.

265. al-Junayd al-Baghdādī, "*Kitāb al-fanā'*," 33.

266. Al-Kharrāz, *Kitāb al-ṣidq,* 80-81.

v. Conclusion

Reviewing the previous discourse we can say that the first Sufi application of the terms *fanā'* and *baqā'* is attributed to al-Kharrāz. Al-Junayd, who was a young contemporary of al-Kharrāz, while distancing himself from the Neo-Platonic language of al-Kharrāz, warned against mistaking those concepts for incarnation. Al-Sarrāj also criticises a certain Sufi group for the same error and refers to a Muʿtazilite catchword which was championed by Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf. Therefore we can confidently suppose that the Sufi group mentioned by al-Sarrāj appeared in an interval between the coinage of the terms *fanā'* and *baqa'* by al-Kharrāz and the time at which al-Junayd wrote his *Kitāb al-fanā'* that could not have been longer than three decades. Abū al-Hudhayl was not only influenced by a pseudo-Aristotelian tradition but also hypothetically was responsible for the early Muslim philosophers' understanding and reconstruction of the Neo-Platonic concept of God. Al-Kharrāz also employs Neo-Platonic language and a Neo-Platonic interpretation concerning the terms *fanā'* and *baqā'* that strengthens the possibility of his relationship with the Muʿtazilite-Philosophical communities of Baghdad. Furthermore, while al-Junayd who was one of the orthodox representatives of Sufism cites the version B of the divine tradition mentioned above, al-Kharrāz prefers its version A that corresponds best with Abū al-Hudhayl's Muʿtazilism. Considering the mood of relationship between al-Kharrāz and al-Junayd, if there were no clear fundamental difference between them regarding the concept of *fanā'* and *baqā'*, the school which is called *Kaharrāzīyah* by al-Hujwīrī would immediately merge into al-Junayd's school.

On the basis of the aforementioned points, I believe it is reasonable to suppose that in the second half of the third Islamic century there was a group of Sufis directly influenced by al-Kharrāz and simultaneously inclining to Abū al-Hudhayl's Mutazilism. This combination was

more than sufficient to distinguish them as a sub-sect in a highly anti-Mutazilite Sufi atmosphere. On the basis of this assumption I suggest that the Kharrāzīyah mentioned by al-Hujwīrī in his *Kashf al-maḥjūb* is identical with this group; though the account of them given by al-Hujwīrī must be a rewritten and edited report in favour of the orthodox anti-Mutazilite Sufism of his era.

CHAPTER 5

THE CASE OF WĀSIṬĪ AND SAYYĀRĪYAH

i. Introduction

The conceptual dichotomy of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* (respectively meaning "integration" and "differentiation") is an important idea in the history of early Sufism because it paved the way for the decisive theory of *waḥdat al-wujūd* that would come to the scene in the 13th century.[267] At the same time it was controversial because it challenged the ordinary logic and metaphysics on which the orthodox Islamic faith and practice were based.

Due to sensitivity of the case, there is a wide range of definitions for the terms *jamʿ* and *tafriqah*, among which, the one that concerns this chapter can be given briefly as follows: *"jamʿ* (integration) is an epistemological state in which one regards existence as a divine indiscriminate whole, while *tafriqah* (differentiation) is an epistemological state in which discrimination is regarded." It is theologically significant that in the state of *jamʿ*, not only it is impossible to recognize different objects but defining a discrete deity apart would be impossible as well.

ii. Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sayyārī and Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī

According to Hujwīrī, the most serious champion of the idea of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah*, by his time, was Abū al-ʿAbbās Qāsim ibn Mahdī al-Sayyārī (d. 342/953). Hujwīrī witnessed an

267. Nicholson translated the words *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* as union and separation. See ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Hujwīrī, *The Kashf al-maḥjūb*, trans. Reynold Nicholson, (London: Luzac, 1976), 251. I don't favor his translation since I prefer to save the word union as a translation of *waḥdah*.

uninterrupted Sufi tradition in Khurāsān that had based its teachings on the concepts of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* and identified itself as the heir of Sayyārī.[268] Sayyārī was a disciple of Abū Bakr Muḥmmad ibn Mūsá al-Wāsiṭī (d. c. 320/931).[269] Sulamī says that Sayyārī used to address Wāsiṭī as the source of his entire Sufi background.[270] Since we don't have suffiecient materials to show how Sayyārī introduced the concepts of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah*, it seems reasonable to trace the idea from what we have received from and through Wāsiṭī.

Wāsiṭī, in his turn, was a disciple of Junayd and Nūrī in Baghdad. He left Iraq for Khūrāsān while his masters were still alive.[271] Therefore, his departure must have taken place before 295/907, the year in which Nūrī died.[272] Wāsiṭī never stayed in a city for a long time because his unique interpretation of *tawḥid* (Divine unity) tended to provoke the local religious authorities.[273] He finally settled in Marw, a city in Khurāsān, because he found its people capable of understanding his doctrines.[274]

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268. "And nowadays there is a huge group of his disciples in Nisā' and Marw, and no school of Sufism has remained undistorted till now except his (Sayyārī's) school … and their teaching is based on *jamʿ* and *tafriqah*." Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb,* ed. V. A. Jukovsky (Tehran: Ṭahūrī, 1992), 323.

269. Ibid, 198.

270. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah,* ed. Muṣṭafá ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā' (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 2003), 330.

271. Ibid, 232.

272. Silvers also has arrived at the same conclusion; see Laury Silvers, *A Soaring Minaret, Abu Bakr al-Wasiti and the Rise of Baghdadi Sufism* (Albany-New York: State University of New York Press, 2010), 33.

273. "It is reported that he was exiled from 70 cities. When he entered a city the people soon expelled him. Finally he settled in Bāward. The people of Bāward gathered to listen to him but they didn't understand his words and a crisis took place; whereupon he went to Marw." (Farīd al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭar al-Nayshabūrī, *Tadhkirat al-awlīyā',* ed. Muḥammad Istiʿlāmī (Tehran: Zawwār, 2000), 732). "And nobody could tolerate his *tawḥīḍ*." (Abū Ismāʿīl ʿAbdullāh al-Anṣārī al-Harawī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah,* ed. Muḥammad Sarwar Mawlā'ī (Tehran: Tūs, 1983), 433).

274. "He was wandering from city to city longing for audience and settled in Marw because he found its inhabitants of a good understanding." (Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 432). "I am informed that he (Wāsiṭī) settled in Marw, and he said that he had not found in Khurāsān any people with a wider

iii. *Jamʿ and Tafriqah: a Solution to the Problem of Divine Transcendence*

Wāsiṭī left Iraq in a critical period in which the theological schools struggled with the problem of divine transcendence: a crucial dimension in Islamic faith. This idea, as supported by some Quranic verses, urged Muʿtazelites to deny any sense of resemblance between God and the creation.[275] Since the idea of resemblance is formed on the basis of 'participation in attributes' (*al-shirākah fī-l-ṣifāt*), the denial of resemblance between God and creation leads to the denial of any common attribute between them. But since our knowledge is an attribute we ascribe to ourselves, accordingly would reflect nothing of God's attributes. The aforementioned statement results in the impossibility of an informative theology. Consequently, such an argument turns the theological aspects of the scripture into pure gibberish. The advocates of non-resemblance even took a more radical position and declared that God's essence and His attributes are identical. In fact, the Muʿtazilite deity was absolutely apart from the world.

On the other side of this debate, the traditionalists (*ahl al-ḥadīth*) were not prone to upsetting the common grounds on which they interpreted the scripture and so doing formulated a communicable concept of the deity. On the other hand, they could not ignore the principle of divine transcendence. Therefore, the traditionalists had found themselves in a passive, defensive, and contradictory theological position when Wāsiṭī left Iraq.

Wāsiṭī seems to have suggested a solution for the problem. Tracking his sayings regarding the dilemma of attributes and resemblance (*tashbīh*), one might be initially confused: Sometimes he identifies the divine essence and attributes.[276] He says in an accusatory tone, "God knows the

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understanding than them in their ability to grasp his knowledge." (Abū Naṣr al- Sarrāj al-Ṭusī, *al-Lumaʿ fī-l-taṣawwuf*, ed. Ṭāhā ʿAbd al-Bāqī Surūr (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthanná, 1960), 506)

275. "… There is nothing like Him …." (*Quran*, 42:11)

276. Silvers looks at this saying of Wāsiṭī as an anti-Muʿtazilite position (Silvers, *A Soaring Minaret*, 22.) She is incorrect, since this is a famous Muʿtazilite doctrine adopted by the leading Muʿtazilite

people who disbelieve in names and attributes and differentiate the attributes from the one to whom they are attributed."[277] Sometimes he denies God's attributes. For example he says, "His essence cannot be described in fact … the Real is out of imagination and understanding; … how can there be descriptions and attributes for Him?"[278] Sometimes he admits the divine attributes and their accessibility for creatures, while saying, "The creatures, according to their capacity, access God's attributes and descriptions."[279] And sometimes he permits no attributes to be shared by God and the creation. He says, "No attributes resemble His attributes in any sense and the only resemblance is merely verbal."[280] This apparent contradiction can be solved if we read Wāsiṭī under the light of his theory of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah*.

Wāsiṭī considers three different modes of experiencing reality, so that each one is accurate within a specific epistemological framework conditioned by one's gnostic insight:

1. From one point of view, God and creation are metaphysically considered absolutely apart so that as Muʿtazilites said there is no resemblance between them. This is the state of *tafriqah*.

2. From another point of view the creation is nothing but God's manifestation; therefore whatever qualities there are in the world must be attributed to God, so that not only God has attributes but He shares them with the creation. Here non-resemblance cannot be regarded. This is the initial state of *jamʿ*.

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thinker, Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf. See Abū al-Fatḥ Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Shahristānī, *Al-Milal wa-al-Niḥal*, vol. 1, ed. Amīr ʿAlī Mahnā (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1993), 64; & Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ashʿarī, *al-Ibānah ʿan-uṣūl al-diyānāh*, ed. Bashīr Muḥammad ʿUyūn (Damascus: Dār al-Bayān, 1990), 114. However, Silvers didn't pay attention to the contradictory positions Wāsiṭī had taken regarding the problem of attributes.

277. Sulamī, *Ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr*, 112:1. All quotations from *Haqā'iq al-tafsīr* are taken from an online edition available in the following website: http://www.altafsir.com/Tafasir.asp?tMadhNo=0&tTafsirNo=0&tSoraNo=1&tAyahNo=1&tDisplay=no&LanguageID=1

278. Ibid, 17:110.

279. Ibid, 7:143.

280. Ibid, 42:11.

3. Finally if one regards existence as a divine indiscriminate entity, there will be no distinction between the essence and the attributes and between the Creator and the creation. This perception transcends the problems of attributes and resemblance and the dilemma will be completely pointless. This is the state of *jamʿ al-jamʿ* or "integration of integration".[281]

iv. Sufi Applications of *Jamʿ* and *Tafriqah*

Wāsiṭī was not the first one who used the terms *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* in a Sufi context. The list of explanations and definitions given by his contemporaries is long enough to enable us to sort them into three categories:

The first and biggest category consists of the explanations that consider *jamʿ* merely as a psychological state in which there is no awareness of any object except God. These explanations don't attach any metaphysical idea to the concept of *jamʿ* and, at the most, can be taken as variant expressions of the state of *fanā'* (annihilation).[282]

The second category consists of a single definition attributed by Sulamī, in his *Sulūk al-ʿārifīn,* to the ascetics of Khurāsān. Later, in this chapter, I will show that Sulamī, in this book, by "the ascetics of Khurāsān" means the Malāmatis. In this definition, the term *jamʿ* is defined as a state in that all the faculties are concentrated and oriented towards God.[283] This definition is

281. For a detailed exposition of these states, see Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin al-Qushayrī, *al-Risālat al-Qushayrīyah*, ed. Khalīl al-Manṣūr (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 2001), 100-1.

282. Explanations as such are quoted from Wāsitī's master al-Junayd, and his contemporaries Abū ʿAlī al-Rūdbārī (d. 322) and Abūbakr ibn Ṭāhir al-Abharī. For al-Junayd's definition see Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 284; for Rūdbārī's see Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī, "Darajāt al-muʿāmilāt," ed. Aḥmad Ṭāhirī ʿArāqī, in *Majmūʿi-ye āthar-e Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Sulamī*, vol 1 (Tehran: Ḥikmat wa-Falsafi-ye Islamī, 2009), 495; and for Abharī's see Anṣārī, *Tabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 464.

283. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī, "Sulūk al-ʿārifīn," ed. Sulaymān Ātash, in *Majmūʿi-ye āthar-e Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Sulamī*, vol 3 (Tehran: Ḥikmat wa-Falsafi-ye Islamī, 2009), 578.

different from the last one because while the former is based on the psychological idea of awareness, the latter's main idea is concentrative orientation, which can reveal the imperative theme of this definition. Furthermore, this definition doesn't define an exclusively Sufi concept since being completely oriented towards God is not an exclusively Sufi feature and can be taken as a disciplinary objective by any Islamic school.[284] Again in this category we find no trace of metaphysics.

The third category is an epistemological category, in which we find Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz, a senior contemporary of Wāsitī, asserting that "certainty integrates and knowledge differentiates."[285] Another definition in this category is quoted from Abū ʿAlī al-Rūdbārī who said, "Integration is the heart of *tawḥīd* while differentiation is the language of *tawḥid*."[286] A third definition in this category is attributed to an anonymous Sufi: "differentiation is the language of knowledge while integration is the language of reality."[287] These three definitions refer the dichotomy of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* to the epistemological dichotomy of "gnosis" and "knowledge". Here gnosis is featured with certainty, and knowledge has been taken as an expressive projection of reality. In other words, they introduce a two-fold process of cognition that on one side is indivisible and on the other side is manifold.[288] More specifically, these definitions are about two modes of cognition through that one may know the Divine. In an atomic mode, God is known in His absolute unity so that there is no room for distinct attributes,

284. This fact supports us to assume this definition to be originally Malāmati rather than Iraqi. However, Kalābādhi, in his exposition of Sufism, adopted this definition as his first definition. This adoption cannot be independent of the influences of Malāmatism in the geographical area Kalābādhi belonged to. See Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq al-Kalabādhī, *al-Taʿarruf li-madhhab ahl al-Taṣawwuf*, ed. Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 1992), 138-40.

285. Sulamī, "Darajāt al-muʿāmilāt," 494.

286. Ibid, 494.

287. Sulamī, "Sulūk al-ʿārifīn," 578.

288. It reminds us of the Platonic dichotomy of episte and doxa.

but since our expressive knowledge is based on diverse attributes, the idea of the Divine in this mode is not communicable. In order to communicate that idea, we need to look at God through His attributes; and following the cognition of different attributes, the differential mode of knowledge comes to the scene.

However, though the terms *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* were not unfamiliar in the Sufi environment of Iraq, Ḥallāj (d. 309/921), in his trial in Baghdad, could not name more than three Sufis who might support the idea, while two of them refused to acknowledge the concept as a Sufi teaching.[289] It means that although the ideas of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* were not completely foreign, they had not attracted the support of a considerable number of Sufis by the first decades of the 10th century and in the best light were kept as sacred secrets. But there is also another possibility: the terms *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* might have been well known to the Iraqi Sufis of the time, but not in the same meanings intended by Ḥallāj. Apparently Ḥallāj intended to employ the idea of *jamʿ* as a state in which one would be excused for identifying God with one's self. Therefore, there must have been an interpretation of the concept of *jamʿ* that could provide Ḥallāj to have both God and the creation, at the same time, in the picture and then to advocate their identicalness. This interpretation must have enabled him to maintain the major premise of the following syllogism:

> *I exist,*
> *Nothing exists except God,*
> *Therefore: I am God.*[290]

289. Abū al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs Iblīs*, ed. Aḥmad ibn ʿUthmān al-Mazīd (Riyadh: Dār al-Waṭan lil-Nashr, 2002), 1018-19; & Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 383.

290. In classic logic it is considered as a "disjunctive syllogism." Precisely speaking, it should be formulated as follows (suppose E(x) means "x exists" and G(x) means "x = God"): ((For every x: (~E(x) or G(x))) & E(I)) → G(I).

We can find such a view among the words of Wāsiṭī.[291] Sulamī, in his collection of Sufi commentaries on the Quranic verses, gives two quotes from Wāsiṭī that reveal his resemblance with Hallāj. In one of them, in order to explain the word *yaqīn* (certainty) in the Quranic verse "serve your Lord until the certainty comes to you!"[292] Wāsiṭī says, "Then it will be realized by you that you perceive no reality but Him and you see nothing but Him and nobody speaks to you except Him."[293] In the second quote, Wāsiṭi claims that the presence of the objects is a projection through that God appears: "He (God) appears in every object through what He exhibits of that object. And His exhibition of the objects is the same as His appearance through the objects, so that, if the objects are well investigated, nothing will be found except God."[294] Therefore according to Wāsiṭī, it would not be surprising if one like Ḥallāj, after investigating oneself, comes to conclude to be identical with God. The peculiarity of these two quotes is that they don't have a psychological, epistemological, or disciplinary claim. They don't describe a mental state that may occur to a Sufi and drop his awareness of the objects; they don't recommend a

291. Wāsiṭī left Baghdad before 295 and Hallāj was arrested around 300, which means Wāsiṭī was not in Iraq when Hallāj was in trial otherwise Wāsiṭī might have been a witness introduced to the court by Hallāj. However, the only Sufi who supported Hallāj's idea of *jamʿ* was Aḥmad ibn ʿAṭā' (d. 309). Ibn ʿAtā''s traditions and those of Wāsiṭī had come to blend by the end of the fourth century so that Sarrāj several times expressed his disability to distinguish them and establish a reliable attribution in the case of some sayings transmitted from both of them. (Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 59, 506) This fact can strengthen our hypothesis that Wāsiṭī, Hallāj and Ibn ʿAṭā', at least independently, shared the same understanding of the idea of *jamʿ*, which was not openly acknowledged by the other Sufis of the time. This common understanding must have been so controversial that, on one hand, it provided the political authorities of Iraq with sufficient accusations to crucify Hallāj, and on the other hand, provoked the inhabitants of the eastern parts of the Muslim territory not to tolerate Wāsiṭī among themselves. Massignon tried to suggest a possibility for a meeting between Wāsiṭī and Ḥallāj on the base of the fact that the latter spent his early life in Wāsiṭ; see Luis Massignon, *The Passion of Hallaj*, trans. Herbert Mason (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), vol. I, 61-2. Such a suggestion could create a ground for mutual influence of one upon the other, but Massignon's attempt seems to lack any concrete evidence. For rejection of Massignon's attempts see Silvers, *A Soaring Minaret*, 11-12, 23.

292. *Quran* 15:99

293. Sulamī, *Ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr*, 15:99.

294. Ibid, 41:53.

devotional way to consider the deity as the sole object of attention; and they are not establishing a dichotomy of atomic certainty and expressive knowledge. On contrary, they are obviously metaphysical. They reveal a fact about the real nature of the objects: while the objects are there in the world, they are ultimately identical with God so that God is the sole being in the world.

The idea of soleness of God, in the history of Islamic theology has been understood in four distinct senses:

1) In the broadest sense, God is considered as the only deity, the only creator, and the absolute sovereign. This view is shared by all Muslims and is the main criterion that defines Islamic faith.

2) Islamic orthodoxy, which includes *ahl al-ḥadith* and at least all extent Sufi schools, in contrast with Muʿtazelit, considers God as the only agent in the world. This thesis is an extension of considering God as the only creator.

3) The third sense of God's soleness is a common featuring Sufi idea: God is the only authentic independent and substantial being in the world; therefore he is the only being worth of attention. This sense of God's soleness is rather prescriptive than descriptive.

4) The narrowest sense of God's soleness distinguishes a particular trend in Sufism that remarkably grew only after Ibn ʿArabi, in the beginning of 13th century organized an elaborate theoretical exposition of the concept of *waḥdat al-wujūd*. According to this thesis God is the only being in the world and the objects are nothing except a finite projection of God's infinite attributes. Wāsiṭī seems to be a forerunner of this thesis, though centuries earlier than Ibn ʿArabi.

The idea of the soleness of God, in the latter sense, was associated by early Sufis to a Prophetic tradition that describes God's "loneliness" before creation: "… There was God and

there was nothing else with him…"[295] Now, a highly critical question might occur to an idealistic Sufi mind: "whose presence might be significant enough to have disturbed an eternal state of God such as His loneliness?" As Ibn ʿArabī reports, the answer is simply reflected in a Sufi addition to the tradition: "there was God and there was nothing else with him 'and now he is as he was.'"[296] If God is still alone, while we perceive many objects including ourselves, there must be an explanation to reconcile our mundane perceptions and the mystical perception of this reality. The aforementioned quotes given by Sulamī can fairly prove that Wāsiṭī with his controversial theory of *tawḥīd* was on the way to taking this responsibility.

Sarrāj reports that there were advocates of the idea of *jamʿ* who employed that to establish God's loneliness. "And a group of people misunderstood the idea of *ʿayn al-jamʿ* and didn't predicate to the creation what God has predicated to that. They attributed their movements to God so that there be considered nothing with God except God"[297] Sarrāj's critical report clearly reveals a historically thematic relationship between the idea of God's eternal soleness and *jamʿ*.

The practical consequence of the idea of *jamʿ* could undermine the foundations of Islamic orthopraxy, simply because for any conscious course of practice, discrimination is a necessary requirement, otherwise, if the identity and distinctive individuality of the subject, the object and the direction of the action are not acknowledged, there can be no conscious action. Wāsitī insists on this consequence of his theory of *jamʿ* saying that "I and He, He and I, my deed and His reward, my prayer and His fulfillment, all of these are dualism (*thanawīyah*)."[298] By dualism he meant a view that contradicts the doctrine of *tawḥīd* (monotheism) as advocated by him. These

295. Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 2, ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Cairo: Al-Maṭbaʿat al-Salafīyah, 1980), 418.

296. Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-ʿArabī, "Kitāb al-Jalālah," in *Rasā'il Ibn ʿArabī*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Naḥrī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 2001), 51.

297. Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 549.

298. Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 432.

considerations urged Qushayrī to write, "A servant must hold both *jamʿ* and *tafriqah*. The one who doesn't hold *tafriqah,* cannot maintain servant-hood; and the one who doesn't hold *jamʿ*, doesn't participate in gnosis."[299]

Furthermore, the idea of *jamʿ* doesn't leave room for personal agency and responsibility. If everything is finally identical with God, or at least, if everything is a manifestation of God's attributes, whatever is done can be ultimately considered as done by God and the human free-will and personal responsibility will be merely false reputations. This doctrine can be an agreeable ground for fatalism (*jabr*). This fact can explain why Sulamī, in his hagiography, introduced Sayyārī, Wāsiṭī's chief disciple, as a champion of fatalism.[300] Further, in the same text, he quotes Sayyārī as follows: "What is the way to avoid a sin that is guaranteed to be entrusted to you in the 'protected tablet' (*al-lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ*)?"[301]

v. Confrontation with Malāmatīyah as the Ground of Distinction

Wāsiṭī not only was aware of these controversial consequences but remarked and emphasized them. That is why it is not unexpected to find him confronting the Malāmtīes of Khurāsān, since Malāmatism was based on piety through blaming human beings for their shortcoming as the responsible agent of their actions. Wāsiṭī, during his journey in Khurāsān had a meeting with the disciples of Abū ʿUthmān al-Ḥīrī, a Malāmatī leader in Nayshabūr. In this meeting the Malāmatīs explained the teaching of their leader as follows: "He instructed us to observe obedience [to God] continually and to consider our shortcoming." Wāsiṭī criticized this teaching

299. Qushayrī, *al-Risālah*, 100.

300. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 330.

301. Ibid, 331-2. It seems that such a conclusion out of the idea of *jamʿ* didn't please the Sufi writers like Sarrāj, whose first priority was the orthodox moral responsibility so that they wrote of that as a dangerous misunderstanding of the idea of *jamʿ*. See Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 549.

comparing that with Magianism (*Majūsīyah*).[302] The word *Majūs*, attached to a theologically negative value, had a significant place in Wāsiṭī's teachings. Wāsiṭī's chief disciple, Sayyārī says, "If I had not seen Wāsiṭī, I would be destroyed in Magianism."[303] The word *Majūs* was a word applied by Arab Muslims to Zoroastrians, who were famous for their dualistic theology. Zoroastrians believed in two independent creators, a good one and a bad one.[304] Apart from its non-Muslim reference, the word *Majūs* had a connotation within the Islamic theology. This connotation was based on a prophetic tradition that had described the advocates of the doctrine of free-will as the *Majūses* within the Muslim community.[305] The basis of the connotation was clear: if human beings act according to their will, they are independently creators of their actions, which implies that there is more than one creator. Later, the transmitters of this tradition found it an address to the Muʿtazilites, one of whose main beliefs was the doctrine of free-will. However, since Abū Ḥafṣ al-Ḥaddād (d. 265/879), one of the main founders of Malāmatism, was counted

302. Qushayrī, *al-Risālah*, 91; Anṣāri, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 433.

303. Ibid, 365.

304. Concerning the word *Majūs*, Knysh writes, "He [Wāsiṭī] was probably referring to Manichean concern with perfecting one's piety through ascetic exercise." (Alexander Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 100) His suggestion doesn't sound plausible; because: first, the Arabic vocabulary, especially in the first Islamic centuries, was heavily based on the Quranic application of the words and their glosses given by the early Quran commentators. The word *Majūs* once had appeared in the Quran (22:17). Ṭabarī, a contemporary of Wāsiṭī, quoting Qatādah glosses the word *Majūs* as the worshipers of the Sun, the Moon, and fire. Muqātil ibn Sulaymān, an early commentator, also understands the word as Ṭabarī does. The other commentators repeated this definition or were silent. The Manicheans never were described as fire worshipers and that was a featuring characteristic of Zoroastrians. Second, the Muslim writers like Shahristānī made a clear distinction between Manichaeism and Majūsīyah which they identified with Zoroastrianism. (Shahristānī, *al-Milal wa-l-Nniḥal*, vol. 1, 278-294) Third, the point of criticism for Wāsiṭī was not Malāmatī's asceticism; otherwise some schools in Wāsiṭī's homeland -Iraq- like that of Tustarī, who was much more famous for his asceticism, would be more likely to be criticized by Wāsiṭī. His criticism referred to their concern with *nafs* and its defects as the agent of human's actions. This fact is supported by writers like ʿAbdullāh al-Anṣārī. (See Anṣāri, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah*, 433.)

305. Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān ibn al-Ashʿath al-Sajistānī, *Sunan* (Riyadh: Bayt al-Afkār al-Dawlīyah, 1999), 511.

among Muʿtazilites by Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 995 or 998) in his catalog, there is thus a possibility to consider a historical and theological link between the Malāmatīs and the Muʿtazilites.[306]

Due to the problem of human agency and free-will, there could be no reconciliation between Malāmatīs and the concept of *jamʿ* as advocated by Wāsiṭī.[307] This conflict was addressed by Sarrāj, who wrote that a result of misunderstanding the idea of *jamʿ* is that people may "drop blame from themselves while crossing the limits [of the Law] …."[308]

Sulamī gives another evidence for the conflict between Malāmatism and the idea of *jamʿ* in his book, *Sulūk al-ʿārifīn*, in which he describes some major Sufi concepts according to two distinct traditions: the tradition of Khurāsān and the tradition of Iraq. It seems that in this book, by the tradition of Khurāsān, Sulamī means Malāmatism.[309] It is noteworthy that according to Sulamī, in the tradition of Khurāsān the dichotomy of *jamʿ* and *tafriqah* was not well received. He writes, "These terms (*jamʿ* and *tafriqah*) were detested by the early masters of Khurāsān. They rejected and never applied them."[310]

This contrast and confrontation between the Malāmatīs who prevailed in Khurāsān and the followers of Wāsiṭī, especially his chief successor, Sayyārī, urged the latter to put an extraordinary stress on the concept of *jamʿ* in opposite to *tafriqah* so that although the idea was

306. Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-fihrist*, ed. Riḍā' Tajaddud (Tehran: Marwī, 1971), 216.

307. Because: first, in the state of *jamʿ* it is impossible to attribute an action to a human being; and second, since all actions are finally attributed to God and it is impious to blame God's deed, no one can blame an action.

308. Sarrāj, *al-Lumaʿ*, 549.

309. My assumption is supported by the following facts: first, as an explanation for the term *khawf* (fear) according to the tradition of Khurāsān, Sulamī merely quotes Abū Ḥafṣ al-Ḥaddād who was a well-known Malāmatī. (Sulamī, "*Sulūk al-ʿārifīn*," 569). Second, accounting the Khurāsānians' opinion about *mukāshifah* (revelation) he writes, "it is to discover the defects of ego…" which is the moral basis of Malāmatism in contrast with the much more mystical meaning of *mukāshifah* according to the tradition of Iraq. (Ibid, 577). Third, about *taṣḥīḥ al-tawbah* (correction of repentance) he writes, "In the tradition of Khurāsānians that is to accuse the ego in all situations … because it (the ego) incites to evil." (Ibid, 568). Again we have a Malāmatī catchword here.

310. Sulamī, "*Sulūk al-ʿārifīn*," 578.

not exclusively championed by Sayyārī, that was assumed by his contemporaries to be the center of his Sufi teachings.

CONCLUSION

The oldest elaborate account of diverse Sufi schools in the formative period of Sufism was given by the Sufi writer, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Hujwīrī (d. 1077), in his Persian work, Kashf al-maḥjūb. This account consists in an association among three constituents: 1) a prominent Sufi as the founder and the eponym, 2) an eponymous Sufi communal entity that identifies itself as the adherent to the teachings of the respective eponym, 3) a distinctive characteristic doctrine that is supposed to have been adopted and championed by the eponym. Hujwīrī, in his presentation of Sufi schools in the 10th and 11th centuries, categorizes the Sufi communities into 12 groups, out of which ten are supposed to be in accordance with the Sunnite interpretation of Islamic doctrinal principles, and two are criticized for unorthodox deviations. The critical approach to Hujwīrī's account grew more intense among modern scholars of Sufi studies, until some of them accused him of having fabricated this paradigm of diversity all together.

Although there are parts of Hujwīrī's account that we are not able to verify on the basis of the historical evidence, and there are parts for which historical evidence are not strong enough, the current research confidently attests to the accuracy of Hujwīrī's account in the case of the following schools: Tayfūrīyah, Qaṣṣārīyah (Malāmatīyah), Sahlīyah, Ṣaḥwīyah (Junaydīyah), Kharrāzīyah, and Sayyārīyah. In addition, due to some clues that reflect a rough and tentative sketch of Hujwīrī's classification in Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah, the biographical work of Sulamī, it can be suggested that the classification was not completely unknown before Hujwīrī.

A close study of the Tayfūrīyah, which is attributed by Hujwīrī to Abū Yazīd of Basṭām, shows that: 1) The idea of perception of the Divine, which is well intimated in the traditional literature pertaining to the Prophetic experience of ascension as well as the eschatological status of the pious, theoretically motivated and paved the way for the Sufi idea of sukr so that the disciplinary basis of the school of sukr is the reconstruction of the Prophetic experience, on one hand, and the pre-realization of the ultimate teleological stage of piety, on the other. 2) The controversial aspects of the pedagogical contributions of the school of sukr, especially the ones that are expressed in terms of the master-disciple relationship, made grounds for distinction between this school and the rival school in Baghdād.

As for the school of Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz, who was, according to Hujwīrī, the founder of a distinct Sufi school whose doctrine was based on the idea of annihilation (fanā') the language former has used is Neo-Platonic. Establishing the influence of Muʿtazilism on Muslim Neo-Platonists makes it plausible to suggest a triangular interaction of Kharrāz, Muʿtazilites, and Muslim Neo-Platonists of the time, in which Kharrāz employed the latters' theological beliefs regarding the Divine's attributes in order to develop a basically anti-Muʿtazilite theory of union between man's attributes and those of God.

In order to evaluate Hujwīrī's report in the case of Sayyārīyah, we need to investigate the theological grounds of the dichotomous concepts of jamʿ (lit. integration) and tafriqah (lit. differentiation), which, according to Hujwīrī, are the foundations of the featured doctrine of the Sufi school of Sayyārīyah. The concepts of jamʿ and tafriqah, in the sense Wasiṭī, Sayyārī's teacher, presented, have been suggested as solutions to the problem of tashbīh and tanzih. In the early period of Sufism four modes of definition for the term jamʿ could be found, namely, the psychological, the epistemological, the disciplinary, and the ontological modes, among which the

last one is the one Wāsiṭī is concerned with. Wāsiṭī's definition of jamʿ, as the ultimate mode of realization of existence, leaves no room for acknowledging the human being as the real agent of his actions. This fact, in its turn, would address the old problem of human agency, again an unsettled problem in the theological environment of the first Islamic centuries. The contrast between Wāsiṭī's idea of jamʿ and the prevailing Malāmatī doctrine in Khurāsān, made a sufficient ground for the distinction of the former's teaching on the local scales. This distinction later was inherited by Wāsiṭī's chief disciple, Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sayyārī, and set the foundation of the latter's independent school.

On the basis of the aforementioned arguments, especially concentrating on the three schools mentioned above as examples, since Hujwīrī's presentation of diverse Sufi schools is a hypothesis that so far gives the most coherent, consistent, and comprehensive picture of the interaction between Sufism and the unsettled theological landscapes of the tenth and the eleventh centuries, we need to credit that more than what it has received from the critical modern scholars by now.

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