

SUFISM *And* SUFİ ORDERS

PROF. DR. HASAN KÂMİL YILMAZ



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PREFACE

Praise be to the Lord of the worlds, mercy and blessings be upon our beloved Prophet and his family and companions.

Sufism is a part of Islam. Since its emergence, it has continued to attract attention and has been the subject of various debates, both as a system of thought and as a way of life and education.

The meeting places of Sufis, such as tekkes and tariqas, which are considered educational institutions, have been pushed out of society by the state in some Muslim countries since the beginning of this century. However, people's interest in these institutions has not diminished. Sufism, especially in the West and America, continues to be an object of interest both in terms of the educational style and in terms of its intellectual approach. Many members of tariqas originating from North Africa lead the spread of Islam in European countries such as France, England, and America. The famous works of Sufis such as Jalaluddin Rumi, Ibn Arabi, and Yunus Emre continue to attract the interest of Westerners.

After the closure of tekkes and zawiyyas with the law numbered 677 on November 30, 1925, during the Republican era, it was an important milestone for "Sufism" to first be

included as a course in Higher Islamic Institutes and Theology Faculties in Turkey in the 1950s and finally a main branch in the Faculty of Theology. It is an expression of Sufism's being recognized on an academic platform. During this process, thousands of academic studies were conducted in our country, scientific articles have been written, and special journals have been published.

Our work consists of an introduction and five chapters. In the introduction, brief information is provided about current Sufi beliefs. In Chapter One, the emergence, source, definition, and purpose of Sufism, as well as its relationship with other sciences, are explained. Chapter Two examines the history of Sufism in three periods, namely "asceticism, Sufism, and the Sufi path," after providing the definition, subject, and purpose of Sufi history. In Chapter Three, Sufi concepts are introduced under two main headings, Takhalluq and Tahaqquq. Chapter Four explains Sufi institutions, including orders, tekkes, and associations, and the main orders of Sufism. Chapter Five includes some Sufi issues. In this section, the concept of existence in Sufi thought is explained separately as "unity of existence," "pantheism," and "witnessing unity," and the problems of "man" and "knowledge" are discussed. In addition, discussions on the subjects of miracles, dreams, knowledge of the unseen, intercession, and spiritual connection are included.

This book, which has been meeting with readers and students for over a quarter of a century, has thankfully been well received. It has been printed about thirty times. When

demands arose for it to be translated into Arabic and English, I felt the need to revisit the work. I reviewed it from beginning to end, and made edits and additions. I added a section called “The Spirit of Worship and Sufism” to Chapter One. I tried to eliminate as many redundancies and repetitions as possible in the sections on the History of Sufism and Sufi Orders. I made some new arrangements and additions to the “Sufi Concepts” chapter. I added “Majlis al-Mashayikh” as an institution to the “Sufi Institutions” chapter. I reorganized the subjects of Existence and Unity of Existence in Sufism. I reviewed the issue of hadith verification again. I removed the narrations that are not found in the hadith literature. Or I just stated them as narrations.

I worked day and night for three months on this project that I started before the “coronavirus period.” But I hope that it has become better and more useful. They say “Better is always the enemy of good.” I asked for the support and help of my former students and current colleagues to make it better. They all contributed by sharing their thoughts and evaluations to reach a better outcome. Therefore, I would like to thank my friends and colleagues, especially Prof. Dr. Necdet TOSUN and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Veysel AKKAYA, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ali NAMLI, Dr. Âdem Ergül, and Dr. Murad Kaya. My special thanks also go to Prof. Dr. Suleyman Derin and Omar Wills for translating this work into English. I owe my thanks to my granddaughter A. Afra ERYILMAZ who helped me with the verification of hadiths mentioned in the book.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Erkam Publications, who enabled the book to meet readers again with a new layout and a new face. Our effort is from us, and success is from Allah, the Most High.

H. Kâmil YILMAZ

17 Ramazan 1441

10 Mayıs 2020

INTRODUCTION

A- CONTEMPORARY CONCEPTIONS OF SUFISM

Sufism is one of the most talked about, debated and discussed topics in the contemporary world. What do we know about this topic, which is so much discussed? It is difficult to say that we know a lot about it, with both the people and the intellectuals. Indeed, when we asked our students and friends “What is Sufism, in your opinion?” they gave very different answers.

For some of them, Sufism is a science that talks about the special customs and rituals such as dhikr (remembrance of God) and ayin (ritual) that are performed with special instruments such as kudum (drum) and ney (reed flute) under the supervision of a **Shaykh** called a murshid in special places called **tekke** (Sufi lodges) and **dargah** (spiritual retreats), and talks about the spiritual states such as **muraqabah** (contemplation) and **rabitah** (spiritual connection) and their peculiarities, while also referring to the special clothes called taj (a type of hat) and hirka (a long tunic) worn during these practices.

For some, the *tariqa* (Sufi order) is an institution that isolates people from social life and leads them to seclusion and retreat.

For others, Sufism is a science that talks about the secrets of the unseen world, such as unveiling (**Kashf**), miracles (**Karamah**) and intervention (**Tasarruf**), and adopts the path of unveiling and inspiration related to the heart instead of the method of reasoning and inference based on intellect that is followed in Islamic theology (*Ilm al-Kalam*) and philosophy.

For others, Sufism is a philosophical system dealing with philosophical problems because of concepts such as “unity of existence” (**Wahdat al-Wujud**) and “Unity of Witnessing” (**Wahdat al-Shuhud**) related to existence and human beings.

According to a more common conception, Sufism is an institution that works towards achieving the feeling of “*Ihsan*” through an ethical system, *dhikr*, contemplation, asceticism, struggle, abstention from worldly desires and voluntary worship.

Each of these evaluations is similar to the story of the blind men that Plato and Rumi narrated. So, blind people were shown an elephant, and they described the elephant based on the parts they touched with their hands. The answer given by each blind man is not sufficient or valid for describing the elephant as a whole, because these descriptions are only about specific organs of the elephant. What is said about Sufism is the same. Each of these evaluations, taken individually, is far from being a comprehensive description of Sufism. However, when these pieces are put together, perhaps the whole will

emerge and Sufism will come to light. It is true that Sufism deals with each of the above-mentioned topics and establishes institutions for them. Before delving into detailed topics such as what Sufism is, its definition and source, we would like to talk about the concept of Sufism, which is often used interchangeably with Sufism and confused with it.

B- MYSTICISM AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

I. WHAT IS MYSTICISM?

The term “mysticism” is derived from ancient Greek and conveys meanings such as “being silent, not speaking, closing one’s lips and eyes.” In a conceptual sense, mysticism refers to the effort to elevate human beings morally, lead them to spiritual happiness, make them comprehend the truth within themselves, and awaken their consciousness to what is unseen above and beyond the visible world. It represents the inner and spiritual aspect of religions. In this regard, just as the concept of religion is as ancient as human history, mysticism and spiritual life are equally ancient. There is no society without religion, and likewise, there is no religion without its mystical aspect or spiritual life, whether it is of divine origin or human-made. As in divine-origin religions, it is also present in human-made religions.

The nature of “mystical experience,” which is a spiritual sensation and inner understanding, exhibits similarities across all religions and philosophical systems. Differences arise in the visual representations and interpretations of mystical visions

due to the cultural and civilizational contexts in which mystics are nurtured.

Mysticism endeavors to elevate the moral aspect of the human soul through practices known as asceticism and struggle. These ascetic practices and struggles lead individuals to become detached from the mundane and to know the ultimate truth not through rational means but through spiritual experiences (ecstasy). The result is spiritual happiness, which cannot be described but can only be comprehended through lived experience.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF MYSTICISM

1. Every mystical system has its own set of moral values, and attaining these moral values is contingent upon purifying the ego through asceticism.

2. The ultimate result of asceticism aimed at moral elevation is to become mortal in the absolute truth.

3. The understanding of truth should be achieved not through rational deduction and reasoning, which belong to the intellect, but through heart-centered discovery, spiritual ecstasy, and mystical experiences.

4. Becoming mortal in the absolute existence leads to an indescribable state of peace, tranquility, and contentment within the individual.

5. Mystical experiences are often conveyed through symbolic expressions and symbols. This is because mystics seek to

conceal the spiritual ecstasy they experience from those who are not qualified to understand it.

C- THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUFISM AND MYSTICISM

Sufism and mysticism are often confused and considered synonymous, but there are some differences between them. The primary distinctions include:

1. While Sufism provides spiritual elevation to individuals, mysticism often involves transient pleasures.

2. In mysticism, suffering holds significance, whereas Sufism does not particularly emphasize suffering.

3. In Sufism, methods of discipline vary according to individuals' character structures, whereas mysticism lacks such diversity and richness.

4. In Sufism, individual effort is essential for spiritual elevation, whereas it is not as crucial in mysticism.

5. Mystics are typically individuals with a predisposition for ecstasy, while Sufis can be both people of ecstasy and seekers of knowledge.

6. In Sufism, practices such as remembrance (**Dhikr**) and companionship with a spiritual guide (shaykh) are essential, while mysticism does not have such prerequisites.

7. Mysticism aims to establish the dominance of the soul over the body, while Sufism focuses on purifying the soul and preparing it for union with the Divine.



**CHAPTER ONE:
GENERAL INFORMATION
ABOUT SUFISM**

A. WHAT IS SUFISM?

Sufism can be defined as the institutionalized and wide-spread form of the spiritual life of Islam and the spiritual authority that it represents in the person of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, which has spread until the present day. The spiritual authority referred to is the exemplary personality expressed by the Prophet's "uswah al-hasanah" (exemplary character) (Al-Ahzab, 33/21). As is known, the Prophet ﷺ brought together political, scientific, and spiritual authority in his person.

Sufism has been described as the pinnacle, essence, and core of Islamic knowledge. The aspect of "spiritual experience" referred to as "**hal**" in Sufism is the experiential side of this practice. Those who describe Sufism as ethics consider it an Islamic science that focuses on achieving ethical maturity and perfection. It is a moral system that works to improve the human inner world and correct negative emotions. The Prophet ﷺ recommended piety by emphasizing the internal and spiritual feelings of people in their worship and behavior, in their dealings and attitudes.

Renouncing the attachment to the world, reviving the awareness of worship and servitude, and the ascetic and austere life that our Prophet ﷺ described as a means to receive the love of both Allah and the people, is one of the most important reasons for the emergence of Sufism, which was first called "**Zuhd**" and later "**Sufism**."

In the narration called the "Hadith of Gabriel" in our Hadith books, the concepts of "Islam, Iman, and Ihsan" are

mentioned in succession (Bukhari, Iman 37, Muslim, Iman 1). This sequence of concepts displays a graph of gradual elevation and ascent towards perfection. Islam represents the aspect of the body and verbal affirmation of the religion. Iman is an event that belongs to the heart and represents the settling of faith in the heart. In fact, the Qur'an states that faith is higher than Islam in the following verse: "The desert Arabs say, 'We are believers.' Do not say you are believers, but rather say 'We are Muslims,' for belief has not yet entered your hearts" (Al-Hujurat, 49/14). When the terms "believer" and "Muslim" are mentioned together in the Qur'an, "Muslim" is mentioned before "believer," indicating a hierarchical order. The hadith of the Prophet ﷺ states, "One who commits adultery or steals is not a believer at the time of committing these acts" (Ibn Majah, Fitna, 3) demonstrates that even if a person does not leave Islam after committing a forbidden act, they have suffered damage in terms of their belief.

In the Hadith of Gabriel, "Ihsan" means "worshipping Allah as if you see Him." (Bukhari, Iman, 37) This represents the highest degree of Islam and Iman because Ihsan is a certain state of conscience and comfort that believers strive to attain with serious effort. A servant who has reached the level of Ihsan turns towards a direction where Allah's face is present.

The verse "His essence or his direction is there" (Al-Baqarah 2/115) refers to the attainment of consciousness in avoiding haram (forbidden actions) and fulfilling the obligations (fard) of Islam. This is achieved by understanding the secret behind this verse. The believers who have achieved this state

of consciousness are called “Al-Sabiqun” in the Qur’an. They are the foremost among the believers, including the emigrants (Al-Muhajirun), the helpers (Al-Ansar), and those who follow them in righteousness. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allah. (Tawbah, 9/100)

The topics mentioned in the hadith of Gabriel have formed a branch of knowledge that encompasses Islamic law (Fiqh), beliefs (Aqidah) and theology (Kalam), as well as spirituality (**Tasawwuf**) and the concept of **Ihsan**.

Islamic law consists of both external and internal (batini) aspects. The external aspects include the acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, charity, and stating the words of unity (shahada), while the internal aspects include avoiding prohibited acts such as adultery, drinking alcohol, blasphemy, and the like.

The acts that lead to divine closeness in Islam are those related to the heart and inner self, such as faith, submission, patience, gratitude, contentment, and reliance on Allah. The actions that hinder this closeness are also related to the heart, such as impatience, arrogance, vanity, hypocrisy, and belittling blessings.

Although all of these spiritual injunctions and prohibitions are mentioned in the Qur’an and Hadith, Muslims tend to be more attentive and sensitive to the external aspects of Islam, such as acts of worship and prohibitions and often overlook the spiritual aspects. This may be due to the focus on the external aspects of Islamic law during the education process.

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF SUFISM

Like all Islamic sciences, Sufism's source is the Qur'an and Sunnah. Sufism has some unique characteristics in terms of its subject, purpose, methods, and areas of interest. The main characteristics of Sufism can be listed as follows:

1. Sufism is the science of states that are understood by experiencing and living, not a science of words. It is said: "One who hasn't tasted, doesn't know." Since these spiritual experiences cannot be explained in words, many different descriptions have been made because Sufis' states, stations, spiritual experiences, and perceptions are different and they all look at the subject from different spiritual levels and stages.

2. The subject of Sufi knowledge is "**Ma'rifatullah**" (direct knowledge of God). The goal of Sufism is to bring the **Salik** or spiritual traveller to the consciousness of worship as if he sees Allah, called "Ihsan" in Islamic terminology. Therefore, the foundation of Sufi knowledge is to know Allah by direct experience (Ma'rifa), to love Him, and to reach Him and meet Him.

3. Since Sufism is an applied science, it is learned under the guidance of a master called a **Murshid** or **Shaykh**. Qur'anic recitation (qiraat) also has this feature. It is also learned from a "fam al-muhsin" a well-trained reciter of the Holy Quran. However, there is no such obligation in other Islamic sciences.

4. The Shaykh must have an uninterrupted chain of transmission reaching back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The Sufi masters who continue the spiritual authority of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ have deemed this chain necessary for Sufi

education. In fact, in the first century of hijrah, a chain of narration was sought in all Islamic sciences such as tafsir, hadith, and fiqh. After the compilation of Islamic works, this was not needed much. Sufi scholars have continued the chain requirement due to the nature of the science of Sufism.

5. Sufism is not a bookish science. That is, a person cannot become a Sufi or a Shaykh by reading books about Sufism. However, this is not the case with other Islamic sciences. For example, a person can become a jurist by reading works on Fiqh, an interpreter of the Quran by reading commentaries, and a hadith scholar by reading hadith books. The obligation of Sufi knowledge to be taught under the guidance of a Sufi master has made it impossible to learn from books.

6. Sufism is a science beyond reason. It is not a purely rational science like philosophy and logic. It is a suprarational, spiritual science. Just as the theology uses reason as a tool in interpreting and commenting on religious texts, Sufism also benefits from the source of knowledge called “**Kashf** and **Ilham**”. When it is said “Sufism is a science beyond reason”, it should not be understood that Sufism is a science that is completely irrational and has no logic. Because in Sufism, many things are also dealt with by reason...

7. In Sufism, besides the visible and physical world that we see, information from the unseen world (Ghayb) is also mentioned at times. In Sufism, knowledge related to the unseen world is obtained through the guidance of a spiritual leader (Murshid), experiences of taste, spiritual discovery of the heart, and spiritual experiences. Good morals and spiritual

perfection are one of the ways to reach the knowledge of the heart and spiritual knowledge.

8. One enters Sufism through special paths called “**Tariqa**” that lead to Allah. These paths are numerous and are traversed under the leadership of guides called “Murshid”. Each of these paths has its own set of rules.

II. ROOTS OF THE WORDS SUFI AND SUFISM

The words Sufi and Sufism are not mentioned in the Qur’an or hadith and were not known concepts in the time of the Sahaba and Tabieen. As those who lived in the time of the Prophet ﷺ, saw him, and had the good fortune to be seen by him were called “Sahaba”, there was no need to give another name to those who excelled in asceticism and spirituality at that time. As the second generation after the Sahaba was called the “Tabi’in”, being referred to by this name was enough honour for them.

As the Islamic world expanded during the “Tabieen” period and the level of prosperity rose, new names were given to those who turned to worship and asceticism. Among these names, the most common ones were “**Abid**” (worshipper), “**Zahid**” (ascetic), “**Nasik**” (devotee), “**Bukka**” (weeper). The term “**Sufi**” was used for the first time after the middle of the 2nd century after Hijrah and gradually became widespread. According to one narration, the person who was first referred to as a “Sufi” was Abu Hashim (d. 150/767), and according to another narration, it was Jabir b. Hayyan (d. 200/815). Consider-

ing the situations of both who were from Kufa, it can be said that the concept of “Sufi” first emerged in Kufa and Basra.

The roots of the words Sufi and Sufism are controversial. Some authors such as Qushayri and Hujwiri state that this word may not be derived from any Arabic word and may be a descriptive nickname at most. Those who claim that the words Sufi and Sufism have an Arabic root have put forward different opinions as they could not agree on a single word. The main words suggested as roots for the word Sufism are:

1. From the “**Suffah**” of the companions (Ashab al-suffah) during the era of the Prophet.

2. From the desert plant called “**Sufanah**”.

3. From the words “**Safa**” and “**Safwah**”, which mean purity and cleanliness.

4. From the term “**Al-Saff al-Awwal**” (the first row) in prayer.

5. From the group called “**Banu al-Sufah**”, who devoted themselves to serving the people.

6. From the word “**Sufat al-qafa**”, which means hair on the back of the neck.

7. From the adjective “**Sifat**” (attribute).

8. From the Greek word “**Sofia**”, which means wise and philosopher.

9. From the word “**Suf**”, which means wool.

“**Ashab al-Suffah** were a group of Sahaba who spent their lives in the mosque of the Prophet ﷺ, sleeping and waking up

there, and who had no worldly occupation other than attending the mosque. This group of poor Sahaba, whose number varied between 70 and 300, were also the ready teachers of the Messenger of Allah. When a teacher was requested from a region, one of them was selected and sent to teach the Quran. There is a similarity between the life of the Ashab al-Suffah, whose livelihood was provided by the Prophet and wealthy Sahaba, and the lives of the Sufis. Therefore, it has been suggested that the words Sufi and Sufism may have come from the root of Suffah. Although this attribution may be correct in terms of meaning, it is not correct in terms of grammar because the derivative of Suffah is not Sufi, but Suffi.

The possibility that the word Sufi or Sufism comes from the desert plant **Sufan** and **Sufanah** is due to the fact that Sufis generally did not value edible things and were careful to eat plant-based foods. However, since the derivative of Sufan or Sufanah must be Sufani, it seems unlikely that Sufi comes from this root.

Those who suggest that the words Sufi or Sufism come from the root of **Safa'** and **Safwah** emphasize that Sufism is mostly about purifying the heart and the importance it places on the purity of the heart. However, this possibility is not very valid because the derivative of Safa is Safa'i and the derivative of Safwah is Safawi.

Some people also suggest that since Sufis are focused on turning towards Allah with their hearts and piety, they should be at the forefront of the **Saff al-Awwal** (the first row) among the people. Therefore, it is suggested that the word Sufism may

come from the word Saff. However, this derivation is not valid grammatically because the derivative of this word should be Saffi.

Banu al-Sufah is the name of a tribe that lived before Islam and dedicated themselves to the service of the Kaaba. Since Sufis prioritize service to Allah and people, they are called Sufi in relation to this tribe serving Allah's house, the Kaaba. Some object to this derivation, arguing that there was no such tribe with this name during the time of the Prophet ﷺ, and that Sufah bin Marrah is fictitious.

Sufat al-Qafa means hair on the nape. Sufis were given this name because they did not care about their clothing and belts and did not pay attention to their hair and heads. Although there are many Sufis in the history of Sufism who grew their hair long, it seems unlikely that the word Sufi comes from the root "Sufa". This is because according to the grammatical rules, the derivative of this word should be Sufati or Sufawi.

Some suggest that the words Sufi and Sufism come from the word **Sifat** (attribute), claiming that Sufis are attributed with the most beautiful characteristics. However, this derivation is not grammatically correct either. Because the derivative of the adjective should not be Sufi, but Sifati or Sifawi."

Biruni (d. 1051) and some Western researchers, following him, claimed that the word "Sufi" was derived from the Greek word "**Sophia**," meaning "wisdom." (Al-Birûnî, *Tahqîq mâ lil Hind*, Haydarabad 1958, p. 2) However, since the word "Sufi" was used in the Islamic world long before the translation of philoso-

phy into Arabic and Islamic philosophers were referred to as “hakim” or “philosopher” rather than “Sufi,” this claim is not acceptable.

The word that is most commonly accepted as the root of the word “Sufi” is the Arabic word “**Suf**,” meaning wool. Abu Nasr as-Sarraj (d. 988), one of the first classical Sufi authors, considers the word “Sufi” to be derived from this root, referring to the tradition of wearing woolen clothes, which he calls the way of the Prophets, saints, and ascetics. According to As-Sarraj, just as the companions of Isa ﷺ were named “Hawari” because they wore white clothes, the Sufis were named after the woolen clothes they wore. Similarly, just as the action of wearing a shirt is expressed by the verb “taqammasa,” the knowledge of the Sufis is called “tasawwuf.”

Classical authors such as Al-Kalabadhi, Abu Nuaym, Al-Ghazali, Ibn al-Jawzi, Al-Suhrawardi, Ibn Taymiyya, and Ibn Khaldun support this view. Western scholars such as Nicholson, Noldeke, Massignon, and Goldziher, as well as modern-day Sufis such as Abdul halim Mahmud, also agree with this view. The French Muslim René Guénon (Abdul wahid Yahya) notes that the word “Sufi” is equal in numerological value to the word “**Al-Hikmat al-Ilahiyya**” (divine wisdom), and thus it is more likely that “Sufi” and “tasawwuf” are derived from the word “suf.”

Sufi members, who were previously known by various names such as ‘abid, zahid, nasik, and bakkâ before the term Sufism became widespread, have also been referred to by various other names in different countries. They were

called “**Ghuraba**” (strangers) because they left their homeland, “**Sayyahin**” (travellers) because they travelled from place to place, “**Shikaftiyye**” by the people of Khorasan because they wandered in the deserts and occasionally lived in caves, “**Ju’iyah**” (the hungry) by the people of Damascus because they paid little attention to worldly matters by being careful with their food and eating little, and “**Fuqara**” because they were self-sufficient towards everyone other than Allah, as they believed that the earth belonged to Allah. They were also given names such as “**Nuriyyah**” because they tried to enlighten their hearts. Al-Suhrawardi used the term “**Muqarrabun al-Sufiyah**” and **Abrar al-mutasawwifah**” to refer to Sufis, emphasizing the relationship between poverty, asceticism, and Sufism.

III. THE SUBJECT OF SUFISM

The subject of Sufism, in general, is Allah, existence, and humanity. It is the recognition of Allah with His essence, attributes, manifestations, and deeds through unveiling, comprehension, ecstasy, and conscience (**Ma’rifat al-Ilahiyyah**). The structure of the human soul and self, the purification of the soul, and the elevation of ethics are the subject of Sufism. For this reason, some Sufis have summarized the subject of Sufism as “**Takhalluq and Tahaqquq.**”

Takhalluq is learning Islamic ethics, while Tahaqquq is realizing it and achieving certain illumination and knowledge as a result of moral and spiritual ascension. In other words, the outward aspect of Sufism is takhalluq towards the public, while the inward aspect is tahaqquq towards Allah.

When asked, “What is Sufism?” Junayd al-Baghdadi (d. 297/909) replied, “Sufism is the name given to the Sufi way of life.” When asked whether this characteristic is related to Allah or people, he replied, “The reality is related to Allah, while the form and image are related to people.”

The necessary conditions, spiritual stations and states such as spiritual ecstasy, absorption, love, hate, and grudge, and related emotions are all part of the subject of Sufism for the purification of the heart and soul and the elevation of the character.

The universe and existence are also among the subjects of Sufism, as Sufism examines the relationship between Allah, humanity, and existence through ways of perception such as “Wahdat al-wujud,” “Wahdat al-shuhud,” or “Tawhid al-wujud and shuhudi.” This will be explained in the relevant sections.

IV. THE PURPOSE OF SUFISM

Nothing in the universe is without purpose and accidental. Everything has a purpose and destiny. In fact, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stated clearly that he had a purpose in being sent as a prophet, which was to “perfect noble character.” The common goal of sciences, especially Islamic sciences, can be summarized as “happiness in this world and the hereafter.”

The purpose of Sufism, which is among the religious sciences, is to distance oneself from bad morals and evil traits, adorn oneself with beautiful qualities, and to raise an individual to become a “perfect human being” by adopting the

morals of Allah and the Prophet ﷺ with complete conformity. In other words, it is to ensure “eternal happiness” for Muslims.

Although all Sufis agree on this main purpose, the means and ways envisioned for its realization are different. Some Sufis express that this outcome and goal can be achieved through worship and remembrance (dhikr), while others emphasize asceticism (**riyada**), and some believe it can be attained through love and ecstasy (**wajd**). The ultimate limit of this journey is union (**wuslah**). The most beautiful way to reach union is to follow the “exemplary model” of Allah’s Messenger, to possess his spiritual inheritance.

V. DEFINITION AND SOURCES OF SUFISM

There is no consensus on the definition of Sufism, just as there is no agreement on its roots. Sufism is not a theoretical or rational science but an empirical science, so there are many definitions. Each Sufi describes Sufism according to their own particular spiritual state and experiences and the levels they have reached. Some describe Sufism as achieving the ultimate goal and purpose through worship and remembrance, others through asceticism, and others through love and ecstasy, with the ultimate goal being union with Allah. The most beautiful way to achieve union with Allah is to follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad, who is the perfect model.

Although the term Sufism and the word Sufi are not found in the Qur’an or Sunnah, Sufis use a variety of expressions and concepts when describing Sufism. Seventy-eight definitions of Sufism are given in the *Al-Risala Al-Qushayriyya*, Attar’s

Tadhkirat al-Awliya, and Jami's Nafahat al-Uns. These definitions can be classified into ten groups. In this section, we will try to show the sources of these definitions in the Qur'an and Sunnah. First, let us list the definitions:

1. Sufism is asceticism (zuhd).
2. Sufism is good character (akhlaq).
3. Sufism is purification of the heart.
4. Sufism is struggling against the ego.
5. Sufism is following the straight path of the Qur'an and Sunnah.
6. Sufism is complete submission to Allah and divine knowledge.
7. Sufism is reaching Allah through excellence (Ihsan).
8. Sufism is the spiritual life of Islam.
9. Sufism is the inner knowledge.
10. Sufism is a special knowledge for the elite (Khawas).

Although the terms Sufism and Sufi are not found in the Qur'an and Sunnah, most of the concepts and expressions used in Sufism are based on these sources.

1- SUFISM IS ZUHD

Zuhd (asceticism) is to belittle the world according to the hereafter and to maintain a distant attitude towards it. It is turning away from worldly matters and turning towards Allah. Some Sufis who emphasized the ability of Sufism to remove the love for the world, which hinders the love for Allah and

direct the heart towards Allah, saw it as zuhd. When the emergence of Sufi perception is taken into account, it is appropriate to see it as such.

Zuhd is a means that leads to spiritual maturity, which Sufism aims to achieve, and is not a goal in itself. Therefore, describing Sufism only as zuhd would be incomplete. In the Qur'an, the word "zuhd" is used in one place: **"Indeed, they (the caravan drivers) were zuhd in regard to him (Joseph); they did not value him."** (Yusuf, 12/20). In the Qur'an, the word **"tabattul"** is used to mean cutting oneself off from everything and turning completely towards Allah. **"Cut off from everything and turn completely towards Allah."** (Al-Muzammil, 73/8). Many verses of the Qur'an explain the **transience** and **allure** of worldly life (Ali Imaran, 3/185), warn people not to be deceived by it (Luqman, 31/33), emphasize its insignificance and the importance and goodness of the afterlife (An-Nisa, 4/38), command that the life of the world should never be preferred to the afterlife (An-Nazi'at, 79/38), state that giving the afterlife in return for the world will bring severe punishment (Al-Baqarah, 2/86), and evaluate wealth and children as worldly life and good deeds as the afterlife (Al-Kahf, 18/46).

The reason why worldly life and the inclination towards it are discredited is to control the natural inclination and love for the world in humans and to ensure that the awareness of servitude is not lost. Otherwise, in Islamic understanding, the world is not inherently condemned as it is in Christianity. The world and worldly possessions are not a goal, but rather a means as described in the following verse of the Qur'an: **"Your**

possessions are the means and the support that Allah made available for your livelihood..”

Zuhd is recommended in the sayings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and the best examples of zuhd are seen in his life. There is a hadith that summarizes the Sufi concept of “zuhd” as follows: A companion once asked Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, “O Messenger of Allah, show me a deed that, when I perform it, will make Allah and the people love me.” Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied: “Be detached from the world, so that Allah will love you. Be detached from what people possess, so that they will love you.” The definition of Sufism given by Ma’ruf Karkhi (d. 200/815), who made the first Sufi definition, is also in line with this understanding of zuhd: “Sufism is to take the truths of reality and to give up hope in what people have in their hands.”

The Messenger of Allah led a life of asceticism. He would wear whatever he found, whether it was woolen, cotton, patched, or without patches. He would eat whatever was available. When necessary, he would ride a mount, and sometimes he would even milk his own sheep and goats. He would mend his shoes and clothes. He would shake hands and meet with both the rich and the poor. He would sleep on a simple mat. His wife, Hafsa, narrates: “We would fold a mat in half to make a bed for him. Once we folded it into quarters, but he could not perform the night prayer comfortably and asked what was spread beneath him. He requested the usual spread, not wanting to be too preoccupied with comfort. (Tirmidh, Al-Shamail p.261)

2- SUFISM IS GOOD CHARACTER

Due to its aim of uprooting bad traits and replacing them with virtuous qualities, some have defined Sufism as good character. Here are some of these definitions: Abu Muhammad al-Jariri (d. 321/933): “Sufism is adopting every good quality and abandoning every bad quality.”

Abu Bakr Al-Kattani (d. 322/933): “Sufism is character. One who is superior to you in terms of character is also superior to you in terms of purity and spiritual cleanliness.”

Abu Muhammad al-Murtai’sh (d. 329/940): “Sufism is good character.”

The subject of Sufism is “takhalluq and tahaqquq.” As it means learning Islamic morals, Sufism is intertwined with moral character. When Sufi terminology is examined, it is seen that the “**maqamat**,” stations of the path is consisted of moral values such as contentment, patience and gratitude. It is known that having high and noble character traits is one of the most important values that Islam aims to realize. Indeed, in the Qur’an, the verse “**You are truly on a vast character**” (Qalam, 68/4) was recited as a lesson of the Prophet’s sublime morality, and he himself said: “I was not sent except to perfect noble character” to emphasize the importance of **akhlaq** or good character.”

When Aisha ؓ was asked about the Prophet’s character, she replied, “His character was the Qur’an.” There are special sections in Hadith, Sirah, and Shama’il books that describe his sublime character. As a requirement of his lofty moral charac-

ter, he did not get angry for his personal reasons and did not try to take revenge for private matters. Anas رضي الله عنه narrated that he had served him for ten years and that during this time, he never once got angry with him or reprimanded him for a task. He was a merciful Prophet. Therefore, when his blessed cheek was split on the day of Uhud, he was asked to curse, and he replied, "I was not sent to curse. I was only sent as a mercy to all the worlds." (Muslim, Birr, 87)

3- SUFISM IS THE PURIFICATION OF THE HEART

Some Sufis have defined Sufism in this way, taking into account the importance they give to the purity of the heart. Here are some of these definitions:

Bishr Al-Hafi (d. 227/841): "A Sufi is someone who purifies their heart for the sake of Allah."

Abu Sa'id Al-Harrāz (d. 277/890): "A Sufi is someone whose heart Allah has purified and filled with light. Those who have light in their hearts enjoy the pleasure of the remembrance of Allah."

Junayd al-Baghdadi: "Sufism is when Allah grants you a unique purity. A true Sufi is someone whose heart is purified from everything other than Allah."

Among the definitions of Sufism, purification of the heart is the most important one. The reason is that everything begins with the purification of the heart.

Those who prioritize purification (**tazkiyyah**) in the definitions of Sufism are more numerous than the others. The

Qur'an mentions two opposing attributes of the heart: purity (safwah) and darkness (qaswah), one of which is praised while the other is condemned. The heart that possesses the quality of purity is a **"sound heart"** in which there is no room for anyone but God. Indeed, it is said in the Quran: **"On that Day, neither wealth nor children will be of any use, except for those who come to Allah with sound and flawless hearts."** (Shuara, 26/88-89) The dark heart, on the other hand, is a heart that is stained with sin, defiled, and hardened. **"Woe to the hearts that are hardened from the remembrance of Allah."** (Zumar, 39/22) Allah Almighty likens the hearts that have become black and hard to rocks. "Then your hearts hardened and became like rocks, or even harder still. For some rocks gush forth streams..." (Al-Baqarah, 2/74)

There are many expressions in the Qur'an and the Sunnah that show that the spiritual acts of the heart are superior to the acts performed with the body. "Allah does not look at your faces or your possessions, but rather He looks at your hearts and your deeds." (Muslim, Birr 32) "Know that there is a piece of flesh in the body that, if it is healthy and sound, the whole body will be healthy and sound, but if it is diseased, the whole body will be diseased. That piece of flesh is the heart." (Bukhari, Iman 39)

The soundness and purity of the heart is that which affects the outcome of our actions. That is why the Prophet once pointed to his heart three times and said: "Taqwa is here." (Muslim, Birr 32)

The purity of the heart leads to **taqwa**, or god-consciousness, and voluntary worship and remembrance bring about contentment. Because the heart becomes darkened from forbidden actions, it is purified by repentance, and voluntary worship. Indeed, there are verses in the Qur'an that indicate that the remembrance of Allah and faith lead to contentment in the heart. **"Only with the remembrance of Allah can the hearts find peace."** (Ra'û, 13/28)

Purifying the heart is the preparation for taqwa through voluntary worship and remembrance. When the heart is purified, it is inclined towards goodness, and from then on, good manners and deeds become second nature. The goal of morality is to reach this state. Thus, spiritual purity and complete refinement are achieved. It is because of the purification of the heart through remembrance and the attainment of spiritual perfection that the Prophet replied to Mu'adh bin Jabal's question, "What is the most virtuous deed?" with the answer, "That your tongue remains moist with the remembrance of Allah until you meet Him." (Tirmidhi, Daawat 4)

4-SUFISM IS THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE EGO

By taking into consideration the methods used by Sufism to discipline the self, some Sufis define it as the struggle against the ego. Junayd al-Baghdadi's statement, "Sufism is a war without peace," actually indicates that Sufism aims to constantly engage in the struggle against the ego without rest. When listing the tasks of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Allah mentions "purification" as one of them in the Qur'an, referring to spiritual purification: "It is He who has sent among the unlet-

tered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom - although they were before in clear error.” (Al-Jum’ah, 62/2)

The purification mentioned in the verse signifies the removal of bad habits and the adornment of individuals with goodness and beauty. This purification, assigned as a mission to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, is actually required of all Muslims. In fact, there is a verse that states: **“By the soul and Him who proportioned it, and inspired it with its depravity and taqwa. He who purifies it has succeeded, and he who soils it has failed.”** (Shams, 91/7-10)

Hence, Sufism embodies purification, but not all forms of purification are synonymous with tasawwuf. The purification commanded by Sufism is one that aligns with the provisions of Shariah and is accomplished by following and emulating the noble Prophet. Following him is an act of love and devotion, as Allah Almighty says: **“Say, if you love Allah, follow me, and Allah will love you and forgive you your wrong actions.”** (Ali Imran, 3/31) The purification in Sufism is a Prophetic purification, untainted by foreign influences and philosophical doubts. This kind of purification undoubtedly strengthens the bonds between hearts and Allah, bodies and souls, nafs (self) and worship, society and ethics, and scholars and teaching. It also safeguards individuals from excessive worldly attachments, wealth, offspring, and lustful desires.

Purification (tazkiyyah) means the elimination of the negative attributes that enjoin the self through asceticism and struggle. According to the narration, ‘Your greatest enemy is

your own soul between your two sides,' it means to free oneself from the enmity of the ego.

5- SUFISM IS FOLLOWING THE STRAIGHT PATH OF THE QUR'AN AND SUNNAH

A Sufi understanding that goes beyond the measures of Shariah cannot be considered Islamic. Sufism involves adhering to Shariah tightly and observing the limits of Islamic etiquette. Junayd al-Baghdadi describes Sufism as “group dhikr, listening to the Qur’an and getting carried away with ecstasy, and following the Book and Sunnah with practice.” Sari As-Saqati (d.251/865) said that Sufism is a word that encompasses three meanings:

The light of doesn't extinguish the light of scrupulousness in following the shariah, and the light of good conduct.

“Sufism does not speak of an inner knowledge that goes against the outward appearance of the Book and the Sunnah. Miracles do not lead the Sufi to enter the forbidden zone of Allah (by considering the forbidden things as permissible and indulging in them).

As Junayd al-Baghdadi describes it: “Sufism is a house, its door is the Shariah.”

Abu Hafs al-Haddad (d.260/874) said: “Sufism is all about good manners. There are specific etiquettes for each station, every circumstance, and every moment. Only those who adhere to these etiquettes can enter the realm of perfected Sufis.”

Sufism is to be on the straight path as commanded in the verse of the Qur'an "So remain on a right course as you have been commanded" (Hud, 11/112). To indicate the difficulty of remaining on the straight path, our Prophet ﷺ said: "Surah Hud has made me old" because this is where the verse that commands us to be on the straight path is located.

The most important factor in realizing the straight path commanded by the Book and Sunnah is good manners. Our Prophet ﷺ expressed that his manners and straight path were divinely inspired and a gift from Allah: "**My Lord educated me and perfected my manners.**" (Suyuti, Jami' as-Saghir, I, 12) The good manners that the Sufis describe as "a strong feeling and willpower that protects one from shameful things" are one of the important aspects they emphasize in preserving the limits of Shariah and maintaining the straight path."

6- SUFISM IS COMPLETE SURRENDER TO ALLAH AND BEING IN A STATE OF DIVINE SERVITUDE.

Some have tried to define Sufism based on the diligence of the Sufis in terms of surrender and worship:

Abu Muhammad Ruwaym (d. 303/915): "Sufism is leaving the self to the divine will of Allah."

Abu al-Husayn al-Muzayyin (d. 328/939): "Sufism is submitting to the Truth."

Abu Ali al-Rudbari (d. 322/933): "Sufism is kneeling and waiting at the door of the Beloved, even if one is expelled."

Ibn Hafif (d. 371/982): “Sufism is patiently accepting the divine decree and traversing deserts and paths with contentment from Allah.”

Abu Sahl al-Sa’luki (d. 369/979): “Sufism is abandoning objections. (to Divine Will)”

Islam means surrender. In the Quran, it is stated, “I have submitted myself (as a Muslim) to the Lord of the worlds” (Hud, 11/112), and the hadith of the Prophet, “**Embrace Islam and you will be saved,**” (Bukhari, Bad’ al-wahy 6) signifies this. Genuine servitude is submission. **Allah wants His servant to be a servant only to Him and not to anyone else. He also expects the servant not to be enslaved by their desires and emotions.** (Furqan, 25/43, Jasiyah, 45/23)

The command of “**Rabbaniyyun**” in the Quran should be understood in this sense: “**So be Rabbaniyyun (scholars who are learned and do righteous deeds) who teach the Book and its recitation.**” (Ali Imran, 3/79) A Rabbani scholar is someone who benefits from their knowledge, guards themselves against the adornments of the world, wealth, children, and lustful desires. The opposite of this is a scholar who does not benefit from their knowledge, and the Prophet has informed that such people will face severe punishment in the hereafter.

Islam prohibits a form of monasticism that completely detaches from the world, seeks isolation, and abstains from worldly pleasures, as invented by Christians. Instead, it encourages “Rabbaniyyah” (being a servant of Allah) as mentioned in the above verse.

7- SUFISM IS REACHING THE STATE OF IHSAN AND ATTAINING CLOSENESS TO ALLAH.

Based on the ultimate goal of Sufism, which is union with Allah and attaining His divine pleasure, some have defined Sufism with similar expressions:

Dhul-Nun al-Misri (d. 245/859): “People of Sufism are those who prefer Allah over everything, and Allah also prefers and elevates them above everything.”

Abu al-Husayn al-Nuri (d. 295/908): “Sufism is abandoning one’s own share for the sake of Allah’s share.”

Abu Amr al-Dimashqi (d. 320/932): “Sufism is seeing imperfections in creation and turning a blind eye to everything that falls short while beholding the perfection of Allah, who is free from all deficiencies.”

Abu Bakr al-Shibli (d. 334/946): “ Sufism embraces the belief of perceiving nothing as a partner to Allah in both the material and spiritual realms.”

The realization of reaching and experiencing closeness to Allah through insight and contemplation is the ultimate goal that Sufism aims for. It is to reach Him and be with Him.

In the Quran, these are the servants **whom Allah declares His satisfaction with and elevates to the station of divine pleasure and acceptance.** (Tawbah, 9/100)

In Sufism, the concept of Ihsan is expressed through terms such as union, **jam’** (togetherness) and intimacy. In a

hadith from Bukhari, the consciousness of union and companionship with Allah is expressed as follows:

“Allah Almighty says: I declare war on anyone who shows enmity to one of My friends. My servant does not come near Me with anything more beloved to Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him. And My servant continues to come closer to Me with nawafil (supererogatory) deeds until I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. If he asks Me for anything, I will surely grant it to him; and if he seeks refuge in Me, I will surely protect him.” (Bukhari, Riqaq, 38)

The hearing and seeing of the servant with Allah is a kind of union and gathering with Allah (Jam’). This closeness of the servant to Allah is clearly stated in several verses of the Qur’an, such as **“We are nearer to him than the jugular vein”** (Qaf, 50/16), **“Wherever you turn, there is Allah”** (Al-Baqarah, 2/115), and **“You did not throw when you who threw, it was Allah who threw”** (Al-Anfal, 8/17). Although everything is ultimately created by Allah, humans cannot see this reality because they are covered by the veil of the material world. However, those who reach union with Allah through worship, as described in the hadith, immediately understand this secret. This is the reality of tawhid that Sufism seeks to convey. The attainment of spiritual unity through love and affection resulting from worship is a spiritual union, not a physical or existential one; it is an acquisition that is gained with effort in the beginning and a divine gift at the final stages of the path.

8- SUFISM IS THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

Sufism is the spiritual life of Islam that results from worship, asceticism, and struggle, leading to the perfection and development of the soul, the unveiling of divine knowledge and spiritual truths, and the experience of love, ecstasy, zeal, and joy. For this reason, some Sufis have made such definitions, emphasizing this aspect of Sufism.

Two statements by Junayd al-Baghdadi express the spiritual state of the Sufis and the concept of divine knowledge:

“Sufism is the killing of oneself through the hand of Allah and reviving oneself with Him,” and

“Sufism is a quality that the Sufi possesses. This quality belongs to Allah in terms of reality and to creation in terms of form and appearance.”

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ lived a life of seclusion in the cave of Hira at the beginning of his Prophethood, and during the last ten days of Ramadan in Medina, he would retreat for spiritual seclusion, during which his soul would ascend, and he would recite the Qur'an with Gabriel.

His love for Allah filled his soul, and he continued to deepen his spiritual life throughout his life. During the period of spiritual seclusion before his Prophethood, people began to say, “Muhammad has fallen in love with his Lord.” (Al-Ghazali, *Ihya*, II, 280) After his Prophethood, he only became friends with those who were friends with Allah, saying, “If I were to choose a friend other than Allah, I would choose Abu Bakr.” (Bukhari, *Fadhail as-Sahabah* 3) He would say, “I am a friend of Allah, but I

do not say this to boast.” (Tirmidhi, Manâqib 16) He lived his entire life in the belief that “a person is with the one he loves,” (Bukhari, Adab, 96) and reached spiritual maturity by being constantly with his Lord. When given the choice between this world and the hereafter, he chose the latter, saying, “O Allah, I choose the highest company. I choose You.” (Ibn Hanbal, VI, 48)

His spiritual perfection was such that it required him to fear Allah as much as he loved Him. He would say, “**I am the one among you who fears Allah the most and is most mindful of Him.**” (Bukhari, Iman, 13) But this fear was blended with love.

No one could look away from his face, and the spiritual radiance on his face caused many to become Muslims, saying, “The owner of this face cannot be a liar.” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 42)

The spiritual life that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his companions lived, as described in the Qur’an and Hadith, formed the basis of the Sufi life. This life is not a zahiri (outward), ta’limi (teaching-based), or rational life, but an inner, spiritual, heart-based, intuitive life. Because it is passed down through experience and living, it is also known as “ilm al-warasat” (the knowledge of inheritance).

9- SUFISM IS A KNOWLEDGE OF INNER LIFE

Sufism is a knowledge that focuses more on the inner aspect rather than the outer form, on the heart rather than the physical appearance, and on the spiritual rather than the material world. For this reason, some have tried to define Sufism within these forms and structures.

Junayd al-Bagdadi said: “If you see a Sufi who pays attention to the outward appearance, know that his inner self is in ruin.”

Dhul-Nun al-Misri said: “The Sufi who speaks is the one who speaks words appropriate to his state. He does not speak of something that is not in himself. If he does not speak and holds his tongue, his behavior becomes the interpreter of his state and tells of his detachment from the world through his state.”

Abu Muhammad Murtaish (d. 329/940) said: “The Sufi is the one whose aspiration does not exceed his step.” In other words, he is balanced in his outward and inward appearance and does not appear to be more than what he is.

Sufism is an inner knowledge. The recognition that humans possess both a physical and a spiritual nature, and that religious orders and rulings have both an apparent and an inner aspect, has led to this conclusion. Actions that manifest themselves through external organs and those that manifest themselves from within are different. Therefore, the knowledge that examines the parts and application of worship and transactions related to bodily organs is called “Fiqh,” while the knowledge that examines the spiritual and inward actions that occur in the heart during worship and transactions, such as sincerity and humility, is called “**Fiqh al-Batin**” and “**Ilm al-Qulub**.”

According to Sufis, the “visible and invisible blessings of Allah” mentioned in the verse “Allah gives you abundant visible and invisible blessings” (Luqman, 31/20) refer to the outward blessings of obedience to Allah through bodily organs, and the inward blessings of emotions and spiritual states in the heart.

This verse and others like it demonstrate that Islamic law has both an outward and inward aspect, comprising both permission and obligation, which requires learning and transmission from heart to heart. Indeed, the attainment of Taqwa (God-consciousness) and sincerity is an inward matter of the heart, and can only be acquired by being with and under the guidance of those who possess it. The following verse provides evidence of this: “O believers, fear Allah and be with the truthful” (Tawbah:9/119). Furthermore, the Qur’an prohibits sitting with unjust and disbelieving people, stating “after you remember, do not sit with the unjust party” (Al-An’am, 6/68).

The Prophet ﷺ used to liken someone who keeps the company of good people to someone who sits in the shop of a perfume seller, and someone who keeps the company of bad people to someone who sits in the shop of a blacksmith. (Muslim, Birr 146) Both take on the fragrance or stench of the place where they sit.

Sufis believe that like worship, religious texts also have an apparent and hidden aspect. The scholars of Sunni Islam agree that the Qur’an has both an apparent and hidden meaning. However, there are differing opinions on the nature of the hidden meanings.

In addition to the aforementioned verse, Sufis consider the following verses as evidence for the existence of hidden meanings in the Qur’an: “There is nothing omitted from the Book” (Al-An’am, 6/38), “Not a single thing, wet or dry, is absent from the Book” (Al-An’am, 6/59), and “What is happening to these people that they almost fail to understand any word?” (An-Nisa, 4/78).

“In this verse, it is narrated the lack of understanding of the polytheists. Because even though they understood the literal and apparent meaning of the Qur’an that was revealed in Arabic, they could not understand its hidden meaning. However, the Qur’an encourages and invites them to think deeply. The hadith of the Prophet ﷺ: “Every verse has an outer and an inner aspect, every letter has a limit, and every limit has a beginning” confirms the existence of both the apparent and hidden meanings in the texts. The Qur’an has a direction and a science, and its new and original meanings are endless. Its meanings cannot be exhausted.

10- SUFISM IS A SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE FOR THE CHOSEN (KHAWAS).

Junayd al- Baghdadi says, “The Sufis are like a household impenetrable by others, as they remain in perpetual reliance upon Allah. Only Allah can truly know them.”

Abu Sulayman Darani (d. 215/830) defines Sufism as the deeds that befall the Sufi and their enduring state of being in the presence of Allah, in a manner known solely to Allah.

According to the widespread view among the Sufis, there are three types of knowledge that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ received from God:

- a. The knowledge of the Shariah that he taught to all of his companions.
- b. Special knowledge that he taught to some of his companions, such as the names of the hypocrites to Hudayfa Ibn Yaman. (Baihaqī, As-Sunan al-Kubra, VIII,347)

c. The knowledge that is like a secret code between him and Allah, and only he knows the meaning of it. The disjointed letters at the beginnings of surahs and ambiguous (Mutashabihat) verses in the Qur'an are examples of this type of knowledge. The Hadith, "If you knew what I knew, you would weep much and laugh little," (Bukhari, Qusuf 2) shows that the Prophet ﷺ was not obligated to convey all of the knowledge he received. Furthermore, the following Hadiths are considered evidence that the Prophet ﷺ taught certain knowledges to some of his companions privately:

aa. Abu Hurayra says: "I received two types of knowledge from the Messenger of God. I told one to the people, but if I were to reveal the other, my neck would be severed." (Bukhari, Ilm 42)

According to the Sufis, this undisclosed knowledge is a special and hidden spiritual knowledge that is connected to the Shariah and a result of love for the Prophet ﷺ.

bb. It is reported that one day Mu'adh Ibn Jabal rode behind the Prophet and was given a secret and confidential knowledge that he was not allowed to disclose to anyone else. (Bukhari, Ilm, 49)

cc. It is narrated that Allah's Messenger gave Huzayfa bin Yaman, his confidant, information about hypocrisy and hypocrites that would continue until the Day of Judgment. (Baihaqi, As-Sunan al-Kubra, VIII, 347; Câmi' Ma'mar b. Rashid, XI, 238, Beyrut 1403.)

There is a knowledge, learned from the Messenger of Allah, known as "Ilm al-hawas" (esoteric knowledge), which is

transmitted to later generations not through written or verbal means, but through spiritual inheritance, mystical experiences, and states of being, similarly **Ilm al-ladunni** is obtained through love.

While the main sources for all Islamic knowledge are the Qur'an and Sunnah, jurists and theologians use reasoning and evidence to interpret these sources, whereas Sufis use unveiling and inspiration, that is, the path of "Ilm al-ladunni". However, attaining the secret of "Ilm al-ladunni" requires reaching a certain level of spiritual maturity through worship, asceticism, and self-mortification. There are verses from the Qur'an and various Hadiths that serve as evidence for this concept. For example, during the companionship of Prophet Musa عليه السلام and Khidhr, it is seen that Musa عليه السلام ruled based on the external appearance of events, while Khidhr, through "Ilm al-ladunni", was aware of the inner dimensions and reality. (Al-Kahf, 18/65-82)

Some of the verses that serve as evidence for this are as follows: a. "Have taqwa of Allah, and Allah will teach you." (Al-Baqarah, 2/282)

b. "If you have taqwa of Allah, He will give you discrimination (to judge between right and wrong), and will cleanse you of your sins." (Anfal, 8/29)

c. "Be mindful of Allah and have faith in His Messenger, and He will grant you a double share of His mercy: He will provide for you a light by which you shall walk, and He will forgive you your sins." (Hadid, 5/28)

The concepts of “furqan”, “rahmah”, and “nur” mentioned in these verses are, in a way, “inspirations” that emerge from the “illumination of the heart” that occurs within the individual, which we can call “knowledge given as a gift from Allah”.

Some of the Hadiths that serve as evidence for this concept are as follows:

a. “Each nation has its own purified individuals who are endowed with unveiling and inspiration. One of the such individuals of this nation is Umar al-Khattab.” (Bukhari, Fadhail 16)

b. “Allah teaches the person who acts upon what they have learned what they do not know.” (Al-Isfahani, Hilya, X, 15.)

c. “For a person who sincerely worships Allah for forty days, wisdom will begin to flow from their heart to their tongue.” (Ibn Abi Shaybah, Musannaf, Volume VII, page 80, Riyadh 1409.)

While unveiling and inspiration are a means for Sufis to reach the truth, they are never the ultimate goal. This is because unveiling and inspiration only bind the individual who experiences them. A Sufi’s unveiling is like a jurist’s effort in jurisprudence. There is always the possibility of error.

One of the past Shaykhs of Al-Azhar and the masters of Sufism, Dr. Abdulhalim Mahmud (d. 1978), considers Abu Bakr Al-Qattani’s description as the most comprehensive among these descriptions, which reads:

“Sufism is purity (safa) and witnessing (mushahadah). Because purity includes all the topics such as purification of the heart, worship, asceticism, self-mortification, sincer-

ity, submission, and directing oneself to Allah. In witnessing through heart, there are all kinds of spiritual experiences, spiritual states, and knowledge of the Divine”

VI. CLASSICAL SOURCES OF SUFISM

The Sufi life and thought based on the Qur’an and Sunnah gained depth with the works written by Sufis and were systematized. The main classic sources of Sufism, which describe its fundamental topics and served as a source for later scholars, are as follows:

1- **Al-Ri’ayah li-Huquqillâh** (The Observance of Rights), by Harith b. Asad al-Muhasibi (d. 243/857), is one of the earliest Sufis whose works have survived to the present day. The book provides detailed information on Sufi and ethical topics such as showing off, pride/deception, envy, self-knowledge, etc. It describes Ri’ayah with its intricacies and makes psychological interpretations. He developed a new and original understanding of the concept of self-accounting with the understanding of “accounting before and after every action.” He is considered a source for Al-Qushayri and Al-Ghazali in the Sufi path. There are Turkish translations of the book, which has been printed many times.

2- **Khatm al-Awliya** (The Seal of the Saints), by Hakim al-Tirmidhi (d. 320/932), is considered one of the earliest representatives of Sufi thought. This work is the first to systematically deal with Prophethood and sainthood. It consists of twenty-nine chapters. In the twenty-fourth chapter of the book, Tirmidhi asks Sufi-related questions and leaves them unanswered,

saying that not everyone can talk about these matters, and talking about them would not be correct. Ibn Arabi answered these questions about three centuries later. Therefore, *Khatm al-Awliya* served as a source for Ibn Arabi. The claim and accusation that sainthood is superior to Prophethood are not included in the book. It has been published with a critical review by Osman Yahya (Beirut 1965), and translated into Turkish by Salih Cift.

3- **Al-Luma'** by Abu Nasr as-Sarraj (d. 378/988) is the first work that extensively covers the concept of Sufism, providing information on the sources and emergence of Sufi knowledge. Although it was written in an early period, the work is highly systematic. *Al-Luma'* consists of an introduction and thirteen chapters that establish the relationship between Hadith, Fiqh, and Sufism, which is quite interesting. The information provided under the heading of "Adab" about the wisdom and secrets of worship has been ground breaking for subsequent scholars. It has been published numerous times in Arabic (Cairo 1960) and I translated this book into Turkish as "Islamic Sufism" (Istanbul 1996, 2012).

4- **At-Taarruf** by Abu Bakr Kalabadhi (d. 380/990) covers the topics of Islamic faith and Sufi concepts. Kalabadhi does not want to see Sufism as an institution with only empty words but seeks to give it a fundamental identity. He is interested in reconciling Sunni Sufis with Sunni beliefs. The work is based on Imam "Adham's (Abu Hanifa) *Fiqh al-Akbar*. The Arabic version of the book is composed of five small sections. It has

been printed numerous times and has been translated into Turkish by Suleyman Uludag (Istanbul, 1979).

5- **Qut al-Qulub** by Abu Talib al-Makki (d. 386/996) explains the topics of asceticism, worship, obedience, and practical aspects of Sufism. Although the work is not very rich in terms of Sufi concepts, it is quite rich in terms of Hadith, wise words of Sufis, and narrations. It has been a source of inspiration for some later authors, especially Al-Ghazali. The book has been printed many times, and its publication in two volumes by Said Nasib Makarim (Beirut 1995). There are two translations available, one by Muharrem Tan (Istanbul 1999) and the other by Yakup Cicek and Dilaver Selvi (Istanbul 2003).

6- **Tahdhib al-Asrar** by Abdul Malik Khargushi (d. 407/1016) covers the meaning of the term Sufism, the characteristics of Malamatiyya, spiritual topics such as knowledge and love, stations such as repentance, asceticism, patience, contentment, and trust, the methods of Sufis for deriving judgments from the Qur'an and Sunnah, worship such as prayer, fasting, and Hajj, etiquette of Sufis for eating, drinking, and dressing, as well as topics such as **Sama**, ecstasy, miracles, and dreams. This Arabic work was first published with scientific editing by Bassam Muhammad Baroud (Abu Dhabi 1999).

7- **Al-Risala al-Qushayriyya** by Abdulkarim Qushayri (d. 465/1072). Qushayri's Risala has an important place among the classics in terms of systematizing Sunni Sufism and rejecting non-Sunni Sufism. The work consists of an introduction and fifty-five chapters. The introduction includes discussions on the oneness of Allah and some theological issues. In the first

chapter, eighty-three notable Sufis are introduced. In the following chapters, Sufi states and stations are described in a manner that is free from exaggeration. Sufis with controversial situations among scholars, such as Hallaj, are not mentioned. Qushayri's *Risala* has been highly regarded in the world of Sunni Sufism, to the extent that it has overshadowed its predecessors, has been printed numerous times, and has been translated into different languages with many commentaries written on it. Besides the Ottoman Turkish translations, it has also been translated into Turkish by Tahsin Yazıcı, Ali Arslan, and Suleyman Uludag and published separately.

8- **Kash al-Mahjub** by Ali Ibn Uthman Jullabi al-Hujwiri (d. 465/1072) is in Persian. The book consists of two parts. In the first part, he explains the science, poverty, Sufism, the essence of Sufism, the practice of wearing a patched robe (*hirka*), different thoughts of Sufis about poverty and Sufism, and the subject of *Malamah*. Then, he mentions the biographies of the caliphs, Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, and ascetics from the *Tabieen* generation. After that, he discusses the Sufi sects, which he scrutinizes in twelve sections. In the second part, he mainly talks about *ma'rifa*, *tawhid*, faith, prayer, *zakat*, fasting, and the wisdom of *hajj*, as well as the concepts of Sufism and subjects of *sohba*. The book has been translated into Arabic by Is'ad Abdul Hadi Kandil (Cairo 1974) and into Turkish by Suleyman Uludag (Istanbul 1982).

9- **Al-Bayad wa as-Sawad** by Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Sirjani (d. 470/1977) includes the topics of Sufi ethics, the explanation of the term Sufism, the essence of Sufism *tawhid*, *ma'rifa*, repentance, *zuhd*, the etiquette of wearing a patched robe (*hirka*),

the work ethics of Sufis, eating less, servitude, etiquette of sohba, desiring to be in charge, futuwwa, generosity, spiritual states and ranks, sincerity, gratitude, dhikr, love, miracles, sama, **fana** and **baqa**, and the impurity of Sufis. This Arabic book has been published by Muhsin Pûrmuhtar (Tehran 2011).

10- **Ihya Ulum al-Din** by Al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111) *Ihya Ulum al-Din* is a four-volume work written to revive and reinvigorate Islamic sciences. Al-Ghazali was a master of theology, philosophy, and jurisprudence, but his focus in this work was on Sufism. The first volume, titled *Rub' al-Ibadat*, covers ten topics under the headings of knowledge, worship, belief, Qur'anic recitation, remembrance, and night worship.

The second volume, "*Rub' al-Adat*," emphasizes the importance of virtuous individuals in fostering a robust foundation for family, state, society, and economic harmony. The third volume, *Rub' al-Muhlikat*, emphasizes the spiritual and moral dimension of human education. The flaws of the tongue, such as backbiting, the attachment to wealth and position, as well as vices like hypocrisy, arrogance, and self-conceit, are discussed.

The fourth volume, *Rub' al-Munjiyat*, discusses topics such as repentance, patience, gratitude, fear and hope, poverty, reliance on God, love, enthusiasm, contentment, intention, sincerity, vigilance, contemplation, death, and the afterlife. *Ihya* is one of the most widely read works in the Islamic world and has been translated into various languages, including Turkish.

11- **Awarif al-Maarif** Abu Hafis Umar al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234) *Awarif al-Maarif* is a sixty-three-chapter work that outlines the principles of Sufism in accordance with Sha-

riah law. Al-Suhrawardi intended to dispel misunderstandings about Sufism and to promote an understanding of its true principles. Unlike earlier works, this book also discusses topics such as the life of a darwish in a sufi lodge, the relationship between the Sufi master and the disciple, and the etiquette of seclusion. The information it provides about Malamatis and Qalandaris is also a distinguishing feature. In the Arab world, it was printed as the fifth volume of *Ihya* for a long time. The book has been translated into Turkish by different people.

12- **Fusus al-Hikam** by Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi's (d. 638/1240) *Fusus al-Hikam* is a comprehensive work that consists of twenty-seven chapters, each dedicated to the wisdom of one of the twenty-seven Prophets mentioned in the Quran. The book begins with a brief introduction, followed by an explanation of the divine wisdom in the story of Adam. Each Prophet is associated with a unique wisdom, which is then explained. Finally, the special wisdom of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is presented. According to Ibn Arabi, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the most perfect existence of humanity, and existence begins and ends with him. The key concept on which the book is based is the *Haqiqat al-Muhammadiyya*. Many commentaries have been written on the *Fusus* over the centuries, and the work has been translated into many languages. A. Avni Konuk's translation and commentary is one of the important translations and commentaries published in recent years.

14- **Mathnawi** by Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi (d. 672/1273) *Mathnawi* is a work of poetry, written in couplets that rhyme internally and externally. The book is a collection of stories,

anecdotes, and poems that convey spiritual messages and teachings. The work covers a wide range of topics, such as love, faith, devotion, and the quest for God. It is considered one of the greatest works of Persian literature and has been translated into many languages. Mawlana Rumi wrote his work, which he saw as a commentary on the Qur'an, as a guidance book like the Qur'an. He aimed to touch people's hearts by using many stories and wise representations, and tried to show them a horizon and instill hope. Mawlana Rumi actually longs for people who will understand his words correctly. His work has become popular, read, memorized and translated into various languages, and perhaps hundreds of commentaries have been written on it. Ve-led Izbudak's translation has been published among MEB Oriental Classics. Tahir al-Mawlawi's commentary, although incomplete, is one of the widest and most popular Turkish commentaries. Sefik Can has both completed this commentary and made a new translation.

B. THE RELATIONSHIP OF SUFISM WITH OTHER SCIENCES

The independence of Islamic sciences began in the 2nd century AH. Initially, all Islamic sciences were integrated and their specificities and principles were not yet apparent. After the emergence of Sufism as an independent science, such as Fiqh, Tafsir, and hadith, the interaction between the sciences continued.

Islam values meaning and spirit more than form and appearance. As Sufism deals with the inner and spiritual aspects of religion, it is related to almost all Islamic sciences.

It is impossible to isolate the Islamic sciences from one another. Sufism, being a religious science by nature, is related to both Islamic sciences and social sciences, literature, and fine arts due to its all-encompassing nature.

I. SUFISM AND ISLAMIC SCIENCES

1. *SUFISM AND TAFSIR*

Tafsir is a scholarly discipline that interprets Qur'anic verses by considering their specific contextual reasons for revelation. There are two common methods in tafsir, namely Narration-Based Tafsir (riwayah) and Opinion-Based Tafsir (dirayah)."

In the first type of Tafsir, the verses of the Quran are explained from different transmission sources. Those sources include the Quran itself, which explains what is said by referring to other Quranic Ayahs dealing with the same subject matter.

This is the second kind of Tafsir of the Quran, which is based on reasoning and on what is called 'Ijtihad' rather than being based on the transmission of knowledge. Fundamentally, Ijtihad derives from the comparison of verses, traditions, and sayings of the Companions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, not from an assumption that they are being interpreted randomly. Thus, by comparing and contrasting the verses of the Quran, scholars arrive at a specific interpretation... and there are other types of Tafsir depending on the categorization.

Sufism as a science is related to tafsir science both in terms of its source being the Qur'an and Sunnah, and the

“symbolic” (Ishari) method it developed and used in addition to the two methods in tafsir. The “symbolic method” used by Sufi commentators assists in better understanding some of the ambiguous verses. Sufis have produced separate works on symbolic tafsir. Some of these tafsirs are as follows:

- a. Abu Abdul Rahman Sulami’s (d. 412/1021) “Haqaiq al-Tafsir”
- b. Abdul Karim al-Qushayri’s (d. 465/1072) “Lathaif al-Isharat”
- c. Abd al-Razzaq al-Kashani’s (d. 730/1330) “Ta’wilat al-Qur’an”
- d. Nimetullah Nahcivanı ‘s (d. 902/1496) “al-Fawatih al-Ilahiyya”
- e. Bursali Ismail Hakki’s (d. 1137/1725) “Ruh al-Bayan” (see Suleyman Ates, *İşâri Tefsir Okulu*, Ankara 1974)

2. *SUFISM AND HADITH*

Hadith is a science that examines the qualities and characteristics of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his sayings, deeds, tacit approval and disposition. The relationship between Sufism and the science of hadith is similar to that between Tafsir (Qur’anic exegesis) and Hadith. In other words, the spiritual and ascetic life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, which forms the basis of Sufi life, as well as his sayings on this subject, have brought Sufism and the science of hadith closer together. The *Kitab al-Zuhd* (Book of Asceticism), written by both hadith scholars and Sufis before the emergence of Sufism as a science, served as a bridge between the science of Hadith and Sufism.

It is known that Sufis have been involved in the science of Hadith since the beginning, and that most of the early Zahid-Sufis were hadith scholars. Therefore, Sufism and Hadith have a kinship. However, it is difficult to say that Sufis showed the same level of rigor as hadith scholars when it comes to the narration of Hadiths, because while Hadith scholars learned and narrated hadiths with certain meticulousness for memorization and narration purposes, Sufis evaluated hadiths as a means of guidance and moral advice. Hence, they also used weak hadiths in their books.

Another connection between Sufism and the science of Hadith, as in the science of tafsir, is the interpretation of Hadiths in an allegorical style and the compilation of collections of forty hadiths on various Sufi topics. Most Sufis have used Sufi interpretations of Hadiths by writing numerous works for this purpose. The first Sufi hadith commentary can be attributed to Hakim al-Tirmidhi (d. 320/932) and his book, *Nawadir al-Usul*. Other scholars who contributed to this field include Abu Bakr al-Kalabadhi (d. 380/990) with his *Bahjat al-Fuqaha*, and Ahmad al-Rifa'i' (d. 578/1183) with his *Halaat Ahl al-Haqq Ma'a Allah. Şerhu hadîs-i erbain*" by Sadreddin Konevî (d. 673/1274) "*Behcetü'n-nufûs*" by Ibn Abi Cemre (d. 699/1300)

3. *SUFISM AND JURISPRUDENCE*

Imam Abu Hanifa defines jurisprudence as "knowing what is for and against the self." The goal of jurisprudence is to regulate the relationships between humans, society, and things. During the era of the *Tabieen* and *Tabi' al-Tabieen*, when knowledge had not yet become independent, the term

“jurisprudence” generally referred to “knowledge” in general. However, later on, the term “al-Fiqh al-Akbar” referred to the knowledge of creed, “al-Fiqh al-Wijdani” or “Fiqh al-Batin” and “Ilmu al-Qulub” referred to the knowledge of purifying the self, ethical education, and Sufism, and only “Fiqh” or “Fiqh al-Dhohir” referred to the name of the knowledge that examines the legal rulings and outward actions related to worship, transactions, and punishments. Therefore, Sufism and jurisprudence are intertwined in their origins and development.

While jurists examine issues such as prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, marriage, divorce, trade, and punishment and develop their rulings, Sufis strive to present the inner aspects of spiritual rulings such as asceticism, piety, and sincerity as vivid examples to the public and try to fill the gap left by jurists.

One of the subjects that jurisprudence examines is “maqasid” and “Hikmat al-Tashri’iyyah” (the wisdom behind legal rulings). Sufism generally considers the wisdom in worship and obedience as “spiritual subtleties.” Topics such as “Asrar al-salat” and “Asrar al-sawm” are included in Sufi books.

As the masters of outward jurisprudence derive the outward rulings of the Shariah from their textual evidence, Sufis also derive the inner rulings of the heart and inner world from the hidden evidence of the Quran and sunnah. Sufism seeks to understand and explain the external subjects that jurisprudence examines from within. Just as there is an outward form of worship and associated rulings that make up the subject matter of jurisprudence, there is also an inner aspect of tranquillity and humility that makes up the subject matter of Sufism. The tendency towards good or evil in the outward

actions and movements of the body is related to the health or corruption of the heart, as the health or corruption of the heart affects every part of the body.

While jurisprudence and Sufism are the same in terms of the subjects they examine, their means and methods are different. Both derive from the Qur'an and Sunnah, but jurisprudence follows the path of reasoning and argumentation with the mind, while Sufis follow the path of spiritual experience and illumination of the heart.

4. *SUFISM AND THEOLOGY*

The science of theology is defined as “a science that discusses the essence and attributes of Allah, issues related to Prophethood and Prophets, the origin and destination of the creatures in the universe according to Islam.” The issues related to Allah, human beings, and the universe, which fall under this definition, are also the subject matter of Sufism. However, while theology examines these topics by using reason based on Islamic law, that is, the Qur'an and Sunnah, Sufism attempts to analyse them through spiritual experiences using the path of unveiling and inspiration within the same framework of the Islamic law.

The goal of the science of theology is to convince people that Islam is the true religion and to respond to criticisms and objections directed towards Islam. Throughout history, there have been significant debates between theologians and Sufis who address the same topics. There are also scholars, such as Al-Ghazali, who have attempted to reconcile these two sciences.

5. *SUFISM AND ETHICS*

Ethics (Akhlaq) is derived from the word “Khulq,” meaning character, or morality. It is the name given to the correction of bad habits known as “immoral” and the natural development of good habits known as “morality” in a person without any coercion. Ethics is a product of conscience and ensures the spiritual well-being and inner peace of an individual. In Islam, the emergence of ethics as a separate science is relatively new. The practical understanding of ethics in Islam has been mostly accomplished by Sufis and represented by them. The theoretical/philosophical understanding of ethics, on the other hand, has been developed and represented by Islamic philosophers.

Sufism, as an educational institution, is occupied with the purification of the self, the purification of the heart, and the beautification of ethics, and thus, has been defined as ethics by some.

The main purpose of purifying the heart and self in Sufism is to enable the individual to perform good deeds without encountering any internal obstacles and to internalize ethical principles without coercion. Therefore, Sufism aims to elevate ethics. To achieve inner peace, it is necessary to be freed from the pressure of material desires and wants. Therefore, Sufism and ethics are intertwined.

II. *SUFISM AND SOCIAL SCIENCES*

Sufism is related to social sciences such as philosophy, sociology, psychology, education, and economics in terms of its methods and subjects, as well as its origins, sources, and

topics. This relationship is sometimes direct and sometimes indirect.

1. *SUFISM AND PHILOSOPHY*

Philosophy is the pursuit of understanding the essence and truth of objects, and the effort to explain the reasons for the existence of things and to understand oneself. Philosophy seeks to solve problems related to topics such as existence, God, and humans using the data of reason. Since Sufism is a science that examines topics such as existence, humans, and God, it is related to philosophy in terms of its subject matter. However, the methods used by Sufism and philosophy to solve problems are different. The tools that Sufism uses to examine the aforementioned topics are the Book and the Sunnah, as well as the ways of unveiling and knowledge called “Ilm al-Ladunni”.

Sufism is a science beyond reason, or “Ma Wara’ al-Aql”. It is not a rational science like philosophy. Although some Western scholars and some Turkish authors have tried to examine Sufism as a philosophical science by looking at certain principles such as “unity of existence” and “unity of witnessing”, it is not possible to see Sufism as one with philosophy in terms of its methods, goals, and results.

2. *SUFISM AND SOCIOLOGY*

Sociology is a science that examines the issues that determine the development of society and groups, and studies the causes and effects of social events. Sufism serves not only at the individual level but also at the societal level through the insti-

tutions it establishes. As a popular movement, Sufism has used the orders and tekkes as social institutions. Through Sufism's unifying essence, people of all levels, whether knowledgeable or ignorant, rich or poor, have become one. The tekkes and other Sufi institutions are an integral part of social life. Understanding the social aspects of Sufism is important in showing how society can be organized and how countries can be conquered. Being able to bring together people of all classes is a great and superior characteristic. Sufism has been practically implementing "Human Rights" for centuries, which modern sociology has failed to achieve. Tekkes and other Sufi institutions are therefore significant sociological establishments. Researchers who wish to study the sociological aspect of Islam cannot overlook Sufism.

3. *SUFISM AND PSYCHOLOGY*

Psychology is a science that studies the motivations behind human behavior. Psychology aims to understand all aspects of life, ourselves, other people, children, to adapt to environmental conditions, and to analyze the problems that arise in human relationships. While psychology deals only with the aspect of the commanding or evil-commanding soul that exists in all humans, Sufism examines all the levels of the soul.

Sufism is closely related to psychology because it teaches people first to know themselves, then their Lord, works to solve spiritual or inner problems in the spiritual life, produces solutions to problems in human relationships, and aims to achieve individual spiritual maturity. Hasan Basri and the great Sufis who followed him called the spiritual wealth gained

from inner activities “**Latifahs.**” The Sufi’s action consists of two parts, subjective and objective. A Sufi who has achieved spiritual perfection from a spiritual perspective can help other people’s spiritual growth with his or her own efforts.

A Sufi believes that they have emerged as a manifestation of divine love in this world, and it is their duty to reflect this love towards others. Sufi psychology aims to untangle the knot of the conflict between man and the universe. Through internal introspection, Sufism seeks to identify the causes of human suffering. By temporarily retreating into “seclusion” and then reintegrating with the universe, Sufism aims to help individuals distance themselves from those causes and find harmony once more.

4. *SUFISM AND EDUCATION*

Pedagogy is the endeavor to cultivate and harness the full potential and capabilities of individuals for their own benefit, as well as for the betterment of society and humanity as a whole. Given that Sufism represents spiritual education within Islam, it is only natural for it to intersect with the broader concept of education. The examination of how Sufism guides individuals with diverse temperaments based on their inherent qualities greatly enriches the educational dimension of Islam.

The most important feature of Sufism from an educational point of view is that it tries to educate people in a family warmth by taking the example of the family system. In the Sufi understanding, the Shaykh is the father, his wife is the mother, and the disciples are like the children of that family.

Another distinctive feature of Sufi pedagogy is the education through the example. Tekkes and tariqas have been important institutions in the lives of Muslims. Ahmad Yesevi's dervishes who wandered around the Central Asian steppes have been instrumental in the guidance of many Turks. Even the most crude and ignorant people have been melted and educated in the warm and embracing pot of Sufism.

Tekkes and tariqas are institutions where Muslims have been trained in religious and moral terms for centuries and have been educated in terms of aesthetics and arts. Suitable environments have been provided in tekkes to develop people's special abilities and talents. Futuwwa organizations aimed to raise people in a more disciplined and ethical way.

5. *SUFISM AND ECONOMICS*

Economics is the study of how to fulfill infinite human needs with finite resources. When an individual believes that their needs are limitless and does not set boundaries, they can become consumed by the pursuit of fulfilling their desires. However, those who know how to limit their needs and desires will avoid falling into such a predicament.

The "one morsel, one garment" understanding of Sufism, which is often misunderstood as being condemned to a consumption-based economy, actually shows the ultimate limit of consumption. It also suggests the need for virtue and altruism by limiting human needs and desires. Sufism, which seems to contradict a consumption-based understanding and teaches not to value worldly possessions and to rely on faith after

relying on material causes, provides moral peace and makes it easier for people in poverty to endure.

It could be argued that the misunderstood idea of trust in God (**tawakkul**) in Sufism has caused some economic setbacks. However, it is known that Sufism generally has a positive effect on the economy. Indeed, members of Sufi orders who work with sincerity in their businesses and crafts have contributed to the development of economic life. Some of the members of these orders were peasants, some were urban artisans and craftsmen. If the members of the Ahilik organization are also included, it can be said that the economic structure and artistic activities of the Ottoman Empire were controlled by Sufi groups.

III. SUFISM AND FINE ARTS

Fine arts, known as “Sanâyi-i nefise (in Turkish),” have always been associated with Sufism. In fact, people living in this realm are generally divided into three groups according to their abilities:

a. Those who are strong in their intellectual side tend to lean towards intellectual and theoretical research and are inclined towards knowledge.

b. Those with strong emotional sides; those whose emotional world is rich and powerful. They are inclined towards fine arts such as calligraphy, painting, music, literature, and poetry.

c. Those with skills and a tendency towards craftsmanship.

Sufis are usually among the second group of people. It is natural to think that Sufis, whose profession is the realm of emotions, excitement, and the heart, would engage in fine arts. This is because fine arts are the result of emotions and excitement. It is impossible for someone who does not feel emotions to write poetry or engage in something related to art.

1. SUFISM AND LITERATURE-POETRY

During the early periods of Sufism, there was no remarkable development in terms of literature, and the first Sufis generally expressed their religious feelings and emotions in short sentences and concise phrases rather than showing an interest in poetry. Therefore, the first works that appeared in Sufi literature were prose. The language of Sufism in the early centuries was Arabic. From the 10th century onwards, Persian became the language of Sufi literature, and from the 12th century onwards, Turkish was also used.

Prayers, hymns, elegies, poetry about the prophet, litanies, invocations, and panegyrics constitute the subject matter of Sufi literature. Sufi writers such as Al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111), Ibn Arabi (d. 638/1240), Ibn Farid (d. 632/1235), Ibn Ataullah al-Iskandari (d. 709/1309), Yafi'i (d. 768/1367), Abu Hayyan (d. 745/1344), and Al-Nablusi (d. 1143/1731) have created masterpieces in the field of Arabic Sufi literature in both prose and poetry.

Among the Persian-speaking writers and poets, Rudegi (d. 329/940), Sanai (d. 525/1131), Anvari (d. 585/1189), Fariduddin

Attar (d. 618/1221), Mawlana Rumi (d. 672/1273), Shaykh Sa'di (d. 692/1292), Sultan Veled (d. 712/1312), and Hafiz Shirazi (d. 792/1390) are among the most notable.

Turkish Sufi literature can be examined in two categories: Tekke Literature and Divan Literature.

a. Tekke Literature

It is represented by Sufis who usually use syllabic meter, are unconcerned with art, and recite poetry of a pedagogical nature. Ahmad Yesevi (d. 562/1166), Yunus Emre (d. 720/1320), Haci Bayram Veli (d. 833/1430), Ashrafoglu Rumî (d. 874/1470), Uftade (d. 988/1580), Aziz Mahmud Hudayi (d. 1038/1628), and Erzurumlu Ibrahim Hakkı (d. 1194/1780) are among them.

b. Diwan Literature

Diwan poets, who usually wrote in the Arabic meter "aruz" with poetic language, are the authors of this type of literature. The most prominent among them are Nizami (d. 611/1214), Seyhi (d. 832/429), Hayreti (d. 941/1534), Fuzuli (d. 963/1556), Nev'i (d. 1007/1599), Baki (d. 1008/1600), Atayi (d. 1044/1635), Nef'i (d. 1044/1635), Naili (d. 1077/1666), Nesati (d. 1085/1674), Fasihi Ahmad Dede (d. 1111/1699), Nabi (d. 1124/1712), Nahifi (d. 1151/1738), Shaykh Galib Dede (d. 1213/1799), and Yenisehirli Avni (d. 1883).

The Turkish historian of literature, Nihad Sami Banarlı states, "Sufi literature gave birth to our literature. It was Sufism that brought forth, developed, and matured Turkish literature."

2. *SUFISM AND MUSIC*

In the early period when the place of music in religion was being debated, Sufis were generally not fond of music. However, starting from the third century after Hijrah, Sufis became interested in music and made it a part of their practice. They began to believe that music had a quality that stimulated feelings and excitement, and brought humans closer to Allah. The first Sufis such as Shibli, Harith al-Muhasibi, Junayd al-Baghdadi and Dhul-Nun praised the sama (Sufi dance) and regularly attended its sessions, openly declaring its powerful effect in elevating the spirit. This topic is also addressed at length by As-Sarraj al-Luma, Abu Bakr Al-Kalabadhi al-Taaruf, Qushayri in *Risala*, Al-Ghazali in *Ihya*, and Al-Suhrawardi in *Awarif al-Maarif*.

The Qur'an does not explicitly provide a clear ruling on the permissibility or prohibition of music. Various hadiths present different perspectives, with some indicating the permissibility of forms such as sama (spiritual music) and music, while others express prohibition. Therefore, both Sufis and those opposing Sufism have interpreted these hadiths to confirm their own beliefs.

Music has been particularly popular in Mevlevi lodges. Music and musical instruments used during dhikr (Sufi remembrance) have integrated Sufism with music. With the exception of the Naqshbandi order, most tariqas (Sufi orders) have been favorable to music and have trained many musicians in their lodges. The title "Dede," which is given to great music

masters, has a Sufi meaning. “Dede” means a dervish who has completed his training in the Mevlevi Sufi order.

3. *SUFISM AND ARCHITECTURE*

Architecture is not only a matter of feeling and excitement, but also a matter of calculation and geometry. It is the manifestation of both emotional and mental abilities in stone. The level that Sufism reaches in terms of sound, speech, movement and lines is much higher than the level it reaches in architecture. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that Sufism has been influential in the emergence of many important architectural works.

Sufism has paved the way for the establishment of new institutions with names such as **Ribat**, **Tekke**, **Dargah**, **Asitane**, **Savmea**, **Zawiyya** and **Khanqah** for the Shaykhs to perform dhikr ceremonies, as well as for the construction of institutions such as Imarathanes, which were built to feed visitors around tombs and mausoleum buildings constructed after the death of great Sufis and has been influential in the emergence of a new architectural style.

Muslims, who constructed their mosques and prayer halls with strong foundations, often built their tekkes and dargahs in more humble conditions, tailored to their own traditions and practices. Within these establishments, there were various dedicated spaces, such as khalwa rooms (solitary meditation rooms), dervish cells (living quarters for dervishes), **tevhidhane** (places for recitation of the unity of God and the names of God), and samahanes (spaces for spiritual music and whirling

ceremonies). On the other hand, larger dargahs, resembling comprehensive campuses, encompassed multiple educational institutions. The samahanes and other units within these complexes contributed to the emergence of new architectural styles specific to their respective functions.

4. *SUFISM AND CALLIGRAPHY*

Since images and pictures were not welcomed in the Islamic world due to religious considerations, Muslim artists turned their natural abilities into *husn-i hat* (in Turkish), which is beautiful writing, and *tezhib*, which is decoration. Tekkes served as specialized areas where fine arts developed and institutionalized. The greatest calligraphers and masters of gilding, Islamic and Turkish art received patronage and support in the Sufi circles and they trained their heirs and successors there. Karahisari (d.963/1556), Rakim (d.1241/1826), Yesarizade (d.1849), Sefik Bey (d.1880), Hasan Rida (d.1920), and Altunbezer (d.1946) are masters who emerged in this environment.

Training in the Sufi path, as well as learning calligraphy and decoration, require enduring hardships. They cultivate patience and instill in individuals a sense of surrender. Just as Sufism necessitates guidance from a master or Shaykh, calligraphy and decoration also require the guidance of a skilled instructor. Even if individuals attempt to practice these arts on their own without proper guidance, they may not achieve significant results.

In addition to these, Sufi thought has had a profound influence on various handicrafts, including carving, inlay,

bookbinding, embroidery, weaving, and knitting. Some Sufis have delved into the field of astronomy, seeking to unveil the secrets of the stars. The Qur'anic verses regarding the creation of the universe have inspired their research in this area. It is known that Sufis also showed interest in chemistry and alchemy, but they primarily utilized this knowledge as a tool for self-discipline. Furthermore, Sufis have demonstrated an interest in mathematics.

5. *SUFISM AND FOLKLORE*

Folklore means “popular culture”. It covers a wide range of topics from food and clothing to songs, proverbs, and lullabies. The Sufi culture that encompassed all aspects of religious and social life during the Seljuk and Ottoman periods played an important role in the formation of our folklore. From the common “eyvallah” greeting among the people to the “hu hu” greeting used by women to call each other, and the lullabies that mothers sing to their children with the phrase “may he sleep and grow up hu”, all of these are the products of Sufi culture. Many materials used in homes and village rooms, from the tables and bowls on the table to the rice bowls, are traditions that have been nourished by Sufi culture and have found their place in our folklore.

C. *SUFISM AND THE ESSENCE OF DEVOTION*

Human beings are composed of both body and soul. A person is first made of mud, and becoming human and taking on the title of Khalifah (vicegerent of God) is only possible with the breath of the soul. When the soul separates from the

body, the body becomes worthless once again. The beginning of the Khalifah is with the breath of the soul in humans. The soul is a divine wind, a breeze, an energy. Allah the Almighty expresses His divine purpose when He says to His angels, **“I will create a Khalifah on earth.”** (Al-Baqarah, 2/30) Then, in the verses that describe the creation process of Adam, He says to the angels, **“When I breathe my spirit into him, you must prostrate yourselves before him in respect.”** (Hijr, 15/29) The soul is from the spiritual realm of command. (Isra, 17/85)

Everything has a soul, just like humans. The worlds, the earth, the countries, and even the cities are believed to have souls. Worship also has a soul. Worship is completed with the soul. When the religious practices of Islam are examined one by one, it can be seen that each of them has a body and a soul. The concepts of Islam, Iman, and Ihsan mentioned in the Hadith of Gabriel define the faith, worship, and moral principles of the believers. The body of Islam is the religion, and the soul of Islam is faith. Ihsan is the essence of faith, the soul of morality. Just as there is a part of worship that belongs to the outer organs, there is also a part that belongs to the soul and the heart. This spiritual and heart-related aspect is what makes worship and deeds righteous. This is exactly where Sufism functions. Let's take a closer look at these:

1. THE SPIRIT OF TAWHID:

The word Tawhid or Shahada has a body and a soul. The part that comes out of the mouth and consists of letters is the body, and the meaning and energy within it is the soul. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, while praying in the Mosque of the

Prophet, once told a companion who said “*Rabbana lakal hamd hamdan kathîran toyyiban mubarakan fih*” after getting up from Ruku’, “I saw thirty-something angels competing to record the reward for the words you uttered.” (Bukhari, azan 126) There are about thirty letters in this sentence, and it is recited in the Du’a (supplication) part of the prayer. So, it means that there is a spiritual and metaphysical environment created by an angel for each letter. According to this situation, it is necessary to think in accordance with the spirit and energy of the environment created by the fact of the blessed word “There is no deity but He” (Al Imran, 3/18).

2. THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER:

The essence of prayer lies in the reverence and sincerity of intention. It serves as a profound lesson for believers to embrace silence and introspection. Prayer, akin to other acts of worship, encompasses both a physical/formal dimension and a spiritual dimension.

The requirements of prayer include purification from impurity, covering of nakedness, facing the qiblah, observing the prescribed time; the pillars of prayer include the opening takbir, standing, recitation, bowing, prostration, and the final sitting, all of which are related to the body. The sincerity mentioned among its requirements and the reverence that is said to ensure the success of prayer according to the Qur’an are the soul of prayer. As the verse says: “The believers have truly succeeded: those who are reverent in their prayers.” (Mu’minun, 23/1-2)

The validity of deeds and acts of worship is related to the sincerity and sincerity of the intentions, which are the soul of the acts. Therefore, it is said that “ Actions are according to intentions.” (Bukhari, *Bad’ al-wahy*, 1) An act or act of worship performed without pure intentions in the heart, although it may meet all the necessary conditions outwardly, is considered soulless. The desired result cannot be achieved.

There is a prayer that can be likened to wings, enabling us to soar, and like armor, providing protection for those who engage in it. When performed with sincerity, reverence, and a resolute intention to remember the Covenant of “**Alastu**” (the covenant with God), this prayer shields individuals from evil influences and fosters their spiritual growth. Reflecting upon the words of the Qur’an, it becomes evident that prayer serves as a barrier against immorality and wrongdoing, as stated in Surah Ankabut, verse 45: “Indeed, prayer prevents immorality and wrongdoing.”

There is a prayer that is like a trap and burden for the one who prays. The ostentation and lack of sincerity within it, as well as the soullessness within, cause the person to stumble. As mentioned in the verse: “ Surely the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but He outwits them. When they stand up for prayer, they do it half-heartedly only to be seen by people—hardly remembering Allah at all.” (An-Nisa, 4/142)

A valuable act of worship performed without reverence, sincerity, or mindfulness is, in a sense, one-winged and will cause its owner to fall. This is because acts of worship can only be evaluated according to the state of one’s heart. In a hadith,

even the most virtuous acts, such as teaching knowledge, generosity, and martyrdom, were rendered soulless and thus useless to their owners without sincerity. (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 4)

Pray so as not to forget me,” is indicated in verse (Taha, 25/14), which signifies that the main purpose of prayer is divine remembrance and to recall the Covenant of Alastu. Indeed, all forms of worship such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and pilgrimage are witnesses to the pact of pre-eternity.

3. THE SPIRIT OF FASTING:

It is taqwa. Fasting is, above all, a lesson in self-discipline for the believer. Although it appears to be a completely material, physical and bodily act in terms of its appearance and timing, the emphasis on piety in the command to fast declares its soul: “O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may attain piety.” (Al-Baqarah, 2/183).

The purpose of fasting is not merely to experience hunger, but rather to attain piety or taqwa. Taqwa, similar to charity, emerges after faith and enhances the significance and value of worship by instilling a consciousness of being in union with Allah. Therefore, fasting, when infused with the spirit of piety, empowers one to gain control over their heart and other bodily organs. By fostering a sense of piety, fasting cultivates empathy and mindfulness. Among all acts of worship, fasting embodies the highest level of the secret of goodness, as it lacks any element of ostentation. When an individual refrains from actions that could break their fast, even in situations where no one is

watching, they are effectively training themselves in sincerity and honesty.

The “furqan” that piety in fasting brings to humans allows them to become aware of many things they had not noticed before. For example, with the awareness that fasting brings, humans begin to notice the hungry, the poor, the needy, and everything that is subject to mercy. Allah says, “If you are pious towards Allah, He gives you furqan/awareness.” (Anfal, 8/29)

4. THE SPIRIT OF ZAKAT:

Purification. Purification is achieved through the training of purification in zakat, which enables the sharing of wealth with others. Allah commands: “Take Sadaqah (alms) from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it, and invoke Allah for them. Verily! Your invocations are a source of tranquility for them” (Tawbah, 9/103).

The concept of purification in this verse is both material, as in the cleaning of wealth, and spiritual, as in the cleansing of the heart from diseases such as miserliness. The verses that discuss spending in the way of Allah also emphasize that the goal of spending should be the pleasure of Allah and thus be spiritual, internal and emotional: “We feed you only for the sake of Allah and expect from you neither reward nor thanks” (Insan, 76/9).

One who believes that the poor have a right to the wealth of the rich finds themselves involved in activities related to giving zakat and cannot resist giving. (Muminun, 23/14) The practice of charitable giving is founded on the belief that “everything

belongs to Allah". Giving can be challenging, as human nature often leans more towards acquisition than sharing. However, purification can only be achieved through this act of giving. To part with something as valuable as wealth, one must first understand that it doesn't belong to them, but to Allah, and that they are merely stewards of it. Similarly, just as a tree cannot be transformed into furniture without first being stripped of its bark and sawn, the wealth possessor's spiritual and emotional growth remains stagnant until the rights of the less fortunate are fulfilled from that wealth.

5. THE SPIRIT OF HAJJ:

Hajj is a form of worship that revolves around specific time, place, and participants, guided by the principles of "ihram". This emphasis is highlighted in the verse describing Hajj: "The months of Hajj are well known. Whoever undertakes the duty of Hajj therein (by entering the state of ihram), abstains from sexual relations, refrains from sinful speech, and avoids disputes during Hajj. Allah is aware of every good deed you do. While provisions for the journey are essential, the ultimate provision is piety. Therefore, fear Me, O you with intellects!" (Al-Baqarah, 2/197)

Through the instruction of ihram during Hajj, the level of servitude is raised in the training of willpower. By observing the prohibitions of ihram, a person undergoes serious training in controlling their sexual desires, their intellect and their anger, and thus takes significant steps towards achieving the spirit of Hajj, which is piety.

The places that are among “Allah’s symbols and signs,” such as the Kaaba, Haram, Arafat, Mina, Muzdalifah, Safa and Marwa, as well as the indescribable spiritual atmosphere created by millions of people who come to Allah’s house during the blessed season of Hajj, transform the believer.

6. THE ESSENCE OF SACRIFICE,

The essence or *kurbani* or sacrifice, extends beyond the mere act of slaughtering an animal. It is fundamentally about *taqwa*, or God-consciousness, manifested in a believer’s dedication to Allah during the act of sacrifice. This commitment intertwines the physical act of sacrifice with spiritual *taqwa*, creating a profound religious experience.

Allah the Almighty encapsulates this concept in the following words: “Their meat and blood do not reach Allah, but it is your *taqwa* that reaches Him.” (Hajj, 22/37) This divine message illustrates that the physical aspects of sacrifice are secondary to the spiritual devotion, or *taqwa*, that accompanies it.

7. THE SPIRIT OF JIHAD:

The essence of *jihad* lies in the intention and will to partake in it for Allah’s cause. Allah the Almighty indeed decrees, “And fight in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives.” (Tawbah, 9/41) This means engaging in battle with your souls as well as “striving hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and being firm against them.” (Hajj, 22/78)

How can one participate in *jihad* without overcoming the challenges posed by their own soul? This entails resisting

and overcoming the internal reactions and opposition of the soul. This internal struggle can only be won by waging a battle against the self.

Hence, Sufis have perceived this inner battle as an integral part of jihad. They reference the hadith: “The true mujahid is one who fights against his own soul.” (Tirmidh, *Fadhail al-Jihad*, 2) and the narration, “Today, we return from the lesser jihad to the greater jihad, which is the struggle against the self.” (Bayhaki, *Zuhd al-Kabir*, II, 165)

8. THE SPIRIT OF RIBAT:

It is taqwa, protecting the heart from external influences. The verse in the Qur’an, “O you who have believed, persevere and endure and remain stationed and fear Allah that you may be successful.” (Ali Imran, 3/200) can be understood to mean “guard your borders by standing guard/watching over them,” as well as a spiritual and Sufi approach to “stand guard against the enemy within you; keep it under surveillance. For this, protect your heart from external influences; let there be a spiritual bond in your heart.” In this case, it is possible to think that the reason why the first Sufi lodges were called ribat might be due to protecting the heart. Since Allah the Almighty announced that He revealed His verses in a book that could have two meanings, there is no obstacle to such an interpretation. “Allah has sent down the most beautiful of speech, a book consistent in its frequent repetition, whereat shiver the skins of those who fear their Lord.” (Zumar, 39/23)



**CHAPTER TWO:
THE HISTORY OF SUFISM**

A- HISTORY AND SOURCES OF SUFISM

I. WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF SUFISM?

The history of Sufism, which means the spiritual and mystical aspect of Islam, is the science that examines its emergence, institutions, prominent intellectual figures, mystics, orders and their founders, its relationship with other Islamic institutions, within the course of history. In Turkish, when “Tasavvuf Tarihi” (Sufism History) is mentioned, it generally refers to “Islamic Sufism.” Commonly, the mystical perspectives of other religions and philosophical systems are referred to as “Mysticism.” In Arabic, “Tarikh at-Tasawwuf” refers to Mysticism, while “Tarikh at-Tasawwuf al-Islami” refers to Islamic Sufism.

The history of Sufism integrates with general history, the history of sciences, institutions, and intellectual developments. As such, comprehensive history books, texts on the history of sciences, philosophy, and thought, along with civilization history publications, often include segments dedicated to discussing the history of Sufism.

The subject of the *history of Sufism* is the Islamic spiritual life, institutions, leaders, orders, and founders with their principles and concepts.

The purpose of the history of Sufism is to provide information about the lives and orders of Sufis, and to objectively and impartially present and introduce one aspect of Islamic civilization and thought history by examining the intellectual structures of Sufi life, Sufi thought, and institutions. It is the

duty of this discipline to determine the lived form of Sufi life. The history of Sufism approaches the subject matter without adhering to any specific order or Sufi institution, but in an impartial way. Like the history of sciences and philosophy, the history of Sufism observes and evaluates events by determining and classifying them objectively.

The first and foremost source for the history of Sufism from the era of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to the present day is the book of Sufi orders.

II. BOOKS OF SUFI BIOGRAPHIES

1. *Abu Abdul Rahman al-Sulami's* (d. 412/1021) "*Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*":

In this book, Al-Sulami narrates the great Sufis from the second century AH, when the concept of Sufism became widespread, until his own time. The book is the oldest extant book on the order of Sufis. The author deals with Sufis in five categories. In the first four categories, he discusses twenty Sufis each, and in the fifth category, he presents the biographies and anecdotes of twenty-three Sufis. Thus, the total number of Sufis mentioned in the book is 103. There is very little mention of ascetics from the companions and the followers (Tabi'een) in *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*. Sulami notes at the beginning of his work that he narrated ascetics from the companions and the followers in his book *Kitab al-Zuhd*. (*Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*, p.3) However, this book is not available today.

Sulami's "*Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*" has served as a source for many books written after him. For example, Al-Qushayri, in

his book “Al-Risala al-Qushayriyya,” uses Sulami’s book as a source.

Indeed, Abdullah Ensârî Herevî’s (d. 481/1088) work bearing the same name is the Persian translation of Al-Sulami’s *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*. However, Herevî made some alterations and additions during the translation process. Al-Sulami’s *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya* has been edited and published by Nureddin Seribe and has been printed several times (Egypt, 1969, 1986). The work has been translated into Turkish by Abdurrezzak Tek (2018).

2. *The Hilyat al-Awliya’ of Abu Nuaym al-Isfahani* (d. 430/1038):

Abu Nuaym was a student of Al-Sulami. In his work, he clearly states that he benefited from the works of his teacher. The *Hilyat al-Awliya’* contains the lives and narratives of about 700 ascetics and Sufis who lived from the time of the companions to the time of the author, including the *Tabieen* and the followers of *Tabieen*. Information about the nature of Sufism is given at the beginning of the work, followed by the four rightly guided caliphs, the ten blessed companions, and the *Ashab al-Suffah*. The work has been published many times in ten volumes with annotation by *Maktabat al-Hanji* in Egypt since 1932. The *Hilyat al-Awliya’* was translated and published in ten volumes by a team under the name “Allah’s Friends from the Companions to Today” (*Sahâbeden Günümüzde Allah Dostları*) in Istanbul in 1995.

3. *The Sifat al-Safwa of Imam Ibn al-Jawzi* (d. 595/1198):

The *Sifat al-Safwa* is a summary of the *Hilyat al-Awliya'* made with a different classification. The author begins his work by introducing the differences between his work and *Hilyat al-Awliya'*. (Al-Isfahani, *Hilya*, I, 21-45) Then, he devotes a significant portion to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. These are the points where *Sifat al-Safwa* differs from the *Hilyat al-Awliya'*. The work, which was published in four volumes in Beirut in 1979, contains the translations of 1031 Sufis and ascetics. It was translated and published together with the *Hilyat al-Awliya'*.

4. *The Tadhkirat al-Awliya' of Fariduddin Attar* (d. 627/1229):

This work, written in Persian, contains the life stories and anecdotes of 97 ascetics and Sufis starting from Jafar As-Sadiq, who is from the lineage of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It has been translated into many languages. Various Ottoman Turkish translations of *Tadhkirat al-Awliya'* made at different times were adopted by Turkish readers and greatly appreciated. Some of these translations have also been published with the new Turkish alphabet. The complete translation of the work was made by Suleyman Uludag (Istanbul, 1985).

5. *The Tabaqat al-Awliya' of Ibn al-Mulaqqin* (d. 804/1402):

The work, in terms of organization, is similar to *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*, but it is much richer than it in terms of the biographies of Sufis (230 Sufis) The annotated edition prepared by Nureddin Seribe (Cairo, 1986) makes it easier to benefit from the work and also provides the opportunity to compare it with similar works.

6. *The Nafahat al-Uns min Hadarat al-quds of Abdur Rahman Jami* (d. 892/1487):

The work titled *Tabaqât al-Sûfiyyq*, which Herevî translated from *Al-Sulamî* into Persian, is a Sufi *tabaqat* (biographical compendium) written primarily based on this work (published by Mahmud Âbidî, Tehran 1370/1991). However, the work has been greatly expanded compared to the first two, including the biographies and legends of 616 Sufis. Out of these Sufis, 34 are women. The work, translated into Turkish by Lâmiî Çelebi, has been printed several times in Ottoman Turkish (Istanbul 1270, 1289). During the translation, Lâmiî Çelebi added the biographies of about 15 Sufis. The person referred to as “Shaykh al-Islam” in the *Nafahât* translation is Abdullah Ansârî Harawî.

7. *The book Tabaqat al-Khawas Ahl-Sidq wal-Ikhlâs by Zainuddin Ahmad b. Abdulatif az-Zabidi* (d. 893 / 1488):

This book includes the biographies of 300 Sufis who were mostly from Yemen or buried in Yemen. The book was published in Egypt in 1321/1903. The author states that while other Sufis from different regions were included in Sufi biographical literature, the Sufis of Yemen did not have a separate section, and he wrote this book to compensate for this lack.

8. *At-Tabaqat al-Kubra by Abdul Wahhab al-Sharani* (d. 973/1565):

This book includes the biographies and stories of about 400 ascetics and Sufis. The book is similar in structure to the *Hilyat al-Awliyya*, and its original name is *Lawaqih al-Anwar fi Tabaqat al-Akhyar*. The book includes the biographies of 400

Sufis and it has been published several times as a small two-volume set (Egypt, 1938, 1988). The book has been translated into Turkish by Abdulkadir Akcicek.

9. *Al-Kawakib al-Durriyah* by Abdul Rauf al-Munawi (d. 1031/1622):

The author begins with the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and then goes on to describe the Companions, the Followers, the Followers of the Followers, and the ascetics and Sufis of later generations in alphabetical order. The book is a two-volume work that has been published in four parts and was edited by Abdul Hamid Salih Hamdan (Egypt, 1994). It includes the biographies and some short stories of a total of 902 saints and Sufis.

10. *The book Jami' al-Karamat al-Awliya'* by Yusuf b. Ismail Al-Nabhâni (d. 1305/1887):

This is a two-volume work that includes the miracles and stories of a total of 1000 saints and Sufis, from the Companions to the author's time, in alphabetical order. This book has been translated into Turkish.

For information about the Ottoman Sufis, the books *Ash-Shakâiku'n-nu'mâniyye* by Taskopruzâde, M. Sureyya's *Sicill-i Osmânî*, and Bursalı M. Tahir's "mesayih" chapter in the first volume of the book *Osmanlı Muellif'leri* are the primary sources to refer to.

In addition, these works, Harîrîzâde's *Tibyânu Vesâil* and Huseyin Vassâf's *Sefine-i Evliyâ* serve as comprehensive encyclopedias of Sufism and Sufi orders. *Sefine* has been published in five volumes by Mehmed Akkus and Ali Yılmaz (Istanbul 2006).

Furthermore, in the Ottoman “history” tradition, it is customary to provide information about the scholars and Sufis of the period, in addition to the political histories of the sultans. Therefore, Ottoman history books can also be considered as sources for Sufi history.

Among the books of *Tabaqat*, there are also those that provide information only about the members of a single Sufi order, such as “*Rashahat Ayn al-Hayat*”, “*Tomâr-ı turuk-ı aliyye*”, “*al-Hadâiku’l-wardiyye*”, “*Lemezât-i Hulviyye ez-Lemeât-i Ulviyye*”, and others.

In general, Ibn Sa’d’s “*Tabaqakat al-Kubra*” (Beirut, 1388/1968), Ibn Khallikan’s “*Wafayat al-A’yan*” (Beirut, 1397/1977), and Al-Zahabi’s “*Siyar A’lam al-Nubala*” are also among the sources that are frequently consulted for the lives of Sufis and the history of Sufism.

B- PERIODS OF SUFI HISTORY

The history of Sufism is generally divided into three periods: the period of *Zuhd* (asceticism), the period of Sufism (Sufism), and the period of *Tariqats* (Sufi orders).

I- Period of Zuhd

This period covers the time from the beginning of Islam, through the time of the *Tabieen* and *Tabi’ al-Tabieen*, and up to the emergence of Sufism and its concepts.

II- Period of Sufism

This period begins with the emergence of Sufism and its development. It spans three to three and a half centuries

from the end of the eighth century to the emergence of the Sufi orders in the twelfth century. Sufism emerged as a science during this period, became widespread, and great Sufis such as Junayd al-Baghdadi, Bayazid, Nuri, Hallaj, Abu Nasr as-Sarraj, and Al-Ghazali emerged during this time.

III- Period of Tariqats

This period is characterized by the institutionalization of Sufism and the emergence of the strongest institutions, the Sufi orders. It has continued from the twelfth century to the present day. This is the period when the greatest representatives of Sufi contemplation, such as Ibn Arabi and Rumi, emerged, and when the most valuable works of poetry and literature were written. However, this period was also marked by conflicts between madrasas and tekkes.

I-PERIOD OF ASCETICISM (ZUHD)

1. THE SPIRITUAL AND ASCETIC LIFE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

It is known that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ lived a spiritual and ascetic life that would lay the groundwork for the formation of Sufism. He also led his companions to live a spiritual life. Indeed, his spiritual influence would affect his companions during conversations, and those who were in his presence would feel as though their souls were ascending to the spiritual realm. For example, when Hanzala ؓ said: “O Messenger of Allah, when we are in your company, we feel as though we are detached from the world and are ascending spiritually; we

feel as though we can see heaven and hell. We are free from all worldly desires. However, when we return to our families and jobs, everything changes,” the Prophet ﷺ replied: “O Hanzala! If you could maintain the same excitement and fervor you have when you are with me, you would see that angels are shaking hands with you on the road. (Ibn Majah, Zuhd 28, Muslim, Tawbah 12, 13)

In the hadith literature, it is narrated that when the companions listened to him, the spiritual effect of the conversation caused them to feel as though there was a bird on their heads, and they did not move to avoid disturbing it (Bukhârî, Jihad 37).

The state in which love and fear, known as “Hayba” in Sufism, are present together, was at its highest level in Prophet Muhammad ﷺ due to his love and fear of Allah. He left a strong impression on those who saw and listened to him. In fact, in a hadith, he said: “I have been endowed with a spiritual power that can scare my enemies from a distance of one month. (Bukhârî, Tayammum 1; Ad-Dârimî, Siyar 28.) According to Ali ؑ, the first person who saw him was filled with a sense of awe in their heart. However, after getting to know him, sincere love was born in their hearts. Some who saw him trembled under the influence of his love. He would say, “Don’t be afraid, I am from the tribe of Quraysh and the son of a woman who ate dried meat in the sun.” (Ibn Majah, Al-At’imah 30)

The companions conveyed the feelings of excitement, love, fervour, and spiritual absorption during his conversations to others through their behaviour. Since it is not possible to convey his spiritual life in writing or speech, it has been transmitted from heart to heart. As it is stated in the hadith,

“A believer is a mirror to a believer,” (Abū Dāwūd, Adab 49) the education of emotions and states is accomplished through reflection and being together. Because of the continuity of his moral qualities, Allah says, “Indeed, Allah’s Messenger is among you.” (Hujurat, 49/7) and “As long as you are with them, Allah will not punish them.” (Anfal, 8/33) His companionship and presence among the ummah after the era of felicity was spiritual in nature.

It is known that the Prophet lived a life of asceticism, which he loved, and recommended to his family and companions. He never showed a tendency to live in luxury and prosperity by elevating his standard of living during times of abundance, due to his disregard for the worldly life. There are many examples and information about his ascetic life in the sources about his life and sayings. Among the narrated examples, there are those related to the difficult conditions of times of scarcity as well as those related to periods of prosperity. We partially touched on this topic in the section on the Definition and Foundations of Sufism (See p. 36). Now we will point out some details here.

There are narrations in the Prophet’s sayings that advise not to value the worldly life and not to be a slave to it: “Those who become slaves to gold, silver, fabric, and luxurious clothing will perish. Such people rejoice when they receive something, and become angry when they don’t.” (Bukhārī, Jihad 70, Rīqaq 10). In another saying, he said: “The world is a prison for the believer and a paradise for the unbeliever.” (Muslim, Zuhd 1)

One day, the Prophet placed his hand on Ibn Umar's shoulder and said: "Be either a stranger in this world or a traveler." (Bukhârî, Riqaq 3)

It is also known that Prophet ﷺ continued to live a humble life even when he owned herds of sheep. He loved to spend his worldly possessions in charity. Therefore, he used to say, "If I had as much gold as Mount Uhud, I would desire for it to be spent to pay off my debts, and for the remaining part to leave my hands within three days." (Bukhârî, İstiqraz 3)

According to Ibn Abbas, Prophet ﷺ sometimes went several nights in a row without eating and even on some evenings, his household could not find anything to eat. Their bread was made of barley. (See Ibn Majah, Al-A'ımah 57)

According to the narration of Anas Ibn Malik ؓ, the daughter of the Prophet, Fatima ؓ brought a piece of bread that she had baked to his father and when Allah's Messenger asked her, "What is this?" she replied, "It is a bread that I have baked. I could not resist myself from bringing it to you before anyone else." Upon this, the Prophet said: "This will be the first morsel that has entered your father's mouth in the last three days." According to Abu Hurayrah's narration, during times of famine, the Prophet used to tie a stone around his waist. (Ibn Sa'd, Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra, I, 400)

There were also times when, according to the narrations of Aisha ؓ and Abu Hurayrah ؓ, no soup was cooked in the Prophet's house for months and the family survived on dates and water. During these times, they drank milk sent by their neighbours who owned milking animals. According to the

narration of Anas Ibn Malik, “The Prophet ﷺ did not often combine bread and meat in his meals for lunch and dinner.”

(Ibn Sa‘d, *Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, I, 400)

Aisha ؓ says, “Two types of food did not enter the Prophet’s stomach in a single day. When he ate meat, he did not eat anything else with it, and when he ate bread and dates, he did not add anything to them.” (Ibn Sa‘d, *Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, I, 404)

Abu Nadr narrates that he heard Aisha ؓ say, “One day we were sitting with the Prophet when my father Abu Bakr offered us a lamb leg. We were trying to cut it with the Prophet during the night. Someone called out, ‘Don’t you have any lamp or light?’ I said: ‘If we had oil, we would have eaten it.’”

(Ibn Sa‘d, *Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, I, 405)

The Prophet ﷺ did not enter his daughter Fatima’s decorated house and said: “It does not befit us to enter such decorated places.” (Bukhârî, *Salât* 16) He gave away a silk dress that was gifted to him, saying, “Those who fear Allah do not use such things,” (Bukhârî, *Libas* 12.) and gave it to one of his wives. According to Aisha’s expression, his bed was not different from anyone else’s under the conditions of that time, and it was made of a leather sack filled with date palm fibers.

There are many hadiths of our Prophet ﷺ that discourage attachment to this world, such as: “Whoever has worldly concerns as his priority, Allah will scatter his affairs and make him poor. No one will get more of the world than what is already decreed for them.” (Ibn Majah, *Zuhd*, 4105)

“Whoever has his intention and concern for the Hereafter, Allah will gather his affairs for him, and give him richness in his heart. Even if he turns his back on the world, it will come to him.” “Allah is sufficient for those who narrow their worldly concerns and worry only about the Hereafter. Allah does not care in which valley the one who scatters his concern for the world will perish.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 4106)

He was not eager to accumulate wealth, for he had chosen “the Prophethood of a slave” over the Prophethood of a king. He said: “I was left to choose between the Prophethood of a slave and the Prophethood of a king. Gabriel humbly pointed to me. So, I chose to be a Prophet of a slave. I said, let me have a day of abundance and let me go hungry another day.” (Haythami, Majma’ al-Zawaid IX, 192)

“He loved to give in charity. In fact, he said to Bilal, ‘O Bilal, give in charity! Do not fear that by giving in charity, the owner of the Throne will diminish your wealth!’” (Abu Dawud, Imârah, 35)

When something was asked of him, he would immediately give it, and if he did not have what was requested, he would promise it and fulfill the request at the first opportunity. One day, the thought of some gold that he had come to possess during prayer came to his mind, and he ordered it to be donated. He would not refrain from donating even on his deathbed. Indeed, he ordered the three dinars he gave to one of his wives for donation to be donated immediately, saying, “What face can I show to my Lord while this money is still in my possession?” (Ibn Hanbal, VI, 104.)

Once, the Ashab al-Suffah complained to him, saying, “O Messenger of Allah, our livers are scorched from eating only dates.” He replied, “We will give you whatever the people of Medina give us.” (Tirmidhi, Buyu’ 7)

Despite his eagerness to give and spend, he was extremely self-sufficient when it came to asking and taking. He advised his companions to be self-sufficient in this matter as well. After migrating to Medina, he asked a group of seven or eight companions to pledge allegiance to “worship Allah alone, perform the five daily prayers, obey the rulers, and not ask anyone for anything.” (Muslim, Zakât 18)

According to one narrator, those who pledged allegiance never asked anyone for anything, and even if they accidentally dropped their swords during battle, they would not ask anyone nearby for help, but would rather retrieve them themselves. (Muslim, Zakât 35)

During difficult times, he liked to share resources fairly and never wanted to be treated differently from others or his family. For example, his daughter Fatima once requested help with household chores, showing him her hands that were cracked from grinding flour and drawing water from the well. He replied, “How can you ask for this when the Ahl al-Suffah live in such poverty and the orphans of Badr are in such distress?” (Ibn Hanbal, I,106;)

He encouraged abstention from the world and not becoming attached to it, saying, “If Allah wishes good for one of His servants, He makes abstention from the world easy for him and shows him his faults. Draw near to one who has renounced the world, for he has wisdom to impart.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 4101)

He also said: “Know Allah in times of plenty, and you will find Him with you in times of scarcity.” (Ibn Hanbal, I, 3072)

His asceticism and distance from the world were his way of life. Even when he established a state that became the most powerful in the world and the state treasury overflowed with wealth, his lifestyle did not change. His wives could not bear his modest lifestyle and asked for worldly goods, so he gave them a choice between worldly goods, Allah, the Messenger, and the Hereafter, and he boycotted them for two months as a result.

According to Ibn Mas’ud, during this period, Umar Ibn al-Khattab saw the Prophet ﷺ sleeping on a mat and started crying. Allah’s Messenger consoled him and those with him by reminding them of the worthlessness of worldly possessions and the need to turn away from them. Eventually, the relevant verses of Surah Al-Ahzab were revealed: “O Prophet, say to your wives: If you should desire the worldly life and its adornment, then come, I will provide for you and give you a gracious release. But if you should desire Allah and His Messenger and the home of the Hereafter - then indeed, Allah has prepared for the doers of good among you a great reward.” (Ahzab, 33/28)

When Allah’s Messenger passed away, he left behind no gold, no silver, and no female slaves, but only a white mule he rode on, his weapons, and a piece of land he had given for charity. In fact, at the time of his death, he had a sack of barley in exchange for his armor and a debt owed to a Jew. (Ibn Sa’d, Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra, I, 408)

2. THE SPIRITUAL AND ASCETIC LIFE OF THE COMPANION

The essence of Sufism, which is known to carry deep traces of asceticism, piety, and spiritual life, can be found in the lives of the Prophet and his close companions. The principles of their ascetic lives included not valuing worldly possessions such as clothing, food, and shelter; engaging in remembrance of Allah and voluntary worship, preferring solitary places for worship and contemplation, and being in a state of surrender and trust in Allah, all of which were manifested in their words and feelings of monotheism.

The books of Sufi biographies, such as Abu Nuaym Al-Isfahani's "Hilyat al-Awliya," Ibn al-Jawzi's "Sifat al-Safwah," and Al-Sharani's "al-Tabaqat al-Kubra," mention great companions known for their ascetic lifestyles, as well as the companions of the Suffah. The first Sufi classic, "Al-Luma," describes the Prophet's exemplary ascetic lifestyle, followed by the unique characteristics of the Rashidun Caliphs, and then goes on to describe other companions, starting with the companions of the Suffah, based on their ascetic qualities.

One of the classic Sufi authors, Abu Bakr al-Kalabadhi (d. 380/990), in his work, mentions that the individuals who described Sufi ecstatic states and experiences with the companions of the Prophet ﷺ were Ali ؑ and his sons Hasan ؑ and Husayn ؑ. He also states that this tradition continued with the Imams from the family of the Prophet, including Ali ibn Husayn Zain al-Abidin, Muhammad al-Baqir, and Ja'far

al-Sadiq. However, he does not provide specific details about their lives, words, or actions.

Hujwiri (d. 465/1092) in his work, after mentioning the four great caliphs, discusses the lives of the Imams from the family of the Prophet ﷺ, including Hasan, Husayn, Zain al-Abidin, Muhammad al-Baqir, and Jafar al-Sadiq, as well as twenty-two companions from the Ashab al-Suffah.

In later sources, such as Sha'rawi's (d. 973/1565) "Tabaqat", he mentions fourteen more companions in addition to the 'Ashara Mubashara (the ten companions promised paradise). Similarly, Munawi's (d. 1031/1622) "al-Kawakib al-Durriyya" includes the biographies of thirty-five companions in alphabetical order following the Rightly Guided Caliphs. All of these references are evidence of the presence of Sufi and ascetic elements in the lives of the companions, as recorded by various authors of Sufi history.

A) THE ASCETIC LIFE OF ABU BAKR:

In Sunni Sufi tradition, Abu Bakr is considered one of the pioneers of ascetic and virtuous Sufi life among the companions of the Prophet ﷺ. For instance, Abu Bakr Vasiti states that Sufi-like expressions were first uttered by Abu Bakr when he brought all his wealth to the Prophet ﷺ, and when asked what he left for his family, he replied, "I left Allah and His Messenger." This highlights his dedication to spiritual pursuits and detachment from worldly possessions.

His meticulous avoidance of doubtful matters was a manifestation of his sense of piety, and it served as the foundation

for the delicacy of “lawful sustenance” in Sufism. For example, when he was offered milk whose source was doubtful or not clearly lawful, he inserted his finger into his throat to vomit it out, saying, “If this morsel were to choke me, I would still have done it.” This incident illustrates his commitment to consuming only what was unquestionably permissible in Islamic law.

Regarding the divine knowledge, Abu Bakr used to say: “I praise Allah, who can only be recognized through His knowledge and whose knowledge cannot be fully understood.” He also said: “Whoever tastes something pure from divine knowledge, this pleasure is sufficient to keep him away from everything except Allah.”

He found generosity in piety, wealth in complete faith, and honor in humility. He advised Salman al-Farsi by saying: “O Salman, obey Allah’s commands. There will be great conquests in the future, and I don’t know what will be your share, but let it not exceed what you can eat, drink, or wear.” To Abdurrahman bin Auf, he gave this advice: “I see that the world will expand and become abundant in the future. People who use silk curtains and satin pillows will appear during the time of abundance. It is better for one of you to be killed than to be engrossed in the world.”

B) THE ASCETIC LIFE OF UMAR:

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ praised Umar by saying: “Each community has individuals who are blessed with inspiration. The blessed one of this community is Umar.” (Bukhari, Fadhâil 16.)

He also elevated him with the hadith: “Allah speaks through the tongue of Umar.” (Bukhari, Fadhâil 16.) Even as a caliph, Umar Ibn al-Khattab ﷺ never attached importance to the world. He led the people while wearing a patched cloak with twelve patches. Umar Ibn al-Khattab warned those who built high and fancy houses, considering the world as a garbage dump. Once, he stood near a garbage dump on the side of the road and said: “Here is the world you love so much; it’s like a garbage dump.” One day, when he saw Jabir bin Abdullah with meat in his hand, he rebuked him, saying, “Do you want to feed your own stomach instead of feeding your neighbor and relatives?”

When the throne and spoils of the Persian Khusrau were brought to Medina, Umar read the verse: “You have already had your share of worldly goods in this life and you took your fill of them, just as those before you did. You became engrossed in the life of this world to the exclusion of everything else. However, in the Hereafter, you will find nothing but the punishment of the Fire.” (Al-Baqarah, 2/96) and cried.

Umar entered his son Abdullah’s room and asked what he had eaten. His son replied, “I ate what I craved.” Umar said: “Do you eat everything you crave? Don’t you know that eating everything you crave is enough waste?”

During his caliphate, Umar Ibn al-Khattab heard someone with a beautiful voice reciting the chapter of Tur, and was so impressed that he became ill and could not leave his house for a month. The companions visited him during this time. Despite having many slaves during his caliphate, he sometimes

carried a bundle of firewood on his back and replied to those who asked him why he didn't ask his men to carry it, "I want to test my own soul and improve it." His words set an example for the struggle of the Sufis against the self. He did not give his ego the opportunity to trust in wealth and status.

C) THE ASCETIC LIFE OF UTHMAN IBN AFFAN

Uthman Ibn Affan ؓ was an example to the Sufis due to his love of reciting the Qur'an, his crying, his generosity, his night prayers, his modesty, and his patience. He demonstrated his sharp insight and clairvoyance by telling a young man who came to him, "I see evidence of adultery in your eyes." He supported the Messenger of Allah during his most difficult times with his wealth, especially during the expedition to Tabuk, also known as the "Army of Hardship," where he donated all of his caravan's camels to equip the army and bought a well called "Bi'r al-Rummah" from its owner to make it available to the ummah. He had a high sense of modesty that even the angels envied.

Uthman Ibn Affan used to say, "I have found goodness in four things:

- aa. Developing a love for optional prayers to attain the divine love,
- bb. Practicing patience in carrying out Allah's commandments,
- cc. Accepting the divine decree with contentment,
- dd. Having modesty in the sight of Allah."

D) THE ASCETIC LIFE OF ALI IBN ABI-TALIB

Ali Ibn Abi-Talib ؑ was a man of great knowledge whom the great Sufi Junayd al-Baghdadi described as “a perfect man to whom Allah has granted divine knowledge.” He was introduced by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the “Gate to the City of Knowledge.” (Tirmidhi, Manâqib 20)

Among the companions of the Prophet, he had a deep understanding of subtle meanings, secrets of tawhid, spiritual knowledge, and faith. When asked how he recognized his Lord, he replied, “He introduced Himself in a way that is unlike anything else, cannot be perceived through emotions, and cannot be compared to humans. He is close to those who are far and far from those who are close. He is above all, but that does not mean there is anything beneath Him. He is beneath everything, but that does not mean there is anything above Him. He is involved in everything, but He is not with anything.” I glorify Allah who has no equal.”

When asked about the foundations of faith, Ali ؑ responded, “Faith is based on patience, certainty, justice, and struggle.” He then went on to explain the ten levels of patience, certainty, justice, and struggle. (Al-Luma', p.180) Based on these and similar accounts, it could be said that Ali Ibn Abi-Talib was the first to mention Sufi stations.

Someone asked him how people can get rid of their shame and flaws and he answered: “Those who use their intellect wisely, take caution, follow advice, make patience their commander, use taqwa as their provision, make the fear of Allah

their companion, and make death and calamity their friend can be freed from their sins and faults.”

Ali ؑ advised Umar ؑ, saying, “If you want to meet our friend, the Messenger of Allah, wear a patched garment, mend your shoes, lower your expectations, and don’t eat until you are fully satisfied. (eat little)”

When the time for prayer came, Ali Ibn Abi-Talib would tremble and his face would change colour. When asked what was wrong, he would say, “The time has come to fulfil the trust that Allah presented to the heavens, the earth, and the mountains, which they refused but mankind accepted. My fear is that I will not be able to fulfil this trust properly.”

When Ali ؑ was martyred, his son Hasan stood on the mimbar and said: “The Commander of the Faithful has been killed among us. He left behind only 400 dirhams that he had set aside to buy a servant.” Hasan announced to the community that his father had not left any worldly possessions behind.

According to a narration from Ali Ibn Abi-Talib, “Goodness is contained in four things: silence, speech, observation, and movement. Speech that does not mention Allah is useless. Silence without contemplation is forgetfulness and absent-mindedness. Observation without reflection is heedlessness, and movement without worshiping Allah is a loss. May Allah have mercy on those who mention Him when they speak, contemplate in silence, observe with reflection, and worship Him with their movement. People are safe from those who are like this in their hands and tongues.”

Abu Nasr as-Sarraj says the following about the roles of the four great caliphs in Sufi life: “The leader of those who abandon the world entirely, spending all they have in the way of Allah and choosing complete poverty, is Abu Bakr As-Siddiq. The leader of those who pass through half the world and devote the other half to fulfilling the rights of family and relatives is Umar. The guide of those who accumulate wealth in the world for the sake of Allah, or who refrain from accumulating it for His sake, and who spend what they have accumulated for His sake is Uthman. The server of those who have no attachment to the world in their hearts and who reject it when it comes to them, even if they do not desire it, is Imam Ali.” (Al-Luma', p.182)

We see that asceticism, piety, patience, reliance on God, generosity, and selflessness were lived in the spiritual and religious life of Allah's Messenger and the rightly guided caliphs, and that these were also adopted by other companions, who lived the most beautiful examples of these virtues. Even the wives of the Prophet who had previously asked for worldly goods, after the revelation of the verse (Ahzab, 33/28-29) abandoned such desires and embraced an ascetic life.

Our mother Aisha رضي الله عنها narrates: “Once I was wearing a dress that I really liked. My father Abu Bakr noticed this and said to me, ‘Don't you know that when a person admires worldly things, Allah becomes angry with them until they overcome that feeling?’ So, I took off the dress and gave it to someone else as a gift.”

Abdullah, the son of Umar Ibn al-Khattab ؓ, had bought a dress for one of his children. When the child went out and tore his dress, he ran to his father and complained, “Dad, my dress is torn!” Abdullah b. Umar warned his son by saying, “Patch up the torn part and wear it again!”

Sâlim b. Abdullah narrates: “When I got married, my father invited many people to my wedding, including Abu Ayyub Ansari. When Abu Ayyub saw the green curtains decorating the walls of the house, he said: ‘I thought everyone would listen to the words of women, but I didn’t think you would.’”

Abdullah b. Masud had a beautiful and tall house built and invited Ammar ibn Yasir to his home. When Ammar saw the house, he reminded Abdullah not to be consumed by lofty desires, saying, “The house is tall, your ambition is great, but death is near.”

3. THE ASCETIC LIFE OF THE ASHAB AL-SUFFAH

As we have mentioned before, it is believed that the Ashab al-Suffah formed the first nucleus of Sufi and Sufism life, and that the words Sufi and Sufism are derived from the word “suffa”. The Ashab al-Suffah consisted of generally poor companions, ranging from 70 to 300 in number, most of whom were from the Muhajir and Ansar tribes. When a teacher was needed from nearby tribes, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would select and send one from among them. Therefore, the Ashab al-Suffah are considered the first nucleus of both the Sufi lodge and the madrasah in Islamic history.

Abu Nuaym Al-Isfahani, who introduced the Ashab al-Suffah in his book *Hilyat al-Awliya'*, mentioned the following views about them: "They were people who made it a principle to cling to Allah's commands instead of being deceived by the transitory world, and who were protected by Allah from trusting in ephemeral things. By not valuing the world, they became an example for those who did not value it. They had no families or property, and no business or occupations that would distract them from Allah's remembrance.

They never mourned for what they lost in the world, and they never rejoiced in anything they gained except for the sake of the hereafter." (*Hilya*, I, 337-38)

As-Sarraj states (*Luma'*, p.190) that the following verses were revealed about the Ashab al-Suffah and their qualities:

"Give your charity to those who are so devoted to Allah that they cannot go about the land (for trade or work). When the ignorant (non-Muslims) think of them, they think they are rich because of their modesty. You can tell them by their faces: they do not beg from people importunately. Whatever you give in charity is for Allah's pleasure; it is not for you to demand thanks from them." (*Al-Baqarah*, 2/273)

The Meccan pagans were uncomfortable with the presence of slaves such as Ammar, Suhayb, and Habbab in the Prophet's Mosque, and demanded that they be expelled. The following verse was revealed in response to their demand: "Do not drive away those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, seeking His favor. It is not for you to punish them or

for them to punish you; if you do, you are one of the wrongdoers.” (Al-An’am, 6/52)

When some of the prominent members of the Quraish tribe asked Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to “drive away poor Muslims who are sincerely attached to Allah and His Messenger,” this verse was revealed: “And be patient with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and evening, seeking His pleasure, and do not turn your eyes away from them, desiring the adornment of worldly life. And do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever (in) neglect.” (Kahf, 18/28)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ loved the Ashab al-Suffah and always met with them. He never got up until they got up, and he never withdrew his hand after shaking hands with them. He also recommended that his companions respect and serve them. His grandson, Hasan, and his cousin’s son, Abdullah bin Jafar, enjoyed sitting with them.

Famous companions such as Abu Hurairah, Salman al-Farsi, Suhayb al-Rumi, Abu Musa al-Ashari, and Abu Dhar were all part of the Ashab al-Suffah. Abu Hurairah’s statement best summarizes their situation: “I saw seventy of the people of the Suffah. Their garments did not reach their knees while praying. Therefore, they would pull their garment hems up when going into rukoo’ to prevent their private parts from being exposed.”

Abu Musa al-Ashari said: “Our scent resembled the smell of sheep herds. This was because we wore woollen clothes and

when we perspired, we smelled like sheep.” (Abū Davud, Libas 6; Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyamah 38; Ibn Majah, Libas 4.)

Abu Dhar was a companion who was excessively concerned about asceticism. Due to his compassion towards the poor, he asked Caliph Uthman to impose a tax on the wealth of the rich, apart from the Zakat, to distribute it to the poor and to level the economic differences between the poor and the rich. His approach earned him the title of the first socialist by socialist Arabs. However, Abu Dhar stated that this sensitivity was taught to him by the Messenger of Allah, who commanded him *“to love the poor, be close to them, not look up to those who are wealthier than himself, not ask for anything from anyone, maintain family ties even if he was abandoned, speak the truth even if it’s bitter, not fear anyone’s criticism, and frequently recite “La Hawla wa La Quwwata Illa Billah.”* (Ibn Abi Shayba, Musannaf, VII,81; Tabrāni, II,156)

Abu Dhar’s critical attitude towards wealthy rulers like Muawiya and his decision to live in a remote place called Rabeze that arose from the people’s hearts, make him particularly interesting from a Sufi perspective.

Abu Darda excelled in contemplation and reflection, and he initially tried to combine commerce and worship. However, he was unable to achieve complete success in this regard, so he abandoned trade and focused on worship. This companion, who was friends with Salman al-Farsi, is renowned for his concise statements on asceticism, piety, and good character, which are documented in tabaqat books. For instance, he rebuked the people of Damascus, saying: “You hoard what you cannot eat,

build houses you cannot sit in, and harbor aspirations that are beyond your reach.” (Al-Isfahāni, Hilya, I, 212; Ibn Saʿd, VII, 392)

Imran ibn Husayn was one of the foremost among the companions in terms of devotion to worship, patience in the face of adversity and tolerance of illness. It is reported that his spirit was elevated due to his devotion to worship and spiritual life, to the extent that angels would greet him. (Hākim Al-Nisābūrī, Mustadraq, III, 471; Ibn Saʿd, IV, 289)

Among the companions, there were many examples of those who embodied the essence of Sufism through their ascetic lifestyle and spiritual life, but since our goal is not to describe the asceticism of the companions in its entirety, we will suffice with these examples.

4. ASCETIC LIFE DURING THE ERA OF THE TABIEEN

During the era of the Tabieen, there were representatives of the ascetic life that began with the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the companions, and continued with the Tabieen. In Sufi classics and *tabaqat* books, Al-Kalabadhi lists the names of Uways al-Qarani, Harem ibn Hayyan, Hasan Basri, and Saleem ibn Dinar. The author of *Hilyat al-Awliyaʾ*, Abu Nuaym, and Ibn al-Jawzi, who quotes him, mention about 200 ascetics Tabieen. In his book *Kashf al-Mahjub*, Al-Hujwiri mentions only Uways al-Qarani, Harem ibn Hayyan, Hasan Basri, Said ibn Musayyib, Atta Jaʿfar al-Sadiq, and Hasan Basri, while Al-Shaʿrani follows the path of Abu Nuaym Al-Isfahani and Ibn al-Jawzi, and tells the stories of about sixty ascetic Tabieen. Al-Sulami (d. 412/1021) and his student Al-Qushayri (d. 465/1072)

do not mention any ascetic Sahaba or Tabieen in their works, and they begin their accounts with later figures such as Fudayl ibn Iyad and Ibrahim ibn Adham.

In this section, we will briefly discuss Hasan Basri, Uways al-Qarani, and Umar ibn Abdulaziz, who are known for their different characteristics in Sufi history and have become symbols of the ascetic lifestyle.

Hasan Basri is considered a school in Sufi history due to being one of the first thinkers of Sufism, as well as his place in the **silsila** of many Sufi orders. Therefore, we will examine Hasan Basri and the Basra school in detail in a later section.

Another important figure of this era is Uways al-Qarani. Although he lived during the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, he was not considered a companion because he did not have the opportunity to meet him in person. However, it is reported that Uways was the recipient of the Prophet's blessing, and that the Prophet gave him a garment as a gift.

Uways became a symbol of the Uwaysi tradition in Sufi history. Over time, Uwaysi tradition became known as receiving spiritual guidance through the path of dreams without seeing a spiritual leader. Although Uways himself did not meet with Prophet Muhammad, he received spiritual guidance through his heart's connection.

Uways was from Yemen-Qaran, which is why he is called Al-Qarani. However, over time, this pronunciation became Qarâni and, finally, Veysel Karâni in Turkish. Uways is described as a poor, ascetic person who loves wandering in

solitude, worship, and asceticism. The life of Uways, who was described as “the best of the Tabieen” in a hadith reported by Ibn Sa’d’s *Tabaqat*, has been lost in the clouds of later myths. However, the “Uwaysi” tradition and the “hirka” custom have continued. Qarani’s hirka is preserved today in Hirka-i Serif Mosque in Fatih, Istanbul.

Umar Ibn Abdulaziz is a distinctive figure of the Tabieen generation in terms of asceticism and piety. He is considered the fifth rightly guided caliph and a renewer of faith of the second century. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: “Allah sends someone to correct the mistakes of this community and renew the religion at the beginning of each century” (Abu Dawud, *Malahim* 1).

Umar Ibn Abdulaziz’s asceticism, piety, and just leadership are remarkable, especially when compared to the Umayyad caliphs who turned the caliphate into a monarchy that was in high demand worldwide. His asceticism during his reign and wealth was deemed more valuable than Qarani’s poverty and asceticism, as it is harder to exercise patience with wealth than with poverty. (Al-Isfahāni, *Hilya*, IX, 272)

5. THE ASCETIC LIFE UNTIL THE END OF THE SECOND CENTURY (OF HIJRAH)

From a historical perspective, the period from the Umayyads until the end of the second century AH was a time when the ascetic way of life appeared as a reaction to the luxurious lifestyles of the ruling elite. This period was the preparation for the transition from the ascetic form of religious life to Sufism or the second ascetic period. The ascetics and pious

people who lived during this period are generally regarded as the forerunners of the later Sufis. The prominent ascetics who lived during this period include Abu Hashim Sufi (d. 150/767), Dawud Al-Ta'i (d. 161/777), Rabi'ah al-Adawiyya (d. 185/801), Fudayl Ibn Iyad (d. 187/802), Shakiq Balkhi (d. 194/809), and Ma'ruf al-Karkhi (d. 200/815). Abu Hashim is the first person to use the title "Sufi" and the first person to build a tekke (sufi lodge). The terms "tasawwuf" and "sufi" began to be used after the middle of the second century AH. Ma'ruf al-Karkhi was the first to provide a definition of Sufism.

The ascetic life of the ascetics from the time of Asr as-Saadah (the time of Prophet Muhammad) until the end of the 2nd century AH was mostly an individualistic way of life. The ascetics of that time, who were often teary-eyed and grief-stricken, expressed their excitement and sorrow through poetry and gave advice and guidance to their visiting friends. They explained verses from the Qur'an and elaborated on hadiths that promoted asceticism, and conveyed these teachings to the people. During this period, the terminology of Sufism had not yet become widespread. The literature of asceticism and Sufism consisted mostly of advice and wisdom sayings in the form of prose and poetry. The writing of systematic poetic and prose works came later in the following eras. In this period, sadness and fear were more prominent than the love and passion that form the basis of Sufism. The ascetic way of life was in a sense a path of purification. Asceticism and worship were means to achieve moral maturity.

Although the words and views of the Sufis who emerged during this period are included in *tabaqat* books, there are very few written works that have been transmitted to us from the Sufis who actually wrote books. These include a few books on asceticism written by Sufi Muhaddiths (hadith scholars) and a few collections of hadiths compiled by the ascetics.

Although the period until the end of the 2nd century AH was generally a time when asceticism was lived individually, there were some regions where a prominent ascetic movement was observed, led by certain ascetics. The ascetic movement that emerged in each region had some regional characteristics, so they were named after those characteristics, their representatives, and the regions. However, it is not possible to sharply distinguish social events both as a history and as a process, and as a distinctive feature. Our attempt to understand and explain them is based on the dominant perspective. The main ascetic schools were the schools of Medina, Kufa, Basra, and Khorasan.

The Schools of Asceticism in the 7th and 8th Centuries			
Medina (Center of the Sunnah)	Kufa (Sufism)	Basra (Fear, sadness, love)	Khorasan (Trust in God)
Prophet Muhammad ﷺ	Abu Hashim (d. 150/767)	Hasan Al-Basri (d. 110/728)	Ibrahim ibn Adham (d. 161/777)
Ashab al-Suffah	Sufyan al-Thawri (d. 161/777)	Ibn Sirin (d. 110/729)	Fudayl ibn Iyad (d. 187/802)
Ashab al-Kiram	Dawud Al-Ta'i (d. 165/781)	Habib al-Ajami (d. 115/733)	Shaqiq al-Balkhi (d. 194/809)
Said ibn Musayyib (d. 90/709)	Ibn Sammak (d. 189/805)	Muhammad ibn Wasi (d. 127/744)	Ahmad ibn Harb (d. 234/848)
Imam Malik (d. 179/795)	Jabir ibn Hayyan (d. 200/815)	Malik ibn Dinar (d. 131/748)	Maruf al-Karkhi (d. 200/815)
		Abdulwahid ibn Zayd (d. 177/793)	
		Rabiah al-Adawiyyah (d. 185/801)	

A. MEDINA SCHOOL

The fundamental principles of asceticism and Sufism, derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, were first reflected in the city of Medina, which was the initial capital of Islam. The most beautiful examples of ascetic life were experienced there through the lives of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the noble companions, and the inhabitants of the Suffah. Medina continued to be the center of ascetic life until the years when the Umayyads transferred the capital to Damascus. Even during the reign of the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus, Medina did not lack ascetics like Sa'id ibn Musayyab (d. 90/709). When the political center shifted to Damascus, Medina gained even more significance in terms of spiritual life. It became a sanctuary for those seeking refuge from the tumultuous political affairs, a safe haven on the shores of tranquility, the city of Allah's Messenger, and the capital that sheltered those distressed by political turbulence. While there were individuals like Abdullah ibn Zubayr who occasionally became involved in political disputes and their followers, overall, Medina maintained its aura as a city of asceticism.

B. KUFA SCHOOL

This city, made the capital by Ali ؑ, is close to the place where Al-Hussayn ؑ, the grandson of the Prophet, was martyred in Karbala. It served as a center where the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt and Shi'a members waged battles against the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus. Following the martyrdom of Al-Hussayn ؑ, due to the remorse that emerged, a group of people from this region turned to asceticism and worship with

sadness and tears. This group, known as “Bakkaun,” was later named “Tawwabun” due to their remorse.

This ascetic life, caused by political turmoil, carries, as some researchers describe, the “symbolic and emblematic” characteristics of the Yemeni people. It is recognized for its Shia and Ahl al-Bayt inclinations within the sect. They have deep interest in hadith scholarship, matters of the apparent (exoteric) and the hidden (esoteric) aspects. The expression of platonic love is fundamental in their poetry. Tawus ibn Kaysan, Said ibn Jubayr, Jabir ibn Hayyan, and Ar-Rabi ibn Khuthaym are among the first ascetics to emerge from here. Those first identified with the term “Sufi” typically originated from Kufa. Abu Hashim Sufi (d. 150/767) is a Kufan.

Abu Hashim Sufi first lived in Kufa, then in Baghdad, and became renowned in those places as a Sufi. His ideas are close to the concept of “malamatiyya.” In his understanding, safeguarding oneself from hypocrisy was more important than achieving sincerity. Indeed, the statement of Sufyan al-Thawri about him illustrates this: “Without Abu Hashim, the subtle points of hypocrisy would not have been known.”

C. BASRA SCHOOL

Basra has become a center of ascetic life distant from politics. This is because Hasan Basri, who emerged from this place, is renowned as the ascetic-sufi who first systematized the understanding of Ahl al-Sunnah based on the Qur’an and the Sunnah in Islam. As the Basra school was associated with the Tamim tribe, it bears the qualities of criticism and investi-

gation. The Basra school, known for its rationalistic approach in poetry, also displayed a diligent and analytical approach in hadith studies. In terms of doctrine, it generally followed Ahl al-Sunnah and partly Mu'tazila. The most famous figures of the Basra school after Hasan Basri were his students.

The most significant characteristic of the ascetics of the 1st and 2nd Hijri centuries was shedding tears out of fear of hell and hope for paradise, connecting to God through worship and ascetic practices, and distancing themselves from worldly attachments. However, during these centuries, an understanding that emphasized love began to spread, exemplified by figures like Rabi'ah al-Adawiyya and Ma'ruf al-Karkhi. Thus, the Sufi school in Basra, under the leadership of Hasan Basri and Rabi'a, developed in two different directions:

I. FEAR and SORROW BASED ASCETIC SCHOOL

The founder of this school, Hasan Basri, lived between 21/642 and 110/728. He is known to have been raised in Medina under the protection of Umm Salamah, one of the wives of the Prophet, and to have lived in Basra. Hasan Basri, who was considered a master in hadith, jurisprudence, theology, and Sufism, was also a skilled orator. Sufi biographical books, particularly by Abu Nuaym and others who relayed his teachings, describe him as someone characterized by fear and sorrow. (Al-Isfahani, *Hilya*, II, 131-132.) Hasan Basri, often described by those who knew him as "always with tearful eyes and a sorrowful face," was an ascetic who didn't value worldly success and turned his back on the material world. His asceticism was grounded in contemplation and self-purification. However, his

deep spiritual life, expressed through his words and demeanor of sorrow, fear, and poverty, aimed not at making asceticism a goal or ultimate purpose, but rather at achieving goodness and escaping from negativity. The good he aimed to attain was the pleasure of God and paradise, while the evil he aimed to escape from was the fear of hellfire and divine anger.

Biographical books mention that he feared hell as if it were created specifically for him. Concerning fear and sorrow, he used to say, "A believer begins the day and ends it with worry." This is because a believer is suspended between two fears: one stemming from past sins and the other from the remainder of their lifetime. Just as a person cannot know how their committed sins will be received by God, they are also unaware of what they will encounter in the remaining part of their life.

This Sufi movement that began with Hasan Basri is characterized by the fundamental qualities of contemplation leading to faith, purifying the self and cleansing the heart, and through fear and sorrow, attaining the pleasure of Allah. At the core of sorrow lies contemplation. This is because contemplation beckons individuals towards both goodness and the actions of goodness. Feeling remorse for committing wrong deeds prevents one from committing them. No matter how much of the transient exists, it cannot equate to what is everlasting. Contemplation lies at the heart of sorrow, for it guides individuals towards both good and the actions of goodness. Feeling regret for wrongdoings prevents one from committing

them, and no matter how much of the transient exists, it can never match the eternal.

The Basra school continued through Hasan Basri's disciples, such as Habib al-Ajami (d. 115/733), Muhammad ibn Wasii (d. 127/744), Malik ibn Dinar (d. 131/748), Ayyub al-Sakhtiyani (d. 131/748), Farkad al-Sabahi (d. 131/748), and Abd al-Wahid ibn Zayd (d. 177/793). This school is centered on bringing individuals to faith through contemplation, purifying their selves, and attaining the pleasure of Allah through fear and sorrow.

II. LOVE-BASED ASCETIC SCHOOL

The first representative of this school is Rabiah al-Adawiyya. Rabia possessed a unique Sufi perspective that differed from her fellow townsman, Hasan Basri. She established a distinct understanding of Sufi life, predominantly centered around love. Her Sufi practice involves withdrawing from the world out of a profound love for God's essence and dedicating one's heart to the contemplation of His beauty. Thus, Rabia divided love into two categories: the love that distracts one with worldly matters and the love of God for His own sake.

Rabia, as an ascetic, tasted the union born of fervent love and pursued the beauty of God. Her love-based ascetic understanding is summarized in the following verse:

"I love You with two loves: one is my expression of my attachment and devotion to You, the other is the love born of Your worthiness to be loved.

Through my attachment with love, I remember only You
and pay no heed to others.

Your worthiness of love removes the veils in between.”

Due to her love for God, Rabia perceived the expectation of paradise in return for worship as akin to a servant expecting payment for serving their master. Love and devotion, in her view, were obstacles to seeking reciprocation. Rabiah al-Adawiyya, who came right after Hasan Basri, passed away in 185/801. In another poem, she expresses:

You claim to love Allah, yet you continue to disobey Him.

If your love were true, you would obey Him, for those who love also obey their beloved.

Rabia considered any love that hinders love for Allah as a barrier between oneself and the Divine. She also connected servitude to the condition of loving Allah:

“My God, if I worship You out of fear of hell, burn me in hell.

And if I worship You in hopes of paradise, exclude me from it.

But if I worship You for Your own sake, withhold not from me Your eternal beauty.”

While Rabia was the first to openly use the concept of love in her words and poetry, this perspective became more widespread in later periods compared to the fear and sorrow-based Sufi approach. In fact, the concept of love and the heart's

school of thought has become a prevailing theme in Sufism as a whole.

D. KHORASAN SCHOOL

The region known as “the land of Khurasan,” encompassing Transoxiana, stood out in the realm of Sufism from the 2nd century A.H. until the later periods. Many significant Sufi personalities emerged from this area, and numerous schools were founded by figures originating from here. It’s recognized that the Sufis who served in Anatolia’s Islamization and Turkification primarily came from this region. Therefore, the Khurasan Sufism holds a significant place in the history of Sufism. Ibrahim ibn Adham (d. 161/777), Fudayl ibn Iyad (d. 187/802), and Shaqiq al-Balkhi (d. 194/809) were among the first ascetics to emerge from this region. These early ascetics from Khurasan later migrated to Basra and Baghdad, where they were influenced by the Sufi movements in those areas. As a result, the initial ascetics from Khurasan prominently exhibited attributes like asceticism, poverty, worship, and fear of Allah, similar to the Basra school.

Apart from these attributes, the ascetics from Khurasan introduced a distinctive perspective on the concept of “reliance” (tawakkul). They interpreted tawakkul as “complete tranquility of the self in accordance with Allah’s promise.” In subsequent years, the Nishapur school would emphasize “self-blame and chivalry,” eventually diverging from the Baghdad school due to debates on whether “pleasure” (rida) is a station or a state and advocating that it is a state.

Until the end of the 2nd century Hijri, Rabiah al-Adawiyya laid the foundation of “divine love,” while Ma’ruf al-Karkhi established the essence of asceticism as “knowledge of God.” The matter of seeking a spiritual guide (murshid) also developed through Ma’ruf. Both Rabia and Dawud al-Ta’i were unmarried. Dawud al-Ta’i turned to seclusion by throwing his books into the river. During this period, asceticism and spiritual struggle were practiced extensively. States of ecstasy, divine intoxication (wajd), and spiritual dancing (sama) had not yet gained widespread popularity.

II. PERIOD OF SUFISM

1- SUFISM IN THE 9TH-10TH CENTURIES

The 9th and 10th centuries are significant periods in the history of Sufism, as they produced great Sufi scholars who were revered for centuries. These centuries hold great importance in Islamic political, social, and academic history. This era is known as a time of progress for the Abbasid state when Baghdad and its surroundings became centers of knowledge. It was a period of interaction and convergence among various tribes and cultures. Heretical currents like the Batiniyya and the Qarmatians, Sunni theological schools like the Maturidiyya and Ash’ariyya, and jurisprudential schools like the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi’i, and Hanbali, along with philosophical movements, emerged in these centuries. With the Shi’a having attained a certain level of organization in this period, these centuries were dynamic in terms of politics, society, and religion.

These centuries mark the phase of Sufism's separation and development from fields like jurisprudence, theology, and hadith. The first Sufi works were composed during this period, and the initial concepts of Sufism started to be used and disseminated. Sufism underwent significant growth in this period, both in terms of education (takhalluk) and realization (tahakkuk). The Sufis of this period analyzed the human soul, elucidated its transient states, discussed the stages it would traverse, and brought forth topics like heart purification and self-purification. Concepts such as annihilation (fana) and subsistence (baqa), along with the notion of unity of existence (ittihad), were first expressed by Sufis like Bayazid al-Bistami (d. 262/875) and Hallaj (d. 309/921).

The love-focused Sufi thought initiated by Rabiah al-Adawiyya developed further through Ma'ruf al-Karkhi, becoming the predominant theme in Sufi thinking during the 9th and 10th centuries. The Basra school, represented by Hasan Basri and his disciples, which emphasized sorrow and fear, gradually gave way to themes of love and affection. The fact that figures like Harith al-Muhasibi (d. 243/857), who emerged in the 9th century and influenced later periods with his works, wrote on love or dedicated specific sections to it in his works underscores the "stamp of love" present in Sufism during this era.

While the ascetics and Sufis of the first two centuries were generally nurtured in Basra, Kufa, and Khurasan, the mystics of the 9th and 10th centuries emerged and flourished in various aspects of Sufism from almost every corner of the Islamic lands. While Basra, Kufa, and Khurasan maintained

the vibrancy of Sufism, regions such as Egypt, Nishapur, Damascus, and particularly Baghdad produced notable mystics during this era.

Among the notable figures of Basra, Sahl ibn Abdullah Tustari (d. 283/896) and Ibn Samaak (d. 183/799) from Kufa are recognized as part of the mystics of the 9th century. In Khurasan, Ahmad ibn Harb (d. 234/848), Hatim al-Asamm (d. 237/851), Ahmad ibn Hadrawayh (d. 240/854), Abu Turab Nahshabi (d. 245/859), and Abu Abdullah Sijzi are representatives of Khurasan Sufism with a focus on reliance (tawakkul) and chivalry (futuwwa). During these years in Khurasan, the concept of futuwwa primarily carried meanings like honesty, kindness, courage, and generosity, while also encompassing selflessness, serving others, refraining from causing harm, spreading goodness, letting go of complaining, distancing oneself from the desire for recognition, and combating the ego.

One of the prominent mystics who emerged from the Khorasan and Transoxiana region during these centuries is Hakim Tirmidhi, also known as Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali (d. 320/932). He received education in Hanafi jurisprudence and Islamic exoteric sciences, and had a significant place in hadith studies. Particularly notable for his work “Khatm al-Awliya” in which he focused on the concept of “Wilayah” (spiritual guardianship), Hakim Tirmidhi’s contributions in Sufism have caught attention. Ibn Arabi also drew upon his works for inspiration.

2- SUFI SCHOOLS IN THE 9TH AND 10TH CENTURIES

a. NISHAPUR SCHOOL (*Chivalry and Asceticism*)

Starting from the early periods, along with Khorasan which was one of the important centers of Sufism, in the 9th century, Nishapur also emerged as a center known for its characteristics of chivalry and asceticism (*futuwwa* and *zuhd*). During these centuries, notable sufis from this region included Bayazid Bistami, Yahya ibn Muadh Ar-Razi, Abu Hafs Al-Haddad, and Hamdun Kassar.

Bayazid Bistami was a Sufi who spoke with an unconventional and challenging style, focusing on ecstatic experiences (*sakr*) and self-annihilation (*mahw*). His words sometimes raised concerns. He describes his state of annihilation in Allah (*fana fillah*) as follows: "Allah took me aside once and said: 'O Bayazid, people wish to see Me.' I replied, 'Then adorn me with Your Oneness, clothe me in Your Essence, lead me to Your Uniqueness. When people see Your attributes in me, let them say they have seen You. Then, You will be Yourself, while I won't exist there.'"

Through these words, Bayazid conveys the spiritual state of *fana fillah*, complete annihilation in Allah. He introduced the concept of "*sakr*" (spiritual intoxication) into Sufism, which became significant alongside the terms of love and passion.

Yahya ibn Muadh Ar-Razi (d. 258/871), another Sufi from Nishapur, was both a contemporary and a fellow disciple of Bayazid. He also spoke of *fana*, ecstasy, and spiritual intoxica-

tion, using the term “lover of God”. Like Ma’ruf al-Karkhi after Rabi’a, Yahya was one of the early mystics who openly discussed the love for God. His understanding of love was rooted in humility, serenity, and submission to his Lord. For him, the essence of love neither increases nor decreases with union or separation. Yahya not only discussed love but also emphasized experiential knowledge (ma’rifa), asserting that knowledge of creator surpasses knowledge of creation. He termed distancing from God as “fawt” and distancing from people as “mawt,” considering “fawt” worse than “mawt.” Fawt means missing opportunities due to negligence and breaking the connection between God and humans. Mawt, on the other hand, involves distancing oneself from worldly concerns and strengthening the connection with God to attain the knowledge of God.

Yahya ibn Muaz, like Bayazid, although he emphasized spiritual intoxication (sagr), he adhered closely to the fundamental principles of asceticism, which were considered the essence of his path. He believed that asceticism could be fulfilled through minimal sleep, speech, and food, coupled with solitude (khalwa).

While Bayazid and his disciple Yahya were advocates of “sagr,” the prominent representatives of the contemporaneous Baghdad school, such as Junayd al-Baghdadi and his companions, leaned towards “sahw” (vigilance) and restraint, instead of spiritual intoxication.

Another figure among the Khorasan-born Nishapur mystics was Abu Hafs Haddad (d. 270/883). He defined Sufism as “adab” (manners) and, while adopting the chivalry approach

of the Khorasan school, he engaged with the Sufis in Iraq and Hijaz during his pilgrimage journey, drawing influence from their ideas. He defined chivalry as “treating others fairly and not expecting fairness from them,” emphasizing that chivalry was not about words but rather actions and practice.

While the Nishapur school of mysticism was influenced by the Basra school, it was even more under the influence of the Khorasan school. In fact, Sufi schools, due to shared sources and continuous interactions, have always been mutually influenced.

The concept of “malamat” introduced by Hamdun Kas-sar (d. 271/884) and emerging in Nishapur was a response to the ascetic and mystical movements in Iraq and other regions. The Malamis saw the Iraqi Sufism as more focused on outward forms, clothing, and superficial conditions, while they considered the “malamat” notion as a reaction against religious and social formalities. Generally, “malamat” is understood as “restraining, reproaching, accusing oneself, and belittling one’s own worship and devotions.” Hence, the “malamat” thought emphasizes introspection. Malamis talk about self-criticism and self-condemnation more than self-praise and glorification. They discuss hypocrisy and its ugliness, but do not talk much about sincerity. Those adhering to this thought prefer to discuss their actions’ deficiencies over praising their positive aspects.

“Malamat” follows the “sahw” approach, placing more emphasis on “jalwa” (witnessing) rather than solitude (khal-wa). The initial layers of the “malamat” understanding devel-

oped in Nishapur were represented by Hamdun Kassar and Abu Usman Hiri (d. 298/910); the second layer included Mahfudh ibn Mahmud Nishaburi (d. 303/915), Abu Muhammad Murta-yish (d. 328/939), Abdullah ibn Munazil (d. 329/940); and the third layer was comprised of Abu Bakr Nishaburi (d. 360/970), Abu al-Husayn Ali ibn Bundar (d. 350/961), Abu al-Hasan Boushanci (d. 348/958), and Abu Amr Ismail ibn Nujayd (d. 366/976).

The “malamat” movement, which initially emerged as a reaction to Sufism, later evolved to become not only a distinctive approach within the Sufi system but also the name of a particular school of thought. However, throughout history, the concept of “malamat” and those associated with “malamiyya” have generally been met with caution and, at times, even subjected to scrutiny.

b. EGYPTIAN SCHOOL (Knowledge and Love of God)

The foundations of institutional Sufism in Egypt were laid by Dhul-Nun al-Misri (d. 245/859). Dhul-Nun is one of the Sufi scholars who spoke about and developed theories on knowledge and love after Ma’ruf al-Karkhi. According to him, knowledge has three forms: the general understanding of believers, the knowledge of theologians and philosophers, and the knowledge of the saints who recognize Allah with their hearts. The third form is the most superior among the degrees of knowledge, filled with certainty. It is recognizing Allah through His attribute of Unity. This kind of knowledge is not attained through rational deduction or intellectual reasoning but is a knowledge born through divine inspiration and safeguarded in the heart by Allah. To know the Essence of the

Almighty through methods other than the knowledge attained through revelation and inspiration is only possible through self-attributes. Dhul-Nun describes the certainty of knowledge as a gift from Allah in these words: "I recognized my Lord through my Lord. If it were not for Him, I could never have recognized Him."

Dhul-Nun al-Misri 's understanding of love related to knowledge is of a nature that leads one to union with Allah. Through this love and union, a person feels immersed in Allah. However, one who attains such sublime and spiritual love should refrain from displaying their state to others and should know how to guard secrets.

Although Dhul-Nun al-Misri was an Egyptian Sufi, his influence extended beyond Egypt to figures such as Sahl ibn Abdullah Tustari, Abu Turab Nahshabi, Abu Abdullah ibn Jalla, and Abu Said Harraz.

c. DAMASCUS SCHOOL (Hunger and Night Worship)

The Sufism of Damascus is generally represented by those who emphasize hunger and night worship and are therefore known as the "People of Hunger and the Night." Among them, Abu Sulayman al-Darani (d. 215/830) and his students Ahmad ibn Abi al-Hawari and Ahmad ibn Asim Antaki stand out. Abu Abdullah ibn Jalla and Fath Mevsili are also notable Sufis from the Damascus region during this period.

Darani, considered one of the leaders of the Damascus school, was the first to use the term "People of the Night" in Sufi history. According to him, the pleasure and delight

derived from night worship for these people of the night surpasses the pleasure that pleasure-seekers gain from their amusements. Darani classified the people of the night into three degrees: the first degree involves thinking, reading, and weeping; the second degree involves being overwhelmed by thoughts and crying out, finding relief in it; the third degree involves reading while being lost in thought, and as a result, being overcome by astonishment and awe, and unable to cry. Darani also viewed the death of the pious as a door to eternal life, highlighting that there are many who are spiritually alive even though physically deceased. He emphasized that the love between Allah and His servant is a state that should be understood without the need for words or lip movements, stating: “When the eye of the gnostic is opened, the eye of the world is closed. Then, nothing but Allah is seen.” According to Abu Sulayman, when the world settles in the heart, there is no room left for the Hereafter.

Ahmad ibn Abi al-Hawari, a disciple of Darani and a friend of Junayd al-Baghdadi, was known by the title “Rayhanat al-Sham” (the fragrant one of Damascus). Ahmad explained how attachment and love for the world act as veils from Allah: “Whoever looks at the world with desire and love, the light of certainty and the asceticism are taken out of their heart. Any action performed without following the way of the Prophet Muhammad is in vain.”

Abu Abdullah ibn Jalla, was devoted to the path of Allah by his parents, explained the terms “abid,” “zahid,” and “muwahhid” as follows: “A zahid is one who considers praise

and blame to be equal, an abid is one who strives to perform obligatory acts of worship fully and on time, and a muwahhid is one who sees all deeds as belonging to Allah alone and does not see anyone other than the Unique.” This statement alone demonstrates that even in those times, the Sufis were concerned with the existence of the unitary doctrine (tawhid).

d. BAGHDAD SCHOOL (Tawhid and Love)

Baghdad, which served as the capital of the Islamic state for centuries, also held the distinction of being a center of knowledge and culture. As a result, it was here that the greatest representatives of Sufism and prolific authors emerged. The Baghdad school of Sufism carries the legacy of the Basra school. Among the Sufis of Baghdad, Abu Hashim Sufi, who was first named “Sufi,” and Ma’ruf al-Karkhi, who provided the initial definition of Sufism, hold significant positions.

Ma’ruf al-Karkhi is known for his connection between spiritual knowledge (ma’rifa) and love (muhabba). He expressed that love is a divine gift (wahbi) from Allah and is not something acquired from people (kasbi). Therefore, it is not a station (maqam) but a state of being (hal).

One of the Sufis who emerged in Baghdad in the 9th century is Mansur ibn Ammar (d. 225/840). A skilled orator and eloquent speaker, Mansur was among the first to discuss concepts related to the inner realm of the heart, such as “self,” “heart,” and “piety.” He advocated the Sunni perspective against the Mu’tazilite view of the “created nature of the Qur’an” held by

the Mu'tazilite members in Baghdad. He aligned himself with Ahmad ibn Hanbal and his associates.

Bishr ibn al-Harith al-Hafi (d. 227/841), a renowned Sufi known by the epithet "the Barefooted" in Baghdad, was a reliable narrator of hadith and a figure known for his asceticism and devotion (zuhd and wara). Even the Abbasid Caliph Ma'mun of that era said of him, "In this city (Baghdad), there is no one left from whom fear and respect should be felt except him." After being born into a wealthy family and having a childhood of abundance and luxury, he led an ascetic life when he embraced the path of Sufism.

Harith ibn Asad al-Muhasibi (d. 243/857) is another influential figure among Baghdad Sufis with an enduring impact. He effectively conveyed the developmental stages a Sufi would undergo during their spiritual journey, the truths that would unfold during those stages, and the difficulties that could be faced along the path of spirituality.

Subsequent Sufi authors like Al-Qushayri and Al-Ghazali referred to Muhasibi in their works, highlighting his unique stature in knowledge (ilm), piety (taqwa), and spiritual states (hal). According to him, "According to him, 'the person who directs their inner self with contemplation and sincerity is adorned by Allah the Almighty with the mujahadah (struggle of their outer self) and compliance with the Sunnah.'"

Muhasibi's influence continued on subsequent generations of sufis, leaving deep traces in the history of Sufism through his works. Many of his writings have survived to the present day. Muhasibi's methodology in Sufism can be char-

acterized as an analytical approach that examines the causes and consequences of the influences shaping the development of the spiritual life. His statement, “The essence of worship is sincerity; the essence of sincerity is piety; the essence of piety is self-accountability; the essence of self-accountability is fear and hope,” serves as a measure in this regard. Muhassibi became renowned in the path of Sufism for emphasizing “self-accountability,” which earned him this epithet.

Sari As-Saqati, who was contemporary with and a companion of Muhassibi and the uncle and teacher of famous Junayd al-Baghdadi, initially engaged in commerce as a spiritual figure. However, he later abandoned commerce and dedicated himself to worship and asceticism. His most notable characteristic in Sufism is being among the early ones to discuss truth and unity, spiritual states (*ahwal*), and stations (*maqamat*). Al-Qushayri regarded him as one of the five individuals who combined knowledge and truth.

Abu Hamza al-Baghdadi (d. 269/882) is especially significant in the context of Baghdad Sufism, and more broadly, he was among the first to mention concepts like remembrance (*dhikr*), collective effort (*jam’i himma*), love (*muhabba*), affection (*uns*), love (*ashq*), closeness (*qurb*), and intimacy (*uns*).

Abu al-Husayn al-Nuri (d. 295/907) presented the concept of monotheism (*tawhid*) through an expression that strikes a balance between transcendence and immanence. He was a contemporary and associate of Junayd al-Baghdadi. While his refined thoughts on monotheism occasionally subjected him

to challenging accusations, Nuri's ideas served as a preliminary foundation for figures like Hallaj.

Junayd al-Baghdadi (d. 297/909) is considered one of the exceptional Sufis acknowledged as the "head of the sufi chain" in Sufism and Sufi orders. In contrast to Bayezid al-Bistami, whom we previously touched upon, Junayd al-Baghdadi is considered the representative of sobriety and caution. According to his perspective, in a state of sobriety, a person recognizes the aspects of their ego. However, when the state of spiritual intoxication increases, the burden of responsibility is lifted. Intoxication refers to a state where the heart is overcome and the mind is entranced. Sobriety follows intoxication, allowing one to distinguish between various experiences and choosing to embrace what leads closer to God.

Due to his systematic mindset, Junayd al-Baghdadi effectively spread the fundamentals of Sufism and maintained his influence over the years. Junayd al-Baghdadi defined Sufism as "God causing you to die to yourself and resurrecting you with Himself." This notion implies annihilating the ego, moving in accordance with the divine will, and acting in alignment with God's desire. In another description, Junayd al-Baghdadi stated, "Sufism is purifying the heart from conformity to people." Living ethically involves extinguishing human attributes, guarding against ego-driven claims, and embracing spiritual and angelic qualities.

Junayd al-Baghdadi was among the first Sufis to speak about the concept of tawhid (monotheism), aiming to distinguish between the primordial (qadim) and the temporal (had-

ith). He affirmed that in the attribute of primordially, God is singular, and there is no existence apart from His actions. (Risalah, 28) He stated, “The most honorable and exalted gathering is one where monotheism or tawhid is contemplated.” (Risalah, 47) Tawhid is essentially about acknowledging that the actions and occurrences of humanity are manifestations of Allah’s actions without any partners. Understanding this leads to affirming tawhid. The knowledge of tawhid is different from its essence. When he mentions the difference between monotheistic knowledge and its essence, he refers to the states of ecstasy (wajd) and sobriety (sahw). In ecstasy, one sees nothing but Allah, while in sobriety, one does not perceive the world as separate from Allah. Junayd al-Baghdadi’s emphasis on tawhid has some slight differences from those of Bayezid and Hallaj.

“During this period, Abū Sa‘īd al-Harrāz (d. 277/890), who is mentioned by authors of religious biographies as the first to use the concepts of fanā (annihilation) and baqā (subsistence) and write a work on this topic, is also the first to speak on the subject of the inner knowledge (ilm al-bātin). However, he stated that the variety of inner knowledge that contradicts the outward sharia is false, in order to express the necessity of filtering this knowledge. He used to say, ‘Fanā is knowing that the world is transient; baqā is understanding that the hereafter is eternal.’ In other words, according to his understanding, fanā is the transient state of a servant in realizing their servitude and not seeing their own deeds; baqā is the eternal state in the lordship of God, seeing God’s beauty and grace, and understanding the helplessness in servitude.”

One of the most significant and colorful figures of this era is Husayn ibn Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 309/921). Hallaj, who was executed for uttering the phrase “Ana al-Haq” (I am the Truth). He occasionally expressed his spiritual experiences through poetry and prose, with his work “Tawasin” being particularly debated. Some perceived kufr (disbelief) in Hallaj’s words, while others regarded them merely as products of intense spiritual ecstasy (*sakr*) and divine attraction (*Jadhb*). Sufis generally embraced Hallaj’s states, and throughout the history of Sufism, Hallaj has been defended. Rumi attributed Hallaj’s execution to his revealing the secret of union with the Divine and speak about him with words of praise.

e. THE SUFI SECTS ACCORDING TO AL-HUJWIRI

In his work “Kashf al-Mahjub,” the author Hujwiri categorizes the Sufis of these centuries into twelve groups (*firaq*) and explains that ten of these groups are correct, while two are misguided. He considers the Hallajiyya and the Hululiyya groups as incorrect paths. He lists the founders and characteristics of the ten correct groups as follows:

aa. Tayfuriyya: A way based on “*sakr*” attributed to Abu Yazid Tayfur b. Isa al-Bistami (d. 234/848).

bb. Muhassibiyya: A group associated with Haris b. Asad al-Muhasibī (d. 243/857), known for considering “contentment” (*rida*) not as a station but as a state.

cc. Kassariyya: A group based on “*malamat*” attributed to Hamdun b. Ahmad al-Kassar (d. 271/884).

dd. Harraziyya: A path attributed to Abu Sa'id (d. 277/890) involving "fana" and "baqa."

ee. Sahliyya: A path of "struggling against the ego" attributed to Sahl b. Abdullah al-Tustari (d. 283/896).

ff. Nuriyya: The path of Abu al-Husayn Ahmad b. Muhammad Nuri (d. 295/908), characterized by the principle of "ithar" (sacrifice for others). Ithar is based on the Qur'anic verse "They prefer others over themselves, even though they themselves are needy." (Hashr, 59:9). Nuri, along with his companions, was tried and sentenced to death. When the executioner asked, "Whose neck should I strike first?" he stepped forward and answered, "Mine." When asked why he did this, he responded with "To ensure my companions live a little longer" (ithar), a stance that sufficed to save both himself and his friends.

gg. Junayd al-Baghdadiyya: The path established by Junayd al-Baghdadi (d. 297/909) based on the principle of "sahw" (waking consciousness) and "tamkin" (restraint).

hh. Hakimiyya: The path of Abu Abdullah Muhammad b. Ali al-Tirmidhi (d. 320/932), characterized by the validation of spiritual authority ("wilaya").

ii. Sufiyya: The path attributed to Abu Abbas Sayyari (d. 342/953), based on the concepts of "unity" and "differentiation" ("jam' wa tafriqa").

jj. Hafifiyya: The path of Abu Abdullah Muhammad b. Hafif (d. 371/982), characterized by the foundation of "ghaybah" (absence) and "hudhur" (presence).

The usage of the term “tariqa” (Sufi order) in Sufism seems to have started during the 9th and 10th centuries. Apart from Sufi authors who produced works, important figures also emerged during this period who did not write works themselves but rather trained disciples, transmitting their words and practices from generation to generation in an traditional manner.

3- SUFISM IN THE 11TH CENTURY:

The 11th century is a period when various types of mystics flourished. It was a time when the political influence of the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad diminished, while the Great Seljuks and other principalities in the eastern regions, the Fatimids in Egypt, and the Umayyads in Al-Andalus (Islamic Spain) held power.

This century witnessed the emergence of a diverse range of sufis. Some of the prominent Sufis born in the 10th century and passing away in the 11th century include:

Abu Ali Ad-Daqqaq, who was the father-in-law and mentor of Qushayri, is among them. He passed away in Nishapur at the beginning of the 11th century (d. 405/1014).

Abu Abdurrahman Sulami (d. 412/1021) is one of the most renowned Sufis of this era. In terms of his works and influence, he resembles his predecessor Muhassibi. He authored the first Sufi biographical collections. His Sufic interpretation of the Qur’an is one of the pioneering works in this field. He facilitated the development of Al-Isfahani and Al-Qushayri as Sufis.

Abu Hasan al-Haraqani (d. 425/1034), who grew up in Haraqan and drew inspiration from Bayazid Bistami through the Uwaysi way, is characterized by a fervent mystical enthusiasm and a preference for seclusion over interaction with people, much like Bayazid.

Abu Nuaym al-Isfahani (d. 430/1038) was a scholar of hadith and a Sufi who compiled an extensive collection of biographies, ranging from Prophet Muhammad and his companions to the most devoted ascetics and Sufis. He was a student of Sulami and a teacher of Qushayri.

Abu Said al-Kharraz (d. 440/1048), following the tradition of Bayazid Bistami and Abu Hasan Haraqani, was an ecstatic and socially engaged Sufi. He placed importance on spiritual gatherings and was known for immersing himself among the people. He attempted to spread the concept of “unity of existence” (*wahdat al-wujud*) and established the initial principles for the manners and administration of Sufi lodges and centers. His life and anecdotes were collected in the work “*Asrar al-Tawhid*,” compiled by his grandson Muhammad b. Munawwar. (published by Suleyman Uludag, Istanbul 2016)

Baba Tahir Uryan (d. 447/1055), on the other hand, was a heartfelt individual who expressed his Sufi enthusiasm through his poetry and quatrains.

Abu Said al-Hayr and Abu Tahir’s contemporary, Abu al-Qasim al-Jurjani (d. 450/1058), was one of the Sufis of this era. Jurjani was trained by Abu Hasan al-Haraqani.

Abu Ali al-Farmadi (d. 477/1085), considered a disciple of both Kusayri and Junayd al-Baghdadi holds a significant place as the spiritual guide (mursyid) of Al-Ghazali.

Ansari (d. 481/1088), who translated Al-Sulami's "Tabaqat al-Sufiyya" into Persian, including some personalities not mentioned in it, classified spiritual states and stages (hal and maqam) in his Arabic work "Manazil al-Sairin." This work is one of the first to systematically organize the concepts of states and stages. Subsequently, numerous commentaries were written on this work.

Abu Bakr al-Nassaj Tusi (d. 487/1094), a disciple of Abu al-Qasim al-Jurjani, is also the spiritual guide of Ahmad Al-Ghazali.

Al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111) is a Sufi known for his adherence to the Sharia, as well as his depth in various other sciences such as jurisprudence (fiqh), theology (kalam), and philosophy. For many years, he taught at the madrasa (Islamic educational institution) established by Nizam al-Mulk, and later, after affiliating with Abu Ali al-Farmadi (d. 477/1084), he embarked on the Sufi path. Abu Ali al-Farmadi is a renowned Sufi who also nurtured Yusuf Hamadani (d. 535/1140), belonging to the Naqshbandi and Yasavi lineages. Al-Ghazali's works "Ihya' Ulum al-Din" and "Kimya' al-Saadah," along with "Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal," are considered masterpieces of Sufism. A distinct figure of these years is Al-Ghazali's younger brother, Ahmad Al-Ghazali (d. 520/1126). While Al-Ghazali emphasized knowledge, science, and ethical principles, Ahmad Al-Ghazali held a Sufi perspective that places importance on love, ecstasy,

and *jadhb* which is translated as divine attraction. (Ibn Al-Jawzi, *al-Muntazam*, IX, 260)

One of Ahmad Al-Ghazali's disciples, Ayn al-Qudat Hamadani (d. 525/1131), developed his ideas with excessive and extravagant expressions of mystical fervor, which led to scrutiny and eventually his execution. Renowned as "Shaykh al-Islam," Ahmad Namiqi Jami (d. 536/1141) was a famous Sufi of the era who viewed his path as guiding people to repentance and emphasized enjoining good and forbidding evil.

Another Sufi considered a spiritual elder by Al-Ghazali is Yusuf Hamadani. Being of the Hanafi school, Hamadani might have been of Tajik origin given his writings in Persian. He had a strong influence on Sufism in Khorasan and Transoxiana and played a crucial role in the upbringing of both Ahmad Yesevi (d. 562/1166) and Abdul Khaliq Gujduwani (d. 595/1199) who would later be part of the Naqshbandi silsila.

The 11th century saw a shift in Sufism towards expressing itself through poetry. Previously untouched by various forms of artistic expression, Sufi poetry during this century began to incorporate literary devices such as metaphor, allegory, simile, and metonymy to convey Sufi symbols and themes. Particularly, poets from Iran used Sufi symbols and motifs in their poetry. It is quite natural for Sufis to have an interest in poetry and literature, as just as Sufism is connected with the heart and soul, poetry also resonates with deep expressions of the heart. Poetry serves as a translator of the realm of illumination and meanings.

This era is characterized by Sufis generally advocating Sufism through their works and attempting to establish

a Sufism aligned with the principles of Sunni Islam. They refrained from engaging in theological debates and instead focused on their spiritual pursuits. Sufis' contemplative lives and virtuous attitudes led to them gaining the affection of the public and rulers. For instance, the visit of Ghaznavid Sultan Mahmud to the lodge of Abu al-Hasan Haraqani in Rey and Seljuk Sultan Tughrul Bey's visit to Baba Tahir Uryan in Hamedan confirm this trend. (Tadhkirat al-awliya, pp. 668-670)

III. THE ERA OF SUFI ORDERS

The XIIth and subsequent centuries are considered the period when Sufism institutionalized in the form of *turuq* (Sufi orders). During these centuries, Al-Ghazali, who lived in this era, marks a pivotal point in Sufi history. The Sufism aligned with the principles of Sunni Islam systematized by Al-Ghazali later took on a formal structure in the shape of "tariqa" or Sufi order. In these centuries, the foundations of the present-day understanding of *tekkes* (Sufi lodges), *zawiyas* (small Sufi retreats), the relationship between *shaykhs* and disciples (*murids*), and the establishment of the earliest *tariqas* were laid.

The respect shown by both the people and the rulers to Sufis had increased steadily since the 11th century. The Seljuk rulers demonstrated genuine acceptance of Sufis, building lodges and dedicating endowments (*waqfs*) for them in the regions they conquered.

In this century, on one hand, the Abbasid caliphate was losing its political influence and stability day by day, and on the

other hand, the Crusader attacks from the West and the Mongol invasion from the East had shattered the Islamic world. This period, known for the rule of the Anatolian Seljuks and various principalities in Anatolia, the Mamluks in Egypt, and various principalities again in Iraq and Syria, is recognized as a time when political authority weakened, the people sought refuge in spiritual authorities, and tried to find solace under their spiritual protection.

During this era, the tariqas began to organize primarily in Baghdad and Basra, which were the centers of the Abbasid caliphate, as well as in Central Asia. Subsequently, they spread across Africa, including Egypt, Spain (Al-Andalus), Anatolia, the Balkans, the Caucasus, and even to regions like India and the Far East.

The numbers of tariqas that gained popularity since their inception are numerous. However, only around ten to fifteen of them were highly influential. Some have spread throughout various parts of the Muslim world, while others have been effective only in specific regions. We will discuss the major tariqas in the “Sufi Institutions” section (see pp. 263 onwards). Therefore, here we will touch upon some tariqa activities in the Middle East, Africa, Central and Far Asia, as well as Anatolia and the Balkans.

1- TARIQAS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ARAB WORLD

The Middle East includes a vast region, encompassing the birthplace of Islam, the Hijaz region, the Arabian Peninsula, the Umayyad capital, Damascus, and Syria, as well as the Abbasid

centers of Baghdad and Basra, along with Jordan, Yemen, and Gulf countries. During the time when these tariqas emerged, this geography was governed by various small states under the shadow of the Abbasid caliphate. Notable founders of tariqas from this period include Shaykh Abdulqadir Al-Jilani in Baghdad and Ahmad al-Rifa'i in Basra.

The Qadiriyya or sometimes called the Jilaniyya, derived from its founder's name, the Qadiri order gradually became one of the most widespread tariqas in the world. It spread from the Far East to South Africa, the Caucasus to the Balkans, and from Siberia to the heart of Africa. Due to the burial place of the founder being in Baghdad, the influence of the order in Iraq remained strong. However, after Mawlana Khalid Baghdadi, the tariqa's influence in Northern Iraq shifted from Qadiriyya to the Naqshbandi-Khalidiyya order.

The Rifaiyya order, after Ahmad al-Rifa'i, established its place among the most widespread tarikats primarily in the Middle East, Anatolia, the Balkans, and the African regions.

While the Al-Suhrawardiyya order originated in the Iraq region, it expanded its influence during its founder's lifetime in Iraq, Syria, and Iran. After his passing, it further extended its reach to Turkistan, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent.

Throughout history, although various tariqas were established in the region due to the Shia-Sunni struggle, Qadiriyya and Rifaiyya tariqas have consistently remained the most influential.

A notable figure among the prominent shaykhs of the region is Adi bin Musafir (d. 557/1162), originally from the city of Baalbek. He had interactions with Shaykh Abdulqadir Al-Jilani, Abu al-Najib Al-Suhrawardi, and Ahmad al-Rifa'i. He spent a significant portion of his life in Hakkari. His tomb is located near Mosul. Somehow, later on, the Yazidis claimed this person as their own. It is extremely intriguing that members of a sect like Yazidism, which is distant from Islam, would lay claim to such a person who adheres to the Sharia and is Sunni.

Throughout history, both supporters and opposers of Sufism and tariqas existed. Especially after the institutionalization of Sufism into tariqas, there were those who have embraced and defended them among the masses, as well as those who disapproved of certain practices and opposed them. The most influential representatives of Sufism and tariqas have emerged from this region, and their most vehement opponents have often originated from these areas as well.

One of the leading figures in the anti-Sufi movement in the Islamic world, if not the foremost, was Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328), who lived in the Damascus region. While he generally opposed Sufism and tariqas, he held great respect for some leading Sufis and particularly for the great Shaykh Abdulqadir Al-Jilani. The mutual respect between Ibn Taymiyyah and Abdulqadir Al-Jilani could be traced back to their shared Hanbali affiliation.

In the region, scholars adhering to hadith and followers of Ibn Taymiyyah, such as Ibn Rajab Hanbali (795/1393),

contributed to the development of a puritanical Salafi trend. Subsequently, Wahhabism, which emerged later, took this line of thought to extreme levels, rejecting Sufism and even advocating armed struggle.

During Yavuz Sultan Selim's campaign in Egypt, his visit to Ibn Arabi's tomb and his later exoneration through the fatwa of Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Kemal contributed to the broader dissemination of Ibn Arabi's teachings in Ottoman territories. In the Ottoman geography, particularly in Istanbul and Anatolia, the names of Ibn Taymiyyah and his followers are not as prominent as Ibn Arabi, who had a substantial influence.

The Sa'diyya order was founded by Sa'deddin Jibawi (d. 700/1300). Originating and flourishing in the Syrian region, this order became powerful in areas around Damascus and Aleppo. Later, it also spread to Anatolia and Istanbul.

It is known that in Syria, besides the Sa'diyya, other orders such as the Qadiriyya, Rifaiyya, and Mevlaviyya were active. Indeed, when the orders were closed in Turkey in 1925, the postnishin (head) of the Konya-based Mevlevi lodge chose to reside in the Aleppo Mevlevi lodge, where he stayed until his death in 1965. Members of the Khalwati and Tijani orders were also active in Damascus and its surroundings.

The Naqshbandiyya order, which later took the name Khalidiyya with Mawlana Khalid Baghdadi (d. 1242/1826), became the most widespread tariqa in the Islamic world of the 19th century. Especially noteworthy was Khalid Baghdadi's selection of scholars as his successors. During the abolishment of the Janissaries and the closure of Bektashi tekkes, Nakshi-

Khalidi Shaykhs were appointed to Bektashi dargahs, which increased the attention of state officials and sultans towards this order.

The Nakshi-Khalidi branches in Syria maintain connections with Turkey. The Hani, Guftaru, and Haznevi families represent these branches.

In the Gulf countries of Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Kuwait, followers of the Burhaniyya and Shadhiliyya orders can be found, and in Kuwait, there are also followers of the Rifaiyya and Qadiriyya orders.

Before the dominance of Wahhabism, it is known that Sufi tariqas had a significant presence in the Hijaz region. By the late 19th century, there were 25 tariqas and a total of 150 tekkes and zawiyas in the region, with 60 of them being in Mecca. It appears that the “Majlis al-Mashayikh” established in Istanbul had representatives from the region. However, after the complete takeover of control by the Wahhabis, the tekkes were either entirely closed or demolished.

2- TARIQAS IN CENTRAL ASIA AND THE FAR EAST

Central Asia encompasses Afghanistan, the Turkic republics, India, Pakistan, and the northern parts of China. Azerbaijan and other Caucasian regions have historical connections with this area. The Islamic civilization of Transoxiana was nurtured by Islamic scholars and the saints of the Khorasan region.

During the period of tariqa formation, Central Asia has notable figures such as Yusuf Hamadani, who was a friend

of Al-Gazzali, and two of his successors who are considered founders of tariqas. One of them is Ahmad Yesevi, the founder of Yasawiyya, and the other is Abdul Khaliq Gujduwani, who later established the foundational eleven principles of Naqshbandiyya.

Ahmad Yesevi played a significant role in spreading Islam and Sufism among the Central Asian Turks.

The Qubrawiyya order is associated with Najmaddin Qubra of Harazm (d. 618/1221), a respected figure among the shaykhs of Turkestan. The order has a significant presence in Central Asia, Iran, and Russia. Representatives of the order are said to still exist in Uzbekistan.

One of the disciples of Najmaddin Qubra, Majduddin Bagdadi, was executed by being thrown into the Jeyhun River by the order of Harezmshah Sultan Muhammad in 606/1209. Another disciple of Najmaddin Qubra was Sayfuddin Baharzi (d. 658/1259), also known as “Najm Daye.” In this era, Najmaddin Razi (d. 628/1230) was also a well-known author.

Baba Kemal Jandi, a disciple of Najmaddin Qubra, was a significant spiritual figure who illuminated the Bukhara region. Saʿdeddin Hamevi (d. 650/1252) was also one of the disciples of Najmaddin Qubra. Aziz Nesefi (d. 700/1300) was a student of Saʿdeddin Hamevi.

The Naqshbandiyya order, founded by Shah al-Naqshband Muhammad Buhari (d. 791/1389), gradually gained prominence from his time onwards. It became the most widespread

tariqa, extending from Turkistan, Anatolia, the Caucasus, the Balkans, to India.

In the 14th and 15th centuries, Central Asia and the Transoxiana region had strong representatives of Naqshbandiyya such as Muhammad Parsa (d. 822/1419), Alaeddin Attar (d. 802/1399), and Ubeydullah Ahrar (d. 893/1488). Particularly, Ubeydullah Ahrar was a highly influential Sufi in spreading the Naqshi order.

In the 13th century, Shaykh Sa'di Shirazi (d. 691/1292), who was nurtured by Shihabuddin Al-Suhrawardi, stands among the respected Sufi poets of the century in Iran. Under the guidance of shaykhs like Shaykh Sa'di Shirazi and Jamaladdin Azhari (d. 672/1273), Ibrahim Zahid Jilani (d. 700/1300) developed through his successors, and we observe the establishment and development of the Safawiyya and Khalwatiyya orders.

The Khalwatiyya order is attributed to Abu Abdullah Sirajuddin Umar ibn Akmaluddin Khalwati (d. 800/1397). Umar Khalwati's Shaykh was his uncle Karimuddin Akhi Muhammad Khalwati (d. 751/1350), a disciple of Jilani. Therefore, Khalwatilik, which is considered a branch of Zahidiyya, became the most widespread tariqa in Ottoman lands after the 15th century, and its influence shifted from Iran to the Caucasus, Anatolia, and Rumelia.

Yahya Shirvani (d. 869/1464), known as the "second pir" of the order, is from Azerbaijan-Shirvan. His disciple, Aydinli Dede Umar Rusheni, first pursued religious studies and then turned to Sufism. He initially joined Alaeddin Ali (866/1461) in Karaman, and later joined Shirvani. This figure, who estab-

lished the Rûsheniyya branch of the Khalwatiyya order, passed away in Tebriz in 892/1486.

The other branch of Zahidiyya is Safiyyuddin Ardabili (d. 735/1334), from which Safawiyya or Ardabiliyya emerges. Initially Sunni but later Shia, Safawiyya played a role in the foundation of the Safawid Shia dynasty. Safiyyuddin and his descendants were mostly Sunni, but after Alaeddin Ali (d. 833/1429), Shaykh Junayd al-Baghdadi (d. 864/1460) brought Shia inclinations to the forefront. Shah Ismail, the founder of the Safawi state, was his grandson through Junayd al-Baghdadi's daughter.

Baba Nimetullah Nahjuvani (d. 902/1496), a sufi commentator of the Holy Quran from Azerbaijan, was a Naqshbandi shaykh. His commentary "al-Fawatih al-lahiyya" is well-known.

While Sunni Sufism was developing and solidifying, Shia factions like Kalanderi and Haydari were also active under the veil of Sufism. Especially in the regions influenced by Shia, centuries saw the rise of the Batini movement by Hasan Sabbah and the organization of the Ikhwan al-Safa.

Prominent Arab and Iranian mystics and poets who systematically expressed the concept of "unity of existence" in Sufism were Ab al-Ala al-Maarri (d. 449/1057), Umar Hayyam (d. 526/1132), Fariduddin Attar (d. 618/1221), and Hafiz (d. 792/1390), who were generally from this region.

Ruzbihan Bakli, who passed away in Shiraz in 606/1209, was one of the prominent Sufis of the 12th century. His works “Mashrab al-Arwah” and “Shatahat as-sûfiyya” are well-known.

Shihabuddin Al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234)’s disciple Bahaud-din Zakariya Multani (d. 661/1262) played a role in spreading the Suhrawardiyya in India and Pakistan. In Iran, Najibuddin Ali b. Buzgush Shirazi (d. 678/1279) and Kamaluddin al-Isfahani (d. 635/1237), and in Syria, Izzuddin b. Abdassalam (d. 680/1281), were associated with the order.

After Muinuddin Chishti (d. 633/1236), the Chishtiyya order, associated with him, became the most widespread tariqa in India and Pakistan. During Nizamuddin Awliya’s time (d. 725/1325), the tariqa spread throughout India. The order was also propagated by Shaykh Akhi Sirajuddin (d. 759/1357) and his successors in Bengal, and by Shaykh Burhanuddin al-Garib (d. 741/1340) and his successors in the Dakka region.

The Sufi who contributed significantly to the emergence of a new aspect of Naqshbandiyya and played a crucial role in the propagation of Islam and Naqshbandiyya in India is Imam Rabbani (d. 1034/1624). The love for Ibn Arabi and the concept of unity of existence present in Naqshbandi Shaykhs until Imam Rabbani transformed into “unity of witnessing” and Naqshbandiyya evolved into Mujaddidiyya under Imam Rabbani’s influence.

The 19th century was a period of great strength for the tariqas in the Caucasus. Shaykh Shamil (1797-1871), who earned the title “Caucasian Eagle,” was influential in the Caucasus and played a role in Naqshbandiyya’s Khalidi branch and Qadiriyya

in Dagestan and Chechnya. Their influence and impact have persisted up to the present day. During the Soviet era, tariqas, especially Naqshbandiyya and Qadiriyya, played a significant role in maintaining religious identity in the Caucasus.

In regions considered part of Far East Asia like Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, tariqas have played an important role in spreading and sustaining Islam. Among the active tariqas in this region are the Qadiriyya, Shattariyya, Rifaiyya, Khalwatiyya, and Naqshbandiyya.

3- *TARIQAS IN AFRICA*

When speaking of Africa, the North African region comes to mind, including countries along the Mediterranean coast like Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. Spain (Andalusia) is considered an extension of North Africa. The Qadiriyya order had the earliest impact in this region. Through the descendants and offspring of Shaykh Abdulqadir Al-Jilani, it spread as the Jalaliyah order and subsequently led to the establishment of local tariqas.

Among these tariqas is the first, known as the Madyaniyya, founded by Abu Madyan Al-Ghawth (d. 590/1193). Shaykh Abu Madyan, originally from Al-Andalus, left a deep influence on Ibn Arabi. In Northern Africa, he is referred to as “Shaykh of the West,” while Abdulqadir Al-Jilani is called “Shaykh of the East.” He was associated with the development of the Shadhiliyya tariqa.

The Shadhiliyya order, attributed to Abu al-Hasan Ash-Shadhili (d. 657/1268), is the most widespread and powerful

tariqa in North Africa. Ash-Shadhili was born in Shadhila, near Jabal al-Zafaran in Tunisia, and established and spread his tariqa in Egypt.

After Ash-Shadhili, the leadership of Shadhiliyya passed to Abu al-Abbas Al-Mursi, and then to Ahmad Ibn Ataullah al-Iskandari. These scholars, along with Suyuti (d. 911/1505), established various branches of the order.

Badawiyya, although sometimes mentioned as a branch of Rifaiyya or Shadhiliyya, is considered an independent tariqa. Badawiyya and Bedouin Sufis have had a significant influence on religious life in Egypt, especially during the Crusades, which enhanced their reputation. Badawiyya is the most widespread tariqa in Egypt after Shadhiliyya.

Dasukiyya is the second most widespread tariqa in Egypt after Shadhiliyya and Badawiyya. It also has branches like Sharnubiyya, Ashuriyya, and Taziyya.

Prominent figures in Egypt's Sufism include Ibn al-Mulakkin (d. 804/1401) and scholars like Zakariya Ansari (d. 926/1520) and Sha'rani (d. 973/1565), who have significant contributions in the field of Sufi thought.

Abdul Rauf Munawi (d. 1031/1621), known for his book "al-Kawakib al-Durriyya," is considered among Egypt's famous Sufi personalities.

In North Africa and Egypt, over time, the importance of lodges and dervish houses increased, extending even to villages and small settlements. Tariqas and their shaykhs began to be organized systematically in these areas, with examples such

as the appointment of Shaykh Shihab al-Din Al-Suhrawardi as the “master of masters” by the head of Baghdad. Similarly, the Mamluk Sultan designated Fahreddin Iraki (d. 688/1289) as the “master of masters of Egypt.”

Sufi thought, which was grounded in the Qur’an, Sunna, and the views of great Sufis and saints until the 13th century, gradually began to be explained using philosophical concepts. Topics like existence, Allah, and the nature of humans entered into discussions during this period. Figures such as Ibn Arabi, Ibn al-Farid, and Abdulhak b. Sebin, who represent the key personalities of this phase, were mainly active in the North African region during the 12th and 13th centuries.

Akbariyya, attributed to Shaykh Muhyiddin ibn al-Arabi (d. 638/1240), also known as Shaykh Al-Akbar, is a path founded by him. He is known for his works “Fusus al-Hikam” and “al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyya,” which solidified his place in Sufi thought and established him as the founder of Akbariyya. Ibn Arabi travelled extensively through Islamic countries of his time, including Andalusia, Egypt, Sham, and Anatolia. He is considered by some to be a Sufi who systematically formulated the concept of “unity of existence.” The years during which he lived witnessed the spread of the belief in “unity of existence” by various individuals across Islamic lands.

In Africa, besides Shadhiliyya, Badawiyya, and Dasukiyya, there are known Sufi orders such as Madyaniyya, Arusiyya, Zarruqiyya, Jazuliyya, Darqawiyya, Samnaniyya, Sanusiyya, Tijaniyya, Madaniyya, and Muridiyya. These orders initially propagated Islam in countries like Mauritania, Niger,

Nigeria, Kenya, Sudan, Chad, Somalia, and Senegal in Central and West Africa, and later facilitated its spread in the southern direction of the continent. Traveling dervishes, especially those who were traders, played a significant role in the dissemination of Islam in these regions.

Tijaniyya gained influence in West Africa, Qadiriyya in Central and West Africa, Shadhiliyya in North Africa, and Senussiyya in the central regions of Africa. In certain parts of Africa, the terms “tekke” and “ribat” are used interchangeably, referring to fortresses or small garrisons established on borderlands by voluntary Muslim dervishes to protect Islamic territories. Tariqas played a crucial role in the propagation, sustenance, and preservation of Islamic culture and civilization through the tekkes that functioned as educational institutions. The regions where Tariqas were present are where Islamic life, social solidarity, scholarly accumulation, and cultural development were most concentrated in the African context.

Particularly, the scholars from Egypt and authors from Morocco like Muhammad ibn Sulayman Al-Jazuli (d. 870/1465), Ahmad Zarruq (d. 899/1493), Abdalaziz Ad-Dabbagh (d. 1132/1720), Ahmad al-Tijani (d. 1230/1815), Muhammad ibn Ali Senussi (d. 1276/1859), and Abdulqadir al-Jazairi (1840-1913) have had a significant impact in the region.

Certain countries in Africa have become synonymous with specific Tariqas. For example, when Egypt is mentioned, Shadhiliyya comes to mind; Sanusiyya with Libya; Arusiyya with Tunisia; Madaniyya with Algeria; Darqawiyya with Morocco; Muridiyya with Senegal; Tijaniyya with Mauritania;

Qadiriyya with Nigeria; Mirganiyya with Sudan; and Salihyya with Eritrea.

In the present day, the most organized structure of Tariqas is found in Egypt, and specifically in Cairo. After the Ottoman Majlis al-Mashayikh, the Mashihatu't-Turuqus-Sufiyya was established in Cairo in the early 20th century, and its regulations were revised in 1976. The head of this institution in 1987, Prof. Dr. Abu al-Wafa Guneymi Teftazani, stated in an interview with me that there were over three million adherents of Tariqas in Egypt at that time. Morocco also has a strong historical background and sociological foundation for Tariqas.

4- TARIQAS IN ANATOLIA AND THE BALKANS

After the establishment of Tariqas and the authoring of Sufi works in the 12th and 13th centuries, Sufism had gained recognition in both social life and among rulers. The construction of the Khanqah al-Mas'udi in Amasya in 545/1150, followed by others, led to the settlement of numerous sufis in Anatolia from the 12th century onward.

Shaykh Mukhlis Baba, the son of Baba Ilyas Khorasani, came to Anatolia to escape the Mongol invasion and settled in Amasya. After the disintegration of the Seljuk State, he served as an amir in Konya for about six months and later resigned to participate in battles alongside Sultan Osman. He is the father of the renowned poet Ashik Pasha.

The 13th century was marked by the Mongol invasion, which affected the Islamic world from Central Asia to Anatolia. Despite being a period of political and social turmoil and

a partial decline in the scholarly domain, it was a time when valuable scholars, thinkers, and Sufis emerged. While Sufism was traditionally a spiritual discipline, it also transformed into an academic discipline through the study of written works during this period.

During this time, noteworthy works included the poetry of Abu Hafs Hariri Kirmani (d. 635/1237), Ibn Arabi's "Fusus al-Hikam," Konavi's commentary "Fukuk," Fahreddin Iraqi's "Lema'at," and Ibn al-Farid's (d. 632/1234) "Diwan." Muhyiddin Jundi and Abdarazzaq Kashani were disciples of Konavi.

During the early years of the Ottoman Empire, the order of Suhrawardiyya spread alongside the Awarif tradition in Anatolia. One representative of Suhrawardiyya in Anatolia was Fahreddin Iraqi (d. 661/1262). Zayniyya, founded by Zayneddin Hafi (d. 838/1435), was an influential branch of Suhrawardiyya in Anatolia.

Husameddin Celebi (d. 687/1288) was one of the fortunate disciples who inspired Jalaluddin Rumi's "Mathnawi" and later became the successor to his father, Husameddin Celebi.

During the period of the establishment and rise of the Ottoman Empire in the 14th and 15th centuries (XIV-XV), Sufism, tariqas (Sufi orders), and the Akhis experienced their most influential era. In that century, the travelogue of Ibn Battuta, who travelled through Anatolia, records that in the absence of the sultan, the Akhi leader of a city would assume control, ruling like a sovereign and extending benevolence to the travellers. This account underscores the influence and impact of the Akhis, who were artisans and craftsmen, on the region.

During the early years of the Ottoman Empire, Rifai lodges were found in various parts of Anatolia. Ibn Battuta also references Rifai lodges along with Akhi zawiya's he encountered in Anatolia and the Balkans. Alongside the Akhis, dervishes from Turkmen ancestors, Central Asia, Khwarezm, and Khorasan, belonging to the Yasawi order, also came to Anatolia.

At the founding of the Ottoman State, the establishment of a tekke adjacent to a madrasa, and the presence of Dursun Fakih (d. 726/1326) and Shaykh Edebali (d. 726/1325) together, symbolized a harmonious step in balancing the state's powers.

Shaykh Edebali, besides being an influential Akhi Shaykh, was also the father-in-law of Osman Gazi. Historical records depict him as a wealthy Shaykh with abundant livestock, wealth, and a guesthouse that was always full. According to Neshri, the son of Shaykh Edebali, Mehmed Pasha, conveyed that this Shaykh's disciples held significant positions within the Ottoman lands. For example, Akhi Huseyin, who accompanied Sultan Orhan during the conquest of Bursa, was the son of Shaykh Edebali's brother, Akhi Shamseddin. Furthermore, there were many Akhis among the state officials, including Akhi Hasan, Akhi Mahmud, and Chandarli Kara Halil (d. 789/1387).

Ashikpashazade (d. 908/1502) and Tashkopruzade (d. 968/1560) mentioned prominent Sufis of the Osman Gazi era, including Shaykh Mukhlis Baba (d. 700/1301), Edebali (d. 726/1325), Shaykh Ashik Pasha (d. 733/1333), his son Elvan Celebi, Akhi Hasan Celebi, Baba İlyas Celebi, and Baba İlyas AJam.

The life of Haji Bektash Veli (d. 669/1271), the founder of the order that later became legendary, held significance due to the role of his order's members in the establishment of the Janisary corps during the Ottoman era.

Yunus Emre (d. 720/1320), a disciple of Taptuk Emre, who was a deputy of Haji Bektash in the 14th and 15th centuries, was not a Sufi order leader, but he was an impassioned mystic and a powerful poet who could easily infuse words with profound meanings.

The influence of Sufis on the general public further fuelled the rulers' and state officials' existing curiosity about Sufism, intensifying their inclination towards sufism. Under Sultan Orhan's leadership, figures like Geyikli Baba, Abdal Musa, Abdal Murad, and Duggu (Ayranlı) Baba, who belonged to the Babai tariqa and were disciples of Baba İlyas, participated in various battles. Zawiyas were established for them on the slopes of Mount Uludag near Bursa.

Following Shaykh Edebalı's leadership among the Akhis, it is unclear who succeeded him. However, during the reign of Murad I, it is evident that the sultan himself was the leader of the Akhis, as seen in the charter and endowment of 767 Recep/1366 March, which he granted to Akhi Mûsa, a leader among the Akhis in Gelibolu (Gallipoli). During Murad I's reign, the Akhi organization began transitioning to Rumeli (the Balkans).

During the Yildirim Bayezid era, there was one renowned among the people of Bursa as Emir Sultan, while Shamseddin b. Ali Huseyni (833/1429), a descendant of Al-Hussayn ﷺ, hailed

from Bukhara where he received education and Sufi training. As a member of the Nurbashi branch of the Qubrawiyya Sufi order, Shamseddin Buhari first journeyed to Baghdad and then arrived in Anatolia while on his way to Hajj. He eventually settled in Bursa. As his fame quickly spread in Bursa, he married Hundi Sultan, the daughter of Yildirim Bayezid, becoming his son-in-law. He participated in the siege of Istanbul by Murad II (825/1422) alongside hundreds of disciples. It's narrated that following Timur's invasion of Anatolia, Emir Buhari was captured and sent to Timur.

Among the Sufis of the Yildirim Bayezid period, Hamiduddin Aksarayi (d.815/1412), famously known as "Somuncu Baba," holds a special place, being said to have delivered the first sermon during the inauguration of the Ulu Cami mosque (802/1400).

During this era, the Akhis gradually lost their sufi identities and started resembling more of a trade guild, yet they continued to exert their influence. While the Akhis transitioned into trade guilds in Anatolia, in the Balkans, they maintained their tariqa identity. For instance, Yildirim Bayezid constructed a zawiya in Dimetoka and allocated certain endowments for it.

The reverence and loyalty shown to the practitioners of the tariqas continued during this century; however, there were also individuals like Simavna Kadisioglu Shaykh Bedreddin (d.823/1420), who sought to transform their shaykh roles into more authoritative positions. Through his disciples, Shaykh Bedreddin brought about what can be called the "Alevi Rebel-

lion,” creating a kind of upheaval known as the Shaykh Bedreddin event in Anatolia and Rumeli. This incident would become a profound and long-standing issue for the state, spanning eight to ten years.

Haji Bayram Veli (d.833/1429), the founder of the Bayramiyya Sufi order, and his successors, including Akshemseddin (d.863/1459), Bicakci Omer Dede (d.880/1475), Akbiyik Meczûb (d.860/1455), Yazicioglu Mehmed (d.855/1451), and his brother Ahmad Bican (d.858/1454), are renowned figures among the Sufis of the 15th century.

Among the Sufis of that time, Abdullah Rûmi (874/1469) is notable for initially being a disciple of Haji Bayram Veli, later adopting the Qadiri tarika through his connection with Huseyin Hamevi (d.832/1428), and establishing the Ashrafiyye branch.

Shaykh Muslihuddin (d.896/1491), also known by the epithet “Vefa” in the Zeyniyye tarika and a disciple of Abdullatif Makdisi (d.856/1452), gained great respect and influence, particularly during the reigns of Fatih and II. Bayezid. His lodge, which held his name, continued to be frequented by the intellectual elite of the era.

In the second half of the 15th century, the Bayramiyya tariqa diversified into various branches (Shemsiya, Malamiyya, Jalwaiyya), and the Khalwatiyye and Zayniyya tariqas also gained widespread popularity.

During this period, notable figures from the Bayramiyya’s SHemsiya branch—established by Akshemseddin—include Kayserili Ibrahim b. Sarraf Huseyin (d.887/1482), and Akshem-

seddin's sons: Feyzullah (d.950/1553), Emrullah (d.909/1503), and Hamdullah Celebi (d.897/1491), as well as Sivrihisarlı Baba Yusuf (d.918/1512) and Habib Karamani (d.902/1497).

The fame of the Naqshbandiyya order extended to Anatolia and Istanbul during Ubeydullah Ahrar's time. The first shaykh who brought Naqshbandiyya to Anatolia was Molla Abdullah İlahi of Simav (d.896/1491), and he was his successor.

Despite being initially founded in Iran, the Khalwatiyye tariqa became most prevalent in Turkey through its representatives spread across many regions of Anatolia. Notable figures from the Khalwatiyya include those known as Celebi Halife: Jamal Khalwati (d.899/1493), Sunbul Sinan (d.936/1529), Merkez Muslihuddin (d.959/1552), Dede Omer Rûsheni (d.892/1486), İbrahim Gulsheni (d.940/1533), and Ummi Sinan (d.958/1551).

Jamal Khalwati (d.899/1493), among them, received his spiritual succession from Yahya Shirvani, particularly from Erzincanlı Pir Mehmed Bahaeddin (d.879/1474). He even visited Istanbul as a guest of invitation from Sultan II. Bayezid and served as a shaykh at the Koca Mustafa Pasha dargah.

Merkez Muslihuddin Efendi, a disciple of Sunbul Sinan Efendi, also held the position of shaykh and ran a lodge in Istanbul. He was originally from Denizli.

The 16th century is the magnificent era when the Ottoman Empire reached its peak in all aspects. In this century, among the Sufi dignitaries, Ummi Sinan Efendi (d.976/1568), the founder of the Sinaniyya branch of the Khalwatiyya order, first affiliated with Habib Karamani, and later with Yigitbashi Ahmad

Efendi (d.910/1504). He served as a shaykh for many years in the tekke located in Istanbul's Sehremeni district. Notably, during this period, Jamaledin İshak Karamani (d.933/1526), a disciple of Habib Karamani from the Khalwatiyya order, produced various works, including a treatise on the concept of "Wahdat al-Wujud" (Unity of Existence).

Diyarbakirli Ibrahim Gulsheni (d.940/1533), a student of Aydinli Dede Omer Rûsheni, founded the Gulsheniyya branch of the Khalwatiyya order. He was brought to Istanbul during the reign of Sulayman the Magnificent, received education, engaged in conversations with notable scholars like İbn Kemal (d.940/1533), and excelled in both exoteric and esoteric sciences. Afterward, he was released with an apology directly from the sultan.

In this era, we can mention Ayashli Bunyamin (d.926/1520) and his successor Aksarayli Pir Ali (d.945/1538) from the Malamiyye branch of the Bayramiyye order, as well as Oglan Shaykh Ismail (d.935/1529) and his successor Ahmad Sarban (d.952/1545), who were disciples of Bicakci Omer Dede (Omer Sikkini), the successor of Haji Bayram Veli.

During the same century, Sofyali Bali Efendi (d.960/1553) and his disciple Filibeli Nureddinzade Muslihuddin Efendi (d.981/1573) were prominent figures within the Khalwatiyye order.

Another colorful figure and interesting Sufi of the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent is Yahya Efendi of Besiktas (d. 978/1571), who was the milk-brother of the Sultan. The founder of the Shabaniyya branch of the Khalwatiyya, Shaykh Shaban-

i Veli from Kastamonu (d. 976/1568), is one of the leading, respected shaykhs of this century. His order, the Khalwatiyya, is among the most widespread branches of the Sufi tradition.

The 17th century is considered the period when the Ottoman Empire's rise came to an end and stagnation began. Up until the end of the 16th century, the trio of tekkes, madrasas, and the military worked harmoniously, but cracks started to appear in the 17th century, especially between the tekkes and madrasas. Similar to other fields, there was a decline in Sufi activities during this period; nevertheless, notable Sufi figures emerged. We will briefly mention some of them.

Ahmad Shemseddin Sivasi (d.1006/1597), who travelled from Sivas to Istanbul, along with his disciples and nephews Abdulmecid (d.1049/1639) and Abdulahad Nûri (d.1061/1651), formed a Khalwati-Sufi tradition known as Sivasiler. In the 17th century, Sivasiler engaged in debates and disputes, particularly with the Kadizadelis, which became a significant event in the history of Sufism.

In the 17th century, prominent Sufi figures include Aziz Mahmud Hudayi (d.1038/1628), the founder of the Jalwaiyye order, Ismail Rûmi (d.1041/1631), who brought the Qadiri order to Istanbul and established a tekke, Ramazan Mahfi (d.1025/1616), the founder of the Ramazaniye branch of the Khalwatiyye order, and Ankarali Ismail Rusûhi (d.1041/1631), who wrote commentaries on the Mathnawi of Rumi.

Throughout Ottoman history, rulers had an interest in the Mevlevi order, and some even joined the order. The center of the Mevlevi order is the mausoleum of Rumi in Konya.

Mevlevi lodges were larger than lodges of other orders due to the space required for the sama (whirling) ceremony. These dargahs were not only centers for spiritual practices like zikr (remembrance) and sama but also academies for fine arts like music and calligraphy.

Rusûhi's commentary on the Mathnawi and other works, as well as Abdullah Ansari's Turkish commentary on Menazilu's-Sairin titled "Minhaj al-fuqara," hold a significant place in the history of Sufism. Bosnali Abdullah Efendi (d.1054/1644), a Mevlevi Sufi, had around sixty works, and he was a disciple of Bayrami Malami shaykhs. He is buried in Konya, alongside Sadreddin Konevi.

Notable figures Aziz Mahmud Hudayi and his disciple Oglanlar Shaykh Ibrahim Efendi (d.1066/1655), Sari Abdullah Efendi (d.1071/1660), Zakirzade Abdullah.

Hulvi Mahmud Efendi (d.1064/1654), a figure from the Khalwati order, is renowned for his work "Lamazat-i Hulvi," a collection of Manaqib (saintly stories) and descriptions of spiritual states related to the Khalwati Sufi tradition.

Towards the end of the 17th century, significant representatives of the Khalwatiyya order include Ali Alaeddin Atvel (d.1090/1679), known as Karabash Veli from the Shaban-iya branch, Malatyali Niyazi Misri (d.1105/1694), and At-pazari Osman Fazli Ilahi (d.1102/1690), a strong figure in the Jalwatiyya order. Osman Fazli from Bulgaria-Shumen was a colorful personality. His most important work is attributed to Ismail Hakki of Bursa (d.1137/1725). Ismail Hakki of Bursa had more than a

hundred works and a broad influence, with his commentary “Rûh al-beyan” being particularly remarkable.

In the early 18th century, along with Ismail Hakki of Bursa, contemporary Khalwati scholars like Mehmed Nasûhi Efendi (d.1130/1718) in Uskudar, Nûreddin Jarrahi (d.1133/1721) in Karagumruk, and Hasan Sezai (d.1151/1738) in Edirne established separate branches. Notable Sufi scholars from this period include Niyazi Misri and Hasan Sezai, who composed diwans.

La’lizade Abdalbaki (d.1159/1746), the grandson of Sari Abdullah Efendi, followed in his grandfather’s footsteps as both a Naqshbandi and a Malami. He authored “Manaqib-i Malamiyya-i Bayramiyya,” following the path of his grandfather Sari Abdullah Efendi.

Another significant Sufi figure from the 18th century is Ibrahim Hakki of Hasankale in Erzurum (d.1186/1772). He received Qadiri and Nakshi training from his shaykh Fakirullah Efendi in Tillo, Siirt, and later merged these two traditions. Ibrahim Hakki, well-versed in both Sufi and natural sciences, is best known for his work “Mar’ifetname.”

Abdullah Salahi-i Ushshaki (d.1196/1782), who received initiation from various Sufi orders, was a prolific Sufi author with around sixty works.

The Sa’diyya order, also known as “Cibaviyya,” originated in Damascus and later spread to Istanbul in the 18th century. In Istanbul, there were more than twenty Sa’di lodges near the time of the closure of the Sufi lodges, indicating the wide-

spread influence of the order. The Sa'di lodges in Egypt's Bedouin tradition in Istanbul were relatively few.

Hashim Baba (d.1197/1783) was initially associated with the Jalwati order but later combined the Bektashi and Jalwati traditions in Egypt, establishing a tekke in Uskudar Inadiye. His diwan holds great importance in both literary and Sufi aspects.

Lalizade Abdalbaki (d. 1159/1746) and Mustakimzade Sadeddin Suleyman Efendi (d.1202/1787) were both Naqshbandi and Malami Sufis. Mustakimzade, interested in calligraphy, authored more than fifty works.

During the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, Halid Bagdadi (d.1242/1826), who received Sufi training from Abdullah Dehlevi, brought a new perspective to Naqshbandiyya. The period when Naqshbandiyya became the most widespread Sufi order in the Ottoman Empire began with him. In the 19th century and onwards, Naqshbandi Sufis were generally known as Khalidi.

In the 19th century, various Khalwati-Shabani shaykhs like Kushadali Ibrahim Efendi (d.1262/1846) gained respect not only among scholars and statesmen but also within the community.

One of the greatest Sufi authors of the 19th century is undoubtedly Haririzade M. Kemaleddin Efendi (d.1299/1882), as referred to by Bursali M. Tahir Bey as "Hace-i irfanim, veliyy-i nimetim." His work "Tibyan al-wasail al-haqaiq" serves as an encyclopedic resource on Sufi matters and fills a significant void in the field. Although Haririzade passed away at a young age, he left behind nearly forty works.

SOME IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE 16TH-19TH CENTURIES

From the 16th century to the beginning of the 20th century, we can identify some of the important events that occurred as follows:

1. The 16th century and onwards mark the completion of the establishment of all Sufi orders and the almost end of the compilation of works on Sufi practices and manners.

2. As a result of the freedom of thought in the Ottoman Empire, especially after Ibn Arabi's exoneration by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Kemal's fatwa, the concept of "wahdat al-Wujud" (unity of existence) gained prominence, particularly in poetry and literature.

3. The 17th century witnessed the decline of both madrasas and Sufi lodges. The transition from the principle of inheriting permission to be a shaykh based on being a genuine follower of the spiritual path to one based on familial lineage caused a decline in the quality of leadership within lodges. Unqualified individuals began to be appointed as shaykhs due to their familial ties, leading to a deterioration in the level of expertise.

4. In the mid-17th century, conflicts arose between the Kadizadelis and the Sivasizades, leading to instances of mutual excommunication and even violence.

5. Despite the decline of Sufi lodges and madrasas in the 18th century, notable mystics such as Ismail Hakki of Bursa and Erzurumlu Ibrahim Hakki emerged.

6. In 1826, following the disbandment of the Janissary corps due to the “Va’ka-i Hayriye” (Auspicious Incident), Bektashi lodges were closed, and their use was handed over to Naqshi, Qadiri, and Mevlevi shaykhs. Consequently, the influence of Naqshbandiyya increased in the 19th century, while Bektashilik transformed into a more esoteric order.

7. In the second half of the 19th century, reforms were initiated to regulate Sufi lodges and dervish convents, and in 1866, the “majlis al-mashayikh” (council of sufi masters) was established to organize their activities. Efforts were made to establish regulations for the functioning of lodges and shaykhs.

8. As newspapers and magazines became more widespread towards the end of the 19th century, similar publishing activities began in Sufi circles. Journals such as “Jaridah al-Sûfiyye,” “Bayan al-haq,” and “Tasawwuf” were published.

9. Reform efforts related to the organization of Sufi orders and lodges also gained attention in Egypt during the same years.

10. Due to the inability to find qualified shaykhs, some lodges were closed down, leading to a decline in their influence. Nonetheless, despite these developments, the existence of over three hundred active lodges in Istanbul by the end of the 19th century in relation to the Muslim population of around 300,000 to 500,000, can be seen as a significant sign of enduring interest.



**CHAPTER THREE:
CONCEPTS OF SUFISM**

Every field of knowledge and art has its own terminology, terms, and concepts. The practitioners of each field aim to facilitate the understanding of their specific meanings by their audience through the use of these concepts and terms. Just as in all Islamic sciences, the concept of terminology has existed in the field of Sufism throughout its historical development, and Sufi concepts, like others, are generally derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah (Prophetic traditions). It can be observed that Sufi terminology began to be used and popularized especially from the period of asceticism (zuhd). The concepts related to worship, ethics, as well as the spiritual ranks and states in Sufism that are used, are drawn from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Notably, the classical Sufi scholars such as al-Qushayri and al-Hujwiri mention that the Sufi practitioners utilize and develop these concepts for two main purposes:

To make difficult subjects easier to comprehend for those who are well-versed in them.

To keep the mystical secrets of Sufism concealed from those who are not qualified to know them (Al-Qushayri, 200; Hujwiri, 517).

By means of these terms and concepts, the Sufis aimed to either explain these meanings or conceal them, depending on their intentions.

SOURCES OF SUFI CONCEPTS

From the 2nd century of the Hijri calendar onwards, the Sufi concepts developed and spread, and the foundational sources for established Sufi concepts are the relevant sections

of classics such as “al-Luma,” “at-Taarruf,” “Qût al-Qulûb,” “Al-Risala al-Qushayriyya,” “Kashf al-mahjub,” “Ihya Ulum al-din,” “Awarif al-Maarif,” “Fusûs al-Hikam,” and “al-Futuhat al-Makkiya.” In addition to these:

- a. Abdullah Ansari’s “Manazil as-Sairîn” (d. 481/1088)
- b. Ruzbihan Bakli’s “Mashrab al-Arwah” (d. 606/1209)
- c. Abdurrazzak Kashani’s “Istilahat as-Sûfiyye” (d. 730/1330)
- d. Seyyid Sharif Jurjani’s “Ta’rifat” (d. 816/1413)
- e. Ismail Ankarawi’s “Minhaj al-fuqara” (d. 1042/1632)
- f. Sarî Abdullah Efendi’s “Samarat al-fuad” (d. 1071/1661)

These are some of the foremost works from ancient times on this subject. In classical Sufi books, these concepts, divided into groups like “maqam” (station), “hal” (spiritual state), “manzil” (level), and “waqt” (time), are classified and described. We will attempt to present these concepts chronologically and based on their relevant contexts. Before proceeding with this classification, we’d like to briefly explain some fundamental stages and concepts of Sufi development, such as “maqam,” “hal,” “waqt,” and “usul al-‘asharah.”

SOME FUNDAMENTAL SUFI CONCEPTS

1. Maqam (Station)

Maqam refers to the manners and ethics that a disciple repeatedly practices and internalizes, making them characteristic qualities. These manners and ethics are acquired through enduring hardships, and striving. Since maqam is acquired through effort, it’s earned and enduring. The attainment of a

maqam signifies that Allah has granted the person a dwelling in that state. Generally, the first maqam is identified as “tawbah” (repentance), and the last as “rida” (contentment).

2. Hal (Spiritual State)

Hal encompasses the spiritual experiences that come to the heart without the individual’s intention or effort, such as feelings of joy, sorrow, comfort, and distress. Hal is a manifestation of Allah’s grace and favor; it’s a divine bestowal. Unlike maqam, hal is not permanent or lasting. Maqam is achieved through effort and striving; thus, its possessors exhibit restraint in their state. On the other hand, those experiencing hal are in a state of ascent. A person cannot induce or dismiss a hal at will. Thus, while the possessor of a maqam retains it through continuous striving, the possessor of a hal is transient in their experience.

While it’s widely accepted that hal is transient, some argue for its continuity. For instance, Harith al-Muhasabi supports this view, while Junayd asserts that hal is fleeting like lightning.

Suhrawardī presents the relationship between hal and maqam as sequential, with one evolving into the other. For instance, the intermittent state of “muhasabah” that occasionally arises within a person is said to transform into a maqam over time through resisting the ego.

3- Waqt (Time)

Waqt refers to the period between the past and the future that a Sufi exists within. When the heart is occupied with the world, time becomes worldly. When engaged with the hereaf-

ter, time becomes about the hereafter. In a sense, the dominating state for a person is their time. Sufis use the term “waqt” in the form of “Ibn al-waqt,” which means choosing and acting upon what is most virtuous according to the present moment. When facing trials and tests, one should surrender with contentment to align with the ruling of time. This way, they let go of regret for the past and anxiety for the future, allowing them to evaluate and appreciate the present moment.

4- Usul Al-‘Asharah (Ten Principles)

Although there are various ways to categorize Sufi stages, the “Usul al-‘Asharah” categorization, consisting of ten stages, authored by Najmaddin Qubra, gained significant popularity and recognition. In this work, the stages are repentance, asceticism, reliance on God, contentment, seclusion, remembrance, turning towards God, patience, self-awareness, and contentment. Many commentaries have been written on this work, with the most famous commentary attributed to Ismail Hakki of Bursa.

We categorized Sufi concepts in a different manner as follows:

A- Concepts of Attainment:

- I- Those related to worship and ethics,
- II- Those concerning spiritual journey and development.

B- Concepts of Realization:

- I- Those related to the heart and conscience,
- II- Those linked to knowledge and gnosis.

C- Concepts Derived from Other Cultures.

A- CONCEPTS OF ATTAINING GOOD CHARACTERISTICS

I- Those Related to Worship and Ethics

1- TAWBAH (Repentance)

Tawbah is turning away from sin and redirecting oneself towards the Divine. It is generally considered the first of the Sufi stages. The Prophet ﷺ described “Tawbah” as a sense of remorse. Tawbah involves feeling regret for transgressions and relinquishing them due to recognizing their wrongfulness. In other words, Tawbah is the sincere endeavor of a believer to detach from negative qualities and behaviors contrary to the essence of Islam, while earnestly returning to virtuous traits.

In the Qur’an Allah encourages believers towards “tawbatan-nasuha” (sincere repentance) which is highlighted as the means of salvation for believers (an-Nur, 24/31) and is emphasized as irreversible (at-Tahrim, 66/8). The Qur’anic verses command first seeking forgiveness and then proceeding with Tawbah: “And seek forgiveness of your Lord and turn to Him in repentance, that He may grant you good enjoyment for a specified term and give every doer of favor His favor.” (Hud, 11/3)

The Beautiful Names of Allah such as Tawwab (the Acceptor of Repentance), Gaffar (the Forgiving), and Ghafūr (the Most Forgiving) mentioned in the Qur'an, along with the stories of prophets turning to repentance, emphasize the significance of repentance. The Prophet Muhammad, in one narration, mentioned that he seeks forgiveness seventy times a day, and in another, a hundred times. (Bukhari, Da'wa 3; Tirmidhi, Da'awa 38)

According to Al-Ghazali, for the realization of Tawbah, a person should consider their sins as a barrier between them and their Beloved. When someone attains this awareness, their heart experiences sorrow due to the danger of losing their Beloved, which corresponds to a sense of remorse. Hence, in Sufism, for Tawbah to be effective, these three essential aspects related to the past, present, and future must be present:

- a. Regret for committed sins (past),
- b. Striving to break free from sins (present),
- c. Commitment to not return to sin (future).

Tawbah isn't just about abstaining from sins; it's an attempt to rectify the past. As sins darken the mirror of the heart, the verse "Nay! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of what they were earning." (al-Mutaffifin, 83/14) and the hadith "When a servant commits a sin, a black spot appears on his heart. If he abandons the sin, seeks forgiveness, and repents, his heart will be cleansed, and it will shine again." (Muslim, Iman 231; Tirmidhi, Tafsir surah 83) elucidate this concept.

In Sufism, tawba is an awakening, alertness, and a surge of longing directed toward the Divine. Hence, in treatises of different Sufi levels, the various reasons that led the early Sufis to asceticism and the path of Sufism are extensively explained through the theme of Tawba.

Sahl b. Abdullah Tustarî defines Tawbah as “not forgetting the sin,” while Junayd defines it as “forgetting the sin.”

These definitions might appear contradictory, yet each carries its own validity. Notably, the distinction between these definitions is essential. Remembering the sin while maintaining a commitment to Tawbah is the domain of the common people, whereas being preoccupied even with thoughts of sin, turning such preoccupation into an engagement with the Divine, and contemplating only Him while forsaking thoughts of sin is the realm of the elite.

Istighfar (Seeking Forgiveness): It means supplicating to Allah for pardon and forgiveness with one’s tongue.

Tawbah (Repentance): This is an affair of the heart. In the Sufi tradition, it has been studied in three stages using Qur’anic terminology: Tawbah, Inabah, and awbah.

aa-Tawbah: It is to abandon sin out of fear of Allah’s punishment. This is the initial step. “O you who have believed, repent to Allah with sincere repentance.” (at-Tahrim, 66/8)

bb-Inabah: It involves both the outward rectification through Tawbah and the inward transformation of the soul toward righteousness. Inabah implies the servant’s alignment with the Divine will, an earnest journey toward Allah with

detachment from the ephemeral, while relying on Allah's rewards and bounties. This is the middle point of Tawbah. "So turn to your Lord in repentance and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you." (az-Zumar, 39/54)

cc-Awbah: It means attaining Divine pleasure and turning solely towards Him. This represents the highest degree of Tawbah. The Qur'anic verses that describe the repentance of David, Solomon, and Job (peace be upon them) as "awwab" (Sad, 38/17, 19, and 44) indicate this stage.

2- IBADA (Worship)

In Sufism, the terms "ibadah," "ubûdiyyet," and "ubûdet", all derived from the root *abd* (servant), denote worship and are perceived as the reason for human creation and existence. This is encapsulated in the Qur'anic verse: "I created the jinn and mankind only to worship Me." (Az-Zariyat, 51/56)

In Sufism, *ibadah* encompasses all actions and behaviors directed towards earning Allah's pleasure. *Ubûdah* and *ubûdiyyah* entail being content and accepting all forms of decree and actions from Allah. The enlightened consider *ibadah* as knowledge of certainty (*ilm al-yaqin*), *ubûdiyiet* as the eye of certainty (*ayn al-yaqin*), and *ubûdah* as the truth of certainty (*hakk al-yaqin*).

Ibadah and *ubûdiyyah* are connected to the concepts of Lord (*Rabb*) and Master (*Mawla*). One who sees themselves as a servant (*abd/qul*) recognizes Allah as the Lord (*Rabb*). One who sees themselves as a worshiper (*abid/ahl al-ibadah*)

regards Allah as the worthy object of worship (Ma'bûd) and the Beloved (Mawla).

Ibadah and ubûdiyyah serve as significant means to attain Allah's pleasure and draw closer to Him. The Qur'an instructs: "Only worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance." (Taha, 20/14) Worship is the pinnacle of reverence, respect, and obedience. Only Allah is deserving of worship and servitude. We emphasize this truth at least forty times each day in the Surah Al-Fatiha, stating: "You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help." (al-Fatiha, 1/5)

Consistency in worship is a vital aspect that Sufi practitioners emphasize. Allah commands: "And worship your Lord until the certainty (death) comes to you." (al-Hijr, 15/99)

Some inattentive individuals, desiring to interpret this verse according to their own desires, might have misunderstood it as if proximity to God is achieved effortlessly, but this is incorrect. The truth is that what is expected from the servant is continuous prayer (salat al-daimah), constant remembrance (dhikr al-daim), and perpetual worship (ibadat al-daimah).

3- IKHLAS (Sincerity)

Ikhlas means purity, being untainted, sincerity, and wholehearted devotion. It involves performing worship and actions solely for Allah, purging them of any other motives. As sincerity is the essence of the belief in the unity of God (tawhid), the surah that most beautifully and concisely articulates the concept of God's oneness is called "Ikhlas" (Sincerity).

Ikhlas is the opposite of hypocrisy (riya), guarding the heart against impure thoughts. Ikhlas leads its possessor towards genuine servitude. Thus, Allah commands: “They were only commanded to worship Allah, (being) sincere to Him in religion.” (al-Bayyina, 98/9) As sincerity is a fundamental requirement for righteous deeds, Allah desires the closing of the doors of hypocrisy and associating partners with Him in worship, saying: “So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone.” (al-Kahf, 18/110)

The difficulty of ikhlas, described by Sahl b. Abdullah Tustari as “the most difficult deed for people,” stems from the fact that it does not allow any share for the ego. Junayd al-Baghdadi says: “Ikhlas is a secret between the servant and Allah. The angels are unaware to record reward for it, Satan can’t corrupt it, and desires don’t perceive it to attract them.” (al-Qushayri, II, 445)

One of the early Sufis, Harith b. Asad Muhasibî, extensively discusses the themes of hypocrisy and sincerity in his work “ar-Riaya li-hukûkullah” (Observing the Rights of Allah). This work may indeed be one of the earliest and most detailed treatises on the subjects of showing off and sincerity.

4- DHIKR (Remembrance)

Dhikr means not forgetting, recalling, keeping in mind, remembering, and mentioning. The word “dhikr” is mentioned along with its derivatives in the Qur’an 256 times. In the Qur’an, it is used in its linguistic sense of remembering

Allah, always keeping Him in mind, and never forgetting Him. It is also used in contexts like prayer (al-Ankabut, 29/45) and the Qur'an (al-Hijr, 15/9). In three verses (Ali Imran, 3/41; al-Ahzab, 33/41-42), there is a command to do "dhikran-kathiran", abundant remembrance.

In one verse, it is stated that believers with sound intellect (aql salim) mention Allah while standing, sitting, and lying down (Ali Imran, 3/191). In another verse, the concept of dhikr is depicted as remembering Allah quietly and with humility, contrasting it with heedlessness. "And mention your Lord within yourself in humility and in fear without being apparent in speech, in the mornings and the evenings. And do not be among the forgetful." (al-Araf, 7/205). This is affirmed by the verse "Remember your Lord when you forget." (al-Kahf, 19/24).

In one verse, it is instructed that worldly possessions and family should not divert people from the remembrance of Allah (al-Munafiqun, 63/9). In another verse, those who are not distracted from the remembrance of Allah even by trade and business are described as people of understanding (rijalullah) (An-Nur, 24/37).

On one hand, it is emphasized that hearts and souls can find tranquility only through divine remembrance (dhikr ilahî) (Ar-Rad, 13/28). On the other hand, it is highlighted that distractions, such as wealth and worldly pursuits, must not hinder believers from engaging in the remembrance of Allah. The statement "those who turn away from the remembrance of the Truth will be afflicted with a narrow livelihood" emphasizes that those who turn away from the remembrance of the

Truth will face a life of hardship. In the verse that criticizes the hypocrites, it is mentioned that they remember Allah very little. (Taha, 20/124)

The virtue of remembrance (dhikr) has also been praised in hadiths. In one hadith, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ compares those who remember their Lord with those who do not, as being like the living compared to the dead. (Bukhari, Da'wa 67) In a divine hadith (hadith Qudsi), it is stated: "When My servant remembers Me, I am as he remembers Me, and when he remembers Me in his heart, I am with him." (Muslim, Dhikr 6) Similarly, in other hadiths, it is mentioned: "Shall I not inform you of the best of your deeds and the most virtuous of them in the sight of your Lord? Remembrance of Allah." (Tirmidhi, Da'wa 6) "When a group of people gather to remember Allah, the angels surround them, and mercy envelops them." (Muslim, Dhikr 8)

Followers of Sufism, based on the guidance of Qur'anic verses and hadiths, have considered the "essence" of various methods of remembrance as fundamental. However, differing opinions and practices have arisen regarding whether remembrance should be performed openly or privately. This is because the verses commanding remembrance generally fall into two categories: some directly and absolutely command remembrance, while others, as in the verse "And remember the name of your Lord in the morning and evening" (al-Muzzamil, 73/8; ad-Dahr, 76/25), specify the form and time of remembrance, restricting it to the mentioning of Allah's name and the morning and evening periods. The verses that directly command remembrance seem to urge the continuous recollection

and remembrance of Allah, while the verses that command remembrance in an open audible or conspicuous manner essentially encourage those who cannot reach that level of mental and spiritual engagement to engage in reciting Allah's name, reciting the Qur'an, and using auxiliary elements of remembrance such as supplications and tasbeeh.

Various Sufi orders have placed great emphasis on individual and collective remembrance, developing diverse methods for its practice. The collective remembrance is often referred to as "sam'a" (spiritual listening) or "ayin" (ritual). We will elaborate on this concept in the subsequent discussion of the stages and practices of spiritual journey (saya al-sulūk). Different types of individual remembrance have been categorized by Sufi orders, such as the remembrance of the tongue, heart, whispered (khafi) remembrance, proclaimed (jali) remembrance, and the silent remembrance. At times, debates have arisen about the superiority of silent remembrance over open remembrance or vice versa. However, it's generally believed that the effectiveness of each type depends on the individual and their state. In Sufi orders, silent remembrance (khafi dhikr) is often associated with the method of the Siddiqi lineage through Abu Bakr As-Siddiq ؓ, while open remembrance (jali/jahri dhikr) is linked to the method of Ali Ibn Abi Talib ؓ, may Allah ennoble his face. Remembrance can also vary linguistically in terms of its expressions, including the affirmation of Tawhid, glorification of the divine attributes (lafz al-jalalah), and recitation of divine names (asma).

5- ITMI'NAN (Tranquility)

Itmi'nān refers to finding calmness after distress, and stability after turmoil. This term, along with its derivatives as nouns and verbs, is mentioned in thirteen places in the Qur'an. It signifies the heart and soul trusting and attaching itself to something, leading to a sense of tranquility. In this sense, it would be appropriate to consider Itmi'nān among the spiritual and conscientious concepts. However, we have considered it within the context of worship terms, taking into account its use in hadiths to denote bodily and outward calmness, and its role as a complementary element of acts of worship.

In the hadiths, Itmi'nān, or tuma'nīna, is used to describe the attribute of bodily tranquility or calmness that comes after rising from the bowing position (ruku) to the standing position in prayer, before proceeding to prostration.

The following verses from the Qur'an discuss the quality of tranquility in the heart and soul; "Those who believe and whose hearts made tranquil by the remembrance of Allah. Truly, only with the remembrance of Allah, are the hearts tranquil" (Ar-Ra'd, 13/28) and "O self at peace and at rest, return to your Lord, well pleasing and well pleased." (Al-Fajr, 89/27)

These verses indicate that the soul, through remembrance of Allah, finds serenity and calmness, and after constriction, it attains contentment.

In hadiths that describe goodness (birr), it is mentioned that the soul and heart find tranquility in accepting something without doubt or suspicion. (Ibn Hanbal, IV, 194)

The sense of “tranquility” (itmi’nan) referred to here, when used alongside concepts like remembrance (dhikr), faith (iman), goodness (birr), and truthfulness (sidq), implies a state of profound peace where all forms of doubt, uncertainty, and suspicions vanish from the heart. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also employs the terms itmi’nan or tuma’nina as measures when defining truth and falsehood.

“Truthfulness is tranquility and peace, while lying is doubt and anxiety.” (Tirmidhi, Qiyama 60) Modern technology today, with devices designed to detect lies, reveals the agitated and electric state of individuals telling lies, exposing their deviation from the truth. The state of calmness and tranquility of someone speaking the truth will undoubtedly differ from the state of the other.

The situation is the same with belief and disbelief. In the states of faith (iman) and remembrance (dhikr), a person is physically, spiritually, and mentally in a state of complete safety and tranquility. Therefore, those who are in such states are referred to as having reached the station of being “mutma’inna” or at peace. On the other hand, those who persist in disbelief and denial continue to experience distress, making it difficult for them to attain the state of tranquility (itmi’nan).

One of the earliest explanations of the concept of itmi’nan can be found in the Sufi work “al-Luma” by Abu Nasr As-Sarraj. Abu Nasr As-Sarraj describes itmi’nan as follows: “Itmi’nan is turning towards Allah with the heart without any trace of doubt. When a person comprehends and recognizes the supreme entity that provides sustenance and provisions, they attain itmi’nan. Itmi’nan is the state of those individuals whose

hearts overpower their intellect, whose faith is strong, whose knowledge is profound, whose minds are clear, and whose essence is solid.”

Some Sufis mention that due to recognizing the greatness and majesty of Allah, hearts shudder and tremble; upon witnessing His mercy and grace, hearts are uplifted; and upon realizing His all-sufficiency, hearts attain tranquility. This state is called *itmi’nan*.

Sufis generally analyze the concept of “*itmi’nan*” in three levels: the *itmi’nan* of the common people (*awam*), the *itmi’nan* of the elite (*Khawas*), and the *itmi’nan* of the most elite (*akhas al-khawas*).

The *itmi’nan* of the common people (*awam*) is finding contentment through remembrance, experiencing joy from this feeling. Their distress is eased by the removal of afflictions and calamities and by an increase in sustenance. Their prayers being accepted by God brings them comfort. The term “*nafs al-mutmainna*” mentioned in the Qur’an signifies the state of a self that believes no one but Allah can avert afflictions or hinder sustenance.

6- MURAQABAH (Watchfulness)

In its lexical sense, this concept implies supervision, constant watching of something, and observance. In the Qur’an, this term, along with various derivatives, appears in twenty-four verses. The usage resembling “*Raqib*” is one of the attributes of Allah. “Indeed, Allah is ever watchful over all things.” (*Al-Ahzab*, 33/52) “Indeed, Allah is watchful over you.” (*An-Nisa*, 4/1)

As a concept, watchfulness (*muraqabah*) refers to the act of purifying the heart from negative thoughts that would distract it from the divine remembrance, while acknowledging that Allah is aware of the servant's inner feelings and thoughts. The hadith of Gabriel expresses the same understanding through the term "ihsan," described as worshipping as if one sees Allah or worshipping with the feeling that Allah sees them. Although not directly related in etymology, this concept is considered an indication of *muraqabah*.

There are two types of *muraqabah*, one from the perspective of the servant and the other from the perspective of Allah. From the servant's perspective, a person monitors their heart with every breath, action, and behavior, striving to gain Allah's pleasure and aiming to bring their heart into a state of divine observation. This form of vigilant practice is directed towards God. In *muraqabah* from Allah's perspective, the individual feels that during their thoughts, movements, words, and deeds, they are under the observation of the Divine gaze and that they can never be away from His oversight.

Exercising control over the heart through *muraqabah* severs its connection to negative thoughts and its association with wrongdoing. Allah says, "Will they associate partners with Allah who create like His creation, so that the creations seem to them alike? Say, 'Allah is the Creator of everything, and He is the One, the Prevailing.'" (Ar-Ra'd, 13/22) These verses indicate the benefit that this kind of *muraqabah* can bring. The renowned Sufi Abu al-Abbas Jafir, addressing this, defines it as: "To protect oneself from every kind of thought that comes to the heart by remembering that Allah Almighty is observing you."

One of the earliest Sufis to speak about muraqabah was Abu Muhammad Jerriri. Considering Sufism to be built upon two foundational aspects, he speaks of watchfulness as one of them: “One of the two foundations of Sufism is muraqabah. The other is the establishment of the Sharia. The self is preserved through muraqabah of Allah, and the inner and outer realms are fortified through the establishment of the Sharia.”

Muraqabah, to a certain extent, can be understood as a spiritual and mental focus. It involves intensifying the thoughts in the mind and heart around the remembrance and thought of “Allah.”

7- WARA (Scrupulousness)

Wara’ means to abstain, to keep away. It involves avoiding what is forbidden and prohibited, and refraining from doubtful matters. In other words, it is being cautious that what enters and leaves one’s mouth, both sustenance and speech, align with what Allah and His Messenger love.

Wara’ is the first step of asceticism (zuhd) and the initial stage of guarding (taqwa). This is because wara’ entails avoiding what is doubtful, while zuhd is abandoning excess beyond what is necessary. By abstaining from what is harmful and avoiding what is doubtful, an individual becomes prepared for self-accountability.

The term “wara” does not appear in the Qur’an, but it is found multiple times in hadiths, both as a verbal noun and a verb. It is often used in hadiths to convey the meaning of abstaining from what is forbidden and doubtful. For instance:

“Adhere to wara’ and you will be among the most worshipful of people.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd 24); “I have not seen an easier and more effective way than wara.” (Bukhari, buyu 3); “The foundation of your religion is wara.” (Ibn al-Ashir). These hadiths emphasize the concept of wara’ in the sense of avoiding what is doubtful and forbidden.

The hadith “The halal (permissible) is clear, and the haram (forbidden) is clear. Between these two are matters that are doubtful, which many people do not know. So, whoever avoids doubtful matters has cleared his religion and his honor, and whoever indulges in doubtful matters has indulged in the unlawful. Just like a shepherd who grazes his animals near the sanctuary of someone else, he is likely to have some of them stray into it. Truly, every king has a sanctuary, and truly Allah’s sanctuary is His prohibitions.” (Muslim, Musakat 107-108) directs believers to abstain from doubtful matters. Based on this hadith, Sufis have concluded that even with permissible and lawful matters, it is best not to exceed beyond what is necessary. Adhering diligently to the standards of Islamic jurisprudence is a requirement of taqwa. Avoiding what is doubtful and unnecessary excess in lawful matters is an expression of this principle.

To completely remove disobedience (ma’siyah) from the heart is the objective of asceticism (zuhd).

Wara’ has four levels:

a. Wara’ of the just: Observing the fundamental principles of religion, such as the obligations and prohibitions.

b. The wara' of the righteous: Abstaining from even doubtful matters with a potential of being forbidden.

c. The wara' of the Godfearing: Keeping away from things that are halal (permissible) but doubtful.

d. The wara' of the truthful: Contenting oneself with worldly blessings to the extent necessary for worship; sufficing with what suffices the self.

The highest level of wara' falls within the scope of asceticism (zuhd). Sufis draw on hadiths like "Sin is what troubles your heart and you do not want people to know it." (Muslim, Birr 14); "Even if the muftis issue a fatwa, consult your heart." (Ad-Darimi, Buyu' 2); "Leave what gives you doubt for what does not give you doubt." (Bukhari, Buyu' 3) The people of tasawwuf have emphasized the meticulous application of wara' as it enhances an intuitive sense that helps one identify sinful and doubtful matters. Indeed, some Sufis exhibit remarkable sensitivity in discerning whether food placed before them is halal, haram, or doubtful. For instance, if Harith al-Muhasibi reached for something and it seemed to be a doubtful object, he could immediately feel his right middle finger's vein throbbing, prompting him to withdraw his hand immediately.

When Bishr al-Hafi was invited to gatherings with doubtful food, he would not be able to extend his hand to the table. Some would abandon things that raise doubts in their hearts and label it as wara'.

Muhammad Ibn Sirin used to say, "For me, nothing is easier than wara'. If something causes suspicion in my heart, I

promptly abandon it.” In this way, he conveyed that wara’ is an affair of the heart, which is most often manifested concerning doubtful matters.

Various Sufis have expressed wara’ in different terms. Ibrahim Hawwas, for instance, described it as “turning all of one’s attention toward what pleases Allah, neither discussing anything other than Allah nor complaining if upset.”

Abu Nasr Sirraj, the author of “al-Luma,” considers wara’ in three degrees. He identifies the first degree as avoiding doubtful matters. The second degree involves abstaining from what the heart opposes and what causes constriction in the heart. He explains that this can be practiced by those with an alert heart. The highest degree of wara’ is when the ecstatic knowers (arifun) view things that divert them from Allah’s remembrance as inauspicious and thus forsake them. This type of wara’ reaches the same level as asceticism and aims to minimize engagement with the world (masiwa).

8- SIDQ (Truthfulness)

Sidq signifies truthfulness, reality, and purity of heart. This concept appears in various forms in the Qur’an, a total of 155 times. Among theological scholars, it is considered a prophetic attribute. Those who possess this attribute but are not prophets hold a position just below that of the prophets to whom Allah has bestowed His blessings. Indeed, “Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger are in the company of those whom Allah has blessed: the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous.” (An-Nisa, 4/69)

Sidq is the consistency between words, deeds, and behaviors, as well as the harmony between the inner and outer aspects of an individual. The Qur'an praises those who attain the status of "Sidq" in their words and actions through various means (Al-Ahzab, 33/35; Al-Ma'idah, 5/119). Being in the company of Sidq holders is considered a means to attain taqwa (God-consciousness). For instance, "O you who have believed, be conscious of Allah's commands and be with the truthful." (At-Tawbah, 9/119)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also stated in a hadith, "Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise." (Muslim, Birr 105) Allah also praises those who uphold their promises with truthfulness in the Qur'an, "Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah." (Al-Ahzab, 33/23). In this verse, Sidq refers to adhering faithfully to the promise made to Allah during the Covenant of Alastu. Therefore, Sidq involves keeping one's promises to Allah. According to Al-Ghazali, Sidq should be present in both speech and intention, as well as determination and action. Among these, sincerity (ikhlas) specifically characterizes sincerity in intention.

9- SABR (Patience)

Sabr means refraining from complaining in the face of pain, distress, and afflictions. It can also be described as abstaining from things that please the ego. Words derived from the root of "sabr" appear in the Qur'an 103 times. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ once referred to patience as half of faith. Sabr is not only a concept within Sufism but also a moral virtue. Patience occurs in two situations:

a. In the willful actions of the servant:

In obeying commands.

In abstaining from prohibitions.

aa. Patience in obeying commands: A person needs patience to perform the worship prescribed, as the ego is not inclined towards servitude. It always seeks dominance.

bb. Patience in abstaining from prohibitions: Resisting unlawful actions requires patience, as it is challenging for the ego to abandon its habits.

b. Patience in the face of trials and tribulations:

Directly from Allah, causing distress that one cannot alleviate, such as the death of a loved one, loss of property, illness, etc. These trials generally serve to mature a person or expiate sins.

Indirectly caused by humans, leading to distress that one cannot mitigate. These are things such as people speaking ill of each other, spreading false accusations, or seeking their rights through means other than justice.

In the Qur'an, those who possess patience have been praised, and it is proclaimed that they will receive a reward better than what they have done (An-Naml, 16/96). It is mentioned that they will be rewarded twice over due to their patience (Al-Kasas, 28/54) and that they will receive immeasurable and countless recompense (Az-Zukhruf, 43/10). In some verses that command patience, it is emphasized that Allah is with the patient ones (Al-Baqarah, 2/153; Al-Anfal, 8/46).

Patience is a characteristic unique to humans. Neither animals nor angels possess patience. The patience of worshippers entails refraining from complaining and maintaining this state. The patience of lovers involves relinquishing impatience in order to hasten toward the Divine.

Patience is obligatory to avoid prohibited things, recommended to resist reprehensible things, and prohibited in the face of severe torment, harm to life, wealth, or honor. Enduring the distress inflicted by certain acts detested by Sharia, along with humility and degradation, is considered reprehensible.

In this world, humans encounter either pleasurable things like health and wealth, or unpleasant things like adversity and poverty. Both situations require patience. Allah says, “Your possessions and your children are a trial, and Allah has with Him a great reward.” (Al-Anfal, 8/28) Thus, patience is needed even in situations that bring pleasure, to avoid over-reliance and attachment to worldly blessings.

We are tested with unpleasant situations and are required to show patience, as indicated in the following Qur’anic verse: “And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient.” (Al-Baqarah, 2/155)

Patience is the clash between spiritual feelings and sensual desires. Therefore, one should strengthen their spiritual emotions to counter sensual desires and work to weaken those desires.

10- TAWAKKUL (Reliance)

In its linguistic sense, tawakkul means appointing someone as an agent to accomplish a task, entrusting a matter to someone, and having the heart rely on that agent. It signifies a believer's reliance and confidence in God. It is the act of a servant who holds the conviction that no one else is the ultimate doer except Allah, and thus, places their trust and dependence in Him. As mentioned in the Qur'an:

“If you believe in Allah, then rely upon Him.” (Al-Ma'idah, 5/18)

“Those who have believed should rely upon Allah.” (Ibrahim, 14/12)

“And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is enough for him.” (At-Talaq, 65/3)

In its general sense, trust involves following natural laws established by Allah and then placing reliance and trust in Him. The method and manner of trust, mentioned in the Qur'an in forty-seven places, is explained in the following verse:

“Consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely (upon Him).” (Al 'Imran, 3/159)

Regarding this matter, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: “If you truly relied upon Allah with due reliance, He would provide for you just as He provides for the birds. They go out

in the morning hungry and return in the evening full.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd 14)

Tawakkul has been understood in various ways within the circles of Sufism since the time of the early Muslims. While some have considered seeking medical treatment as contrary to trust in God, others have viewed using means for sustenance as a form of necessary prajaution. However, the concept of “avoidance of prajaution” is a subtle point. Sufis have generally understood this concept as abandoning reliance on mere material measures.

Prominent figures among the Sufi masters of Khorasan, such as Ibrahim Ibn Adham, Shaqiq al-Balkhi, and Abu Hafis al-Haddad, are considered to be practitioners of tawakkul.

Al-Ghazali analyzes tawakkul in three dimensions: knowledge, state, and action. The knowledge aspect involves affirming with the heart and declaring with the tongue. The state aspect is surrender and trust, and the action aspect involves actions that are required by the conditions. Mawlana Rumi describes this beautifully:

“Trust in God, and keep working always,

First, sow the seed, then ask from God.”

Tawakkul is an affair of the heart and a sense of trust. It manifests in three degrees:

- a. Trusting Allah like one would trust a representative,
- b. Turning to only Allah, like a child who recognizes no one but their mother,

c. Surrendering oneself to Allah like a corpse before a washer, like a leaf blown in the wind.

Some categorize tawakkul into three forms: tawakkul (trust), teslim (surrender), and tefwiz (resignation). Tawakkul is trusting in Allah's promise; teslim is submitting oneself, knowing that Allah knows oneself; and tefwiz is being content with Allah's decree.

11- ISTIQAMAH (Steadfastness)

Istiqamah is to proceed straight and correctly, to perform something fully and justly, and to show the determination to stand up. In the Qur'an, the term istiqamah is derived from the verse: "So remain on a straight path as you have been commanded, (you) and those who have turned back with you (to Allah), and do not transgress." (Hud, 11/112). Istiqamah is the opposite of transgression. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said regarding this verse: "Surah Hud made me grow old." (Tirmidhi, Tafsir sura 56). Therefore, istiqamah is a state that can truly be fulfilled only by the Messenger of Allah. He also said: "Strive to be upright, though none of you can be perfectly upright." (Ibn Majah, Tahara 4).

In Sufism, istiqamah is often used in conjunction with karama (miracle) and it is emphasized that what is expected from a person is istiqamah rather than karamah. Abu Ali Juzjani states, "Be a person of istiqamah, do not strive for karamah. Because one who seeks karama is seeking it for his ego, while one who seeks istiqamah is seeking it for his Lord." Ibn Ata said: "Istiqamah is achieved by dedicating the heart to

Allah.” Al-Qushayri notes that *istiqamah* requires the continuity of *karama*, as those who are steadfast will receive the continuous mercy of Allah, as mentioned in the verse: “So if they remain steadfast, We will certainly give them to drink of Our water constantly.” (al-Jinn, 72/16).

In summary, *istiqamah* means to maintain a straight and righteous path in one’s actions and intentions, seeking the pleasure of Allah rather than seeking personal recognition or miracles.

12- TAQWA (God-Consciousness)

The term *taqwa* in its linguistic sense means “to guard against and protect oneself from any danger.” In the Qur’an, *taqwa* is used in three main contexts:

- a. In the sense of fear, awe, and reverence: “Fear Me alone!” (al-Baqara, 2/41)
- b. In the sense of obedience and worship: “O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims.” (Ali Imran, 3/102)
- c. In the sense of guarding the heart from sins: “Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger and fears Allah and is conscious of Him - it is those who are the successful.” (an-Nur, 24/52)

For Sufis, *taqwa* means, as mentioned in the last verse, guarding the heart from sins. According to the people of spiritual reality (*ahl Haqiqa*), *taqwa* is protecting oneself from divine punishment through obedience to Allah. The true meaning of *taqwa* in acts of worship is to abstain and guard against.

Dry rituals and asceticism hold no benefit in the eyes of Muslims. Knowledge and fear (awe) are interrelated. As it is stated: “Only those of His servants who fear Allah have knowledge.” (Fatir, 35/28). In other words, taqwa involves staying away from anything that might distance you from Allah. In the stormy sea of worldly life, taqwa means trembling in order to avoid going against any of Allah’s commands.

13- QANAAH (Contentment)

Contentment is being satisfied with what one has, being pleased with what Allah has given, and practicing patience. In other words, it is being content with what is acquired after putting in effort and striving. The Lord has distributed everyone’s sustenance by attaching it to a means. Whatever is destined for you is what you will attain. Today, being thankful for whatever you have received from Allah in this very moment is true contentment. Finding joy in abundance and feeling sorrow over scarcity is not contentment.

The concept of contentment is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur’an like the term “zuhd” (asceticism), but its essence is present. For instance, in the verse: “Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward according to the best of what they used to do.” (an-Nahl, 16/97), the phrase “good life” or “pleasant life” is interpreted by many scholars as “contentment.”

The sayings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ provide clarity on the concept of contentment. His statement “Blessed is the

one who accepts Islam and has been provided with enough provision (sustenance) to satisfy himself!” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd 4; Tirmidhi, Zuhd 35) and “Contentment is an inexhaustible treasure” (Kanz al-ummal, III, 780) emphasize the significance of contentment. His supplication “O Allah, make the provisions of the family of Muhammad just sufficient (kifaf)” (Bukhari, Al-Riqaq 17) further illustrates the concept of contentment.

Muhammad ibn Hafif states: “Contentment is not looking back at what has passed and being satisfied with what one possesses.”

14- SHUKR (Gratitude)

Gratitude is acknowledging and confessing the bestower of blessings, praising and thanking Him for His favors, and utilizing those blessings in the direction indicated by Him. Gratitude manifests through the tongue, the heart, and the body. With the tongue, gratitude is expressed through confession and praise towards the bestower of blessings. With the heart, gratitude arises from recognizing that it is Allah who has bestowed the blessings. With the body, gratitude is practiced by guarding the body against forbidden actions and adhering to Allah’s commandments.

Allah desires that we show gratitude for His blessings and warns against ingratitude. He promises to increase His blessings when we express gratitude (Ibrahim, 14/7) and emphasizes that true gratitude is a rare quality (Saba, 34/13). The Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ dedication to night prayers despite physical discomfort is an example of this. When asked why he exerts

himself so much, he responded, “Should I not be a thankful servant?” (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 6).

Al-Ghazali metaphorically explains gratitude using the example of someone receiving a gift of a horse from a king. This fortunate person might rejoice for three reasons:

- a. For possessing the horse.
- b. Because the king remembered him.
- c. To serve the king with the horse.

Gratitude involves using the blessing Allah has given in His path and as a means to draw closer to Him, which corresponds to the third reason.

Praise (hamd) and gratitude (shukr) are distinct. Praise involves using words to express admiration and commendation, without any reason and it has a broader meaning than gratitude. Gratitude, on the other hand, is specific to responding to blessings. Additionally, each blessing has its own type of gratitude. Gratitude for wealth is demonstrated by using it generously, gratitude for knowledge is expressed through sharing it, and gratitude for health is shown by taking care of oneself and those in need.

From Allah’s countless blessings, there are those that are beneficial both in this world and the Hereafter, like knowledge and good character. (Ibrahim, 14/34) There are also desires and pursuits that may bring worldly gain but result in harm in the Hereafter. Resisting these desires might be challenging in this world, but it brings great benefits in the Hereafter. “Ignorance

and bad habits” are undesirable both in this world and the Hereafter. Ignorance and heedlessness are major obstacles that hinder people from expressing gratitude.

15- RIDA (Satisfaction)

Rida denotes satisfaction and approval. It is the submissive acceptance of a servant before the divine decree and is considered one of the loftiest stations in Sufism and has two dimensions:

- a. The servant’s satisfaction with Allah,
- b. Allah’s satisfaction with the servant. The verse “Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him” (Al-Bayyina, 96/8) indicates Allah’s contentment with His servants, while the verse “Return to your Lord well pleasing and well pleased” (Al-Fajr, 89/27-28) emphasizes the servant being pleased with Allah. Abu Nasr Siraj clarifies this matter with the following words he narrated from Abu Sulayman Darani: “It is not the actions of the servants that make Allah pleased or displeased. Rather, Allah is first pleased with a group, and then He uses them for the actions in which He will be pleased. He also becomes angry with a group and then uses them for the actions of those He is angry with. Thus, the beginning and the end of contentment belong to Allah.” (al-Luma, 80-81)

Ruwaym bin Ahmad Baghdadi defines contentment as finding pleasure in afflictions that befall a person. Similarly, poets like Fuzuli and Ashiq Yunus have expressed this concept. Abu Bakr Shibli demonstrated this idea by confronting his visiting friends while imprisoned, asking, “Who are you?” When

they replied, “We are your friends and companions,” he threw a stone at them and exclaimed, “You liars! You claim to be my friends, yet you cannot endure my stones and hardship.”

It is known that there is a connection between rida and love. A lover finds pleasure in the deeds of the beloved and approves of them. A lover doesn't feel the pain that comes from the beloved. For instance, when the Egyptian women were captivated by the beauty of the Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام and lost themselves in his presence, they didn't even realize they were cutting their hands. In the face of pain, one can endure and show contentment due to love. A heart filled with love for the Divine remains unshaken by divine decrees.

There are two paths that prepare a person for rida:

a. For our worldly benefit. Just as we endure the bitterness of medicine or the difficulties of surgery for the purpose of healing, we can condition ourselves for contentment with fate for future benefit.

b. To seek the pleasure of the Beloved, willingly facing the difficulties they desire.

Contentment involves surrendering to the flow of destiny in every situation, embracing every circumstance beautifully, and refraining from complaining about God's decree.

The Sufis of Iraq and Khorasan have debated whether rida is a state or a station. Those from Khurasan believe that contentment is the result of reliance on God (tawakkul) and a station that is attained through one's own efforts. The Sufis from Iraq, however, contend that contentment is a state and

is not acquired through personal efforts but rather as a divine gift. In reality, both of these viewpoints hold true in their own contexts. Initially, contentment can be attained through one's effort, making it a station. However, the culmination and advanced stage of contentment is a divine gift, making it a state among other spiritual states.

16- FAQR (Neediness)

Faqr refers to the absence of what is needed, indicating a state of lacking. In Sufism, it is the inability of the servant to see any existence in themselves, attributing everything to God. It's the acceptance that one's being, actions, state, and station are all through the grace of Allah. The true owner of all things is Allah; hence, all beings are in need of Him. As mentioned in the Qur'an: "O mankind, you are those in need of Allah, while Allah is the free of need, the Praiseworthy." (Fatir, 35/15). This verse signifies that Allah is rich and self-sufficient, while humans are in need.

Faqr, due to its profound meaning, has been considered a sublime attribute of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ among the eight attributes of eight prophets in Sufism. These attributes include the generosity of Abraham, the submission of Ishmael, the patience of Job, the miraculous speech of Zakariya, the strangeness of John the Baptist, the wearing of wool by Moses, the travels of Jesus, and the Faqr (neediness) of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. This interpretation attributed to Junayd al-Baghdadi presents an interesting approach to other prophets within the context of Sufism. Faqr, in a sense, encapsulates a

profound sense of unity and is used in a manner close to the concept of asceticism.

The term “faqir” also means “dervish.” Faqir has two main interpretations:

a. Material Poverty: This is the material poverty, which is a source of pain. It’s mentioned negatively in the following hadith: “Poverty was about to lead to disbelief.” (Tabarani, Dua, 319) It refers to not possessing what is needed and feeling the burning of one’s heart due to this lack.

b. Spiritual Poverty: This is the detachment from human attributes and not seeing oneself as an owner of anything (self-annihilation of attributes). Even if one possesses vast wealth, they consider themselves poor by not attaching their heart to their wealth and remembering the true owner of wealth. Sufis believe that due to Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ emphasis on faqr, it was a source of pride for him. He even prayed: “O Allah, keep me in a state of poverty, let me die in a state of poverty, and resurrect me in the company of the poor.” (Tirmidhi, zuhd, 37) This spiritual poverty isn’t about lacking material possessions but rather not becoming enslaved by them.

According to Al-Ghazali in his work “Ihya Ulum al-Din,” faqr, zuhd (asceticism), istighna (contentment), qanaah (self-sufficiency), and hirs (greed) are interrelated concepts that are ranked in degrees. Faqr is discussed in five degrees:

Zuhd: Those who wouldn’t like to receive something they need due to concerns it would distract them.

Rida: Those who neither desire wealth nor are saddened by its absence.

Qanaah: Those who prefer wealth to poverty but don't obsessively pursue it.

Hirs: Those who, despite not running after wealth due to weakness, have a lingering desire for it.

Iztirar: Being in a state of absolute need for things one doesn't possess, like being hungry without food or naked without clothes.

Beyond these, there's a state known as "istigna," where the presence or absence of material possessions hold equal value in one's perception.

True Faqr is to become only for the sake of Allah. Thus, it involves abandoning all selfish desires and ambitions, leaving only thoughts of Allah. When a person's heart is entirely filled with love for Allah and devoid of attachment to anything else, they are considered to have achieved the state of faqr.

Such poverty is not a hindrance to possessing wealth. In fact, it can be said that poverty without patience and contentment is lacking. Such poverty holds no virtue. As Ibn Ata said: "A grateful wealthy person who fulfills the rights of their wealth is better than a poor person who lacks patience." Thus, the situation of a poor person who lacks patience is not at all commendable.

In a narration by Daylamī, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated: "The poor person who can give from what they have

earned through hardship is the best of those who perform virtuous deeds.” (Firdaws, II, 178)

17- ZUHD (Asceticism)

Zuhd is to detach from everything except Allah, not finding joy in either abundance or scarcity, being content with Allah, and finding honor only in Allah. Like Yunus Emre said:

“I rejoice not in the existence,
Nor am I grieved by nonexistence;
My solace is the love of You,
I need You, and only You.”

In the section about the emergence of Sufism, we mentioned that asceticism is the earliest form of Sufism and that it is mentioned as “zahid” (Joseph, 12/20) in the Qur’an. We also explained the concept of zuhd in the context of hadiths (see page 98 ff.). Therefore, here, we will briefly touch upon the concept of zuhd only as a Sufi term.

Sufyan al-Thawri said: “Zuhd is more about neglecting desires than wearing coarse clothing or eating dry bread.”

Fudayl ibn Iyad said: “True asceticism is all about submitting to Allah’s decree, avoiding excess in eating, excessive sleep, and unnecessary talk, as they kill the heart. Zuhd is avoiding all worldly matters and idle chatter that prevents closeness to Allah and not allowing them a place in the heart.”

Zuhd is renouncing the world, renouncing the Hereafter, renouncing one’s own existence; it is even renouncing the feel-

ing of renunciation. Just as those who perform more worship and devotion than obligatory are called “abid,” those who don’t care for the adornments and attractions of the world are called “zahid.”

Human desires are limitless. Satisfying desires gives birth to new desires. The sufis draw a connection between desire and sorrow, emphasizing that as desires increase, sorrows will also increase. Zuhd involves neglecting desires in favor of good deeds. It is escaping the sorrows of desires and finding delight in good deeds.

Ibrahim ibn Adham states that zuhd lies in renouncing the forbidden when it comes to obligatory, doubtful, and permissible matters. Based on this definition, we can examine zuhd in three degrees:

- a. Obligatory zuhd: Abstaining from all sins.
- b. Renouncing the excessive in permissible matters, avoiding doubtful actions.
- c. Renouncing things that hinder contemplation of Allah.

In essence, zuhd is not entirely abandoning things that bring pleasure and delight; rather, it is minimizing engagement and attachment, not placing love for them in the heart, and not becoming a slave to them.

Chasing after blessings is not asceticism. One should recognize wealth and prosperity that come without chasing and becoming enslaved by them as a mercy and blessing from Allah, and show proper gratitude as is fitting for the Provider of the Universe.

II- CONCEPTS OF SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

1- SAYR AL-SULUK (Spiritual Journeying)

In its literal sense, “sayr” means to travel or journey, while “suluk” means to walk or advance. In the terminology of Sufism, sayr refers to the movement from ignorance to knowledge, from negative and ugly qualities to good character, and from one’s own existence toward the existence of God. Suluk, on the other hand, is the ethical training that prepares an individual who enters the path of Sufism for closeness to God. In other words, sayr al-suluk is the name given to the phases a person undergoes until they complete their spiritual stations upon entering the path of Sufism and tariqa. Sayr is the beginning, and suluk is the end. Suluk involves learning, struggle, negation, and affirmation.

Sayr and suluk are considered inseparable parts of each other. In the realm of Sufism, the necessity of suluk for sayr is as crucial as ablution is for prayer. Just as prayer without ablution is considered invalid, sayr without suluk is nullified.

2- SHAYKH-MURSHID (Teacher/Guide)

In the literal sense, “shaykh” refers to a person with visible signs of old age, whose hair and beard are mostly gray, indicating someone around the age of fifty or older. The plural form is “shuyūkh” or “mashayikh.” In the terminology of Tasawwuf, “tarikāt pir,” “murshid,” and “ustad” all refer to a spiritual guide.

A Sufi shaykh is similar to a teacher in a madrasa, but their roles are functionally different. While a teacher imparts lessons, a shaykh guides and leads the seekers to spiritual maturity according to their aptitude and capabilities. They show what is beneficial and harmful, and strive to instill knowledge of the shari'a and the love of Allah in their hearts. The role of a regular teacher is theoretical and verbal, whereas a shaykh's role is practical and applied.

Considering the unique qualities and capacities of their disciples, a shaykh provides personalized guidance to each individual. They gradually remove any harshness from the disciple's disposition. If a disciple has complete submission, they progress quickly, mature, and reach a state of "pure heart." The relationship between a shaykh and a disciple is as warm as a parent-child relationship. Just as the Prophets are like fathers to their communities, the shaykhs who are the representatives and heirs of the Prophets also assume a "fatherly" role toward their disciples. This is why in some Sufi orders, terms like "dede" (grandfather) and "baba" (father) are used instead of "shaykh."

A shaykh should be knowledgeable about the Quran and Sunnah (Prophet's teachings). However, not every scholar can be a shaykh. A potential shaykh should be equipped with perfected attributes, free from attachment to the world and positions. They should have practiced self-control in eating, sleeping, speaking, solitude, ascetic practices, struggle, and engaging in optional acts of worship like prayer, fasting, and dhikr (remembrance of God), purifying their souls through these

means. They should be morally aligned with the character of Allah and the Prophet may Allah bless him and grant him abundant peace. Moreover, they should have an unbroken chain of transmission leading back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

“Tarbiya” is the name for the influence that mature personalities exert on the beginners and rough aspects of individuals.

The shaykh’s actions and behaviors must harmonize with their teachings; otherwise, their guidance will be ineffective. In Sufism, the term “murshid” is often used interchangeably with the concept of a “shaykh.” A murshid is similar to a physician. Just as a physician diagnoses and treats a patient’s illness and resistance based on their condition, a murshid diagnoses and treats individuals who come to them. Just as a commander outlines the strategy for a soldier engaged in combat, a murid’s path of struggle against the enemy of the self is determined by the murshid.

Shaykhs and murshids guide their disciples according to their “mashrab” (disposition) through the paths of “sayahat (travel), “suhbah” (companionship), and “khalwa” (seclusion). Every shaykh is also a murshid. Attaining closeness to God and His satisfaction doesn’t come through studying knowledge and books alone but by surrendering oneself to a qualified murshid with heart and soul.

3- MURID-SALIK (Disciple/Wayfarer)

In its literal sense, “murid” means “someone with a will, someone who possesses will.” In the terminology of Sufism, it

refers to “a person who submits their will to the will of God and their shaykh.” In fact, Aziz Mahmud Hudayî defines a murid as “someone who doesn’t truly possess their own will. Although every murid has desires, the true murid’s ultimate desire is Allah.” Occasionally, the Arabic term “faqir” (poor) or the Persian term “dervish” is used as an equivalent to murid. Fakir seeks poverty and nothingness, while dervish refers to a servant of a tariqa (Sufi order).

A person who submits to their shaykh is called a murid, and someone who progresses on this path is called a “salik” (wayfarer/seeker). In the realm of tariqa and Sufism progression is not based on knowledge alone but also on one’s spiritual state. In Sufism, the idea of a murid journeying without a murshid has not been seen as viable. This is because Satan has numerous hidden and overt ways in the world. Without a murshid, Satan can lead the murid astray. Therefore, if someone enters the path of suluk (spiritual journey) and doesn’t have a murshid, Satan will attempt to become their guide. Human beings are inclined to display themselves, and this vulnerability can only be overcome through the guidance of a qualified murshid.

4- BAY’A-INTISAB (Pledge and Affiliation)

In its literal sense, “bay’a” means a transaction involving the sale of goods. In Sufism, it refers to the pledge made by a murid candidate, called a “talib,” to obey the shaykh’s commands. “Intisab,” “mubayaa,” “Ahid,” “inaba,” “tawba,” and “ikrar” are also terms used in this context. In the Sufis perspective, the foundation of bay’a is rooted in the practice of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who would take verbal commitments

from individuals wishing to embrace Islam and participate in significant activities like jihad and migration.

In the Qur'an, the companions who pledged allegiance (bay'a) to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ at Hdaybiya are highly praised, and their allegiance to Allah's Messenger is considered an allegiance to Allah (al-Fath, 48/10). While there are minor differences among various Sufi orders, the concept of bay'a, its purpose, and its method are generally quite similar. When someone wishes to enter a Sufi order, they first seek a shaykh who aligns with their disposition. Once they find a shaykh who resonates with their heart, they approach them and seek guidance through istikhara (a form of prayer seeking guidance). The shaykh then investigates whether the aspirant is fit to join the order. Upon a positive outcome, the bey'at and affiliation (intisab) take place.

During the bay'a ceremony, the aspirant arrives before the shaykh in a state of ritual purity (ghusl) and sits down, often knee-to-knee with the shaykh. They hold hands as a gesture of musafaha (spiritual handshake). The shaykh first advises the aspirant to repent and seek forgiveness for all past sins. Subsequently, the shaykh counsels the aspirant to fulfill any outstanding obligations to God (such as missed prayers, fasts, and alms) and to settle any rights owed to others, the rights of fellow humans). The murid listens to the shaykh's guidance, pledges before Allah to adhere to the teachings and instructions given, and states that they accept Allah as their Lord, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the Messenger, the Qur'an as the guide, and the Shaykh as the murshid. Thus, the aspirant joins the ranks of the Shaykh's spiritual companions and engages

in the practice of dhikr (remembrance of God) and suhba (spiritual discourse).

During the bay'a, some Sufi orders might place a hirka (a spiritual cloak) or a sikke (a head covering) on the aspirant. Because bay'a signifies submission and devotion to Allah, breaking this allegiance without proper reason carries a responsibility and accountability. The bay'a establishes a flow of spiritual grace from the Shaykh's heart to the heart of the murid.

For women, affiliation and bay'a can be conducted without holding hands with the Shaykh, typically through verbal or written commitment.

5- AYIN-SAMA (Whirling Ceremony)

Sama refers to perceiving, hearing, and listening to beautiful sounds that reach the ear. It involves listening to poetry and divine melodies, and during this process, experiencing ecstasy that leads to uncontrollable movements to the right and left.

Ayin, on the other hand, signifies custom, tradition, and ceremony, and in the context of Sufism, it denotes the performance of the remembrance of God, known as "dhikrullah." The collective dhikr practices within Sufi orders are called "ayin." Depending on the manner in which they are performed, each Sufi order has a distinct name for its ayin. For instance, in Mevlevi ayin, it's associated with sama, the Qadiri's with dawran, in Rifa'i and Sadi's with dhikr al-Qiyam, in Khalwai's with darb-1 esma, in Naqshi's with hatm-i hacegan, in Yasawi's with dhikr-i erre, in Jalwai's with nisf al-Qiyam, and in Shadhili's with hadra.

Early Sufi Practices:

In the earliest days of Sufism, after Quranic recitations, the early Sufis like Sari As-Saqati, Dhul-Nun al-Misri, and Junayd al-Baghdadi would listen to poetic or prose pieces that reminded them of the love for Allah and the Prophet. These pieces, when performed with melody, would influence those present, leading to the emergence of ecstasy. Movements accompanied by cries that arise from ecstasy gave rise to debates about the practice of sama.

Sama and Controversy:

From the earliest days of Sufism, there has been a debate about sama. Al-Ghazali, for instance, tried to find a middle ground. In his work “Ihya,” he dedicates a considerable section to this topic, discussing both positive and negative views on sama. He concludes that if sama arouses base desires, it is prohibited, but if it awakens spiritual emotions, it is permissible and lawful.

Levels of Sama:

Junayd al-Baghdadi categorizes sama into three levels: sama for the common people (awam), sama for the ascetics (zahid), and sama for the gnostics (arifun). While sama is forbidden for those unaware of divine inspirations, it is allowed for those engaged in spiritual practices, and for gnostics who engage in sama for the revival of their hearts.

Rumi’s Perspective:

Rumi stated that sama is the nourishment of the lovers of God. He explained that it contains a delicate longing for union with the Beloved, and those who perform sama should keep their stomachs empty during the practice, for just as the ney (reed flute) is hollow and cries out, the sama practitioner should also empty themselves.

Spiritual Dimension:

Sama is performed with a spiritual connection to Allah and done for the sake of Allah, not for the ego (nafs). Those who engage in sama while focused on their ego are not true remembrancers (dhakirun). Shaykh Abdulqadir Al-Jilani emphasized that sama should be performed with a sincere heart and soul. Al-Suhrawardî stressed the importance of a living heart and a subdued ego, noting that sama is not permissible for someone with a lively ego and a dead heart.

For a sama gathering, there needs to be a knowledgeable spiritual guide (murshid) and a sincere rememberer (dhakir). The dhakir leads the dhikr, while the guide imparts spiritual blessings and ecstasy.

In most foundational Sufi works, the practice of sama is discussed. While some modern Khalidi Sufi scholars have reservations, the broader Sufi community generally embraces sama and music. The Ottoman period witnessed both the involvement of sultans in dhikr, sama, and ayin gatherings and discussions among Sufi scholars about these practices. One reason for the construction of tekke outside of mosques was to facilitate the practice of sama and dhikr, which were not

always welcomed in mosque environments due to the presence of musical instruments.

6- SUHBAH (Companionship)

“Suhbah” refers to being together, being friends and companions. The terms “suhbah” have been used to describe being in the company of prophets, spiritual guides, teachers, and masters.

Those who saw and were blessed by the presence of the Prophet, those who were in his company, and those who passed away with this faith were given the title of “sahabi,” which is derived from the root of “suhbah.” The Prophet nurtured and guided his companions through suhbah. Suhbah encompasses both verbal education, guidance, and communication, as well as the training of demeanor and spiritual reflection.

In the Qur’an: “Certainly, there is a fine example for you in the Messenger of Allah, for those who place their hope in Allah and the Last Day, and remember Allah much.” (al-Ahzab, 33/23) The verse mentioned reflects this reflection and transfer of states. In human education, the most effective way is through indirect education by setting an example. As expressed in the hadith “A believer is a mirror to another believer” (Abu Dawud, Adab 49), a person’s acquisition of good qualities is dependent on being in the company of individuals who possess those qualities. Likewise, the command in the Quran: “O you who have believed, fear Allah. And be with those who are true and righteous.” (at-Tawbah, 9/19) encourages people to be in the company of the righteous. On the other hand, the verse “Do not sit

with those who do wrong and then become deserving of punishment.” (al-An’ām, 6/68) commands to not associate extensively with those who might lead one into spiritual impurities.

Without active effort, a person cannot free themselves from internal spiritual ailments like hypocrisy, discord, pride, envy, the desire for fame, and the longing for dominance.

Approaching the subject in light of the hadiths such as “The likeness of a good companion and a bad companion is that of the seller of musk and the blower of the bellows. As for the seller of musk, he will either give you some, or you will purchase from him, or at least you will smell a pleasant fragrance from him. As for the blower of the bellows, he will either burn your clothes or you will get an offensive smell from him.” (Muslim, Birr 146), Sufis view companionship in four degrees:

- a. Companionship with the Shaykh and spiritual guide is like medicine for the disciple.
- b. Companionship with fellow believers is like nourishment for the body.
- c. Companionship with sinners and wrongdoers is like exposure to germs.
- d. Companionship with disbelievers, atheists, and skeptics is like exposure to poison.

As a social being, humans are influenced by both their physical and social environment. Today, due to scientific advancements, it is understood that everyone emits certain

energy fields around them. These fields create an impact zone around a person. Additionally, psychological states are contagious. Those who are around people who are fearful and sorrowful tend to be influenced by their emotions, just as those who are joyful and happy can influence their surroundings. In this sense, companionship involves an exchange of emotions.

Sufis emphasize that since the Shaykhs and spiritual guides are the spiritual heirs of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, it's natural for them to use the method of companionship for guiding people. However, it's important to ensure that the characters are compatible and their natures align. Conversations during these companionship sessions help remove the veil of heedlessness that covers the heart outside of such interactions, separating one from worldly attachments. Practices like dhikr (remembrance of God) and sama (spiritual music and dance) purify the heart, elevate one's enjoyment of worship, and bring them closer to God.

7- MUJAHADA-RIYADA (Struggle and Abstinence)

Mujahada (struggle) is the act of resisting and fighting against one's own desires, negative inclinations, and the forces of the devil. The weapons of this battle are acts of worship, remembrance (dhikr), glorification (tasbih), and supplication (dua). To combat the ego's enemy, one must launch attacks using these weapons and surround its logistical supply lines with the mines of asceticism (riyada).

Riyada is the practice of curbing and minimizing the desires of the ego and the body, making it perform tasks that

it finds difficult. This involves eating less, not overfilling the stomach, and thereby reducing the ego's influence. Since the ego is always trying to influence and captivate humans with its desires, it's essential to weaken it. In fact, there's a saying: "The desire is the greatest idol that angers Allah on Earth." (al-Mu'jam al-kabir, VIII,103)

Mujahada is sometimes referred to as "struggling against the self" or "greater struggle" (jihad al-akbar). Struggling against the self is more difficult than struggling against visible enemies because protecting oneself from the harm of an unseen enemy is not straightforward. This is why Prophet Muhammad ﷺ classified the struggle against the ego as the "greater struggle." (Bayhaqi, az-Zuhd al-kabir, II, 165) The Quranic verse, "And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways." (al-Ankabut, 29/69), can be seen as an indication of this spiritual struggle. Abu Ali Ad-Daqqaq connected this verse to the saying: "Whoever beautifies his outward with struggle, Allah will beautify his inward with witnessing." This suggests that without the initial struggle, a person won't perceive even a glimmer of light on this path.

Mujahada and riyada are closely related concepts. Mujahada involves compelling the ego towards goodness, while riyada aims to accustom the ego to this practice. Mujahada is the beginning, riyada is the continuation, and witnessing (mushahada) is the culmination.

The essence of Mujahada lies in breaking the ego's habits and consistently doing the opposite of what it desires. The ego possesses two hindrances to goodness:

- a. Its whims and desires.
- b. Its tendency to avoid acts of worship and obedience.

When the ego pursues its desires, it is restrained by the reins of taqwa (mindful awareness of God). When it shows laziness in worship and obedience, it is motivated to do the opposite through riyada. Riyada is indeed a challenging task, requiring great effort. However, if the spiritual guide (shaykh/murshid) is experienced and knowledgeable about the subtleties of the path, the difficulties become easier to manage.

At the start, a disciple (murid) might not possess complete sincerity (ikhlas). Due to human nature, certain weaknesses may exist, which can be rectified through various methods. For instance, if one overcomes worldly ambitions and experiences a sense of self-righteousness, they might be assigned to beg like a beggar. If this is accepted, more humble tasks will follow. In riyada, gradual progress is crucial. If all the rules of riyada are applied at once or tasks that should be performed later are assigned beforehand, the disciple's equilibrium can be disrupted.

There are generally considered to be three fundamental principles for Mujahada and riyada aimed at purifying the ego: Hunger (jū') and eating moderately (Qillah at-Taâm), sleeping minimally (Qillah al-Manâm), and speaking minimally (Qillah al-Kalam). Sometimes, additional practices like isolation (Uzlat an al-an'am) are also included.

a. JŪ' / QILLAH AT-TAÂM (Hunger/ Eating Modestly)

Among the things that fuel human desires, an unrestricted indulgence in eating and drinking takes precedence. Those

who only recognize pleasure in consuming food and drink have little knowledge and experience significant distress. This is because those bound to eating and drinking are perceived as plants, those ruled by desires are animals, and those under the command of knowledge and wisdom are human in nature. Therefore, the purpose of a human being should not be pursuing eating and drinking, which activate base emotions, but rather eating to support higher emotions. In the Quran, it is stated: “Eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He does not like those who commit excess.” (al-A'raf, 7/31) The excessive indulgence of disbelievers in food is likened to that of animals: “The disbelievers are like livestock; rather, they are more astray.” (Muhammad, 47/12) For this reason, Sufis stipulate that a person should only eat what is necessary to sustain them and not reach a level where they are burdened with excess. They emphasize that most acts of extravagance and rebellion stem from satiety and that the rebellion of Pharaoh and Korah was due to their satiation.

The continuous fasting and hunger of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his companions have been the foundation for Tasawwuf (Sufi mysticism) and tariqa (Sufi orders) teachings in this regard. Indeed, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: “The human being fills no worse vessel than his stomach. It is sufficient for the son of Adam to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his spine straight.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd 48)

b. QILLAH AL-MANÂM (Sleeping Minimally)

In the Qur'an, those who rise from their warm beds in the night to supplicate to their Lord with fear and hope (As-Sajda,

32/16), those who stay awake in the pre-dawn hours engaged in seeking forgiveness, and those who sleep very little at night and engage in seeking forgiveness early in the morning are praised. Prolonged praises (tasbih) are also encouraged during long nights, and the Tahajjud prayer during the night is commanded. However, the Tahajjud prayer is obligatory for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and a confirmed Sunnah for his ummah.

Sleeping minimally is an expression of returning to Allah, as sleep makes the faculties sluggish. Sleeping less purifies and enlightens the heart. Sleeping minimally is achieved through hunger and eating less, as a full stomach generally increases sleep. Although it is already conveyed in the Qur'anic language that all of Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ past and future sins were forgiven, his choice to sleep little at night and spend the remaining time in worship, expressing this as an act of gratitude, is thought-provoking.

Sufis point out that the necessity of eating and sleeping in moderation can lead to the revelation of hidden spiritual truths. When describing the qualities of the "abdal" or spiritually advanced individuals, it is mentioned: "Eating to stay alive, sleeping to gain strength, speaking only when necessary."

Excessive sleep is often attributed to excessive consumption of water. It is believed that oversleeping leads to excessive dampness in the brain.

Those with spiritual insight believe that eating and drinking in moderation helps eliminate unnecessary elements from the body. Sleeping minimally provides comfort to both the body and soul. The measure of sleep should be sufficient for

bodily rest. However, excessively depriving the body of sleep is not desirable as it can lead to physical discomfort.

c. QILLAH AL- KALAM (Speaking Minimally)

Speech is a balance for humans; excess leads to waste, while moderation reflects dignity. A person who speaks little is neither criticized nor ignored; their reputation also remains intact. On the other hand, speaking excessively is embarrassing and disgraceful. One who restrains their tongue is protected from evil. Speaking unnecessarily exposes one's faults and diminishes their character. Those who control their speech while expressing their hearts have fewer sins and a serene heart. There are several verses and hadiths that highlight the virtue of speaking sparingly. For instance, in the Qur'an, it is mentioned: "I have made a covenant with Allah, the Most Merciful. So, with whomever you find it convenient to establish this covenant, speak to them." (Maryam, 19/26)

"As it is said in the verse, 'Your sign for three days shall be that you will not speak to people except by gesture.'" (Maryam, 19/10) Similarly, in hadith, it is mentioned, "Silence leads to salvation." (Tirmidhi, Qiyama 50) And "I guarantee Paradise for the one who safeguards what is between their two lips and between their two legs from the forbidden." (Bukhari, Hudud 19) According to a narration by Tirmidhi, when Uqba ibn Amir asked the Messenger of Allah about a means of salvation, he received this response: "Restrain your tongue, have a spacious house, and weep over sins and mistakes!" (Bukhari, Hudud 19)

Since Allah has granted humans two ears and one mouth, the fundamental principle is for humans to listen twice as much as they speak. As the first commandment of the Qur'an is "Read," the emphasis should be on seeking knowledge rather than speaking. Rumi also begins his "Mathnawi" with "Listen," because humans have a greater need for listening than speaking.

8- KHALWA-UZLA (Solitude and Isolation)

Solitude, in the language, means being alone, being alone with a loved one. In Sufi terminology, it refers to the practice of a disciple entering a specific period of seclusion, away from people, under the guidance of their spiritual mentor, often in a dedicated section of a Sufi lodge known as a "Cilehane" or "khalwahâne." During this time, the disciple devotes themselves to worship and directs their heart toward the Divine. The goal of solitude is to remove worldly distractions from the heart, cleanse it of impurities, and immerse oneself in the contemplation of the countless blessings of the Divine. Just as a lover might roam in solitude, consumed by thoughts of their beloved, forsaking food, drink, and sleep, the seeker of the Divine chooses solitude.

Solitude and seclusion are closely related terms, but solitude is more specific, while seclusion is more general. In solitude, there is a defined period and reason for being alone and distant from people. Solitude is temporary, whereas seclusion can be open-ended. In other words, seclusion involves distancing oneself from physical human interactions.

Cile (Solitude) is a Sufi term derived from the Persian word "Cihil" which corresponds to the Arabic term "erbaîn," meaning

“forty.” It is a form of training that involves encouraging active patience to polish the rough edges of a disciple’s nature.

One of the methods for disciplining and purifying the ego, which is considered the source of negative traits and qualities, is through “Cile” and “erbain,” which are forms of seclusion and solitude practices. In this context, solitude involves a Sufi aspirant, who has joined a Sufi path, withdrawing under the guidance of their spiritual mentor to a secluded and dark place called a “khalwahâne.” Here, they engage in continuous worship while practicing minimal eating and sleeping. The duration of solitude varies depending on the Sufi order, with common periods being three days, forty days, or even a thousand and one days. The most prevalent period is forty days.

Regarding the forty-day duration of solitude and seclusion, some Sufis cite references from the Quran and Sunnah. For example, in his work “Kashf al-mahjûb,” Hujwiri mentions that the forty-day period is based on the following verse related to Moses ﷺ: “We made an appointment with Moses for thirty nights, and We fulfilled it with ten more” (Quran, al-A’raf, 7/142). Al-Suhrawardi also cites a hadith as evidence: “He who acts with sincerity for the sake of Allah for forty days, streams of wisdom will flow from his heart to his tongue” (Ibn Abi Shayba, Musannaf, VII). Some Sufis have also attempted to draw parallels between asceticism and solitude and the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ during the days preceding his prophethood in the cave of Hira. There is also some resemblance between asceticism, solitude, and “i’tikaf” (spiritual retreat) in Islam.

The goal of solitude is to cleanse the heart’s abode from worldly distractions and to contemplate the countless blessings

of the Divine, placing the presence of the Lord in the sanctuary of the heart and witnessing unity amid multiplicity.

Since solitude and seclusion are intertwined with rigorous discipline and spiritual struggle, there are Sufis who complete their solitude practices through travel and spend their entire lives in solitude.

In Sufi sources, solitude and asceticism have been discussed since the early periods, and scholars like Al-Ghazali and similar Sufis meticulously studied the benefits and drawbacks of seclusion and solitude. Al-Ghazali expressed that through solitude and seclusion, a person can distance themselves from the perils of the tongue, protect the heart from spiritual ailments like showing off and self-praise, develop habits of asceticism and contentment, escape from associating with undesirable individuals, increase the time devoted to worship and remembrance of God, attain a sense of spiritual pleasure, eliminate feelings of hatred and enmity, and draw closer to God.

After the establishment of Sufi orders, Al-Suhrawardi's work "Awârif al-maârif" extensively discusses solitude and seclusion, specifying their conditions and etiquettes.

Following Al-Suhrawardi, various Sufi masters wrote about "Cile" (solitude) and seclusion in their works, often drawing information from his writings. Different Sufi orders developed various practices over time. For instance, the Mevlevi adopted the practice of "Cile" corresponding to the numerical value of the word "rida" (contentment) in Arabic, which they considered as "a thousand and one days." "Cile"

is performed under the supervision of the Shaykh in all Sufi orders, while in the Mevlevi order, it is supervised by the Ash-chi Dede (the chief cook) and is carried out in accordance with specific conditions. If the conditions are not met, the “Cile” is considered broken, and those who break it are referred to as “Cile kirgını” (one who broke their seclusion). Those who undertake “Cile” and complete the full thousand and one days without leaving the tekke without permission are said to have “Cile cikardı” (completed their seclusion), and they are given the title of “dede” (spiritual leader). During “Cile,” the disciple undergoes various trials to purify their soul and improve their character. Another variation of solitude, which is synonymous with “Cile,” is “Khalwa dar-anjuman.”

9- JALWA or KHALWA DAR-ANJUMAN

In the language, “jalwa” means a person being separated from their homeland and family; the removal and polishing of rust on items such as swords and mirrors; and the emergence or manifestation of something. In Sufi terminology, “jalwa” is the opposite of “khalwa” and means “getting together with people after withdrawing and being alone with God.” It signifies a person, adorned with divine attributes and good character, coming out of seclusion and mixing with people.

The use of “khalwa” and “jalwa” as Sufi concepts postdates Ibn Arabi. While references to “khalwa” can be found in earlier sources, “jalwa” is not frequently mentioned.

The concepts of “khalwa” and “jalwa” are derived from the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a Sufi station and way of

life. For instance, the Prophet's life before receiving prophethood in the cave of Hira is considered "khalwa," while his life after receiving prophethood, spent among the people, is seen as "jalwa." In this sense, the lives of most prophets and great saints exhibit elements of both solitude and interaction with society. However, due to differences in temperament, some emphasize solitude more, while others emphasize interaction. Over time, these differences in temperament led to the establishment of two Sufi orders: the Khalwatiyya and Jalwatiyya. (known in Turkish Helvetiye and Celvetiye)

Another way to understand "jalwa" is as the removal of the impurities from the heart, polishing the mirror of the soul, and illuminating the heart with the divine light. To achieve this state, one must first lead a life of seclusion to temper the sharp edges of the ego and free the heart from the influence of the lower self. Once the seeker is adorned with good qualities and attributes, it is permissible, and in some cases even obligatory, to interact with people.

"Reform cannot happen without righteousness." Solitude serves the purpose of righteousness. When righteousness is achieved, the path to reforming others opens. This is not accomplished by remaining hidden in solitude but by engaging with people and transferring spiritual states.

The concept of "jalwa" is expressed in the Naqshbandi order as "Khalwa dar-anjuman," meaning "in the company of people, but alone" or "the hand at work, the heart with the Beloved." Those who attain this station have calmed the storms within their inner worlds and achieved contentment with their

egos. Therefore, their engagement with society and worldly affairs does not sever their connection with the Divine. Their hearts continuously radiate with the inner illumination received from their Lord. The words and deeds of such individuals are the expression and reflection of this divine light. When they speak, they convey wisdom. Individuals like these do not prefer solitude over interaction. However, for those who cannot control their ego's destructive tendencies and cannot prevent harm from reaching others, solitude is recommended rather than interaction; it is a means to restrain the ego.

10- WALI – WILAYA (Saint and Sainthood)

In the language, “wali” denotes a person who is a friend of God or a person loved by God, contrasting with an enemy. As a Sufi concept, a “wali” is used in the form of “fail” and “ism al-maf’ûl” to mean “a person protected and watched over by God.” In the Quran, it is stated: “He is a guardian over all righteous servants” (Quran, al-A’raf, 7/196). In the same form, it is sometimes used to mean “a person who undertakes the duties of obedience and worship for the sake of God.” For instance, “Allah is the guardian of those who carry the responsibility of faith” (Al-Baqarah, 2/257).

There are two types of “wilaya” (sainthood): “Wilayat al-‘ammah” (general sainthood) and “wilayat al-khassah” (specific sainthood).

a. WILAYAT AL-‘AMMAH (General Sainthood):

This refers to the state of striving and making efforts to fulfill the obligatory and necessary commandments of the

Sharia. Every responsible believer is required to strive for this. Therefore, all believers who are engaged in these efforts fall within the scope of this sainthood.

b. WILAYAT AL-KHASSAH (Specific Sainthood):

This state involves advancing in obligatory and necessary acts of worship while adhering to the Quranic commandments related to remembrance and contemplation. It means achieving a state where one is vigilant in remembrance and contemplation even while standing, sitting, or lying down, reaching a level of worship that resembles the concept of “ihsan” where one worships as if seeing Allah. This state is characterized by a sense of nearness and presence.

The wayfarer (sâlik) is someone who aspires to attain the pinnacle of perfection in religion. In Sufism, there are various paths to achieve this. In his work “Wilayatullah,” Shawkani lists the conditions for embarking on the path to sainthood in three main points:

- aa. A strong belief and submission
- bb. Fulfilling the obligatory acts and abstaining from prohibitions
- cc. Continuing with voluntary acts of worship after fulfilling the obligatory acts

Commands and prohibitions are of two types: apparent (zâhirî) and hidden (bâtunî). Apparent commands include acts like prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and others, while apparent prohibitions include things like drinking alcohol, gambling,

and adultery. Hidden obligatory commands include sincerity, truthfulness, trustworthiness, repentance, and patience, while hidden prohibitions encompass actions like showing off, having negative suspicions about others, gossiping, and spreading harmful rumors. (Wilayatuallah wa Tarik ilayha, Cairo, p.350-405).

Compliance with these commands brings the servant closer to God. As stated in a sacred hadith: “My servant draws near to Me with nothing more loved by Me than the religious duties I have imposed upon him” (Bukhari, Al-Riqaq 38).

Voluntary acts of worship are those that go beyond the obligatory and necessary acts. They include acts like voluntary prayers, fasting, remembrance, and supplication. Ibn Arabi, in his “Futuhāt,” mentions that an increase in voluntary acts of worship is a sign of growing love for God. “Nâfilah” means increase. He says, “You are an increase in existence; God was already in existence. When you were non-existent, you came into existence with the existence of the Divine. By being ‘nâfilah’ in the existence of God, permission was granted to you to engage in voluntary worship.” Voluntary acts of worship should resemble obligatory acts; otherwise, they become innovations.

A “wali” is someone engaged with God, desiring Him and striving to reach Him. In the words of a hadith, “The faces of those who engage in worship remind people of God” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd 4).

B. CONCEPTS RELATED TO REALIZATION

We have previously stated that the dimension of realization in Sufism is the sense of state acquired as a result of spiritual journey and spiritual practice in Sufism, and the knowledge obtained through this is considered experiential knowledge. The knowledge and feelings obtained in the dimension of realization are generally inspired by divine grace. While the foundation of all spiritual states is related to the servant's effort, what comes after a certain point is inspired by divine grace; it is a gift from God. The states at this point are usually either related to the heart and conscience or related to knowledge and wisdom. Therefore, we have divided the concept of realization into two categories: those related to the heart and conscience, and those related to knowledge and wisdom. Now, according to this classification, we will try to explain some of the main concepts that are generally considered under the term "ahwal" in classical Sufi literature:

I- THOSE RELATED TO THE HEART AND CONSCIENCE

1- WAJD- ISTIGRAK (Ecstasy and Immersion)

Ecstasy, which often requires sadness and sorrow, is the state of transcending oneself in a state of love and longing, and

it is a state of intense excitement that comes from the manifestations of God. It is a high state of enthusiasm. Ecstasy is also referred to as “faqd” in some early sources, where faqd means loss, and ecstasy is the opposite of losing oneself. When one of these states occurs, the other departs. Ecstasy generally occurs in three degrees: tawajud (self-annihilation), wajd (ecstasy), and wujud (existence).

a. Tawajud is the effort and endeavor of a person to reach a state of ecstasy, sometimes even by pushing themselves. Some forms of this search for ecstasy are considered acceptable, while others are considered blameworthy. The acceptable form is when a person strives to reach a state of ecstasy without any pretense or insincerity. In fact, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ recommended that those who do not cry and enter into ecstasy while reciting the Quran should push themselves to do so. (At-Tabarani, al-Mu'jam al-kabir, p.398) Tawajud is a practice and exercise done to eliminate the heaviness in one's heart, often through supplication, weeping, and lamentation to enter into ecstasy.

b. Ecstasy (Wajd) is when a person, as a result of their love for God, can witness the numerous manifestations of God, experiencing inner joy and pleasure that leads them to lose themselves. True ecstasy arises from an extreme love for Allah, strength of will, and devotion to God. In this kind of ecstasy, there is no coercion, and it can manifest itself at any time. Those who do not enter into ecstasy while reciting the Quran but achieve it through other means are not devoted to God but are attached to worldly desires. This is because the Quran tells us that those who fear their Lord will read and listen to the Quran with their skin shivering in awe and their hearts soft-

ened by the remembrance of Allah. (az-Zumar, 39/23) “The true believers are those whose hearts tremble with awe when Allah is mentioned.” (al-Anfal, 8/2)

There are many examples of ecstasy in the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his companions. For instance, when Abdullah bin Mas’ud was reciting Surah An-Nisa, he reached the verse “How will it be when We bring from every nation a witness and bring you, against them as a witness?” (an-Nisa, 4/41), and the Prophet’s eyes filled with tears, and he said: “That’s enough, O Abdullah!” (Bukhari, Fada'il al-Qur'an 33).

It is reported that while praying, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ sometimes made fervent sounds from his chest that resembled the bubbling of a pot, and during verses of punishment, he would weep, while during verses of glad tidings and supplication, he would rejoice. Among the Companions and their successors, there were those who entered into ecstasy while listening to Quranic verses. Some would cry, some would shout in ecstasy, and others would faint. All of these examples indicate that ecstasy is a natural and legitimate state.

c. Wujud (Existence) is an advanced stage of ecstasy that occurs after the realization of ecstasy. It means finding God and losing human attributes, as human qualities disappear with the manifestation of the truth’s powerful influence. For those who experience Wujud, there is a state of awareness and annihilation. Awareness means remaining in God, and annihilation means being annihilated in Allah.

These states, which can be expressed by the words tawajjud (self-annihilation), wajd (ecstasy), and Wujud (existence),

can be illustrated with the following analogy: “Tawajud is like reaching the shore of the sea; wajd is like entering the sea, and Wujud is like drowning in the sea.”

Istigrak, which is synonymous with vucud, the advanced stage of ecstasy, is the state in which a traveler on the spiritual path loses awareness of the material world and becomes completely immersed in divine love. In the state of istigrak, the traveler is like a stone thrown into water, sinking and disappearing into the depths of the ocean of divine love and unity.

2- JADHB (Divine Attraction)

Jadhb, which means to attract or pull, is a state in Sufism where the servant of God is drawn towards God by God Himself. Jadhb is a divine gift from Allah, and it is not something that the servant can control or attain through their own efforts. It is when Allah, without the servant's striving or exertion, elevates them to higher spiritual stations through the light of certainty. Such a state of jadhb instills in the servant a desire for righteousness and worship, as well as the strength to endure trials and tribulations with patience. In a state of spiritual jadhb, the servant finds the source of truth, forgets everything other than Allah, becomes unaware of their own servitude, and experiences a state of ecstasy and istigrak.

It is important to note that in popular usage, the term “jadhb” is sometimes wrongly associated with insanity or madness (jinnah). However, jadhb and insanity are distinct concepts. Being majdhub (one who is divinely attracted) is different from being majnun (insane).

Sufis use the Quranic verse “Allah attracts to Himself whom He wills” (ash-Shura, 42/13) and the saying attributed to Abu al-Qasim Ibrahim Nasrabad, “Allah’s attraction to His servant is equivalent to the deeds of both worlds” (Sulami, *Tabaqatu’s-sufiyya*, p.395), as evidence for the concept of *jadhb*.

God’s attraction of His servant through *jadhb* is an expression of divine love, and it leads the servant to turn towards Allah. For example, the repentance of Ibrahim ibn Adham, who was a sultan but left his throne when he heard a voice saying, “Is this what you were created for?” three times while he was hunting, serves as an example of *jadhb*. Those who experience such divine attraction are guided by Allah to introspection, detachment from the ego and worldly matters, and closeness to the divine essence. In this sense, *jadhb* is a characteristic of prophets and saints, a matter of capacity and predisposition, and a path to achieving a “pure heart” (*Qalbun salim*). The poet Yunus Emre alludes to this in the following verse: without the divine attraction of love, what can my shaykh do with me?

In gatherings of companionship, remembrance, and spiritual practices, individuals who, unable to resist the inner experiences arising in their hearts, become overwhelmed, cry out, involuntarily leap and shout are also referred to as experiencing “*jadhb*.” Terms in Turkish such as “*cezblenmek*” (to become entranced), “*jadhb*”, and phrases like “*Hayy and Hû*”, a form of divine invocation and shouting are used to describe this kind of behavior. In early Sufi texts, these movements, often described as ecstasy (*wajd*) along with discussions of *dhikr* (remembrance) and *sama* (spiritual listening), were

referred to as “jadhb” in Turkish written as “cezbe”. It is important to distinguish this kind of “jadhb,” which represents the outward expression of ecstasy, from the original concept of divine attraction explained above. Early Sufis did not consider the type of behavior involving shouting and physical movements as the true form of jadhb.

3- ASHQ – MUHABBA (Love and Affection)

The original word for “love” is “ishq,” which means “vine” or “creeper.” Just as a vine overtakes and conquers the place or tree it clings to, love similarly invades and conquers the heart and body it enters. This is why intense love is called “ashq.” The word “ashq” is not mentioned in the Quran, but according to the interpretation of Ibn Arabi, it is implied indirectly. The verse “But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah” (Al-Baqarah, 2/165) is considered evidence for this.

According to the famous saying attributed to the “kanzil-mahfi” (hidden treasure), “I was a hidden treasure, and I wanted to be known, so I created the creatures,” love initially emerged from God and caused the creation of the entire universe (The scholars of hadith consider the hadith to be invented, yet the meaning is similar to Ibn Abbas’s exegesis on Surah Az-Zariyat verse 56). Indeed, the verse “Allah loves them, and they love Allah” (Al-Ma’idah, 5/54) confirms that love first emanates from God. According to Sufis, there is no foreign element in the entire creation when it comes to love. However, the capacity for love varies according to each creature’s own potential and capability. The shortest way to conquer the ego is through the path of love. Nonetheless, it is a spiritual pleasure and ecstasy that only the one who

experiences it can truly know and describe. This is illustrated by the response of Rumi, when asked, “What is love?” He replied, “Be me, and you will know.” True love is the longing of the human soul for the absolute truth. Love is a fire that, once ignited, burns everything except the Beloved.

Sufis examine love in two categories: “metaphorical” (majazi) and “real” (haqiqi).

a. Majazi Ashq (Metaphorical Love)

This refers to loving a temporary form or appearance. As long as it serves as a bridge leading to divine and true love, such love is accepted. For instance, it is considered commendable for someone to love another with a pure, divine love, and to die with this love without even daring to confess it. This is exemplified by the narration, “One who secretly loves someone and dies with this love, without ever revealing it, is considered to have died as a martyr” (Ibn al-Jawzi, *Zamm al-hawa*, I, 326). Not everyone may have the capacity for genuine love, so metaphorical love serves as a practice for true love. However, those who do not know how to connect the beauty they love to its divine source have a natural love. Within permissible boundaries, this is also considered acceptable. The difference between metaphorical love and natural love is that metaphorical love has a purifying quality.

b. Haqiqi Love (real love)

Real love is to love the Absolute Being, i.e., Allah. It is to transcend everything other than the Truth. One who attains true love has lost themselves and has attained annihilation in God (fana fillah).

Sufis consider “mahabbah” (affection) as the foundation of love. Mahabbah means the inclination of the human heart towards something that brings pleasure. There are four factors that influence a person’s inclination and love:

aa. The first thing a person loves is their own self. As a result, a person also loves the well-being of their body, wealth, children, relatives and friends.

bb. Another factor that prepares a person for love is “ihsan” (kindness). Human beings are slaves to kindness and virtue. Even if the kindness doesn’t benefit them directly, people still love those who have gained fame through acts of kindness.

cc. The beauty and charm found in things, the aesthetic and subtlety, draw people towards them. Human beings are naturally attracted to beauty.

dd. Compatibility among people is a reason for love. Human beings, having originated from the divine source and having a connection to the absolute beauty, feel an inclination and love toward their original source. The hadith that states “Allah created humanity in the image of the All-Merciful” (Muslim, Birr 11) and the belief that “acquiring the attributes of Allah” confirms this.

In summary, real love (haqiqi ashq) is the love of Allah, the One who is the Absolute Being. It is the highest form of love, leading one to transcend the self and worldly attachments, ultimately culminating in a deep, spiritual connection with the Divine.

aaa. Removing worldly love from the heart sincerely is generally achieved through asceticism and struggle. The verse from the Quran, “Allah has not placed two hearts in the chest of any man” (Al-Ahzab, 33/4), signifies that there should not be two types of love in the heart. This is because the perfection of love is for the heart to love Allah entirely. Those who love are attached to their beloved. What a person loves and is attached to can become their object of worship. Just as the verse says, “Have you seen the one who has taken his desires as his god?” (Al-Furqan, 25/43), and Tabarani’s narration, “The most infuriating idol on Earth to Allah is the desires and whims that are worshipped” (Al-Tabarani, *Majmu’ al-Kabir*, VIII, p.103), provide evidence for this. The love of the world is one of the primary factors that weakens love for Allah.

bbb. Increasing knowledge through worship and obedience leads to affection. When knowledge completely envelops the human heart, it results in love. The path to this is strengthening the soul through voluntary acts of worship and obedience. The love obtained through this process is like sowing seeds after clearing the land. As mentioned in the Quran, “Have you not considered how Allah presents an example, (making) a good word like a good tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches (high) in the sky?” (Ibrahim, 14/24), this verse indicates that the seed of faith will grow into a fruitful tree through worship, obedience, and good conduct.

4. KHAWF – RAJA’ (Fear and Hope)

Khawf is fear, and raja’ is hope. One of the conditions for the validity of faith is that it should exist between fear

and hope. Fear and hope are composed of states, knowledge, and actions. When something related to the future comes to a person's mind and settles in their heart, if it's something unpleasant, it is called "Khawf," and if it's something desired and pleasant, it's called "raja." The highest degree of Khawf and raja' related to the future is called "Qabd" and "bast." The highest degree of Qabd and bast is "hayba" and "uns" (awe and intimacy). In other words, raja is waiting for something pleasant after remembering everything that is under one's control.

Khawf is a state that the wayfarer attains by understanding the meaning of the Quranic verse: "But only those who have knowledge fear Allah" (Fatir, 35/28). Raja', on the other hand, is to become hopeful of Allah's reward and mercy by perceiving His grace and benevolence and knowing His blessings as described in the language of the Quran.

Khawf is the result of ma'rifa (knowledge of God). Asceticism, patience, repentance, and Khawf are its sources. Asceticism and repentance establish sincerity and devotion in a person, directing them towards remembrance and contemplation. Continual remembrance and contemplation prepare one for love.

The fear of Allah's punishment that arises from a genuine knowledge of God is not considered excessive and is not meant to lead a person to despair. The praised and commendable Khawf is the one that prevents a person from falling into sin and encourages them to perform acts of obedience in a complete and perfect manner. Sufis consider worship done with hope in Allah's grace and favor as superior to worship done out of fear of His punishment, as being hopeful is closer to love.

5. QABD – BAST (Constriction and Expansion)

Qabd and bast come after khawf and raja. Qabd means constriction or tightening, while bast means expansion and relief. The verse, “Allah doth straiten (qabd) and He doth release (bast)” (Al-Baqarah, 2/245), contains this meaning of qabd and bast.

Qabd refers to the feeling that arises in the heart due to a spiritual state that warrants punishment, while bast is the feeling of relief that arises from the hope of reward. Qabd is the state of the heart in concealment, and bast is the state of the heart in unveiling.

Although Sufis have expressed different views on whether constriction or expansion is superior, qabd and bast are generally considered to come from the Divine without any effort from the individual.

6- HAYBA - UNS (Awe and Intimacy)

Hayba and uns are two states above qabd and bast. hayba is a higher level of qabd, and uns is a higher level of bast. hayba is a state that arouses both fear and reverence. Uns means drawing close and approaching God. It is the heart being at ease when contemplating the beauty of Allah. The state of uns is the desire for seclusion and solitude of the one who has triumphed. When Ibrahim bin Adham was asked, “Where are you coming from?” he replied, “I am coming from being in close companionship with Allah.” A sign of uns is that one gets bored of mingling with people, talking and laughing with them, and finds joy in remembrance and solitude. According

to Al-Qushayri, the right of hayba (awe) is absence. Every seeker who possesses hayba is in a state of absence (ghaybah). Seekers who have hayba exhibit different states of absence. Some experience long periods of absence, while others have short periods.

Hayba is the feeling of concern brought about by closeness to the Divine. It is the fear of being deprived of His proximity. Hayba is the contemplation of divine majesty (jalal), while uns is the enjoyment of divine beauty (jamal). The lowest degree of uns is when a seeker, even if thrown into a fire or struck on the face with a sword, does not feel it due to the deep spiritual pleasures they experience. This is exemplified by the state of Prophet Ibrahim when he was thrown into the fire.

Uns is also the intimate relationship between the lover and the Beloved, where formality disappears. For instance, the supplication of Prophet Ibrahim, “My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead” (Al-Baqarah, 2/260), and Prophet Musa’s prayer, “Show Yourself to me” (Al-Araf, 7/143), in the Quran are examples of uns.

7- GHAYBAH – HUDHUR (Withdrawal and Presence)

Ghaybah means losing oneself, being unaware of oneself; hudhur means being present, being in the presence. It is when the seeker becomes oblivious to their surroundings and themselves due to the abundance and intensity of the divine inspiration and manifestations coming from God. The one in a state of ghaybah to people and the self is present with God and in His presence. On the other hand, the one in a state of ghaybah

to God is present with people and the self. Since *hudhur* and *ghaybah* are relative concepts, they can be used interchangeably in the literal sense, even though they are opposites. This is because, in the state of being absent from people, one is in the presence of the God according to human perception. Conversely, one who is present with the God is, relative to people, in a state of absence.

The state of *ghaybah* occurs by the grace of the God; it is born of divine manifestation. The withdrawal of those experienced in this state can vary in different situations.

Tranquility is being present with the God. If tranquility arises from the complete disappearance of the seeker from the people, then it can be considered that tranquility has reached its perfection along with withdrawal. The disappearance of the state of *ghaybah* leads to finding tranquility with people; tranquility with people results in forgetfulness of the God.

The story of Zulaikha calling prophet Yusuf by handing knives and apples to the Egyptian women as a test, and the women cutting their hands in amazement at Prophet Yusuf's beauty (Yusuf, 12/31), is cited as an example of "ghaybah."

8- MAHW - ISBAT (Destruction and Affirmation)

Mahw means to erase and annihilate, while *isbat* means to exist and affirm. Mahw is when something disappears to the extent that no trace of it remains. God Almighty attracts those servants who have high spiritual ranks to Himself and makes them near to Him by destroying their egos in His presence.

Mahw is the removal of bad habits and qualities that arise from a seeker's own actions, while isbat is establishing acts of worship and obedience in their place. When a seeker replaces their negative behaviors with virtuous ones, they have achieved both mahw and isbat. Mahw is the annihilation of a servant's actions in God's actions, while isbat is the realization of union states. The verse in the Quran, "Allah blots out what He wills and confirms (isbat) what He wills" (Ar-Rād, 13/39), is considered the source for mahw and isbat.

Mahw occurs with the removal of distractions from the heart, the elimination of heedlessness from the soul, and the cessation of attachment to the material world. Isbat is achieved through establishing God's presence in the heart.

9- SAKR - SAHW (Intoxication and Sobriety)

Sakr is a state of intoxication and losing oneself, while sahw is being sober and in one's right mind. Sakr is when a servant, due to a powerful divine manifestation, loses self-awareness and experiences spiritual pleasures. Often associated with the characteristics of ecstatic mystics, sakr resembles ghaybah but can sometimes be at a more advanced level. Sakr occurs when a seeker beholds the manifestation of the divine beauty (jalāl). In a state of sakr, a seeker may occasionally utter words that go against religious norms. Bāyezīd Bistāmī, who created a distinct school known as "Tayfuriyya" in the history of Sufism, elevated the status of sakr above sahw. The most notable feature of this Sufi movement was its overflowing and exuberant ecstatic experiences. Representatives of Turkish Sufism, such as Mawlana Rumi and Yunus Emre, can be con-

sidered part of this tradition. The words spoken by individuals in a state of *sakr*, which may sometimes conflict with religious rulings, are referred to as “*shatahât*” or “*shathiyâyât*.” Sufis who are intoxicated with divine love and the manifestation of divine beauty consider themselves inebriated with the “pure wine” mentioned in the Quran: “Their Lord will give them a pure drink” (Al-Insan, 79/21). Just as the state of one striving for ecstasy is called “*tawajud*,” the state of one striving for *sakr* is referred to as “*tasakur*.”

Sahw, the opposite of *sakr*, signifies awakening from spiritual intoxication, as well as always being sober, cautious, and maintaining presence and consciousness without falling into such intoxication. In the history of Sufism, Bāyezid is often seen as the representative of the understanding that emphasizes *sakr* and ecstasy, while Junayd al-Baghdadi is considered the representative of *sahw*, temperance, and presence. Junayd al-Baghdadi and those who follow his path have criticized behaviors that include excessive ecstasy and *sakr*, even to the extent of ecstatic cries, and have kept a distance from “*shathiyâyât*.” Throughout the history of Sufism, representatives of both approaches have always coexisted.

10- FANA – BAQA (Annihilation and Subsistence)

Fana is non-existence, nothingness, and transience. Baqa, on the other hand, is permanence and eternity. Fana is the disappearance of negative qualities, while baqa is the persistence of positive qualities. When someone abandons sinful actions, their sensual and ego-driven desires experience fana, while sincerity and good intentions remain in baqa. When someone

severs their emotional attachment to the world, their heart has experienced fana regarding worldly passions. When worldly desires and bad habits experience fana, chivalry and righteousness remain in baqa.

Fana is when the servant loses awareness of their own actions, and it is the moment when “abd” (servant) is replaced by God as the one who acts. In this state, where the servant does not see their own actions, they become established with God. They see, hear, and hold by God. This way, the hadith qudsi, “When I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, and his hand with which he strikes” (Bukhari, Al-Riqaq 38), becomes realized. The servant becomes so absorbed in God that they eventually lose their sense of self. God takes the place of that self-awareness. If this state is attained through remembrance (dhikr), it is called “al-Fana fi al-Madhkûr,” and if it is achieved through love, it is called “al-Fana fi al-Mahbûb.” The highest degree of fana is “Al-Fana an al-fana,” which means to go beyond the awareness of fana itself. A servant in a state of fana may be liberated from some human attributes, but they cannot completely transcend human qualities. Claiming otherwise would be incorrect and could lead to disbelief.

Fana is one of the highest levels of approaching Allah (taqarrub). An advanced stage of fana is called jam'. Being a fani (transient) does not mean complete annihilation or merging into nothingness because the one who attains fana and experiences it is not annihilated completely and does not merge into nothingness.

The concepts of fana and baqa are commonly believed to have been first used by Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz. Indeed, Kharraz described fana as the removal of worldly and otherworldly pleasures from the heart, leaving only the satisfaction of God's pleasure, and baqa as the erasure of everything from the heart except Allah. It is known that Sufis such as Bayezid and Junayd al-Baghdadi used the concepts of fana and baqa. For instance, Bayezid said: "Mankind has states, but the knower of God ('Arif) has none. His human traits are effaced, and his essence has passed away into the essence of another. His traits are gone because the traits of another have taken their place."

Since the entire universe derives its existence from Allah, "fana fillah" is described as a part merging into the whole, much like a drop becoming one with the ocean. Just as a drop mingles with the sea and becomes imperceptible, a Sufi aspires to undergo fana into Allah or within the unity of God, vanishing within that unity. Therefore, Fariduddin Attar uses the term "istigrak" (immersion) instead of fana.

A person whose heart experiences fana becomes a recipient of the manifestations of divine actions. A seeker who is immersed in the unity of God cannot see anything other than that unity, considering themselves a drop in that ocean. In Sufism, the concept of fana has been categorized in various ways from different perspectives.

a. Fanâ al-dhât: It is when a person considers themselves as non-existent, seeing no self-worth and recognizing the true existence as Allah.

b. Fanâ al-sifat: This is the process of shedding human attributes.

c. Fanâ al-fi'il: In this state, there is a lack of conscious intention in a person's actions and movements. For this reason, in Sufi literature, fanâ and fakr are often used interchangeably and as synonyms.

Fanâ also has variations based on the individual's progress in the path of spiritual development:

aa. Fanâ fil-ikhwan: This involves establishing brotherhood and love in the Sufi order, prioritizing the desires and wishes of fellow members over one's own desires, and merging with them through love.

bb. Fanâ fish-shaykh: It is when the seeker eliminates their personal will and desires in favor of the Shaykh's will and desires, placing the shaykh's wishes and intentions above their own.

cc. Fanâ fir-Rasûl: After experiencing fanâ in their Shaykh, the seeker melts in love and devotion to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, finding fanâ in his character. It involves adopting the qualities and ethics of the Prophet and adorning oneself with them.

dd. Fanafillah: It is when the seeker transcends their own attributes and qualities, adorning themselves with the attributes of Allah. After becoming transient in Allah, the state of remaining with Allah (baqa) emerges. Baqa, in one sense, is when a person no longer sees themselves as separate from

the people and objects around them. Someone who has transcended their ego becomes eternal with God.

When one attains fanâ in Allah, they also become eternal with Him. For instance, Ismail Hakki of Bursa states, “Fanâ is complete self-annihilation in the essence of the One. In this way, the servant does not see their own actions and behaviors but becomes aware of their establishment with God.”

Some Sufis have expressed that baqa is a station reserved for the prophets and that fana and baqa are about not being attached to worldly pleasures and ensuring the continuation of love for God.

11-JAM - FARQ (Gatherness and Separation)

Jam is the state of recognizing everything as coming from Allah, perceiving no existence apart from the Creator. Jam means gathering one’s focus and will into a single point. Jam and Farq (or tafriqa) are used together.

According to Abu Said Harraz, Jam is God creating Himself within His servants. Since He exists for them, it involves the annihilation of their existence. The state of Yaqin (certainty) unites a person with God, while knowledge distinguishes one’s existence from God (Farq). Therefore, some Sufis consider the Quranic verse, “Allah bears witness that there is no deity except Him” (Ali Imran, 3/18), as evidence of Jam, and the following part “angels and those of knowledge” as evidence of Farq. According to some Sufis, there is a connection between a person’s creation and Jam. Jam is God’s speech during the act of creation. At that time, humans did not exist (ghaybah), so

the speaker and the listener were one. When God addressed humanity through the prophets, the state of Farq emerged.

After this differentiation, the servant united with their Lord, and this state was named Jam. From this perspective, looking at oneself is Farq, while looking at one's Lord is Jam. Abu Ali Ad-Daqqaq even said: "Farq is what is attributed to you, while Jam is something that cannot be attributed to you."

Jam is the act of gathering scattered attention and focus into a single point. In this context, one who focuses their attention and devotion on Allah says only "Allah" during their remembrance (dhikr) and sees nothing else. On the other hand, someone who directs their attention and focus toward entities other than God sees nothing other than created beings.

According to another definition, Jam encompasses extraordinary actions, while Farq pertains to ordinary actions. According to this definition, miracles and supernatural occurrences are Jam, and the actions of created beings are Farq. There is a distinction between attributing the actions of created beings to the Creator and attributing the Creator's actions to created beings. One acknowledges God, humankind, and oneself while humbling themselves, and the other asserts existence and greatness. When an extraordinary action occurs that does not resemble the actions of humans, its doer is undoubtedly Allah, as seen in examples like Ibrahim not being burned in the fire or Yusuf being saved from the well.

When individuals reach a state of Jam, their actions are attributed to Allah. This is evident in cases like the actions of the Prophet during his moments of divine inspiration, where

God said: “You did not throw, when you threw, it was Allah who threw.” (al-Anfal, 8/17). In a Hadith Qudsi, when those who experience ecstasy and immersion in worship attribute their actions to God, it becomes clear that Jam is realized when God’s love exerts dominion over reason and nature, and the servant’s actions transform into the actions of God.

Ibn Arabi explains Jam as that which directs towards the Divine without seeing the created world. He states that unity of Ahadiyah (the Divine Oneness) is achieved through Jam. According to him, Oneness can only be realized through Jam, and Jam, in turn, is realized through Oneness. For example, what is stated in the verse, “Wherever you may be, Allah is with you” (Al-Baqarah, 2/115) is a form of Jam. As long as the unity with the Divine continues despite the existence of the world, the authority of Jam also endures.

Jam and Farq, like light and darkness following each other, always follow one another. When the state of Jam appears, Farq disappears. When Farq becomes evident, Jam vanishes. The existence of one is the absence of the other. For the seeker of knowledge, both are essential. Because without Farq, servitude cannot be realized, and without Jam, knowledge of the Divine (maʿrifa) cannot be achieved. Therefore, the expression “You alone we worship” in the famous opening chapter refers to Farq, while the phrase “You alone we ask for help” points to Jam. A lack of Farq is considered to be disbelief, and a lack of Jam is viewed as inertia. The state where both Jam and Farq coexist is interpreted as the true form of Tawhid (the oneness of God).

The highest degree of Jam is Jam al-Jam. Jam al-Jam is to witness all of existence and creatures as one with the Divine, without hindering one another, and to see unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity. The state of “Subsistence with God” (baqâ billah) for the servant, recovery after annihilation in Allah (fana fillah), and the second stage of differentiation after Jam (Farq al-thani) are all part of this. In the state of Jam al-Jam, the seeker sees everything as existing in reality with the God and stands with God. In this state, the seeker gives each rightful owner their due.

Jam al-Jam” is the state where Jam and Farq coexist simultaneously, following each other. In this state, when a person looks at things with a Jam perspective, the state of Farq does not completely vanish from their vision. When looking with a Farq perspective, the state of Jam is not entirely lost, as they see the created world as existing by Allah. This way, they attain the reality of Tawhid by recognizing the differences between servitude and lordship. In the state of Jam, the seeker reaches the level of annihilation in multiplicity, becoming completely transient from the created world (ma siwallah) and accepting themselves under the level of Ahadiyyah (Divine Oneness), losing all feelings related to entities other than God in a state of sakr (intoxication), and surrendering themselves to the authority of the Divine. They must return to the state of sahw (sobriety) to perform acts of worship. This is why the state that comes after Jam, which unites Jam and Farq, is called “sahw al-thâni.”

Farq is to perceive God and the created world as separate entities with the attribute of servitude. It is synonymous with “tafriqa” and is used together with Jam. Farq, which

means having separate thoughts and desires (*tafriqa al-khatir*), includes matters related to the will and effort of the worshipper, such as acts of worship and labor.

Nasrabadi explains that in the state of *Farq*, the seeker directs their gaze towards the attributes of God, while in the state of *Jam*, they look towards the essence of God. *Jam* occurs in matters of knowledge (*ma'rifa*), while *Farq* pertains to matters of station and state. When the seeker is in the station of servitude, it is *Farq*, and when they are in the station of lordship, it is *Jam*.

The act of Allah gathering His creations in His knowledge and will is *Jam*, whereas the act of differentiating and giving existence to various species is *Farq*. During the process of existence, the manifestation of unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity in the Divine's essence and its appearance in created beings is called "*Farq al-Jam*." This happens because, during the process of creation, the essence of God is veiled by the veil of His glory, causing the descent of the spirit to the realm of creation, the separation of the Eternal from the contingent, and the perception of the Eternal and the temporal as separate entities.

II- CONCEPTS OF MA'RIFA (GNOSIS)

The concept of *ma'rifa* (gnosis) and knowledge is one of the important issues in Sufism. Therefore, it will be discussed separately in the "issue of knowledge in Sufism" section (see page 383 and onwards). However, here we will provide definitions for some related concepts to the topic of *ma'rifa*.

1- MA'RIFA, IRFAN, and 'ARIF

Ma'rifa translates to “knowing,” “acquaintance,” and “knowledge.” However, there is a distinction between knowledge (ilm) and ma'rifa. Ma'rifa is knowledge acquired through living, seeing, tasting, and experiencing. Its source is inspiration and revelation that come to the heart, soul, and innermost being. The source of knowledge (ilm) is intellect, reasoning, sensory organs, sight, and transmission. Scholars of external knowledge (zâhiri ilm) are called 'âlim, while those who possess inner and heart-based knowledge and ma'rifa are called 'ârif. Knowledge (ilm) is more general, while ma'rifa is more specific. Ma'rifa is knowledge obtained through divine inspiration regarding God, God's attributes, actions, and the unseen world (ma'rifa al-Ilâhiyyah). The reason these individuals are referred to as “ârif billah” (those who know God) is that their knowledge comes from God.

An 'ârif is someone who thinks, follows through, and becomes knowledgeable and wise through experience. Sometimes, the term “âgâh” is also used instead of “ârif.”

Abu Turab Nahshebi defines an 'ârif as someone who is not affected by anything and is the source of purity for everything. According to Abu Bakr Qattani, an 'ârif is a person who adheres to God's commands, never contradicts divine orders and prohibitions in their state and actions, and continually remembers God. Dhul-Nun al-Misri mentions three signs of an 'Arif:

“The light of gnosis cannot extinguish the light of piety, it does not speak of the esoteric knowledge contrary to the

outward aspect of the religious law. Miracles do not lead the enlightened one to act contrary to the outward aspects of the religious law”; in other words, an ‘Arif does not abandon the sense of piety and refraining from sin and prohibited acts just because they have attained spiritual insights by saying, “I am a saint”.

The most important attribute of an ‘Arif is steadfastness. As Muhammad ibn Fadl says, “Above all, an ‘Arif must attain steadfastness, which completes all the virtues of existence and eliminates all the deficiencies and sins caused by absence.”

2- YAQIN (Certainty)

Yaqin refers to true and certain knowledge obtained through reasoning and intellect, or solid knowledge that fully satisfies the seeker. It is knowledge that leaves no room for doubt or hesitation. It is an unwavering belief that is in accordance with reality. Yaqin is not based on evidence but is seen clearly through the power of faith. It is heartfelt conviction about the truth of something. For those who possess Yaqin, calamity is a blessing, and ease is a trial. Yaqin can also mean witnessing.

There are three types of Yaqin:

- a. *Ilm al-Yaqin*: the Knowledge of Certainty, which leaves no room for doubt.
- b. *Ayn al-Yaqin*: the Eye of Certainty, obtained by seeing.
- c. *Haqqa al-Yaqin*: the Truth of Certainty, obtained through personal experience. In the context of the Qur’an, these concepts

of *Yaqin* are interpreted as follows: *Ilm al-Yaqin* corresponds to *Sharia*, *Ayn al-Yaqin* to *Tariqa*, and *Haqqa al-Yaqin* to *Haqiqa* and *Ma'rifa*. In Turkish Sufi circles, these three levels of *Yaqin* are often expressed as “knowing, finding, and becoming.”

3- ILHAM (Inspiration)

Inspiration refers to direct and unmediated knowledge received from Allah. Inspirational knowledge occurs either by hearing and listening to divine discourse or by seeing the unseen world. Knowledge received through inspiration is not acquired through thought; rather, it is born in the heart and enters the soul through divine grace. The source of inspiration is either directly from Allah or through an angel. Indeed, the verse that swears by the soul's inclination to both obedience and disobedience (*Ash-Shams*, 91/7-8) points to this. Ibn Arabi suggests that the inspiration of saints comes from the same source as the angel who conveys revelation to the prophets.

4- KASHF - MUKASHAFA (Unveiling and Discovery)

Unveiling, also known as “*Kashf*,” refers to the lifting of the veil and the revelation of hidden truths. It involves becoming acquainted with and attaining an understanding of unseen, spiritual realities through direct experience and observation.

“*Mukashafa*,” means lifting the veil of the body and senses and viewing the spiritual world. The influence and dirt of the world of material emotions creates a curtain that prevents the heart from seeing the unseen world. Through ascetic practices, self-discipline, and purification, this barrier is removed, and

one begins to see the realm of the unseen, which is referred to as “Kashf.”

Kashf and Mukashafa provide hidden knowledge about the unseen and the divine realm that cannot be obtained through the intellect and sensory organs. The goal of Mukashafa knowledge is to acquire true knowledge, offering insights beyond the intellectual, observational, and logical methods concerning subjects such as human behavior, existence, and God. Al-Ghazali refers to this kind of knowledge as “ilm al-mukashafa” (knowledge through divine unveiling) (tahaquq) for heart-based knowledge, and he calls the knowledge of human conduct and actions from a religious and moral perspective “ilm al-muâmalâ” (knowledge through correct behavior) (tahalluq).

5- MUHADARA - MUSHAHADA (Presence and Witnessing)

Muhadara means being in the presence. It is when the seeker’s heart is in the presence of God through the divine attributes. Muhadara can occur either through strong evidence or the influence of remembrance (dhikr). The advanced stage of muhadara leads to mushahada.

Mushahada is to witness Allah in the heart. The one who experiences mushahada has transcended their own self, and their knowledge has led them to annihilation. In the state of muhadara, the seeker relies on evidence, and their intellect is their guide. Muhadara is the beginning, while mushahada is the ultimate stage. Muhadara is for those on the path of illumi-

nation (talwin), whereas mushahada is for those on the path of direct witnessing (tamkin).

6- FATH - FAYD (Victory and Divine Bestowal)

Fath (victory) is a term used to describe the perfect states that become apparent to the seeker when the door is opened by God. This divine conquest, also known as Fathul ilâhî, ensures the seeker's ascent through various spiritual stations. Fath brings about different manifestations based on the condition of the ego and the soul. Fath in the ego imparts knowledge, while Fath in the soul imparts gnosis (ma'rifa). Fath can also refer to the opening of the heart's eye and is used to describe both material and spiritual blessings that may come from God. Allah, by the name "Fattâh," is the source of all kinds of conquests and openings.

Fayd (divine bestowal), on the other hand, refers to the knowledge and spiritual state that reaches the heart without the effort or acquisition of the seeker. Fayzd can also denote the encompassing spiritual state that surrounds the seeker. There is another aspect of fayd known as "isnâdî," which is transmitted to the seekers through the spiritual chain (silsila) from their spiritual guides (shaykhs). The shaykh conveys this type of fayd to the disciple's heart during spiritual practices, such as dhikr (remembrance of God) and gatherings of spiritual discourse.

7- TAJALLI (Manifestation)

Tajalli means to become apparent or to manifest. In Sufism, it refers to the manifestation of divine power in the

created world. It is also used in the context of the divine lights that become evident in the heart from the unseen realm. How manifestation occurs is known only to Allah. The entire world, upon the moment of manifestation, transitions from non-existence to existence and then promptly returns to its origin, vanishing. However, this manifestation is so swift and continuous that there is no discernible gap between two manifestations. Consequently, we perceive the existence of things as perpetual.

All things in the world are constantly changing. Each existing thing fades away, and immediately, something similar takes its place. This is called “*tajaddud al-amsal*,” likening it to a river that flows continuously. The water that arrives is always new. As the saying goes, “A person does not bathe in the same river twice.”

In manifestation, there is a transition from the unseen (*ghayb*) to the witnessed (*shahâda*) realm, and from darkness to light. There are two types of manifestation: spiritual (*ruhânî*) and divine (*Rabbânî*). In spiritual manifestation, a quality of renewal is evident, and there is a possibility of conceit (*ujub*). However, in divine manifestation, as worldly existence transforms into non-existence, there is no danger of arrogance. There are four types of manifestation concerning acts, names, attributes, and essence:

a. Manifestation of acts (*Tajalli al-af’âl*): In this type, one of God’s acts manifests in the heart of the seeker. The one who reaches this station comes to realize that there is no doer but Allah, acknowledging that all actions are originated from God.

b. Manifestation of names (Tajalli al-asmâ): This manifestation occurs when one of God's beautiful names becomes engraved in the seeker's heart. The recipient of such manifestation is left in awe under the radiance of that name.

c. Manifestation of attributes (Tajalli as-sifat): This form of manifestation involves one of God's attributes manifesting in the seeker's heart. Through divine grace, some effects of that attribute become evident in the individual. For example, a person on whom the attribute "Hearing" manifests might hear the glorification of even lifeless beings.

d. Manifestation of essence (Tajalli al-dhat): Beyond the first three types of manifestation, this one is referred to as the "manifestation of the divine essence within the essence." This manifestation is beyond human comprehension.

8- LAWAIH-TAWARIK-LAWAMI' (Illuminations - Inspirations and Gleams)

Lawaih is the immediate but fleeting manifestation of the divine light. Al-Suhrawardî considers lawaih as the beginning of a spiritual state. (Awarif, p. 586) Tawarik are the nighttime inspirations that come to the people who seek the truth. Lawami' are the dazzling lights and manifestations from the world of meaning that become visible to those whose souls are pure and who are in the initial stages of their spiritual journey. These three concepts have closely related meanings.

9- WARIDAT -KHAWATIR (Overflowings and Innermost Thoughts)

Warid (plural: waridat) is a term used to describe the meanings, inspirations, and divine favors that come from God without the will or intention of the servant. They are expressed as divine inspirations and divine messages. Khawatir, on the other hand, are the inner voices or thoughts that one experiences within themselves. However, khawatir can originate from God, angels, the ego, or even Satan. Therefore, inspirations from Allah are referred to as “the thoughts of God” (Khatir al-Haq), those from angels as inspirations, from Satan as whispers, and from the ego as desires or “the whims of the self” (Hadis an-Nafs).

10- WAQIA-WAQIAT (Occurrence and Occurrences)

The term “Waqia-Waqiat” is used to describe vivid occurrences of meanings and glad tidings that come from the unseen world to the heart, either through a similitude or through a form of address. Sometimes, these are the truths that a seeker in seclusion or a devoted disciple absorbed in worship experiences when they are in an ecstatic state. “Waqia” generally tends to happen in the intermediate state between sleep and wakefulness. When it happens in the presence of a seeker, it is referred to as “mukashafa” or unveiling. “Waqia” is also used to describe meanings seen in the realm of dreams, but it is distinct from ordinary dreams.

C- CONCEPTS DERIVED FROM OTHER CULTURES

In addition to the terminology related to experience and practice that we have mentioned so far, there are also some concepts in Sufism and classical poetry that have been adopted from other cultures. For instance, “pîr-i mûgan,” which in Iranian culture originally meant a Zoroastrian religious figure, is used in Sufism to refer to a spiritual leader or guide; “tersâ,” which meant a Christian priest, now refers to a spiritually reformed person; “deyr,” originally meaning monastery, is used in Sufism in place of “zâwiya” or hermitage; “mey,” which meant wine, is used to convey the idea of love; “meyhane” is used in place of “tekke,” and “sâkî,” who served wine, is used to represent a caliph or spiritual leader.

Apart from these, there are other symbolic concepts used in Sufism, such as:

“âshiq”: symbolizing a lover or one who is passionately in love, referring to those who love God.

“Ma’shuq”: meaning the beloved one, often symbolizing the deserving and beloved God.

“pîr”: used to denote a spiritual leader or elder master instead of the term “Shaykh.”

“shive”: indicating the pleasing demeanor of beautiful ones or the manifestations of divine beauty.

“hijab”: representing the veil that separates the lover from the Beloved, or divine secrets.

“jilve”: signifying coyness and the divine light that shines in the seeker’s heart.

“nây”: symbolizing a reed flute or the station of the beloved or the seeker.

“sharab”: used to express deep love and passion.

“nâkus”: referring to a bell or something that awakens one from the slumber of heedlessness.

“Jheshm”: meaning the eye or the divine attribute of seeing.

“leb”: signifying the lips or speech.

“zulf”: representing hair or the hidden aspect of a person’s identity.



**CHAPTER FOUR:
SUFİ INSTITUTIONS**

Sufism, being both a science and a matter of spiritual experience and education, has established institutions that have left deep marks on both our individual and societal lives. These institutions developed by Sufism can be grouped into four main categories:

- A- Tariqas (Sufi Orders),
- B- Tekkes (Sufi Lodges),
- C- Futuwwa (Chivalry) and Akhî (Craftsmen) Guilds,
- D- Majlis al-Mashayikh (Council of Sufi Masters).

A- TARIQAS

As we mentioned before, after the ascetic and mystical period of Sufism, Sufi orders began to emerge in various regions of Islamic countries from the 12th century onwards. In terms of the language, “tariq” and “tariqa,” which signify concepts like “path to follow,” “method to be pursued,” “spiritual state,” and “condition,” refer to the spiritual path taken by individuals to develop their spiritual capabilities. Initially, “tariqa” meant the path one followed to attain the hereafter by turning away from the world, disciplining spiritual forces, and controlling desires and worldly inclinations. Later, it came to signify the principles and social codes followed by individuals who receive spiritual education under the guidance of a spiritual guide called a “shaykh” within the context of a lodge or hermitage (tekke and zawiya).

The main purpose of a tariqa is to discipline the human spirit, free individuals from the influences of the external world, and guide them toward the absolute truth within them-

selves. In a way, a tariqa is the path leading from the outward aspects of Islamic law (shari'a) to its inner essence and ultimate truth.

Tariqas can be categorized into three groups based on their preferences regarding worship, ascetic practices, and spiritual states: (1) Ahyâr (the Righteous), (2) Abrâr (the Virtuous), and (3) Shuttâr (the Lovers).

Ahyâr Tariqa: This path is followed by those who are devoted to deeds and worship. The seekers on this path generally seek to approach God through voluntary acts of worship.

Abrâr Tariqa: This path emphasizes asceticism and struggle. Its adherents are truthful in their dealings with both people and God.

Shuttâr Tariqa: This is the path of lovers and those filled with affection. Without love, ecstasy, and passion, one cannot embark on this path.

In the early days of Islam, like other religious sciences, Sufism was not an independent science but was integrated into the Quran and Sunnah. The rapid spread of Islam, the difficulty of immediately removing the former beliefs of converts to this religion, the disputes over various philosophical ideas, and the weakening of the political center over time prompted some people to escape from the bewildering, mind-clouding, and spiritually constricting atmosphere to lead an ascetic life. During this period, some people gathered around certain Islamic scholars who managed to maintain their purity of faith. These communities later came to be known as "tariqas."

In today's context, the first Sufi orders, with their current organizational structure, were founded primarily by the great Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani (d. 561/1166) and Ahmad Al-Rifa'i (d. 575/1179).

The distinction between a Sufi order (tariqa) and a school of jurisprudence (madhhab) lies in that a Sufi order is concerned with matters of spirituality and mysticism, while a religious school of thought deals with political, doctrinal, and jurisprudential aspects. Members of Sufi orders also belong to a religious school of thought. Sunni Sufi orders, for example, are affiliated with Sunni schools of thought.

The principles of a Sufi order are derived from the Quran and the Sunnah (the practices and teachings of the Prophet). They are practiced after fulfilling religious obligations. The pledge of allegiance (bay'at) of a disciple to their spiritual guide (shaykh) is distinct from the various pledges of allegiance the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ made. This connection serves to renew both the pledge to the Prophet and the pact made during the the Covenant of Alastu.

The emergence and spread of Sufi orders can be attributed to two significant factors, namely the spiritual and the social/community factors:

a. **Spiritual Factor:** It is rooted in the structure of the Islamic religion and is characterized by the ascetic, spiritual, and moral tendencies found in the Quran and the Sunnah and exemplified in the lives of the Companions and other devout individuals.

b. Social/Community Factor: Over time, the spiritual and moral way of life inherent in Islam became accessible to the masses, and people began to take an interest in it, thus leading to its acceptance and popularity within society.

A wayfarer (sâlik) who joins a spiritual guide (shaykh) with an unbroken chain of transmission (silsila) to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ receives “spiritual aspiration” (manawi himmet) from their shaykh. Being part of a community has a spiritual and psychological impact, and the states (spiritual conditions) are reflected and influenced by this community. In accordance with the hadith, “A believer is the mirror of another believer” (Abu Dawud, Adab 49; Tirmidhi, Birr 18), the beautiful states of the seekers are mirrored in each other, leading to a spiritual interaction.

In the education provided within Sufi orders, the Sufi community, consisting of the shaykh and the disciples is considered as a family unit. The shaykh holds the position of a spiritual father for the disciples. The disciples address each other as “ikhwân,” considering themselves as brothers sharing the same spiritual father. This understanding is applicable in a broader Islamic context as well. For instance, as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: “I am your father and I teach you” (Abu Dawud, Tahara 4), and in the Qur’an, referring to the Prophet’s wives, it is mentioned, “They are the mothers of the believers” (Al-Ahzab, 33/6). Similarly, all Muslims are indeed brothers and sisters in the language of the Qur’an (Al-Hujurat, 49/10).

I- SUFI ORDERS ACCORDING TO THE METHODS OF JOURNEY AND SPIRITUAL WAYFARING (SAYR AL-SULŪK)

Man is a unique being where the manifestations of the divine attributes, both the beautiful (jamal) and the majestic (jalal), converge. The result of the manifestation of beauty is the soul (ruh), and the result of the manifestation of majesty is the ego (nafs). The soul and ego are like two separate rulers each seeking dominance within the kingdom of man's existence.

The goal of Sufi orders is to make the soul the ruler within the kingdom of the human body and to subject the ego to it. In other words, it is to liberate the ego from base morals and, in accordance with the Covenant of Alastu, to establish the soul as the sovereign over the body.

To achieve this goal in Sufi orders, there are various principles and methods. Based on the differences in these principles and methods, Sufi orders are divided into two categories: 1. Spiritual orders (Ruhani Tariqas), 2. Carnal orders (Naffsani Tariqas).

1- RUHANI TARIQAS (Spiritual Orders)

In spiritual Sufi orders, the wayfarer (sâlik) engages in the purification of the heart to remove the obscurities found over the "inspired soul" mentioned in the verse: "So when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My soul, then fall down to him in prostration" (Al-Hijr, 15/29; Sad, 38/72). The means to achieve this purification involve acts of supererogatory wor-

ship, remembrance (dhikr), surrender, and spiritual connection to nourish the soul.

Spiritual Sufi orders do not emphasize ascetic practices. Instead, they focus on purifying the soul and keeping it bound to the covenant made during the Covenant of Alastu. Through these practices, the soul gains mastery over the ego.

In spiritual Sufi orders, the practice of dhikr (remembrance) is subtle (“khafi”), and the Sufi spiritual lineage typically traces back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through Sayyidina Abu Bakr ؓ. The Naqshbandiyya order, which embodies these characteristics today, is one such example. In this path, the seeker first engages in the remembrance (dhikr) of the subtle centers called “lata’if” in the body, each named for a specific attribute: heart (qalb), soul (ruh), secret (sir), subtle (khafi), very subtle (akhfâ), ego (nafs), and universal (kull).

Among these, the five subtle centers, known as “lata’if al-khamsa” or “five latifas,” are located in the chest area. The heart (qalb) is situated under the left breast, the soul (ruh) is two fingers below the right breast, the secret (sir) is under the left breast, the subtle (khafi) is two fingers above the right breast, and the very subtle (akhfâ) lies in the exact center of these four. After each of these five subtle centers is awakened to participate in the remembrance (dhikr), the opening of the chest (sharh al-sadr) occurs. Subsequently, the remembrance is directed to the ego, which is situated in the exact center of the forehead. Once the ego also engages in the remembrance, the practice expands to all the latifas known as “Lata’if al-kul” throughout the entire body, with an emphasis on feeling the

blood flowing quietly and deeply as it utters the word “Allah” within the veins.

Next, it is time for the remembrance of the word of Tawhid called “nafy u isbât.” During this remembrance, the wayfarer (salik) kneels down with closed eyes, tongue adhered to the palate, slightly tilting the head to the right side, sitting as if gazing into their heart, while holding their breath. They silently contemplate the two parts of the phrase “Lā ilāha” (negation) followed by “illallāh” (affirmation), striving to remove all attachment and love for worldly matters from their heart. They can prolong this process with each breath, extending it to three, five, seven, and so on, up to twenty times as much as their strength allows. When releasing the breath, they say: “Ilahi anta maqsudi wa ridaka matlubi” (My Lord, You are my aim, and my desire is Your pleasure). After nafy u isbât, the seeker is guided into muraqabah by their spiritual guide (shaykh).

Muraqabah (spiritual contemplation) consists of four stages: Ahadiyyah, Maiyyah, Aqrabiyyah, and Muhabbah. In Ahadiyyah muraqabah, the seeker reflects on the meaning of surah Al-Ikhlās. In Maiyyah, they contemplate the verse: “Wherever you may be, He is with you” (Al-Hadid, 57/4). In Aqrabiyyah, they ponder the verse: “We are closer to Him than (his) jugular vein” (Qaf, 50/16). In Muhabbah, they focus on the verse: “Allah loves them, and they love Allah” (Al-Ma’idah, 5/54). Through these contemplations, the seeker strives to strengthen their love for Allah and enhance their awareness of His presence in their heart.

The concentration on the heart and remembrance during the process of spiritual journey (Sayr al-suluk) is a practice that can be likened to a timeless ritual, inspired by the practices of some of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, such as Mu'adh ibn Jabal, who would say to each other: "Let's believe together for a while, let's remember Allah for a period so that our faith increases. Let's accept Him with obedience, and hopefully, He will remember us with His forgiveness." (Ibn Abi Shayba, Musannaf, XI, 43).

The wayfarer (sâlik), guided by their spiritual master, completes their spiritual journey by passing through all these stages. As each of the subtle centers within a person reaches the state of remembrance and attains the light of Tawhid, the soul, with the permission of Allah, ascends to the level of "haqq al-yakin," the level of knowledge of certainty.

2- NAFFSANI TARIQAS (Carnal orders)

Naffasani Sufi orders are focused on the struggle against the deceptive and transient desires of the ego. In Naffasani Sufi orders, as there are seven veils and seven stations within the ego, each one is trained with one of the "asma al-sab'ah" or the "seven beautiful names" from the "asma al-husna," tailored to suit the meaning of these names through exercises.

a. STAGES OF THE NAFFS (Self)

In Naffasani Sufi orders, the seven stages of the naffs that are accepted correspond to the "asmâ al-sab'ah" (seven names), stations, and types of spiritual journey. Here are the seven

stages along with their corresponding names, stations, and types of spiritual journey:

aa. NAFFS AL-‘AMMARAHAH (the commanding self): This is the naffs or self that encourages and commands committing sinful and immoral acts. It is referred to in the Qur’an by the verse: “Indeed, the lower self-commands to evil.” (Yusuf, 12/53). A seeker at this level neither engages in goodness nor avoids evil deeds; however, they may feel remorse upon the occurrence of evil. But this remorse does not affect their behavior. The condition of the naffs at this level is overly inclined to its desires. The dhikr (remembrance) at this stage is “La ilaha illallah,” the type of journey is “sayr ilallah,” and the method is “shari’at riayat.” When Tawhid influences the heart, the negation (nafy) disappears, and affirmation (isbat) remains, gradually moving on to the second stage.

bb. NAFFS AL-LAWWAMAHAH (the reproachful self): This naffs feels remorse after committing sins and, due to its rebuke by the conscience, it inclines towards repentance. It gets its name from the verse in the Qur’an: “And I swear by the self-reproaching self.” (Al-Qiyamah, 75/2). At this level, the seeker’s remembrance is “lâfza-i Jalal” (Allah), the journey is “sayr alal- lah,” and the spiritual center is the “qalb.”

cc. NAFFS AL-MULHAMAMAHAH (the inspired self): This self begins to experience divine inspirations and revelations and gains the capability to discern between good and evil. It takes its name from the Qur’an like the others: “And He inspired it with depravity or taqwa.” (ash-Shams, 94/8). At this stage, the spiritual journey is “sayr billah,” the remembrance is “Hû,”

the spiritual center is “maqam al-rûh,” and the realm is “alam al-arwah.”

dd. NAFFS AL-MUTMA'INNAH (the self at peace): Now freed from ugly traits, the self is adorned with noble characteristics and moral qualities. By the grace and favor of Allah, it attains complete tranquility and certitude, free from distress. At this level, the naffs ceases to be of human nature, and the “Light of Muhammad” manifests. This naffs is addressed by divine words, as mentioned in the Qur'an: “O self at rest and at peace, return to your Lord, well-pleasing and well pleased.” (Al-Fajr, 89/27). In this level, the spiritual journey is “sayr anillah,” the remembrance is “al-Haq,” and the realm is “Jam.”

ee. NAFFS AR-RADHIYAH (pleasing self): The place of this self is where it is agreed upon by both Allah and His servant. This is a level where both Allah and His servant are pleased with each other. The verse that follows the previous one mentioned: “And your Lord is going to give to you, and you will be satisfied.” (ad-Duha, 93/5) is considered a reference to this level. In this stage, the spiritual journey is “sayr fillah,” the remembrance is “al-Hayy,” and it is the “Jamal-Jam” level.

ff. NAFFS AL-MARDHIYAH (the pleased self): At this level, the self accepts the decree that applies to both itself and others, whether it be for good or evil. The continuation of the verse mentioned earlier, “And your Lord is going to give to you, and you will be satisfied,” is evidence of this. At this level, the spiritual journey is “sayr maallah,” the remembrance is “al-Qayyûm,” and it is the Hadrat al-jam (the presence of gatheredness) and the Haqq al-yakin (truth of certainty) level.

gg. NAFFS AL-KAMILAH (the perfected self): At this level, the seeker reaches the rank of guidance by acquiring all the qualities of knowledge (ma'rifa). This level is a bestowed rank. The journey is "sayr lillah," the remembrance is "ya Qahhar."

The seven levels of the ego, their corresponding names, stations, and types of spiritual journeys can be illustrated as follows:

NAFFS	Ammara	Lawwama	Mulhama	Mutma'inna	Radhiya	Mardhiyya	Kamila
DHIKR	Lâ ilâha illallah	Allah	Hu	Hakk	Hayy	Qayyûm	Qahhâr
JOURNEY (SAYR)	Îlallah	Alallah	Billah	Anillah	Fillah	Maallah	Lillah
REALM	Shahada	Misal	Arwah	Jabarut	Lâhût	Nâsût	Hakikat
STATE	Zawq	Shawq	Ashq	Wasl	Hayrat	Fanâ fil-fanâ	Baqâ bi al-Baqâ'
CENTER	Sadr	Qalb	Ruh	Sirr	Sirru's-sîr	Khafi	Akhfâ
PRINCIPLE	Shari'a	Tariqa	Hakika	Ma'rifa	Wilaya	Siddiqiyya	Qurbah
STATIONS	Tawhid al-Af'al	Tawhid as-Sifat	Tawhid al-Dhat	Jam	Jam al-Jam	Hazrat al-jam'	Ahadiyya-al-jam
COLOR	Blue	Yellow	Red	Black	Green	White	Colorless

II- MAJOR SUFI ORDERS

Sufi orders have been categorized based on their forms of dhikr (remembrance of God) (both silent and vocal, standing and sitting), belief systems (truth vs. falsehood, Ahl al-Sunnah vs. Ahl al-Bid'ah, orthodox vs. heterodox). An accurate determination of the total number of Sufi orders and their branches seems challenging since these orders are often referred to by the name of their founder or by the principles they embrace. According to sources like Harîrî zâde's "Tibyânü wasâil al-

haqâiq” and Zabidi’s “Aqd al-Jawhar,” as well as works like Huseyin Vassaf Bey’s “Safinah al-Awliyâ” and Islamic encyclopedias, there are approximately 400 Sufi orders. Sufi orders are often classified into twelve branches, and we will partially follow this tradition while adding one more. In chronological order, we will briefly introduce the thirteen most widespread Sufi orders in the Islamic world, along with their founders and characteristics. These orders are: 1. Qadiriyya, 2. Yasawiyya, 3. Rifa’iyya, 4. Suhrawardiyya, 5. Chishtiyya, 6. Shadhiliyya, 7. Bektashiyya, 8. Mevlaviyya, 9. Bâ ‘Alawiyya, 10. Dasûkiyya, 11. Naqshbandiyya, 12. Khalwatiyya (Helvetiyye), and 13. Bayramiyya.

1- QADIRIYYA

The Qadiriyya tariqa is a Sufi order attributed to Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani (d. 562/1166). Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani was born in the village of Nayf, which is located in Jilan, southwest of the Caspian Sea. His lineage can be traced back to the great companion Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Jilani’s full name is Muhyiddin Abu Muhammad b. Abu Salih Zengidost. He was born in the year 470/1077 in his village. After receiving his early education in his hometown, he went to Baghdad at the age of eighteen. He completed his education in the center of knowledge and wisdom at that time, Baghdad. After studying disciplines such as Hadith, jurisprudence, and literature, he entered the path of Sufism through his connection with Abu al-Khayr Muhammad b. Muslim ad-Dabbas (d. 525/1131) and later became his son-in-law.

For a while, he taught various sciences, including Qur'anic exegesis, Hadith, jurisprudence, and Qur'an recitation. However, he later withdrew from his teaching duties at the madrasa and embraced a life of seclusion. According to tradition, he spent about twenty-five years in asceticism and seclusion in Baghdad and the ruins of Karkh. Finally, through Abu Said Mubarak al-Muharrimi, he was granted the spiritual leadership mantle (the "shaykh's robe") and began serving the community by mingling with the people once more.

From 521/1127 onwards, Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani became a beloved spiritual guide in Baghdad due to his influential and passionate sermons and advisory activities. Many scholars and government officials became his disciples. He passed away in Baghdad in the year 562/1166.

In his Sufi educational philosophy, a disciple would first go through a period of asceticism and hardship, detach from the world, complete their spiritual journey, and then return to the people. His approach to Sufism has influenced many after him, including prominent figures like Ibn Arabi. Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani's Sufi order has spread to various parts of the Islamic world. His works, such as "al-Ghunya," "al-Fathu ar-Rabbâni," and "Futuh al-ghayb," which consist of sermons and guidance, have been translated into Turkish.

Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani initially followed the Shafi'i school, but later found the Hanbali school more suitable to his beliefs and became an advocate of this school. His adoption of Hanbali jurisprudence even led staunch opponents of Sufism like Ibn Taymiyyah to express words of admiration for him.

Since Ibn Taymiyyah himself was a Hanbali, he mentioned that Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani was known for his strict adherence to Islamic jurisprudence, much like other scholars like Junayd al-Baghdadi and Harith al-Muhasibi.

Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani had a strong attachment to Sufism, Islamic law (Shari'a), and the outward aspects of religion. He continued the Sunni Sufism that Al-Ghazali had developed and systematized. The introduction of the Qadiri order to Anatolia was attributed to Haji Bayram Veli, who was the son-in-law of Ashrafoglu Rûmî (d. 874/1470). Ashrafoglu, who was highly regarded in the Anatolian Sufi community due to his work "Muzekki'n-nufûs" and his poetry, is referred to as "Pîr-i sânî" in the order. The Qadiri order's arrival in Istanbul was facilitated by Ismail Rûmî (d. 1041/1631), the founder of the Istanbul Tophane Kâdirîhanesi. It is said that Ismail Rûmî established around forty Qadiri lodges in various locations. The order was brought to North Africa and Andalusia (Spain) through Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani's sons and was known as "Jalaliyya" in those regions.

Initiation into the Qadiriyya order is similar to other Sufi orders, typically involving the murid (disciple) pledging allegiance (bay'at or mubâyaa) to the shaykh by holding hands, and the shaykh guiding the murid in repentance and seeking forgiveness. The daily spiritual practices (awrad) for the Sufis in this order usually consist of praise (hamdalah), prayers and blessings on the prophet (salatu wa assalam), supplications, the recitation of the declaration of the oneness of God (tawhid), and the chanting of the name of Allah (lafz al-jalalah). Ascetic

practices hold a significant place in the order, with the disciples engaging in forty-day seclusions (“arbain”) as prescribed by Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani. Qadiriyya is known for its loud group chanting (dhikr) since it is a Sufi order that traces its spiritual lineage back to the companion Ali ؑ. The order’s rituals often include a turning or spinning dance known as the “devrân.” After one year of initiation into the order, a murid typically wears an eighteen-pointed green conical hat (kulâh/tâc) made of green fabric. The Qadiriya order has various branches or sub-orders, including Ashrafiyya, Rûmiyya, Khalisiyya, Garibiyya, Hilaliyya, Yafiyya, Asadiyya, and Akbariyya. Detailed information about the general principles and branches of the order can be found in Harîrîzâde’s “Tibyânu wasaili al-haqâ’iq.”

2- YASAWIYYA

Yasawiyya is a Sufi order attributed to the prominent Turkic mystic Ahmad Yesevi (d. 562/1166). Ahmad Yesevi, a disciple of Yusuf Hamdani (d. 525/1130), is known primarily through legendary accounts about his life. In these legends, there is mention of a companion named Arslan Baba, claimed to be from the time of the Prophet.

Ahmad Yesevi was born in Chimkent-Sayram and later pursued education and Sufi training in Bukhara. After his spiritual teacher’s passing, he settled in Yasi, Turkistan, where he continued his guidance and teaching until his own passing.

Yasawi played a significant role in the dissemination of Islam and Sufi thought among the Central Asian Turks. His

most important surviving work is “*Diwan-ı Hikmet*,” a collection of Turkish advice poems known as “*hikmah*.” Like his teacher Yusuf Hamdani, Ahmad Yesevi was a Hanafi in jurisprudence and contributed significantly to reconciling Sufism and Islamic law (*Shari’a*). He sent disciples and successors to Anatolia and the Balkans, then known as the “*Rum Diyari*,” thereby facilitating the settlement of Turks in these regions and advancing the spread of Islam.

Ahmad Yesevi, who encouraged people in their native languages to embrace the Sufi path, Sufism, and Islam, held significant influence in an area extending from Anatolia to the Balkans. He died around 562/1166.

One of the most famous disciples of Ahmad Yesevi among the Turks was Suleyman Hakîm Atâ, and his first successor was Mansûr Atâ. *Yasawilik* (*Yasawi Sufism*) initially spread in the regions of Tashkent, Syr Darya, Khwarazm, and Transoxiana, and later extended to the Caucasus, Anatolia, and the Balkans.

There is a historical relationship between Yasawi and the Naqshbandi order. Ahmad Yesevi and later Abdul Khaliq Gujduwani, who played a role in the emergence of the Naqshbandiyya, were disciples of Yusuf Hamdani. Additionally, there is a Yasawi Shaykh among the mentors of Muhammad Bahauddin Bukhari (d. 791/1389), the founder of Naqshbandiyya. Some have also suggested that Bektashiyyais another branch of Yasawiyya.

Yasawi Sufism places a strong emphasis on ascetic practices, spiritual combat (*mujahada*), and the loud recitation (*jahri dhikr*) of the divine names. The Sufis in the Yasawi order

are known for making sounds similar to a spinning wheel (destere) while reciting the divine names, which has led to the name “dhikr-i erre” for this particular form of dhikr. Solitude (khalwa) holds a significant place in their practices. Yasawiyya expects the disciples to be intelligent, dedicated in service to their Shaykh, truthful, and reserved. The influence and traces of Yasawiyya continue to exist in the Central Asian Turkic republics to this day.

3- RIFAIYYA

The Rifaiyya is a Sufi order attributed to Shaykh Ahmad ar-Rifai (d. 578/1183), a contemporary substitute spiritual leader of Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani. Ahmad al-Rifa'i was also descendant of the Prophet. He was born in Basra around 500 or 512/1118. After completing his religious education, he received Sufi training from his uncle, Shaykh Mansur Bataihi. His primary spiritual guide was Ali Wasiti Qurashi. After the passing of his uncle, Ahmad Rifa'i became his successor in the dargah. Ahmad al-Rifa'i, who was a Shafi'i jurist, continued to provide spiritual guidance until his death in 578/1182. His tomb is located in the now-deserted city of Wasit.

He authored several works, including “Hikam al-Rifaiyya,” “al-Burhan al-muayyad,” “al-Majalis as-saniyya,” and “Hâlatu ahli al-haqiqa maallah.” All of these works have been translated into Turkish.

The order associated with Ahmad al-Rifa'i is sometimes referred to as Bataihiyya or Ahmadiyya but is most commonly known as Rifâiyya. It is considered one of the earliest

Sufi orders, founded around the same time as Qadiriyya and Yasawiyya. After Ahmad al-Rifa'i, the Rifaiyya order spread predominantly in the Middle East, Anatolia, and the Balkans. During the early years of the Ottoman Empire, Rifai dargahs were found in various regions of Anatolia. Arab traveler Ibn Batuta, who visited Anatolia and the Balkans during that era, also mentioned the presence of Rifai dargahs alongside Akhî lodges.

Kenan Rifai, who has written works about Shaykh Ahmad al-Rifa'i and the Rifaiyya, explains the principles and practices of the order. The order places a strong emphasis on asceticism (riyada) and spiritual combat (mujahada). There is a special forty-one-day seclusion period (khalwa) for disciples who are candidates for leadership (naqib), aimed at refining their character and morals. During this period, the disciple fasts, and the breaking of the fast and pre-dawn meal (sahur) is done as instructed by the shaykh. The disciple's entire worship, ascetic practices, and behavior are under the supervision of the shaykh, including dreams and experiences.

Additionally, there is another type of seclusion known as "Muharramiyya," observed for seven days during the month of Muharram. It involves maintaining ritual purity, fasting, refraining from conjugal relations, abstaining from eating meat, and maintaining silence.

Rifai followers wear black turbans, sit on prayer rugs, and play drums and tambourines during their spiritual gatherings and recitation ceremonies. During dhikr and ritual ceremonies, they perform extraordinary acts known as "khawariq,"

such as striking themselves with a metal skewer (referred to as “burhân”), walking on fire, and biting glass.

The Rifai order remained influential in the Ottoman Empire until late Ottoman period. Shaykh Abu al-Huda Efendi Rifai was highly respected by Sultan Abdulhamid II. The Rifaiyya order has several sub-branches, including Sayyadiya, Kayyâliya, Nûriya, İzziya, Fenâriya, and Burhâniya.

4- SUHRAWARDIYYA

The Suhrawardiyya order is sometimes attributed to Abu Hafs Umar Al-Suhrawardi in certain sources, but it was primarily founded and developed by two notable Sufi figures: Abu al-Najib al-Suhrawardi (d. 563/1167), the author of “Adab al-muridin,” and Abu Hafs Umar al-Suhrawardî (d. 632/1234), the author of “Awârif al-maârif.”

Abu Hafs Umar Suhrawardî, originally from the town of Suhraward in the region of Iraq al-Ajam in Iran, spent most of his life in Baghdad, Iraq. In Baghdad, he studied various fields, including tafsir, hadith, and Shafi’i jurisprudence, under scholars of the time, including his uncle Abu al-Najîb. He also received spiritual guidance (sayr al-sulûk) from his uncle. Like his contemporary Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani, al-Suhrawardi engaged with Sufi masters, such as Ibn Arabî and Ibn al-Farid. He earned the respect of the Abbasid Caliph of the time, Nasir lidînillah, who appointed him to the position of “Shayh ash-shuykh” (the shaykh of the shaykhs), making him one of the most respected Sufi leaders of his era. Nasir entrusted him

with diplomatic missions, including efforts to unite the Akhi organizations in Anatolia and other diplomatic tasks.

His work “Awârif al-maârif” has found a place among the classic Sufi literature and is considered one of the primary sources on Sufi etiquette and protocols in the tekke and zâwiya. Besides “Awârif,” al-Suhrawardî authored other works on tafsir and Sufism.

Al-Suhrawardî’s Sufi tradition spread to various parts of the Islamic world. In India, Bahâuddin Zakariyyâ Multânî (d. 666/1268) represented the Suhrawardiyya order. After his teacher’s death, Bahâuddin Zakariyyâ Multânî traveled from India to Anatolia, where he met Konawi and became acquainted with the ideas of Ibn Arabî. He subsequently authored the work “Al-Lumaât” and passed away in 688/1289 in Damascus.

During the early years of the Ottoman Empire, the Awarif tradition, along with Suhrawardiyya, began to gain influence in Anatolia. One of the Suhrawardiyya representatives in Anatolia was Fahrudînn Iraqi (d. 661/1262). Zayniyya, established by Zaynuddin Khafî (d. 838/1435) in Anatolia, is an influential branch of the Suhrawardiyya order.

5- CHISHTIYYA

The Chishtiyya Sufi order, attributed to Mu’inuddîn Hasan Chishti (d. 633/1236), is one of the prominent Sufi orders in the Indian subcontinent. Mu’inuddîn Chishti, also known as Sijzî, was born in Sijistan and is sometimes referred to as al-Suhrawardî due to his association with the village of Chisht, where his spiritual mentor, Abu Ishaq Shami, resided.

Mu'inuddin Chishti studied in Bukhara and Samarkand and then traveled to cities like Balkh and Baghdad. During his journeys, he met renowned Sufi leaders of the time, including Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani, Abu al-Najib al-Suhrawardi, and Najmuddin Kubra. For a time, he lived in seclusion in the tomb of al-Hujwiri, the author of "Kashf al-Mahjub." After affiliating with Abu Ishaq Shami, he settled in the village of Chisht and spent many years there until his death in 633/1236.

The Chishtiyya Sufi order played a significant role in the spread of Islam and the development of the spiritual life of Muslims in the Indian subcontinent, particularly in India and Pakistan. Chishtiyya followers initially considered the works "Awârif al-maârif" by al-Suhrawardi and "Kashf al-Mahjub" by Hujwiri as fundamental sources for their spiritual practices and teachings.

The Chishtiyya tradition incorporates both loud (jahri) and silent (hafi) dhikr (remembrance of God), spiritual observation (murâqaba), ascetic practices, and the practice of sama (spiritual dance). Written sources within the Chishtiyya tradition include discourses, letters, Sufi works, and hagiographies (biographical accounts of saints).

Chishtiyya Sufis prioritize humility and contentment, emphasizing the avoidance of material possessions that might lead individuals away from God. They sum up their approach to guidance with the motto: "Be generous like the ocean, be courteous like the sun, and humble like the earth."

Chishtiyya tekkes were known for their hospitality and service to travelers. Although the concept of "unity of being"

(wahdat al-wujud) was not explicitly articulated in the early Chishtiyya tradition, Mas'ud Bak, a Chishti shaykh, introduced his followers to the ideas of Ibn Arabi and Fahrud-din Iraqi.

After Mu'inuddin Chishti, one of the most prominent shaykhs of the order was Nizamuddin Awliya. During his time, the influence of the Chishtiyya order extended throughout India, with people flocking to Chishti tekkes. The expansion of the Chishtiyya in the outlying provinces of India was facilitated by Nizamuddin Awliya's disciples and successors.

Chishtiyya made its way to the Bengal region through Shaykh Akhi Sirajuddin and his followers and to Dhaka through Shaykh Burhanuddin al-Gharib and his followers. The Sabiriyya branch of Chishtiyya was founded by Shaykh Alaeddin Ali b. Ahmad Sabir.

In response to the influence of Ibn Taymiyya's ideas in the Indian subcontinent, Chishtiyya followers, led by Chiragh al-Dehli, had to engage in a struggle against these ideas during the rule of Timur (Tamerlane).

Chishtiyya's influence spread even further, reaching countries in Southeast Asia like Malaysia and Indonesia.

6- SHADHILIYYA

The Shadhiliyya Sufi order, attributed to Abu al-Hasan Ash-Shadhili (d. 657/1268), is known for its spiritual emphasis and a strong focus on inner training. Abu al-Hasan Ali b. Abdullah Shadhili was born in 593/1196 in Morocco in the

region of Jabal Zafran, in North Africa, which is why he is associated with the name Shadhili.

He was recognized for his noble lineage and passion for knowledge, and it is said that his eyesight suffered due to his love of studying and scholarly pursuits. Abu al-Hasan Shadhili traveled extensively, meeting with renowned scholars and Sufi shaykhs of his time. He received spiritual guidance and training in Sufism and from his shaykh, Abd as-salam Ibn Mashish. Abu al-Hasan Shadhili passed away on his way to Hajj in the vicinity of Humaysira, Egypt, in 657/1258, and he was laid to rest there. In his honor, the Mamluk Sultan of the time built a dome over his grave, creating a shrine.

The Shadhiliyya order, despite its silsila (spiritual chain) connecting to Junayd al-Baghdadi, is distinct in its approach to spiritual development. Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Shadhili encouraged his followers to engage in constant, silent dhikr (remembrance of God) and to remember God at all times, in all places, and under all conditions. He did not emphasize extreme asceticism, seclusion, group gatherings, or rituals. Instead, Shadhiliyya members were instructed to integrate the spiritual path into their daily lives and fulfill their duties in society, practicing voluntary worship, supplication, dhikr, and recitation to achieve God's presence in their hearts and lives being alone with Allah while among people (Khalwat dar-Anjuman).

Unlike other Sufi orders that heavily focus on asceticism and rigorous spiritual training, Shadhiliyya adherents are known for dressing neatly and not abstaining from worldly blessings. They believe that one can reach realization of tawhid

(the oneness of God) in their daily life, amidst their responsibilities and activities. Shadhiliyya's core principles include:

- a. Developing an inner and outer fear of God.
- b. Wholeheartedly adhering to the prophetic sunnah in speech and actions.
- c. Not expecting anything from people in times of happiness or sorrow.
- d. Surrendering completely to the divine will in all matters, whether big or small.
- e. Seeking refuge in God in times of joy and sadness.

Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Shadhili mentioned, "If someone practices our way as we describe it, what happens to us will happen to them. What comes upon us will come upon them. If they act according to our instructions and show us respect, we will be compassionate and serve as a means of mercy to them." This confirms that the Shadhiliyya path revolves around specific supplications and regular acts of remembrance.

In Shadhiliyya, sobriety (*sahw*) and vigilance (*tamkin*) are prioritized over spiritual ecstasy (*sakr*). This sets Shadhiliyya apart from other Sufi orders that focus more on the divine and musical experiences leading to spiritual ecstasy.

Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Shadhili's guidance on finding the path to God through mundane life and personal devotion is summarized in his words: "Just as you remove your body from the effects of worldly hardships and difficulties, relieve your heart from the idols of your lower desires. Then, live as you please."

The Shadhiliyya order is particularly prominent in regions such as Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, and some other African countries. The Shadhiliyya reached Turkey during the late Ottoman period through Shaykh Muhammad Zafer al-Madani but it did not gain significant popularity there. Some claim that the order had a connection with Sultan Abdulhamid II. In recent times, the Shadhiliyya followers have greatly expanded their presence in Europe, and in modern Egypt, it remains the most widespread Sufi order.

7- *BEKTASHIYYA*

The Bektashi Order is attributed to Haji Bektash Veli, who passed away in 669/1271. Haji Bektash Veli was one of the mystics from Khorasan and is said to have been a follower of the Bābā'ī sect or a dervish of the Yasawi tradition. However, in historical terms, it is more reliable to assert that Haji Bektash's teacher was Baba Ilyas Khorasani, suggesting that the Bektashiyya is an offshoot of the Wafaiyya order founded in Baghdad.

According to Asikpasazade, Haji Bektash Veli hailed from Khorasan, along with a brother named Mentesh, and their intention was to meet "Baba Ilyas." They traveled to Kırsehir and Kayseri with this goal in mind. It is said that Mentesh went to Sivas and became a martyr there, while Haji Bektash Veli never met with any member of the Ottoman dynasty.

Haji Bektash Veli settled near Nevsehir in Anatolia, and his tomb is located there. His Arabic work, "Makâlât," demonstrates his adherence to Sunni principles.

There are historical records suggesting that during the time of Osman and Orhan Ghazi, many of the Turkmen warriors who participated in border conflicts were followers of Haji Bektash Veli. While the stories that claim Haji Bektash blessed the foundation of the Janissary Corps seem to have been fabricated, they illustrate the spiritual importance of Haji Bektash and the Bektashiyya. Consequently, Bektashiyya was commonly associated with the Janissary Corps, and when the corps was abolished in 1826, Bektashi tekkes were also closed down.

According to Hammer, During the reign of Orhan, members of the newly formed “Yenicerilik” Corps were not only soldiers but also followers of the Bektashi order. The shaykh of the tariqa even held the rank of Miralay (colonel), and eight dervishes were present in the Janissary barracks, where they would pray for the welfare of the state and the success of their comrades day and night (Tarih, I, 200).

Over time, Bektashiyya evolved into a cultural mosaic containing elements of Batinism, Hurufism, and Shamanism. As a result, people with various heterodox beliefs in Anatolia and the Balkans often found refuge within the Bektashi community.

The central tekke of the Bektashi order is located in Haji Bektash. The order is most widespread in the Balkans, particularly in Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia. The largest tekke in the Balkans is the Harabati Ali Baba tekke in Kalkan-delen, North Macedonia.

Bektashiyya is based on a fourfold path consisting of Sharia (Islamic law), Tariqa (Sufi path), Ma'rifa (spiritual

knowledge), and Haqiqa (spiritual truth), and emphasizes unity between Sunni and Alawi Muslims along with a deep love for the family of the prophet known as the People of the House (Ahl al-Bayt). During the Ottoman era, the Bektashi order and its followers faced repression and persecution. However, in the Republic of Turkey, the Bektashi community gained a different kind of attention and interest. The annual ceremonies held in Haji Bektash are a testament to this revival of interest.

8- *MEVLAVIYYA*

The Mevlevi Order is attributed to Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi, who passed away in 672/1273. Jalaluddin Rumi was born in 604/1207 in the city of Balkh, Afghanistan. In 610/1213, he left Balkh along with his father, Bahauddin Walad, known as “Sultān al-ulamā,” with the intention of making a pilgrimage. They traveled through Baghdad to Hijaz, then to Karaman, and eventually settled in Konya. Jalaluddin Rumi’s first teacher was his father, and after his father’s passing in 638/1240, he continued his education under the guidance of Burhanuddin Muhaqqiq Tirmidhi, one of his father’s disciples. Muhaqqiq Tirmidhi, a follower and disciple of Bahauddin Walad, followed him from Balkh to Anatolia, settling in Kayseri.

Jalaluddin Rumi combined the Kubrawi Sufi order he received from his father Bahauddin Walad and the state of ecstasy and fervor he received from Shams al-Din Tabrizi with the influence of Ibn Arabi’s doctrine of Wahdat al-Wujud (the Unity of Being). This combination gave rise to a new school of thought.

Shams al-Din Tabrizi, who spent most of his life traveling, arrived in Konya in 642/1244 and met Jalaluddin Rumi. Shams altered the course of Jalaluddin Rumi's life. Jalaluddin Rumi was a teacher at a madrasa and a preacher in a mosque when he encountered Shams al-Din Tabrizi in 642/1244. They met at the gate of the "Pilinciler Hani" in Konya, and through Shams al-Din Tabrizi, Jalaluddin Rumi discovered the path of love and ecstasy known as the "tariq as-shuttâr."

Following Shams's death, Jalaluddin Rumi became friends with Salahaddin Zarkub. He claimed that Husam al-Din Chalabi, a person associated with Salahaddin Zarkub, was the source of inspiration for his famous work "Mathnawi."

In addition to his renowned work "Mathnawi," Jalaluddin Rumi also wrote other books, such as "Fihi Ma Fihi" and "Diwan al-Kabir," which are widely read in the Islamic world.

Mevlevi order continued through Jalaluddin Rumi's descendants who held the title of "Celebi." The order has been one of the most prevalent Sufi orders since its inception. Apart from Konya, Mevlevi lodges and followers have been present in important centers of the Ottoman Empire, including Istanbul, Aleppo, Cairo, Bursa, the Balkans, and Crimea, during various eras.

Mevlevi order is known for two key elements: the Sama, which is the whirling ritual performed by Mevlevi dervishes, and the concept of self-mortification. Sama includes music and instruments like the ney and kudum. The "ney," a musical instrument mentioned by Jalaluddin Rumi in the first eighteen couplets of his Mathnawi, holds significant importance in

Mevlevi order. The tradition also emphasizes poetry, literature, and the practice of Sama.

Jalaluddin Rumi and Mevlevi order have an important place in our cultural history. Mevlevi order has been known to attract well-educated foreigners to convert to Islam through its teachings. Jalaluddin Rumi, with his broad vision and inclusive thinking, has continuously captured the interest of people from all walks of life. After the closure of Sufi lodges, the Jalaluddin Rumi Mausoleum was turned into a museum, where Sama performances were still tolerated.

Unlike many other Sufi orders, Mevlevi order doesn't have multiple branches. Within the Mevlevi order, there is only a binary classification: the Walad branch and the Shams branch. This division is mainly related to differences in their spiritual inclinations. The Shams branch is more focused on love and ecstasy, while the Walad branch, which follows Jalaluddin Rumi's son, has a more ascetic approach.

9- BADAWIYYA

The Badawiyya is a Sufi order attributed to Shaykh Ahmad al-Badawi, who passed away in 675/1276. Ahmad Badawi was born in 596/1200 in Fes, Morocco. He initially pursued the study of traditional Islamic sciences, memorizing the Quran, mastering seven different Quranic recitations (Qiraat saba'h), and studying Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). Later on, he developed an interest in the Sufi path and initially visited the tombs of Abdulqadir al-Jilani and Ahmad al-Rifa'i. Badruddin Hasan Maghribi was his spiritual guide (murshid, and Ahmad

Badawi spent his life in Tanta after associating with him until his death. His tomb is located there, and he spent over forty years guiding and instructing the people in this town. It is known that he was highly respected by the Mamluk sultans, especially by Sultan Baybars.

The Sufi order founded by Ahmad Badawi is referred to as the “Ahmadiyya” based on his name and the “Badawiyya” due to his association. During his ascetic practices, Ahmad Badawi would ascend to a roof (called “sutûh”) and gaze at the sun until his eyes turned red. This practice gave rise to the nickname “Sutuhiyya.”

While some sources mention the Badawiyya as a branch of the Rifa’iyya and Shadhiliyya orders, his classification as one of the “aqtâb al-arba’ah” (the four great saints) and the distinct characteristics of the order justify considering the Badawiyya as an independent Sufi order. Badawiyya and Badawi dervishes had a significant influence on the religious life of Egypt, and their contributions during the Crusades increased the order’s popularity among the people. In Egypt, Badawiyya is the second most widespread Sufi order after the Shadhiliyya. It did not spread significantly beyond Egypt, and the number of Badawi lodges in Istanbul remained limited.

Badawiyya’s spiritual lineage traces back to Ali عليه السلام, which gives it an Alawi-oriented characteristic. Although it lacks the Alawis’ specific theological elements present in Bektashishiyya, there are some similarities between the two.

In Ahmad Badawi’s work called “Wasayâ,” adherence to the Quran and Sunnah, continuous remembrance of God in

the heart, and other features of the order are described. The distinctive colors of the Badawiyya order are the red dervish robe (*hirka*), the *alem* (a ritual banner), and the *sanjak* (a flag). The dervishes wear a two-pointed hat, and they wrap a red turban around it.

While remembrance of Allah in the heart is the essence of Badawiyya's spiritual practice, vocal (*jahri*) remembrance gained importance over time. The *dhikr* (remembrance) could be performed either in a seated (*quûdî*) position or standing (*qiyami*). During the Badawi ritual, when the dervishes' enthusiasm increased, they would hold each other closely, forming a tight circle, and continue their *dhikr* with fervor, creating a spectacle known as the "Badawi ball."

As part of their spiritual training, an initiate would be given certain instructions by the Shaykh during the initiation process, often using a question-and-answer format. Then, the initiate would be asked to repeat the following phrases: "Allah is with me. Allah is watching me. Allah is a witness for me."

Abdulâl (d. 733/1332) served the Badawiyya Sufi order significantly after Ahmad Badawi regarding the establishment and spread of the order. The most common branches of the Badawiyya order are Selâmiyya, Fergaliyya, Imbaiyya, Munâwiyya, Sutûhiyya, and Bayyûmiyya.

In Egypt, during the last week of the month of Zulhijjah, annual celebrations and religious gatherings dedicated to Ahmad Badawi have been held, resembling a fair for centuries. These gatherings draw hundreds of thousands of people, and the various Sufi orders set up tents to perform rituals and offer

treats, creating a festive atmosphere. People from villages and towns come together on this occasion.

10- DASUKIYYA

The founder of the Dasukiyya Sufi order is Burhanuddin Ibrahim, known as Dasuki (d. 676/1277). Dasuki was from southern Egypt, and he is renowned for spending most of his life in the town of Dasuk, which is why he is known as “Dasuki.” He is also called “Abu al-aynayn.” He completed his initial religious studies in Dasuk, memorized the Quran, and studied Shafi’i jurisprudence. Through his father’s influence, he became initiated into the Rifaiyya and Suhrawardiyya Sufi orders. He also received authorization from the Shadhiliyya Sufi order. For nearly twenty years, he lived a life of seclusion (halvethane) until his father’s passing. At the insistence of his disciples after his father’s death, he left seclusion and began guiding others. For many years, he guided people from various languages and backgrounds. Ibrahim Dasuki was a strict adherent to Islamic law (sharia), but he had a mysterious personality and a joyful disposition.

The Dasukiyya Sufi order has spread in Egypt, Sudan, and North Africa. It is not commonly found in the Middle East, Anatolia, and the Balkans. Dasukiyya is also referred to as “Burhaniyya” due to his nickname. In terms of principles, manners, practices, and spiritual lineage, it shares similarities with the Rifaiyya, Suhrawardiyya, and Shadhiliyya Sufi orders. Some consider Dasukiyya a branch of the Badawiyya order.

Dasukiyya places emphasis on vocal remembrance of God (jahrî dhikr) and spiritual practices (riyada). The main principles of the order include a strong commitment to Islamic law (sharia) and the cultivation of virtuous character, which are among the fundamental teachings. While initially not giving much importance to the sama (spiritual dance) in its practices, later, the sama and standing remembrance of God gained significance. During dhikr, dervishes frequently repeat the phrase “Yâ Dâim.” Dasukiyya members generally wore green attire. Dasukiyya is one of the most widespread Sufi orders in Egypt, following the Shadhiliyya and Badaviyya orders. It also has followers in Gulf countries. The order has different branches, including Sharnubiyya, Ashuriyya, Taziyya, and Suyutiyya. These branches were founded by various individuals: Sharnubiyya by Abu al-Abbas Sharnubi (d. 994/1586), Ashuriyya by Salih Ashur Maghribi, Taziyya by Abu Salim Tazi, and Suyutiyya by Jalaluddin As-Suyuti (d. 911/1505).

11- NAQSHBANDIYYA

Muhammad Bahâuddin Naqshband al-Bukhari (d. 791/1389) is attributed as the founder of the Naqshbandiyya Sufi order. Known as “Shah Naqshband,” he was born near Bukhara in the region of Qasr al-Arifan. He grew up in a Sufi environment from an early age. His father was a disciple of Haji Muhammad Baba Semmasî (d. 740/1339), who was a prominent figure in the “Hajigan” Sufi path. Semmasî entrusted Bahâuddin’s education to his disciple, Amir Kulal. Consequently, Bahâuddin’s spiritual teacher for companionship and guidance was Amir Kulal, and his Usayri spiritual guide was Shaykh Abdul Khaliq

Gujduwani (d. 595/1199). Amir Kulal, who was a relative of Emir Sultan, moved from Bukhara to Bursa.

The Naqshbandiyya Sufi order is notable for the “eleven principles” initially established by Abdul Khaliq Gujduwani (d. 595/1199), who had received spiritual inspiration from the same master as Ahmad Yesevi. Abdul Khaliq Gujduwani and Shah-ı Naqshband preferred silent remembrance (*hafi dhikr*) over vocal *dhikr* (*jahrı dhikr*). Although Gujduwani had passed away years before Shah-ı Naqshband, their shared spiritual approach led to a deep connection between them. Bahàuddin Naqshband also had connections to Yasawi Sufi masters such as Qasım shaykh and Khalil Ata.

The Naqshbandiyya order gained prominence over time, particularly since the time of its founder, Shah-ı Naqshband. It spread extensively and became one of the most widespread Sufi orders, extending from Turkestan through Anatolia to India.

During the 14th and 15th centuries in the regions of Turkestan and Transoxiana, the Naqshbandiyya order had influential representatives such as Muhammad Parsa (d. 822/1419), Alàeddin Attâr (d. 802/1399), and Ubaydullah Ahrâr (d. 893/1488). Ubaydullah Ahrâr, in particular, had a significant impact on the spread of Naqshbandiyya, and during his time, the order’s reputation extended as far as Anatolia and Istanbul. The first Shaykh to bring Naqshbandiyya to Anatolia was Simavi Molla Abdullah ilahi (d. 896/1491), who was a disciple of Ubaydullah Ahrâr.

It is noted that Fatih Sultan Mehmed had great respect for Ahrâr. Ubaydullah Ahrâr was the spiritual guide of Safiyyuddin Ali (d. 939/1532), who authored “Resahât,” and he wrote it in honor of the Naqshbandiyya order and Ubaydullah Ahrâr in particular.

The eleven principles of Naqshbandi Sufism, organized by Abdul Khaliq Gujduwani, are as follows:

a. Wukuf Zamânî (Awareness of Time): Reflecting on every moment and state, being grateful for the present moment and condition, and seeking repentance for the moments spent heedlessly. In other words, continuing to seek forgiveness in times of contraction and expressing gratitude in times of expansion. The seeker should recognize the value of time, pay attention to every breath they take, and stay vigilant both while inhaling and exhaling. The concept of time and timing is like milestones on the spiritual path.

b. Wukuf ‘Adadî (Awareness of Numbers): Observing the count during dhikr, maintaining focus and preventing distractions, and concentrating the mind. While counting during dhikr is important, the essential factor is not quantity but quality. Even if the number of repetitions is small, the heart should be in a state of presence before the Divine Being.

c. Wukuf Qalbî (Vigilance of the Heart): This can occur in two ways:

aa. The constant awareness of Allah in one’s heart, leaving no space for anything else.

bb. During dhikr, directing one’s heart toward the Divine.

The seeker focuses on the heart area, which resembles the core of a pine cone under the left breast, ensuring that the heart does not become heedless during dhikr. Just as a person turns towards the Kaaba and opens their hands when supplicating to Allah, during dhikr, they turn their hearts toward Allah and become aware of His manifestations within.

d. Hosh dar-dam (Conscious Breathing): To maintain presence with every breath, ensuring that not a single breath is taken heedlessly. This is because taking each breath without heedlessness fills the heart with tranquility. In Naqsh-bandi Sufism, the foundation of spiritual progress is based on breath control. Breathing mindfully and avoiding heedlessness between breaths is considered a manifestation of Allah's name "Hayy" (the Ever-Living). A person who guards their breath becomes free from dwelling on past regrets and future anxieties and becomes "Ibn al-waqt" (the son of the moment).

e. Nazar bar Qadam (Watch your Footstep): Fixing one's gaze on one's feet. When someone looks around while walking, their focus becomes scattered, and their heart is occupied by distractions. Keeping one's gaze on their feet helps to avoid looking at forbidden things and prevents distractions because the heart's veils are often drawn due to unnecessary preoccupation with the surroundings. The eye is the spy of the heart, and what the eye sees preoccupies the heart. The eye functions like a camera, capturing images and sending them to the heart, where these images are stored, often unnecessarily preoccupying the heart. Looking down at one's feet embodies humility,

etiquette, and self-awareness. It is also in line with the practice of the Prophet.

f. *Safar dar Watan* (Journey to Homeland): Journey from the people to the Divine. It involves the seeker transcending negative traits and human qualities to attain virtuous character and angelic attributes, returning to their original homeland. The journey a seeker embarks upon to find a spiritual guide is also included in this concept. The inner meaning of the saying of Prophet Ibrahim, “I am going to my Lord” (*as-Saffât*, 37/99), is an inner spiritual journey. In Sufism, it encompasses any action that serves as a means of traveling from the worldly realm to the Divine.

g. *Khalwat dar Anjuman* (Solitude in the Crowd): The concept of solitude within a gathering, being alone among people, and “being with God within a crowd.” While the body and appearance are engaged with people, the heart and inner being are engaged with God. To achieve this, one must fully surrender themselves to remembrance (*dhikr*), to the point that even in the busiest places, they hear nothing but the remembrance of God, and nothing distracts them from it. In this way, the secret of the verse “And remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with (complete) devotion” (*al-Muzammil*, 73/8) becomes evident.

h. *Yâd Kard* (Essential Remembrance): Remembrance with the tongue, meaning uttering the remembrance of God with the heart. For a seeker who has reached the level of contemplation (*muraqaba*), this involves vocalizing the remembrance of God’s oneness with their tongue. Since the heart is

connected to material elements, when these elements become rusty, the heart also becomes rusty. When remembrance is practiced with the tongue, the rust on the tongue and then on the heart is removed. As a result, the seeker ascends from the state of contemplation to the state of witnessing (*mushahada*). During the recitation of the oneness (*tawhid*) phrase, the eyes are closed, the tongue is held against the palate, and breath is held as the phrase is uttered with the heart.

i. *Bâz gasht* (Returning back): To cast away thoughts that arise spontaneously during remembrance, whether good or bad, by releasing the breath and saying, “*Ilahi anta maqsudi wa ridhaka matlubi*” (My God, You are my goal, and what I seek is Your pleasure).

j. *Nigâh dâsht* (Attentiveness): To guard the heart, the dwelling place of God’s manifestation, against intrusive thoughts and inappropriate notions unrelated to the Divine. In other words, it is to prevent the imagination from occupying itself. The difficulty of this task goes without saying.

k. *Yâd-dâsht* (Recollection): Having preserved the vigilance of turning towards God without vocalizing it. In remembrance, exaggeration is used to reach a state of presence and the station of witnessing (*shuhud*).

Shah Naqshband was a Sufi within the Hanafi school of thought. In his order, the most critical aspect was the concept of “*suhbah*” (spiritual discourse) and “*rabitah*” (spiritual connection). He emphasized the importance of spiritual discourse, saying, “Our path is through spiritual discourse.” This indicates the significance of “being in the presence of the spiritual

guide even in their absence,” which is a distinguishing feature of this path compared to other Sufi orders.

The Naqshbandi Sufi order found opportunities to spread in the Indian subcontinent, especially with the guidance of Imam Rabbani (d. 1034/1624). The love of Ibn Arabi and the concept of “wahdat al-wujud” (unity of existence) among previous Naqshbandi leaders shifted toward “wahdat al-shuhud” (unity of witnessing) with Imam Rabbani.

With Khalid Baghdadi (d. 1242/1826), the Naqshbandi order became one of the most widespread Sufi orders in the Islamic world in the 19th century. Particularly during the abolition of the Janissary corps and the closing of Bektashi dervish lodges, the appointment of Naqshbandi-Khalidi Shaykhs to Bektashi lodges and the interest of state officials and sultans in this order increased its significance. It can even be said that after the 19th century, Naqshbandiyya took the form of Khalidiyya in Iraq, Syria, Anatolia, and the Balkans. The strong focus on upholding the sharia and the fact that most Shaykhs had a background in religious education played a significant role in the popularity of Khalidiyya. Furthermore, the fact that the most effective dervish lodges in Istanbul, just before their closure, were Naqshbandi-Khalidi also confirms this. Only in Kosovo and North Macedonia did Naqshbandiyya take a different path, merging with the Mujaddidi branch and the mala-mati mashrabi under Muhammad Nur al-Arabi (d. 1305/1887).

In Naqshbandi Sufism, the spiritual practice of “khatm al-khawajagan” (the round of the masters) is maintained and practiced with great secrecy. Non-members of the order were

not allowed to participate in khatm al-khawajagan. The Naqsh-bandi path is a “silent dhikr” that focuses on keeping the heart pure and is associated with the chain of transmission reaching back to Abu Bakr, who was called “Siddiq,” due to his strong commitment to the oneness of God.

12- KHALWATIYYA

It is attributed to Abu Abdullah Sirajuddin Umar ibn Akmaluddin Khalwati (d. 800/1397). Umar Khalwati’s uncle, Karimuddin Khalwati, was his spiritual guide. Karimuddin Khalwati was one of the two caliphs of Ibrahim Zahid Jilani (d. 700/1300), making the Khalwatiyya a branch of the Zahidiyya. The other branch is Safawiyya or Ardabiliyya, connected to Safiuddin Ardabil (d. 735/1334).

The founder of this Sufi order, Umar Khalwati, attached great importance to seclusion (Khalwa). It is even reported that he entered into seclusion (khirqa) forty times, which is why this path is called “Khalwatiyya.” Sayyid Yahya Shirwani, who held the title of “Second Pir,” played a leading role in spreading the order in the Caucasus and Anatolia, enabling the Khalwatiyya to become the most widespread Sufi order in Istanbul, Anatolia, and the Balkans during the Ottoman period where it is pronounced as Helvetiyye in the Turkish phonetics. The Khalwatiyya has around forty sub-branches, which are generally divided into four main lineages: Rūshaniyya, Jamāliyya, Ahmadiyya, and Shamsiyya.

a. RŪSHANIYYA: Founded by Aydin Dede Omer Rūshani (d. 892/1487). Rūshani is a disciple of Yahya Shirwani.

Sub-branches of Rūshaniyya include Demirtashiyya (attributed to Mehmed Demirtashi, d. 938/1531), Gulshaniyya (attributed to Ibrahim Gulsheni, d. 940/1533), Sezaiyya (attributed to Hasan Sezai, d. 1151/1738), and Hāletiyya (attributed to Hasan Hāleti, d. 1329/1911).

b. JAMĀLIYYA: Founded by Muhammad ibn Hamiduddin Jamālī (d. 899/1494), known as “Al-Jamāl al-Khalwati. Jamāliyya is associated with scholars from the lineage of Al-Jamāl al-Khalwati, such as Sunbul Sinan (d. 936/1529), Shabaniyya , Karabashiyya , Nasuhiyya , as well as sub-branches like Bakriyya, Dardiriyya, and Sawiyya.

c. AHMADIYYA: Founded by Ahmad Shamsuddin, known by the title “Yigitbashi” from Golmarmara. Sub-branches of Ahmadiyya include Ramazaniyya, Jerrahiyya, Ushakiyya, Misriyya, as well as other sub-branches like Jihangiriyya, Raūfiyya, and Salāhiyya.

d. SHAMSIYYA: Founded by Ahmad Shamseddin Sivasî. He was the eldest member of the family known in history as the Sivasîs. During the seventeenth century, the Tekke institution was represented by the Sivasîs in conflicts between Tekkes and Madrasas. Abdul Ahad Nûrî Sivasî from this family founded a branch known as Sivâsiyya.

In the Khalwatiyya Sufi order, besides seclusion (Khalwa), the remembrance of the “Asma al-Husna” (the Beautiful Names of God) and the dhikr of tawhid (the affirmation of the oneness of God) are of great importance. To purify the heart, one must distance themselves from everything other than God and engage in the dhikr of divine majesty. In this Sufi order, the

interpretation of dreams played a significant role in advancing on the path of spiritual journey (*sayr al-suluk*).

The Khalwatiyya Sufi order gained importance in Istanbul after the conquest of the city. It was often the case that Khalwatiyya Sufi guides were found in the circles of Ottoman sultans, such as Bayezid II, Selim I, and Suleiman the Magnificent. Even during the years when tekkes were closed, Istanbul still had many Khalwatiyya tekkes. Today, there are branches of the Khalwatiyya order in Egypt, including Demirtashiyya, Guneymiyya, Harawiyya, Simnaniye, Alwaniyya, and Tijaniyya. Activities of some Khalwatiyya branches, especially Jerahiyya, are observed in Europe and America.

13- BAYRAMIYYA

The Bayramiyya Sufi order, attributed to Haji Bayram Veli (d. 833/1429), is generally considered a Sufi order that combines the principles of both Khalwatiyya and Naqshbandiyya. It is known that Haji Bayram Veli received training from both his Shaykh, Hamiduddin Aksarayi, through the Safawid family and his Shaykh, Shadi al-Rumi, in Damascus, through the Bayezidi and Naqshi Sufi orders. The basic principles of the Bayramiyya Sufi order were established during its founder's lifetime, and it spread in the regions around Ankara, Bursa and Edirne.

Haji Bayram Veli was known for his practice of farming and earning a living through his own labor. He guided his disciples and associates to various professions and crafts, which

is considered in line with the principles of brotherhood and self-blame.

The Bayramiyya Sufi order practices *jahrī* (loud) *dhikr* like the *Khalwatiyya*. However, the *Malamiyya* branch of the *Bayramiyya* order includes a silent *dhikr* form known as “*gonul bekleme*” (heart waiting).

The *Bayramiyya* Sufi order has three fundamental principles: “*Jadhb*” (spiritual attraction), “*mahabbah*” (divine love), and “*sir ilâhî*” (divine secret). After *Haji Bayram Veli*, the most significant *Shaykh* of the order is *Akshamseddin*. His works have been essential in preserving the fundamental principles of the order. Unlike *Haji Bayram Veli*, whose few poems are known, there are no surviving works of *Akshamseddin*.

The *Bayramiyya* Sufi order embraces the ideas of *Ibn Arabi*, as indicated by the works of *Akshamseddin* and *Ibrahim Tennuri*. Another distinctive feature of the *Bayramiyya* is that it is the first Sufi order founded by a Turk on Anatolian soil. It mostly spread in Turkish regions of Anatolia and the Balkans.

The *Bayramiyya* order’s turban (*tac*) was initially twelve-sectioned and red. However, *Haji Bayram Veli* changed it to a six-sectioned white cotton turban. Although the turban was initially long, resembling the *Mevlevi* turban, it was later shortened. The turban has a button at the top, which symbolizes *Hamiduddin-i Aksarayî*’s affiliation with the *Bayezidiyya* Sufi lodge in Damascus and resembles a rose.

The Bayramiyya Sufi order has three branches: Shamsiyye, founded by Akshamseddin; Malamiyye, represented by Dede Omer Sikkîni; and Celvetiyye (jalwatiyya), associated with Aziz Mahmud Hudayi through Akbiyik.

a. SHAMSIYYA: Along with the Himmetiyya branch, it continued the main Bayramiyya Sufi order. Apart from the central tekke in Ankara, there have been Bayrami tekkes in Istanbul, Bursa, Edirne, and the Balkans, although their numbers have been relatively small since the beginning.

b. MALAMIYYA: This term refers both to a particular sect and a Sufi order led by Dede Omer Sikkîni. The Malamiyya of the Bayramiyye order was the target of the most scrutiny by the Ottomans in their period.

While both Shamsiyya and Malamiyya are two separate branches of the same Sufi order, they have conflicting positions in terms of their spiritual lineage. The Malamis, who adhere to silent dhikr, have adopted the Khalwati spiritual lineage that emphasizes vocal dhikr. The Shamsiyya, who prefer vocal dhikr, have embraced the Naqshbandi spiritual lineage.

a. JALWATIYYA: This tariqa Jalwatiyya or in Turkish, Celvetiyye, started as a branch of the Bayramiyya and later became an independent Sufi order. The founder of Jalwatiyya is Shaykh Aziz Mahmud Hudayi (d. 1038/1628), one of the most well-known and influential Sufi guides of the Ottoman era. After receiving a solid education and reaching the rank of an authorised scholar, he embraced the Sufi path. With around thirty works and tens of thousands of disciples, Aziz Mahmud Hudayi's Sufi order spread in Istanbul, Bursa, Anatolia, and the

Balkans during his lifetime and after his passing. The order is based on the principles of “dhikr of tawhid” and “spiritual struggle.” It attracted the attention of scholars and government officials. Prominent Sufi authors like Ismail Hakki of Bursa (d. 1137/1725) were among the followers of this Sufi order. In Istanbul, there were about thirty tekkes affiliated with the order, including Haqqiyya, Fanâiyya, Salâmiyya, and Hashimiyya branches.

III. FUNCTIONS OF SUFI ORDERS

Sufi orders have served as institutions not only for individual spiritual education but have also provided various social services within the community. Especially in the context of the practice of religion by broader masses and the dissemination of religious teachings, Sufi orders have often played a crucial role.

Throughout Islamic history, three significant institutions have served the mission of practicing, preserving, and disseminating Islam: 1. Jaysh al-Mujahidin (the army of jihad), including mujahids, 2. Jama'ah al-Darawish (the army of prayer), which refers to Sufi order members (dervishes), and 3. Ahl al- 'Ilm, or the group of scholars. Often, the mujahids and Sufi order members have jointly undertaken these services, with mujahids leading the way in opening new territories for Muslims (futuhat al-buldan) and Sufi dervishes coming afterward to win the hearts of the local population for Islam (futuhat al-qulub). At times, Sufi dervishes, or people of spiritual insight, would lead the way by opening the hearts of people to Islam, and then the army and mujahids would follow to conquer that

land for Islam. The group of scholars played an essential role in educating both the army and Sufi order members and in administering justice to the public.

Today, in contemporary terms, the defense of the homeland has become the responsibility of the military. The widespread education, on the other hand, has been the domain of tekke and Sufi order members. The establishment of justice through formal education has been the role of madrasa and the scholarly class.

The social activities, services, and functions of Sufi orders can be summarized as follows:

1. Facilitating the accepting of Islam of regions conquered by mujahids and opening the hearts of local populations.
2. Spreading Islam to non-Muslim lands through traveling dervishes.
3. Forming a resistance front with members of a tariqa in Islamic territories under occupation to protect the region.
4. Participation of dervishes in jihad during conquests, which was common during the Seljuk and Ottoman periods.

Ensuring the spread of Islam to distant countries that Islamic mujahids could not reach. For example, the expansion of Islam in India and some Far Eastern countries was achieved through the efforts of Sufi orders like the Kubrawiyya, Chishtiyya, and Naqshbandiyya. In Central Africa, the spread of Islam was facilitated by the Tijani and Qadiri orders, while the

Islamization of Siberia and Russian Tatars was thanks to the Yasawi dervishes.

Mediating to resolve inter-tribal conflicts and hostilities, thus preventing division and fragmentation. For instance, in the 19th century, Sufi orders played a role in ending inter-tribal conflicts in Algeria. Towards the end of the same century, the Naqshbandi-Khalidi Sufi shaykhs had a significant impact on preventing Kurdish separatist activities in Southeastern Anatolia and Iraq.

B. TEKES AND ZAWIYAS

When Sufism emerged as a movement of action and thought and began to organize in the form of Sufi orders (tariqa), it established institutions initially known as “ribat” and later referred to as “tekke” and “khanqah” (zawiya).

I. VARIOUS NAMES GIVEN TO TEKES

1-RIBAT

The first term used for semi-military, semi-Sufi structures located along the frontiers and fortresses is “ribat.” It is known that the first ribat was established in Abadan, Iran by Abdul Wahid Ibn Zayd, one of the disciples of Hasan al-Basri, in the year 150 AH (767 CE). The author of “Nafahât al-Uns” mentions that the first tekke was established in the town of Ramla in Palestine. (Nafahât., p. 86) Furthermore, the renowned Sufi, Abu Ishaq Kazeruni (d. 426 AH/1034 CE), had approximately sixty ribats constructed in the Iranian region. The members of this

path, known as Kazerûniyya or Ishaqiyya, had a strong desire and enthusiasm for jihad. Every year, a group of mujahids, consisting of dervishes who resided in Kazerûniyya ribats, would participate in jihad against unbelievers. It is known that these mujahid dervishes fought against Crusader armies in Anatolia and Palestine, as well as against non-Muslims in India. (Vakıflar Dergisi, İstanbul 1942, II, 267-269)

The term “ribat” began to be used to mean “khanqah” and “tekke” starting from the 10th and 11th centuries. These centuries were also the years when madrasas were being established in the Islamic world. In the history of Sufism and civilization, terms such as “tekke,” “khanqah,” “dargah,” “âsitâne,” and “zawiya” have been used in addition to “ribat.” The meanings these terms convey are often very similar, and there are no clear-cut distinctions that sharply separate them from one another.

2-TEKKE

The term “tekke” is a mispronunciation of the Arabic word “taqiyya” (plural: taqaya), which means a place of support or refuge. It is used to refer to buildings where Sufi orders engage in dhikr (spiritual remembrance), religious rituals, and discussions outside of mosques and masjids. Tekkes were established for those who withdrew from worldly affairs to seek spiritual elevation through the pursuit of knowledge and science. Therefore, those without prior knowledge would either be sent to study in madrasas or receive education and training within the tekke for their spiritual development.

3- *KHANQAH*

The word “khanqah” comes from the Farsi term “hânegâh” and has been incorporated into Arabic and Turkish. The larger Sufi lodges were referred to as “tekke,” while the smaller ones were called “zawiya.” The needs of the tekke and zawiya were provided through the khanqah they were affiliated with. Hence, the leader who resided in the khanqah held great importance in the order. In some Sufi orders, the leaders of tekkes and zawiya were selected by this leader. The registration of members from other tekkes and zawiya affiliated with the same order was also maintained in the khanqah.

4- *DERGÂH*

The term “dergâh” comes from the Farsi word meaning “threshold” and refers to the residence of Sufi leaders and dervishes in the tekke. For added respect, sometimes the title “sharif” would be appended at the end, resulting in “dergâh sharif.”

5- *ÂSÎTANE*

“Âsitâne” is a Farsi term meaning “threshold” and “dargâh.” It is a term used for larger and central tekkes. Additionally, it signifies the center of authority (formerly Istanbul). In Mevlevi terminology, large tekkes where rigorous ascetic practices were observed were referred to as “âsitâne.” Smaller Mevlevi tekkes were known as “zawiya.” In other Sufi orders, the central tekke with its branches was referred to as a “kulliye,” often where the founder of the Sufi order was buried, as in “Hudâyî âsitânesi.”

6-ZAWIYA

The term “zawiya” is used for smaller tekkes, especially those located in remote areas of cities and towns. The leaders of zawayas were called “zawiya-dâr,” and the dervishes of zawayas were referred to as “zawiya-nishîn.”

II- SOCIAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY TEKES

Tekkes, which emerged as institutions for community education within the Islamic social structure, not only formed a distinct architectural style, different from mosques and madrasas but also provided various social services to the public. These social functions of tekkes can be listed as follows:

1. Tekkes were used for worship, just like mosques and masjids.
2. They functioned as educational institutions where reading, writing, and religious sciences were taught. These institutions served as schools for the members of Sufi orders, where works written by Sufis (particularly works like the *Al-Risala al-Qushayriyya*, *Ihya Ulum al-din*, *Awârif*, *Mathnawi*, *Maktubat al-Rabbânîyah*, *al-Futuhât al-Makkiyya*) were studied.
3. Tekkes were places where scholars and shaykhs occasionally gathered to consult on religious and scientific matters.
4. They served as centers for spiritual counseling and “psycho-social therapy” for the social and psychological problems of the members of Sufi orders.
5. Tekkes often functioned as caravanserais, offering accommodations to travelers, visitors, pilgrims and others.

6. They served as institutions where patients, the disabled, the helpless and the destitute would seek refuge, and in some cases, they even operated as “dâr al-ajaza” or quarantine facilities. Especially, the tekkes for the destitute served as isolation facilities for those afflicted with the contagious disease of leprosy; in other words, they had quarantine features.

7. Tekkes were responsible for feeding the poor and providing help to those in need.

8. They served as communication centers and hubs for receiving and transmitting information. During the Ottoman era, the public’s needs and complaints were conveyed to the authorities through the tekkes, while administrative requests were relayed to the public.

9. Tekkes often functioned as libraries where scholars and shaykhs would come to write and obtain books, eventually leaving their works as endowments.

10. They served as places of refuge for political fugitives pursued by the law and those fleeing from enemies, functioning as what we might call “asylum” centres.

11. While primarily centers for spiritual training and asceticism, tekkes also offered “riyâdah al-badaniya,” or physical exercise centers, for young individuals. Tekkes like Pehlivanlar and Okchular promoted physical and mental development among the youth.

The founders and followers of tekkes established numerous “waqf” foundations to make their services permanent and to spread the concept of “Sadaqa Jariya” (continuous charity).

The fact that a significant portion of Istanbul, Anatolia, and the Balkans consisted of waqf lands, especially those associated with tekkes, highlights the social impact and significance of these institutions.

EDUCATION IN DERVISH LODGES

Dervish lodges are places where disciples are morally nurtured, and spiritual guides are prepared for guidance. In the conditions of that time, education and teaching services within the lodges were conducted through two main approaches: theoretical and practical. The theoretical education primarily consisted of advice, guidance, and admonitions given by spiritual guides to their disciples. Practical education involved acts of self-discipline (riyada), spiritual retreat (itikaf), voluntary fasting, prayers, forty-day solitary retreats, spiritual exercises, and forms of remembrance.

Education in dervish lodges can be summarized into four main categories: verbal, written, practical, and through spiritual states.

1- VERBAL EDUCATION

Verbal education in dervish lodges typically took the form of discussions and guidance delivered by the leaders of the Sufi orders (Shaykhs). Spiritual guides would address their disciples and the general public on various occasions. When speaking to the public, the discussions mainly revolved around general religious knowledge, worship, and ethical advice. However, discussions held for the members of the Sufi orders and especially

for the advanced seekers of spiritual knowledge (saliks) differed from those for the general public. In these discussions, the subtle aspects of Sufism and the intricacies of spiritual knowledge were elaborated upon. The Shaykhs, in their talks and discussions at the lodge, would explain fundamental principles in accordance with their own style and tailored to the circumstances and needs of their audience. Their talks were simple, devoid of artistic pretensions, and conducted in a family-like atmosphere, making them more impactful on the listeners. The charismatic and mysterious personalities of the spiritual guides and the disciples' loyalty to their guides amplified the influence of this kind of verbal education. This was because there was a special significance in sharing the same space with people who shared similar emotions and experiences.

2- WRITTEN EDUCATION

Written education played a significant role in the educational function of dervish lodges. When we talk about written education, it generally refers to the Sufi order leaders expressing their ideas and thoughts in the form of written works, and these works being utilized within the lodge community. Many of the spiritual leaders who held the position of Sufi order master during the Sufi order era produced written works, both in poetic and prose form, and these works have always been among the sources regularly read in lodge libraries. Examples of these written educational resources include Yazıcıoğlu Mehmed's "Muhammediye," Ashrafoglu Rûmî's "Muzekki'n-nufûs," Yunus Emre's poetry, and during the Ottoman period, these were some of the most widespread written educational materials in dervish lodges.

Another aspect of written education is the letters written by Sufi order leaders and lodge members for the purpose of guidance and propagation. The letters written by shaykhs to their disciples, followers, or even ordinary people have a distinct educational value. This tradition, which began with the letters that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ wrote to neighboring state leaders, took on a Sufi character with letters written by Hasan al-Basri to Umar ibn Abdalaziz, and it was continued by lodge members. The “Maktubat” of Imam Rabbani (d. 1034/1624) and the letters written by his contemporary Aziz Mahmud Hudayi (d. 1038/1628) to sultans and state officials are examples of this type of correspondence.

3- PRACTICAL EDUCATION

Practical education in dervish lodges primarily consisted of Sufi rituals, collective remembrance (dhikr), and spiritual dances (semâ). These remembrance gatherings were of great importance for purifying the heart and elevating the soul to a state where it could receive divine messages. Sometimes, these remembrance ceremonies involved auxiliary instruments such as the “ney” (reed flute), “kudum” (drum), “halile” (cymbal), and “bendir” (frame drum), while other times, they were conducted directly through the recitation of Quranic verses and divine chants. These gatherings created a sense of peace and tranquility in the hearts of the participants and brought about spiritual clarity. The communal aspect of these gatherings and the interaction among participants were of particular importance, making this an effective method of spiritual education.

4- EDUCATION THROUGH SPIRITUAL STATES

This style of education is the most vivid example of the educational approach described in the Quran as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ being an “excellent example” to the believers and is referred to in modern education as “education through being an example.” Indeed, the Messenger of Allah, through his immensely vast character, lived a life of constant awareness of the divine presence with his companions around him. The companions, inspired by their love, devotion, and excitement in his gatherings, absorbed and transmitted this spirituality through spiritual states to the generations that followed, ensuring its continuity to the present day.

In the moral education within dervish lodges, a direct educational method was not applied. Disciples and seekers of the path were not bombarded with instructions like “do this, don’t do that.” Instead, the shaykh, as a person of good manners and ethics, served as an example to the disciples. Through his demeanor, conduct, voice, and breath, he guided them. This is because spiritual states have a contagious quality. Especially strong and accomplished individuals can strongly influence those around them. Thus, in Sufism, the concepts of “nazar” (spiritual attention) and “tawajjuh” (spiritual inclination) were used as educational tools to impact individuals.

C- FUTUWWA AND THE AKHI ORGANIZATION

The use of the concept of “futuwwa” in Sufism has a long historical background. The term “futuwwa,” which first emerged in the third century of the Islamic calendar in the

regions of Khorasan and Nishapur, generally implies preferring others over oneself and having a profound moral character. In the language, “futuwwa” conveys meanings of courage, valor, and chivalry, while in Sufi circles, it has become a term encompassing selflessness, generosity, and compassion.

I- FUTUWWA TRADITION

The practitioners of Sufism consider the word “fata” (plural: *fitya* and *fityan*) mentioned in the Quran as the essence of the futuwwa tradition. “Indeed, they were young men who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance.” (Al-Kahf, 18:13) The young men mentioned in this verse sought refuge in a cave to protect their faith and were put to sleep for over 300 years. “A young man (*fata*) had heard about them, and he used to call them by their names; he said: ‘Ibrahim (Abraham) among them,’ “ (Al-Anbiya, 21:60) This verse mentions the young man/*fata* Ibrahim ﷺ who broke the idols in the idol-house.

Futuwwa, derived from the saying “There is no hero (*fata*) except Ali; there is no sword except *Zulfikar*” (Ibn Hisham, *Sira*, II, 100, Cairo 1955), encompasses all the qualities that should be found in a young person. In the middle of the first century of Islam, during abnormal political developments in Arabia, the bravery and warrior-like qualities of Ali, along with his increasing and widespread reputation, led to him being regarded as the best example of a *fata* in Islam.

The futuwwa movement, which seriously organized and directed young people toward specific professions, eventually

split into two branches: the “verbal branch” associated with Abu Bakr ﷺ, and the “sword branch” associated with our master Ali Ibn Abi Talib ﷺ, may Allah ennoble his face.

There is an interesting similarity between the futuwwa organization and Sufism. While Sufis wear a “hirka” (a long cloak), the fatas wear “shalwar” (baggy trousers), and instead of the “taj” (Sufi headgear), they wear “shedd/kushak” (a type of belt). Since the practitioners of futuwwa are young professionals, dressing them in shalvar and wearing shedd symbolizes self-control over their base desires and nafs (lower self).

The regulations of the futuwwa practitioners have always been in the form of futuwwanâmes (codes of conduct). The earliest known writing on futuwwa belongs to Abu Abdurahman Sulami (d. 412/1021). Futuwwanâmes outline the principles and ethical and social rules of futuwwa, as well as the conditions for acceptance into the futuwwa community. Those practicing futuwwa are expected to adhere to principles like loyalty, honesty, trustworthiness, generosity, advice, humility and repentance, and to refrain from vices such as drinking, adultery, homosexuality, lying, gossip and deceit. These principles are summarized as “control your hand, tongue, and waist” in a general sense. Those who do not adhere to the principles of futuwwa are expelled from the futuwwa community. It is known that the futuwwa organization was first systematized as a social order by the Abbasid caliph An-Nasir liamrillah in the late 12th century. When the political and social order of the state was disrupted, Nasir sought to restore social balance by making use of the futuwwa associations. Initially, in Baghdad,

he had a book called “Kitab al-futuwwa” written for Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234), who held the title of “Shaykh of Shaykhs” of the time, and brought all the futuwwa associations under his authority. He sent envoys and decrees to neighboring Islamic states, inviting them to join the futuwwa organization as well. Contacts were established with the Anatolian Seljuk state in this regard, and Shihabuddin al-Suhrawardi was even sent as an envoy to Konya by the caliph.

II- AKHI ORGANIZATION

“Akhi organization” is seen as the form of futuwwa that emerged in Anatolia and is considered an institutionalized example of Islamic economic life. “Akhi” is derived from the Arabic word “Akhi,” which means “my brother.” However, some claim that this word is derived from the Turkish word “akı,” which means “generous,” in Turkish. “Akhi organization” is a unique institution in Anatolia that encompasses professional, ethical, and economic aspects.

The Akhis trace their lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through Ali ؑ and are known as “ahli futuwwa” like the fatas, wearing the “futuwwa shalwar” (baggy trousers). This organization, which includes many enlightened individuals, is not only a guild but also a Sufi organization.

An Akhi’s table, forehead, and door should always be open. An Akhi should be generous, not rely on the material world, and if they have more than eighteen dirhams, they should distribute it. They should love knowledge and scholars

and should not roam around the doors of the elite and the wealthy.

It is known that Shaykh Nasir al-Din Mahmud (d.660/1262), known as “Akhi Awran,” an Iranian, played a crucial role in organizing and spreading Akhi way under the patronage of Alâeddin Keykubad I in Anatolia.

The spread of the Akhis to Anatolia coincides with the late period of the Abbasids, and their arrival in Anatolia was greatly influenced by the Mongol invasion. Thanks to this migration, the Akhis expanded their territories and strengthened their influence.

During this period, many Akhi leaders settled in villages and built lodges, serving in the country’s construction and settlement, as well as in religious propagation and guidance. There are groups of Akhis classified by Ashîkpashazâde as “Rum Erenleri” (The Saints of Rum), including Abdalân Rûm, Akhiyân Rûm, Bajîyan Rûm, and Gâziyân Rûm. Among these, the Gâziyâ Rûm can be regarded as the sword branch of futuwwa.

Akhi organization quickly found fertile ground in Anatolia, and Akhi lodges were opened in many regions from cities to villages. The Akhis occasionally participated in political activities, especially during times when political authority weakened in the 13th century, they played a significant role in protecting cities from enemy invasions and suppressing some uprisings. Akhi organization, which spread to villages in Anatolia, became stronger by incorporating many statesmen, scholars, and military group members. After the 14th

century, it took on the form of organized guilds, and its social and political power weakened slightly. However, it is known that Akhis played a significant role in the establishment of the Ottoman state. Osman Gazi's father-in-law, Shaykh Edebâli, and many pashas and scholars who played a role in the state's establishment were members of the Akhi organization.

Historical facts confirm that Sultan Orhan held the position of "İhtiyar ad-dîn" in Akhi organization, and Sultan Murad I was known as the "Akhi shaykh." Particularly in his work "Tarih," Âshîkpashazâde extensively describes the Akhis who played a role in the establishment of the Ottoman state. The famous Arab traveler Ibn Battuta, who visited Anatolia during the time of Orhan Gazi, describes the Akhi lodges he encountered and their activities during his stay.

The concepts of the akhi path were similar to those in Sufism. In Sufism, the one at the beginning of the path is called "tâlib-murîd," and with the Akhis, they are referred to as "yigit" (hero). In Sufism, the one progressing on the path is called "sâlik," while according to the way of the akhis, they are simply called "akhi." In Sufism, the one who completes the path is called "wasil," Akhis give the title of "shaykh." "Akhi Baba" and "Akhi Shaykh" meant the highest shaykh. Sometimes, the term "qudwah al-fityân" was also used in this sense.

III- AKHI UNIONS AND ECONOMIC LIFE

Over time they gradually evolved into a mostly economic institution. Its structure consisted of guilds of craftsmen, including masters, journeymen and apprentices. To progress

from being an apprentice, one had to meet the requirements of professional competence and merit. Apprentices couldn't open their own shops unless they mastered the craft thoroughly. The number of artisans and shops was limited, and the production of goods was based on demand.

In large cities, each Akhi union had its separate lodge, while in smaller towns, various craft groups formed a single union. During the time of the Anatolian Seljuks, Akhi unions were responsible for resolving professional issues and regulating relations with the state. They were tasked with quality control and determining fair prices. The proper training of apprentices was of utmost importance for the future of the profession. The contributions of Akhî unions to economic life can be summarized as follows:

a. Akhi unions established warm and spiritual relationships between apprentices, journeymen, masters, and fathers, resembling a parent-child bond.

b. They regulated relationships between producers and consumers based on need and efficiency and worked to prevent wastefulness.

c. Through the lodges established in villages and towns, Akhî members contributed to the vitality of art, culture, accommodation, travel, and tourism.

d. They facilitated the organization and structuring of the population and enabled artisans to practice their crafts without being oppressed or oppressing others.

D- MAJLIS AL-MASHAYIKH

The Majlis al-Mashayikh (council of shaykhs) is the name of a higher institution and council affiliated with the shaykh al-Islam that oversees the administration and supervision of tekkes and zawiyas as well as the affairs of Sufi orders.

The shaykh al-Islam, since its establishment during the Ottoman era, was an institution responsible for managing and overseeing educational, judicial and religious services. In the post-Tanzimat period, the shaykh al-Islam delegated the majority of educational services to the Maarif ministry, and judicial affairs to the Adliya ministry. As a result, it became responsible only for the management of mosques, madrasas, tekkes, zawiyas, and some madrasas.

The Majlis al-Mashayikh was established for the administration of tekkes, zawiyas, and the services related to Sufi orders. Various efforts were made over the centuries to organize and regulate the management and supervision of Sufi orders. In the 13th century, during the Abbasid Caliphate of Nâsır li-dinillâh, there was an attempt to centralize the administration and supervision of both Sufi orders and futuwwa organizations under the title “shaykh as-shuyukh” given to Abu Haffs Umar al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234). Similar individual efforts were made in later periods.

In the Ottoman Empire, from its beginning until the 19th century, tekkes and Sufi orders had a certain degree of independence. Each tekke managed its services with its own endowment revenues, following unwritten, tradition-based

rules. Central tekkes of Sufi orders had influence and authority over others.

During the reign of Sultan III. Selim, the first known step to prevent individuals with deviant beliefs and practices from establishing tekkes and engaging in Sufi activities was taken by appointing a small delegation of tekke shaykhs by the Istanbul kadilik (judicial institution). During the same period, tekke endowments were placed under the supervision of “Evkâf-ı Humayun”, and all tekkes in Istanbul were connected to the central tekkes, known as âsitane. The appointments of shaykhs in Istanbul and provinces were made by the shaykh al-Islam after consulting with the central tekke.

The institutionalization of the management and supervision of tekkes and zawiya, and the acquisition of corporate identity for Sufi orders, occurred with the establishment of the Majlis al-Mashayikh in 1866. This council, consisting of five members and governed by a 17-article regulation, saw its first presidency taken by Osman Selahaddin Dede, the shaykh of the Yenikapı Mevlevi Lodge. In addition to the president, the council included members from various Sufi orders such as Sa‘di, Qadiri, Sunbuli, Khalwati, and Naqshi. Later, with the participation of a Rifa‘i member, the number of members increased to six. In 1875, a minister who was not a shaykh and a secretary from the religious class were added as members. The process continued with fluctuations in the number of members until 1918. In the same year, a new regulation was enacted by law regarding the Majlis al-Mashayikh. The regulations of the Majlis al-Mashayikh dated 1918 and the Central

Tekkes Instruction/Directive came into effect. Following this regulation, shaykhs from each region convened in their centers and began selecting two shaykhs for the administration, inspection, and supervision of tekkes. The selected shaykhs were required to inspect the tekkes in their centers at least once a year and submit a supervision report to the Majlis al-Mashayikh. In the provinces, districts, and sub-districts, a committee named the Enjumen-i Mashayikh, led by the mufti with two members, was formed. Members were selected by a commission consisting of local shaykhs and reputable individuals from among scholars and shaykhs. The Majlis al-Mashayikh and its subunits were tasked with the administration and supervision of tekkes and Sufi orders. This included the appointment of shaykhs to tekkes and, when necessary, the removal of shaykhs. In cases of vacancy due to the death of a shaykh, direct application to the council for appointment was allowed. If the applicant, usually a son of the deceased shaykh, met the necessary criteria, the appointment was made. Otherwise, a qualified individual from the order's followers or other Sufi orders would be appointed as the shaykh. If no suitable candidate was found, a selection process among the applicants would be conducted, and those deemed appropriate would be appointed. All these processes took into account the conditions specified in the endowment deed. Those who did not behave appropriately in the position of shaykh or faced issues of ethical or doctrinal nature causing problems in their representative capacity were dismissed by the Meshihat authority.

The Majlis al-Mashayikh used to administratively and financially oversee tekkes and Sufi orders. Administratively,

the lodges were examined based on the endowment deed to determine whether they adhered to the customs of the respective Sufi order to which they were affiliated. Those who acted against Islamic law and did not comply with the Sufi etiquette could face penalties or dismissal, depending on the severity of their actions. Financially, the inspection focused on whether the endowment revenues were used in accordance with the endowment conditions and whether the state aid reached its intended destination.

The Majlis al-Mashayikh continued its services until March 3, 1924, when the office of Meshihat, along with the Ministry of Islamic Law (Sher'-iyye) and Foundations (Evkaf), was abolished. With the relevant law, the services of the Majlis al-Mashayikh were transferred to the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı). The Presidency of Religious Affairs continued these services until November 30, 1925, when the law (Law No. 677) was enacted, leading to the closure of tekkes and zawiya.

Following the attempted coup on July 15, 2016, there has been discussion about re-establishing a similar institution like the Majlis al-Mashayikh to monitor and regulate Sufi orders and religious communities. The decision and inventory books of this institution, which served for nearly sixty years, are available in the archives of the Meshihat under the Istanbul Mufti. Twenty-eight decision books and twenty-two inventory books could shed light on the working system of such an institution and contribute to efforts to update and revive it.



**CHAPTER FIVE:
SUFI ISSUES**

A- EXISTENCE ISSUE IN SUFI THOUGHT

As in all sciences, there are various problems and issues in the areas that Sufism examines and addresses. These issues are either related to the field of thought and theory, which we call “Sufi thought,” or they are related to the practical aspects of Sufi life, which we refer to as “practical Sufism.” Here, we will first explore the “Issue of Existence, Human, and Knowledge in Sufism” and then examine the remaining topics under the title “Some Other Sufi Issues.”

In Sufi thought, the “unity of existence” is a fundamental principle, even though it is referred to by different names. The Islamic concept of tawhid has resulted in the spread of the understanding of “unity and oneness” in every aspect of life in Sufism. The fact that the creation is the work of the “One,” Allah, is emphasized both in the verses of revelation and in the verses of the book of the universe, reinforcing the concept of “unity in existence.” The necessity of reducing diverse and scattered thoughts to the “One” is underscored by the continuous emphasis on the “One” in both the verses of revelation and the signs in the universe. In fact, the potential for diverse and changing thoughts to act as a veil on the path to the “One” has made it necessary to streamline these thoughts into the

concept of the “One.” The saying of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, “Whoever reduces his concerns to the One, Allah will take care of his other concerns,” constitutes the foundation of the concept of unity or oneness in thought (Ibn Majah, *Muqadimah*, 23),” forms the basis for the concept of unity or “oneness.” Because reducing concerns thoughts to the One, consistently perceiving the One, and contemplating the One, evolving into a state of union with the One, has been expressed as the manifestation of tawhid and the unity of existence.

The convergence of concerns and purposes, sometimes referred to as “tawhid al-qasd,” meaning the unity of the will of God with the will of the servant by the will of God, sometimes meaning the unity of existence, and sometimes simply seeing the One, is expressed in terms such as “tawhid al-shuhud.” These thoughts have generally become famous over time as “wahdat al-wujud” or “wahdat al-shuhud.”

Although the first of these two thoughts is attributed to Ibn Arabi (d. 638/1240) and the second to Imam Rabbani (d. 1034/1624), they have been expressed in various forms since the beginning. The fundamental principle in Sufism regarding existence is the “unity of existence.” Let’s quote the words of some of the early Sufis on this subject:

Junayd al-Baghdadi (d. 297/909) says: “Tawhid is for the servant to be like a shadow in the presence of Allah. The measures and administrative arrangements of Allah, the judgments of His power, and the necessities of His authority flow over the servant. In this case, the servant, being mortal due to the call of the people and responding to this call, is immersed in the

depths of the ocean of unity. The servant, stripped of feelings, movements, and will in the truth of Allah's oneness, is fulfilling what Allah desires for His servant. This means the final state of the servant returning to his pure station in the realm of souls before becoming one with "unity and annihilation." Indeed, in that station called "the Covenant of Alastu," Allah asked His servants, "Am I not your Lord?" and the souls affirmed, saying, "Yes, you are our Lord" (*Al-A'raf*, 7/172). In another saying, Junayd al-Baghdadi defines tawhid as "distinguishing the eternal from the created." This means knowing only Allah, who is eternal, and seeing only Him as existing. Another name for this is "fana fillah."

Muhammad ibn wâsî (d. 127/744) says, "I have not seen anything in which I have not seen Allah," while another Sufi says, "I have not seen anything in which I have not seen Allah before." These descriptions belong to Junayd al-Baghdadi, indicating "wahdat al-wujud" (unity of existence), and the latter indicating "wahdat al-shuhud" (unity of witnessing).

I- WAHDAT AL-WUJUD (Unity of Existence)

Existence is one; it is composed of the essence of the Real (*Al-Haq*). There is no existence other than Him with a real essence, no "self-subsistent existence" other than Him. The existence of other entities is null and void compared to His existence because their existence is dependent on His existence. The entities in this universe are a manifestation of Him; in other words, they are the place of manifestation. Therefore, the existence of things is like the existence of shadows. Just as there can be no shadow without objects, the existence of things

cannot be thought of without His existence. In comparison to Him, their existence is like a shadow compared to the object casting the shadow, essentially non-existent, “kun fa-yakun,” i.e., nothing. Because this world and things did not exist, He existed. He is the one who manifests them in the sea of existence. Their manifestation is not an independent existence but waves in the sea of the essence of Al-Haq. Only He exists at this moment. Just as Bâyezid Bistâmî said: “Allah existed, there was no existence other than Him.” In the sense of “Kânallahu wa lam yakun ma’ahu shay” (Bukhari, Tawhid 22), when the hadith was narrated, saying, “Allah existed, there was no existence other than Him,” he responded, “al-Ân kamâ-kâna”; in other words, “now there is no existence other than Him.”

In the understanding of the unity of existence, “oneness” is in knowledge and thought. The seeker knows that true existence is one, consisting of Al-Haq and the manifestations of Al-Haq. They believe that there is no real existence other than Al-Haq. However, this knowledge and belief are not a result obtained through theory or intellectual reasoning. On the contrary, it is a result obtained through asceticism, spiritual ascent, and spiritual experience. Knowing in any other way than through spiritual and mystical experience has no value.

The unity of existence occurs during the spiritual journey of the heart. Its source is the abundance of worship. Love and affection arise in the heart through reasons such as spiritual struggle, renouncing attachment to the world, and continuous remembrance. In this way, the heart is purified from worldly attachments, becoming a mirror to the names, attributes, and

divine lights of Al-Haq. During this process, due to intense love and affection, the seeker begins to say, “Ana al-Haq” (I am the Truth), thinking that the reflections and shadows are Al-Haq Himself. In a hadith Qudsi, it is stated as, “My servant approaches Me with voluntary deeds until I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his walking with which he walks, and his hand with which he strikes” (Bukhari, Al-Riqaq 38). Thus, the servant, due to intense love and affection, begins to realize that his actions are the actions of Al-Haq. Although everyone’s actions are, in fact, the actions of Al-Haq, people are not aware of it. The states of annihilation, unity, and witness lift the veil and allow one to see this truth.

The concept of unity reached through spiritual experience and spiritual development is often expressed in states of ecstasy and intoxication, making it difficult to understand and explain in the language of legal and external aspects. For example, Bâyezid Bistâmi’s expression of unity, where he transcends his own existence and declares, “Subhânî mâ ađhama shanî” (I glorify myself; how exalted is my glory), and his words, “There is nothing inside my robe except Allah,” fall into this category. Hallâj-ı Mansur also considered himself established with God, ignoring his own existence, saying, “Ana al-Haq/I am the Truth.” However, there is a subtlety here; the term “Allah” refers to His essence, while the name “Al-Haq” refers to His manifestations. In this regard, there is a distinction between the statement “Ana al-Haq” and “Ana Allah.”

Hallaj was sentenced to death due to his statement “Ana al-Haq.” However, the words he uttered during his execution indicate that this was a result of a spiritual ascent and ecstasy: “Your servants gathered to kill me because of their proximity to You and their loyalty to their religions. Forgive them! If You had shown them the secrets You revealed to me, they would not have thought this way about me. If You had hidden from them what You concealed from me, I would not have spoken these words.” “O my God, You manifest everywhere. Your recognition is with me. My existence being possible with You contradicts Your existence being permissible with me. My standing with You is in the Nasut realm. However, Your standing with me is permissible in the Lahut realm. Thus, my humanity has vanished without uniting with Your divinity. Your divinity has encompassed my humanity without touching it. The proof of Your eternity is my being contingent. The proof of my temporality is under Your eternal garment.” (Louis Massignon, *Kitabu ahbari al-hallaj*, 1936, p.7-8)

Al-Ghazali, who systematized Sunni Sufism, is observed to have developed certain views on the unity of existence, following the path of the early Sufis, and in a sense, paving the way for the later concept of *wahdat al-wujud* (unity of existence). In his work “*Ihyâ ulûm ad-dîn*,” while explaining the concept of gnosis, Al-Ghazali states: “In the realm of existence, there is nothing other than Allah and His actions. The entire universe consists of His actions.” In his work “*Mishqat al-anwar*,” Al-Ghazali expresses the following opinions: “After ascending from the metaphorical pit to the reality of the heavens and completing their spiritual ascensions, the know-

ers have witnessed with their eyes that there is nothing in the realm of existence other than Allah. This is because the Quran says, ‘Everything will perish except His face’ (Al-Qasas: 88), and the quality of ‘perishing’ in the verse signifies continuity; it is not limited to a specific period. Therefore, the meaning of this verse implies eternal existence for Allah and eternal non-existence for other beings. Indeed, no other interpretation is conceivable.

The knowers do not need to wait for the Day of Judgment to hear the proclamation, ‘Today sovereignty belongs to the One who is the Unique and the Conqueror.’ On the contrary, they hear this proclamation at every moment. After ascending to the reality of the heavens, the knowers unanimously agree that they see nothing other than the existence of Allah, who is the Truth and the One. However, some of them perceive this state as knowledge and gnosis, while others experience it as a state of ecstasy and bliss.”

When the knowers (arifin) strip away multiplicity and immerse themselves in absolute oneness during the state of ecstasy, some of them say, “Ana al-Haq” (I am the Truth), some say, “Subhani ma-adhama sha’ni” (Glory be to Me, how exalted is My Majesty), and others say, “ma fi al-jubba illa Allah” (Beneath my cloak, there is nothing but Allah). The words spoken by lovers in the state of ecstasy are not disclosed; they are kept secret. When the knower returns from the state of ecstasy to sobriety, they express that there is no actual union (ittihad), but rather, an experience of union. Although the metaphorical

term for this state of ecstasy and burning is “ittihad,” its true name is “tawhid.”

Al-Ghazali’s expression “La mawjuda illa Hu” (There is no existence except Him) denotes an unnamed unity of existence. Indeed, the concept of “unity of existence” (wahdat al-wujud) attributed to Ibn Arabi, who is claimed to have systematized it, was not used by Ibn Arabi himself; it emerged after him.

In Ibn Arabi’s understanding of existence, existence is a single reality, and that is the existence of Allah. The multiplicity and diversity observed in existence are an apparent phenomenon created by external senses. Allah is the “pure existence” or “essential existence,” an absolute existence without any cause or reason. Knowing and comprehending His essence with His own essence is impossible.

Ibn Arabi explains the emergence of existence as follows: “Allah existed eternally, and there was nothing with Him.” Allah created this universe to manifest His names and attributes. Allah knew in His eternal knowledge that He would create us and the universe in specific ways. If He did not know, He would not have created. Since there is no existence other than Him, it is not possible for the universe to derive its form from another place. Since He knew with His eternal knowledge that He would create us and the universe in this way, the universe was already existent in His knowledge. Allah’s knowledge about the universe is called “Al-’ayan al-thabita” by Ibn Arabi.

1. AL-A'YAN AL-THABITA (Source Forms)

Al-a'yan al-thabita are the truths of things that exist in the external world in the knowledge of Allah, and they are not actually present outside. In other words, they are non-existent entities that are fixed in Allah's knowledge. The existence of Al-a'yan al-thabita is not present before its manifestation in the external world, but it is fixed/present in the knowledge of Allah. Therefore, it is considered as non-existent. Al-a'yan al-thabita is the field of existence between the sensory world and the identity of Al-Haq (truth). Ibn Arabi mentions three stages of creatures and things.

a. As-Shu'un al-thabita is the universal presence of things in Allah's knowledge without any differentiation between them. This is also called "at-taayyun al-awwal".

b. Al-a'yan al-thabita is the manifestation of things as separate and distinct from each other in Allah's knowledge. In this stage, entities exist as concrete things, and this is also called "at-taayyun al-thani".

c. At-taayyun al-khariji is the manifestation and emergence of things in the external world as ayn al-kharijiya. Creation consists of these three stages.

The manifestation of external things that belong to "Al-a'yan al-thabita" in the world is, in fact, the manifestation of Al-Haq's attribute of "creation." Therefore, they are actually non-existent. The entities that seem to belong to them are, in reality, the manifestation of Al-Haq's existence; they are not real but shadowy entities. Although the world emerges from

Allah, it is not the same as Allah in terms of nature. Possible entities were nonexistent at first, and they later manifested from Allah. However, this manifestation is not an existence that separates the part from the whole. If that were the case, things would have had to move from one existence to another, and in eternity, they would have had a self-existent being. Therefore, Ibn Arabi argues that existence is composed of the “Al-aql al-awwal,” the first manifestation of Haq, and that the first “aql” is unique, but it contains the potential for multiplicity, thus refuting such a possibility.

2. MARATIB AL-WUJUD – HADARAT AL-KHAMS (Stages of Existence-The Five Presences)

Ibn Arabi, in addition to the “al-a’yan al-thabita” related to the emergence of existence, also provides a fivefold classification.

a. Alam al-Lahut (Lahut Realm): This level is known by various names such as the absolute unseen (Ghayb al-Mutlaq), indeterminate realm (La Taayun), all-encompassing realm (Alam al-Itlaq), absolute darkness (A’ma al-mutlaq), essential existence (wujud al-mahd), pure existence (wujud al-saff), the Mother of the Book (umm al-kitab), absolute clarification (Al-bayan al-mutlaq), and the unseen of the unseen (Ghayb al-Ghuyub). In this stage, there is neither a name nor an attribute, nor anything attributed. Allah has not yet descended into the realm of names and attributes. Everything has ceased to exist in the essence of the Truth. The verse “Has there not come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing even mentioned?” (Al-Insan, 1) is considered an indication of this state.

b. Alam al-Jabarut (Jabarut Realm): This level is also called the first specification (al-ta'ayun al-awwal), the first intellect (Al-aql al-awwal), the first manifestation (al-tajalli al-awwal), the reality of Muhammad (Al-haqiqa al-muhamamdiyya), the relative spirit (Ar-ruh al-Idhafi), the universal spirit (Ar-ruh al-kulli), the appended unseen (Al-ghayb al-Mudhaf), and the clear book (Al-kitab al-mubin). The entity, which was united in the first level, is now divided and detailed.

c. Alam Malakut (Malakut Realm): This level is also called the world of ideals (Al-alam al-Mithal), unity (al-wahidiyya), the second specification (al-ta'ayun al-thani), the second manifestation (al-tajalli al-thani), the lote-tree of the utmost boundary (sidrat al-muntaha), and the world of command (alam al-amar). This realm is close to the world of witnessing (alam as-syahadah). If we accept the first three levels as the unseen, the fourth level constitutes the witnessing world.

d. Nasut Realm: This level is also called absolute witnessing (as-shuhud al-mutlaq), the world of witnessing (alam as-syahadah), the world of senses (alam al-hiss), the world of elements (alam al-anasir), and the world of spheres (alam al-aflak).

e. Insan al-Kamil: This level is the one that collects all realms within itself. The first four realms are the Great Name of Allah. All of them show the essence of Allah. All of these realms are also found in man. Therefore, the "perfect human being" is a summary of all realms. Everything in the universe has an example in man. Just as the universe is the combination of Allah's names and attributes, man, as an example of the

universe, is the combination of Allah's names and attributes. Therefore, Allah's Messenger said: "Allah created Adam in His own image (Muslim, Birr, 115). Because all divine names are manifested in man, he is considered worthy of vicegerency. In addition to this triple and quintuple categorization of the levels of existence, there are also categorizations showing seven or more levels.

3. PROOFS OF WAHDATUL WUJUD

There are some verses and hadiths that Sufis consider as evidence for the unity of being. Let's summarize them under two subheadings.

VERSES OF THE QURAN

aa. "It is Allah who takes away the souls at the time of their death." (Az-Zumar, 39/42)

bb. "He it is who accepts repentance from his servants and pardons sins, and He knows what you do." (At-Tawbah, 42/25)

cc. "These are the verses of Allah which We recite to you in truth. Then in what statement after Allah and His verses will they believe?" (Al-Baqarah, 2/252)

dd. "And when the Qur'an is recited, then listen to it and remain silent, that mercy may be shown to you." (Al-Qiyamah, 75/18)

ee. "The Merciful has taught the Qur'an." (Ar-Rahman, 55/2)

ff. "And you did not kill them, but it was Allah who killed them. And you threw not, when you threw, but it was Allah who threw." (Al-Anfal, 8/17)

gg. “Those who pledge allegiance (to you, O Muhammad), are actually pledging allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is over their hands.” (Al-Fath, 48/10)

hh. “Except for His Face (His essence and existence), everything will perish.” (Al-Qasas, 28/88)

ii. “Wherever you turn, there is the face of Allah.” (Al-Baqarah, 2/115)

jj. “We are closer to man than his jugular vein.” (Qaf, 50/16)

kk. “Everything is perishable, only His Face (His essence and existence) is eternal.” (Ar-Rahman, 28/88)

ll. “He is engaged in a new task every day.” (Ar-Rahman, 55/29).

mm. “He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden.” (Al-Hadid, 57/3)

These verses indicate that Allah’s attributes and actions directly encompass everything, while others attribute human actions to Allah. According to Sufis, the reason for this is that all things exist within the essence of Allah and are manifested through Him. Indeed, there is no doubt that these actions occur through divine power. Power is one of Allah’s attributes, as stated in the Qur’an: “All power belongs to Allah” (Al-Baqarah, 2/165). As it cannot be separated from Allah, the manifestation of divine power is necessarily present wherever it is manifested.

b. HADITHS

The attribution of certain actions of Allah to His servants in hadiths has captured the attention of mystics, who have

considered these sacred hadiths as evidence for the concept of the unity of existence:

aa. “My servant approaches Me with optional deeds until I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his leg with which he walks.” (Bukhari, *Al-Riqaq* 38)

bb. “On the Day of Judgment, Allah will say: ‘O son of Adam, I fell ill, but you did not visit Me.’ The person will respond: ‘O Lord, how could I visit You when You are the Lord of all worlds?’ Allah will reply: ‘Did you not know that My servant so-and-so fell ill? If you had visited him, you would have found Me there.’ The same scenario applies to the person who asked for food and drink.” (Muslim, *Birr* 43)

cc. “Charity does not reach the hand of a poor person before it reaches the hand of Allah.” (Tabarani, *al-Mu’jam al-kabir*, XI,405; *Al-Isfahani*, *Hilya*, IV,81)

dd. “Allah created Adam in the image of the Most Merciful.” (Muslim, *Birr* 115)

In hadiths, just as in verses, Allah is described as the absolute doer, attributing the actions of His servants to Himself. The doer of the one who approaches Him with optional deeds is considered to be the person himself; visiting the sick is likened to visiting Allah; giving charity to a poor person is said to first reach Allah’s hand, and finally, the creation of Adam in the image of the Most Merciful is taken as evidence for the unity of existence.

4. RESULTS OF THE UNITY OF EXISTENCE BELIEF

It is evident that the Sufi who comprehends the belief in the unity of existence through spiritual progress and mystical experience gains certain spiritual achievements. Some of these can be listed as follows:

a. Human intellect is incapable of comprehending Allah with His essence; humans can only perceive Him at the level of attributes.

b. The Knower (Arif) knows all the perfect attributes from Allah, thereby freeing themselves from arrogance.

c. Through the belief in the unity of existence, some ambiguous verses become clear. For instance, in the verse “Allah’s hand is over their hands” (Al-Fath, 48/10), the term “hand” refers to the Prophet Muhammad’s hand, as it was his hand that touched hands with the companions during the pledge of allegiance.

d. Knowing everything in the world as a manifestation of the Divine requires viewing creatures with compassion and mercy. The purpose of religion is to “show respect for Allah’s command and show compassion to His creatures.”

e. Those who believe in the unity of existence do not need other proofs to demonstrate the oneness of Allah’s existence.

Ibn Arabi’s systematized concept of the unity of existence was introduced to Anatolia by his disciple Sadreddin Konevi, who became one of the most powerful representatives of this thought in Anatolia. Around the same time, in Egypt and Pal-

estine, Ibn al-Farid (d. 632/1234) emerged as one of the leading proponents of this idea.

Konevi (d. 673/1274), contemporaneous with Mevlânâ (d. 672/1273) and Yunus Emre (d. 720/1320), stands out as one of the most powerful exponents of the belief in the unity of existence in Turkish Sufism. Mevlânâ, in his *Mathnawî*, describes the unity of existence with the following words: "We are lions, but lions on banners. Their play and attack are due to the wind from breath to breath. The play of lions is visible, but the wind is invisible. You gave the taste of the road to existence. You made the non-existent fall in love with itself. If you take it back, who can seek it from You? How can a painting engage in battle with the painter?" (*Mathnawî*, I, 153-154)

Yunus Emre also expresses the unity of existence as follows:

Don't call me "me" I am not in "me" There is one within me I am in Him

The concept of the unity of existence in our poetry and literature, which began with Mevlânâ and Yunus, has become a passionate theme for centuries. Our poets and writers in the *Diwan* and Sufi tradition have left a rich legacy by working on this theme in their poems.

II- WAHDAT AL-MAWJUD (PANTHEISM)

One of the main obstacles preventing the correct understanding of the belief in the unity of existence is pantheism.

The confusion between the unity of existence and pantheism leads to opposition against both concepts. However, these two ideas are entirely distinct. According to pantheistic views or the concept of the unity of existence, Allah and the universe are considered as one. Allah is perceived as the totality of existing things. Those adhering to this perspective worship nature by imagining a kind of imaginative unity. Philosophers such as Hegel, Diderot, Spinoza, Descartes, the Rawaqiyyun, and the school of Alexandria are generally considered pantheists. Auguste Comte developed pantheism under the name of positivism, summarizing it as “a universe without God, humans without souls, things without spirits.” Materialism can be considered, to some extent, the offspring of positivism.

Scholars who oppose the belief in the unity of existence often confuse it with the views of pantheists who consider Allah as the sum or total of the universe, subject to necessity, and devoid of will and consciousness. These two perspectives are like two different cups of seawater and spring water placed side by side. Someone looking from a distance cannot distinguish which one is seawater and which one is spring water. However, this distinction can be made by tasting. Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi, in his commentary on Surah Al-Baqarah, provides the following information regarding the differences between the unity of existence and pantheism:

“The faith enjoined in Islam is the oneness of God, namely the oneness of divinity (tawhid al-uluhiya), not the oneness of existence (tawhid al-wujud) expressed as ‘La mawjuda illâ Hû’ (There is no existence except Him). This might be rel-

evant only for the elite who have transcended the stages of spiritual journeying in the path of knowledge. In our view, 'the unity of existence' is not rejected altogether; indeed, it may be proven experientially in the spiritual journey. However, there is a significant difference between saying 'there is no existence except Allah' and 'every existence is Allah.' The former might be considered a 'pure oneness of existence,' while the latter is 'pure polytheism.'

"When it is said: 'There is no existence except Allah,' it means that the existence attributed to the created beings is not real but rather imaginary, illusory, a reflection in consciousness, and it is acknowledged that the true existence belongs to Allah." Thus, he neither opposes nor accepts the unity of existence's reducing everything to a single reality, while rejecting pantheism, which is called the unity of existence. He rejects pantheism with the following statements:

"When it is said: 'Every existence is Allah,' a complete multiplicity is accepted in existence, and it is claimed that all of them are Allah. This is not oneness; instead, it is multiplying Allah and associating partners with Him. This is not the unity of existence; it is the unity of mingling or incarnation. Denying Allah is proving the universe. Making the One 'every' is associating infinite partners with the One who has no partners. This is called 'pantheism' or 'incarnation of divinity.' In pantheism, Allah is indeed in a state of unity and incarnation with everything." (Hak Dini Kur'an Dili, Istanbul 1971, I, 576-577)

1- DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UNITY OF EXISTENCE AND PANTHEISM

a. The unity of existence (wahdat al-wujud) is the result of the discoveries based on the scriptures and traditions of the prophets and their heirs, the saints. Pantheism, on the other hand, is a product of sensory organs and intellect.

b. Followers of Sufism unanimously accept Islamic beliefs. Those who adhere to the unity of existence have accepted this idea in a manner consistent with this belief. Therefore, those who advocate the unity of existence, the “arifin” (the knowers), are not followers of different doctrines. Pantheists, on the other hand, hold various and distinct theories.

c. According to the belief in the unity of existence, humans are the acquirers of their actions through their unique abilities and are responsible for their actions due to this ability and will. The Creator of their actions is Allah. In pantheism, since everything is considered the actions of the Divine, good and evil, worship and sin, are equal.

d. To grasp the extremely subtle nuances of the unity of existence, it is necessary to believe that this is the essence of the mystical knowledge of the saints, based on verses and hadiths, and to achieve this through the guidance of a perfected spiritual guide, reaching the state of spiritual gathering (jam') and self-annihilation (fana). However, the natural intelligence is sufficient to understand the thoughts and disputes of pantheists.

e. Those who attain the perception of the unity of existence state that the reality of attributes and entities is Allah, but they do not assert that attributes and entities themselves are Allah. They say, “The Real is the Real, and entities are entities in their own essence.” Pantheists, on the other hand, believe that both the realities and essences of entities are Allah.

Perhaps the most important and distinct difference between the unity of existence and pantheism is found here. When this subtle distinction is not recognized, these two ideas are often mistakenly considered identical, leading to opposition. Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi says, “Some ignorant heretics insist on taking pantheism, the theory of unity and incarnation, as the unity of existence and true monotheism. They explain that saying ‘La ilaha illa Hú’ (There is no god but He) means saying ‘La mawjuda illa Hú’ (There is no existence except Him), insisting that it means ‘Every existence is Him.’ They want to see everything as Allah, where Allah should be seen behind and beyond everything.”

Due to the proximity in expression, the unity of existence and unity of witnessing/pantheism have often been confused, leading some Sufis to develop and defend the concept of “unity of witnessing” instead of the “unity of existence.”

III- WAHDAT AL-SHUHUD (Unity of Witnessing)

The Nakshbandi Sufi order, which systematized the concept of “wahdat al-shuhud” (unity of witnessing), was led by the Indian spiritual master titled “Mujaddid,” Imam Rabbani

Ahmad Faruqi Sirhindi (d. 1034/1624). While the early followers of the Nakshbandi order respected and adhered to the works and views of Ibn Arabi, Imam Rabbani, in contrast, criticized and opposed Ibn Arabi's concept of "wahdat al-wujud" (unity of existence) with respect. Imam Rabbani had valid reasons for his opposition to Ibn Arabi's concept of "wahdat al-wujud." One of the primary reasons was the attempt by the contemporary ruler, Akbar Shah, to create a new religion that amalgamated Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Zoroastrianism. This new religious perspective prominently featured pantheistic ideas. In such a context, Imam Rabbani, facing the difficulty of explaining his stance and the resemblance to pantheism, advocated for "wahdat al-shuhud" instead of "wahdat al-wujud." Moreover, according to Imam Rabbani, "wahdat al-wujud" was a stage that needed to be overcome on the Sufi path. He believed that "wahdat al-shuhud" was a higher stage, but the spiritual seeker should not stop there; rather, they should ascend to the level of "abdiyyet" (servanthood). According to Imam Rabbani, reaching the stage of "abdiyyet" was the ultimate goal on the path of Sufism.

Through worship, obedience, and ascetic practices, divine love and affection overpower the worshiper, leading to states of ecstasy and spiritual intoxication, and a sense of annihilation and unity emerges. The seeker who reaches this state sees nothing but the manifestation of Allah. The material world completely disappears from their view, and they only start to see the One (Unity of Witnessing). Imam Rabbani explains this with the analogy of someone seeing stars when the sunlight disappears; the stars are not gone but are obscured by a

more superior light. In the belief of Unity of Witnessing, the one who witnesses the manifestation of the Divine does not claim that other entities cease to exist even if they don't see them. According to Imam Rabbani, the statements "Ana al-Haq" by Hallaj and "Subhani" by Bistami were uttered at the stage of Unity of Witnessing. When someone in this stage says "Ana al-Haq" they mean "Al-Haq is Al-Haq, not me." Otherwise, claiming to see oneself and saying such words leads to disbelief.

Imam Rabbani argues that entities are the manifestations of Allah's names and attributes, and they are not the same. Therefore, he suggests that the idea "heme O'st / everything is He" should be corrected to "heme ez-O'st / everything is from Him." Thus, he defines the wahdat al-wujud (unity of existence) he calls "wujudi tawhid" as knowing that existence is one and believing that there is nothing but the One, viewing this thought as the level of "ilm al-yaqin" (knowledge of certainty). The "wahdat al-shuhud" he calls "shuhud al-tawhid" is considered the consequence of the "ayn al-yaqin" (eye of certainty) level and is described to be realized through annihilation (fana).

B- MAN IN SUFISM

The subject of Sufi training, the journey of spiritual development, is the human being. By creation, humans are the vicegerents of Allah on Earth (Al-Baqarah, 2/30) and bearers of the secret of “the best of stature” (At-Tin, 95/4). The fact that humans are vicegerents of Allah results from the manifestation of certain attributes of Allah. For instance, the hadith “Allah Almighty created Adam in His own image” (Muslim, Birr 115) and the verse “When I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My (created) soul” (Al-Hijr, 15/29; Sad, 38/72) indicate the divine and lordly aspect within humans. The verse “The soul is of the affair of my Lord” (Al-Isra, 17/85) emphasizes that the authority and rule in the soul are under the command of Allah, linking the attribute of vicegerency to the soul through the term “affair.”

Being created “in the best of stature” means being formed in the most beautiful condition, both materially and spiritually. Physical and spiritual beauty, in terms of both physical and bodily aspects and ethics, spirituality, and the realm of the soul, imply that humans are created in a beautiful state. Ali عليه السلام expressed this concept as follows:

The cure is within you, yet you do not sense it.

You assume you are but a small entity.

Yet within you is unfolded the vast universe.

Humans emerge as a concise model, incorporating the forms of all realms within themselves. Therefore, Sufis have considered humans as the grand manuscript and essence of the universe. Shaykh Galip also says:

Admire yourself, for you are the essence of the universe. You are the seen Adam, the observer of creation.

Sufis have likened the human body to the earth, the bones to mountains, the marrow to minerals, the emptiness within to seas, the intestines to rivers, the internal fat to marshes, the veins to rivers, the sense of empathy to civilization, the sense of savagery to ruins, and the breath to the blowing of the winds. The act of speaking has been likened to thunder in Sufi thought.

The beauty of humans and their participation in the secret of “the best of stature” might be due to their essence resembling the essence of this world. Ahsan at-taqwim (the best of stature) does not refer to physical appearance or matter but involves grasping the meaning called “husn” (beauty). Starting from the sense of beauty, the recognition of the Most Beautiful of the Beautiful, and becoming morally educated through His perfect attributes is essential in understanding Ahsan al-khalik, the most beautiful Creator. Human beings are naturally endowed with this capacity from birth.

Humans are not perfect from the perspective of external organs. For example, animals like elephants, lions, and tigers surpass humans in strength and power. The bat, also known as

the night bird, excels in hearing. Similarly, the tick surpasses all animals, and consequently humans, in smell. In fact, every being excels in a particular field. Thus, humans are not the most perfect animals. However, they are the most honored creation because it is stated, “We have certainly honored the children of Adam” (Al-Isra, 17/70).

The attribute of nobility has two aspects: physical and spiritual. The physical aspect includes both believers and non-believers, while the spiritual aspect is specific to prophets and faithful servants who, through their belief in prophethood and guidance, attain Islam and guidance.

Human beings have both a material and a spiritual aspect. Philosophers perceive humans as rational animals, while Sufis see them as creatures of love.

In the Quran, there are explicit verses that elevate and express the nobility of humans. Simultaneously, there are verses emphasizing human weaknesses, such as being constantly in need of God, having originated from clay, facing disputes and divisions, being impulsive, prone to rebellion, arrogant, capricious, ungrateful, sometimes ignorant, and unjust.

The responsibility entrusted to humans, as mentioned in the Quran, is often interpreted as intellect. By bestowing this trust, God holds humans accountable and subjects them to examination.

Human beings are considered as beings between angels and animals, possessing both reason and desire. Consequently, humans are inclined toward both good and evil. Alternatively,

it can be expressed that humans have both the qualities of angels – intellect and spirituality – and animals – instincts and desires – simultaneously.

I- SPIRITUAL STRUCTURE OF HUMAN

Sufis generally emphasize four significant features in the spiritual structure of humans: the heart (qalb), the ego (nafs), the soul (ruh), and the intellect (aql).

1. QALB (The Heart)

The term “heart” linguistically refers to turning something inside out, changing it, transforming it; it signifies the innermost, central, and essential aspect. In Sufi literature, the heart is often translated as “gonul” in Turkish. In religious texts, the focus is more on the functions of the heart than its essence. In the Quran and hadiths, the heart is considered the center of understanding, comprehension, perception, and thought. Verses like “They have hearts with which they do not understand” confirm this interpretation. The center of faith is also located in the heart. The expression “confirmation through the heart” in theology is related to the Quranic notion of “implanting and establishing faith in the hearts.”

The heart has two faces, one facing towards God and the other towards people. The actions of humans are of two types: those related to the body and those related to the heart. The bodily actions are external, while the actions of the heart are internal. The actions of the heart, determining the outcomes of worship, are matters such as sincerity (ikhlas) and piety

(taqwa), and have been considered superior to the actions of the body.

The terms “sadr,” “qalb,” “fuad,” and “lubb” in the Quran are synonymous and convey similar meanings.

The term “qalb” is used in two senses:

The first sense refers to a piece of flesh resembling a pine cone under the left breast (qalb al-sanubari). This piece of flesh is considered the essence and source of the soul.

The second sense relates to a divine and spiritual subtlety, associated with the physical qalb al-sanubari. According to Ibn Arabi, it is a luminous essence situated between the speaking self (An-nafs al-nathiqah) and the soul. It is described as having the soul within and the animalistic self as its mount. The Quranic verses “Indeed, it is not the eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts” (al-Hajj, 22/46) and “In their hearts is disease” (al-Baqarah, 2/11) refer to this inner essence.

2. NAFS (Self)

The term “nafs” denotes the essence, selfhood, and the self itself. It is a subtle point assigned to the bodily form and considered the seat of bad qualities. According to Sufis, the nafs encompasses the ill-fated qualities belonging to the servant and includes the bad habits and actions of a person. The ill-fated deeds of a person consist of wrongdoing and disobedience, such as unlawful desires earned through passions, arrogance, anger, hatred, and envy, as well as two types of the self’s actions:

sins committed with intent and those stemming from the self's lower and base qualities. The most difficult and problematic aspect of the self's deeds is the delusion that ugly actions are beautiful. It involves admiring one's own ugly deeds and thinking that one has value. In Sufism, this condition is considered a hidden form of shirk (polytheism).

Disciplining and purifying the self is possible through spiritual training. Allah states: "But as for him who feared the position of his Lord and forbade the self (nafs) from desire, then indeed, Paradise will be his refuge" (an-Naziat, 79/40-41).

The sayings from our Prophet, "The greatest enemy is the nafs (lower self) between the two sides" (Bayhaqi, az-Zuhd al-kabir, I, 156) and "We turned from the lesser jihad to the greater jihad, the struggle against the nafs" (Bayhaqi, az-Zuhd al-kabir, II, 165), along with the hadith "The true mujahid is the one who strives against his own self" (Tirmidhi, Fada'il al-jihad 2) and the verse "Indeed, the nafs (lower self) is ever inclined to evil" (Yusuf, 12/53), indicate that the nafs is the center of negative attributes.

3. RUH (The Spirit):

The ruh refers to the spirit, life, and soul. It is a divine and celestial subtlety assigned to the bodily form. As long as it resides in the body, Allah provides life and vitality to the body through the soul. A person is alive and animated not because of the soul but because of life. During sleep, the soul rises, separates from the body, and then returns. The verse that indicates the divine origin of the soul is: "When I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My Spirit" (Al-Hijr, 15/29; Sa'd, 38/72).

The soul is likened to a pleasant breeze giving life to the body, while the nafs is described as the source of movement, stillness, and desires, a warm breath. Although the question of whether the soul is a creation (*makhluq*) is a matter of dispute, Sufis generally accept its creation status, citing the verse: “The Spirit (*ruh*) is from the command of my Lord. And of knowledge, you have been given only a little” (*Al-Isra*, 17/85) as evidence. Ancient sages and physicians describe the *ruh* as a temperament (*mizaj*). They attribute to plants a vegetative soul or spirit (*nabati nafs* or *ruh*), to animals an animalistic soul or spirit (*haywani nafs* or *ruh*), and to humans a human soul or spirit (*insani nafs* or *ruh*), also known as *an-nafs an-natiqah*, *Ar-ruh al-idhafi*, or *Ar-ruh al-manfuhah*.

In plants, only the vegetative soul is present, while in animals both the vegetative and animalistic souls coexist. In humans, the vegetative, animalistic, and human souls exist together. Conditions such as growth, development, and reproduction are attributed to the vegetative soul; movements related to senses and will are ascribed to the animalistic soul; and intellectual activities such as thinking and reasoning are associated with the human soul. The vegetative and animalistic souls die, but the human soul does not; it lives on.

Some Sufis assert that the soul and the nafs (lower self) are the same, referring to the affirmative aspect of the self as the soul and the negative aspect as the nafs. Alternatively, they describe the nafs as the lower level of the soul or the first degree resulting from the union of the soul and matter. Therefore, what psychology studies is not the soul but the nafs, or

the psyche. As the nafs gains purity upward, its characteristics fade away. The degrees of the nafs, to some extent, indicate this ascent, and the nafs that reaches the mutmainna degree transforms from being a nafs to acquiring the characteristics of the soul.

On the other hand, some Sufis consider the nafs and the soul as separate entities, stating that they strive to subjugate each other. Since the soul encompasses the divine aspects of a person and the nafs embodies characteristics originating from the body, they engage in a struggle to dominate one another.

4. AQL (The Intellect)

The intellect is the capability of perception and comprehension. There are two kinds of intellect. One is the intellect that is concerned with knowing the truth of things, while the other is the intellect described by the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, “The first thing created by Allah is the intellect” (Al-Isfahani, Hilya, VII, 318), which grasps knowledge.

Sufis generally use the term “heart” instead of intellect, akin to the usage in the Quran. There is a certain relationship among the heart, soul, intellect, and mind: when desire prevails in a soul, it becomes the nafs; when the soul conquers unlawful desire, it becomes the intellect; and when it possesses qualities of faith, it is called the heart.

Hakim Tirmidhi, one of the early Sufis, explains the characteristics that constitute the spiritual and mental world of humans using the terms sadr, qalb, fuad, and lubb in his treatise called “Bayan al-farq,” which he derived from the Quran.

a. Sadr: It is the entry point for all kinds of doubts and calamities. It is the place where emotions such as need, desire, anxiety, and distress reside. Therefore, it may contract or expand at times. It is the governing center of the commanding self (*nafs al-amara*). It is where the light of Islam first enters. Indeed, the verse, “Allah has opened the heart of the one for Islam and provided a light from his Lord...” (*az-Zumar*, 39/22), illustrates this.

b. Qalb: It is the interior of the *sadr*. It is the center of feelings such as piety, humility, love, contentment, certainty, hope, and satisfaction. The heart is a lantern, and its light is the light of piety and certainty.

c. Fuad: Just as the *kalb* is in the middle of the *sadr*, the *fuad* is also in the middle of the heart. *Fuad* is the place of knowledge, inspirations, and visions.

d. Lubb: In linguistic terms, this concept is equivalent to intellect. According to Hakim Tirmidhi, it is the source of the light of oneness (*nur at-tawhid*).

II- INSAN AL-KAMIL (The Perfect Man)

The term “*insan al-kamil*” in Sufism has a meaning distinct from its literal sense, encompassing the person who, as Allah’s vicegerent on Earth, gathers within themselves all names and attributes in the form of “*Al-hadarat al-khams*” and “*maratib al-wujud*.”

The term “*insan al-kamil*” was not commonly encountered in the early Sufi period. However, Hallaj Mansur (d.

309/921), based on the hadith “Allah created Adam in His own image” (Bukhari, *Isti’zân* 1), asserted that Allah manifested Himself within His essence. Through this manifestation, Allah brought into existence a form that encompasses all His names and attributes.

Hallaj’s understanding laid the groundwork for the teaching of “*insan al-kamil*” in the work of Ibn Arabi (d. 638/1240). The idea of the perfect man is an extension of the concept of existence. According to Ibn Arabi, the universe was initially without a soul, like an unpolished mirror. Adam became the polishing and soul of this unpolished mirror. For him, the perfect man is the being who comprehends all the perfections of the divine names and attributes. The perfect man is the one who knows all the names of Allah. It encompasses all degrees of material and spiritual perfection.

The perfect man is indeed our master the prophet Muhammad ﷺ. This term does not however refer to the historical figure of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, but rather Muhammad as a prophet while still between the spirit and the body; in other words, the reality of Muhammad (Ibn Abi Shayba, *Musannaf*, VII, 329). The fifth of the “*Al-hadharat al-khamsah*” is the perfect man. The perfect man is the purpose of existence and creation. The divine will is realized through it. If the perfect man did not exist, Allah would not be known.

The sufis interpret the hadiths “The first thing Allah created is the intellect” and “The first thing Allah created is the pen” by considering the intellect and the pen as the “*haqiqat al-Muhammadiya*” or the reality of Muhammad. They express

that the intellect came before the light, and then the pen emerged. The hadith “We are the last but the first on the Day of Judgment” (Bukhari, Wudu’ 67, Jumu’a 1, 12) confirms this interpretation.

Aziz Nasafi (d. 700/1300) was the first to write an independent Persian work titled “*Insan al-kamil*” and defined the perfect man as a person who is complete in shari’a, tariqa, and haqiqa, saying, “A perfect person is one who is complete in good speech, good deeds, good character and good knowledge. One who achieves perfection in these four aspects is considered perfect.”

Following in the footsteps of Ibn Arabi and Aziz Nasafi, Abdul karim Jili (d. 820/1417) stated in his work with the same title that the perfect man is the “*haqiqat al-Muhammadiya*.” However, this reality appears in different names and forms as a prophet or saint depending on the time. The poet’s verse, “This world is a mirror, everything stands with the Truth. Allah is always visible from the Muhammadan mirror,” expresses this idea. The perfect man corresponds ontologically to the truths of existence. For example, his heart corresponds to the Throne (Arash), his essence to the Footstool (Kursi), his position to the Sidrat al-Muntaha, his aql to the Supreme Pen (Qalam), his soul to the Preserved Tablet (Luh al-Mahfuz), and his nature to the four elements.

The perfect human, being the representative of divine manifestations, is a way to recognize Allah. Therefore, in Sufi circles, the saying “He who knows himself knows his Lord”

has gained popularity. Haji Bayram Veli's couplet reflects this meaning:

*If you want to know yourself / Seek the essence within
Pass beyond your ego / Know yourself, know yourself*

According to the understanding of the Sufis, every human carries the potential to become a perfect human. Those who develop these potentials according to Sufi training methods are candidates for that station.

The concept of the perfect human, developed after Ibn Arabi, has been expressed in a specific way by later Sufis. Shaykh Aziz Mahmud Hudayi (d. 1038/1628), a great Sufi of the Ottoman period, particularly addressed this topic in letters he wrote to the sultans, saying, "The perfect man is the soul of all. He who makes the whole complete and gives the right of the whole. The one who sees Allah in people, and people in Allah, and tries to fulfill the rights of both." Erzurumlu İbrahim Hakkı (d. 1194/1780) also wrote a treatise called "İnsaniyet-i Kâmile," emphasizing the idea of the perfect human being.

C - THE ISSUE OF KNOWLEDGE IN SUFISM

The subject of knowledge and gnosis (ma'rifa) in Sufism is closely related to the concept of existence because existence is known through knowledge and gnosis. Knowing Allah is due to the divine "breath" (spirit) within human beings. The divine breath, which is the spirit, reaches the ocean of unity in the state of ecstasy and gathering, attaining unity by merging with the essence of the divine gem.

Gnosis or knowledge is nothing but recognizing the "dhat al-kibriyâ," which encompasses all beings. In the realm of existence, there is nothing but Allah and His actions. The existence is composed of His actions alone. Knowing His essence is only possible through His attributes and actions.

Qushayri describes knowing Allah through the knowledge received from Al-Haq (the Truth) as follows: "The wayfarer first recognizes Al-Haq through His attributes, names, and actions. Then, by purifying oneself through worship, servitude, and asceticism, one draws closer to Al-Haq. At that point, Al-Haq introduces Himself to the seeker, and thus the seeker becomes "Ma'ruf" to Al-Haq. Dhul-Nun al-Misri affirms this view by saying, "I knew Allah through His way of introducing Himself to me." When a person becomes unfa-

miliar with oneself and one's surroundings, they gain acquaintance (ma'rifa) with Al-Haq.

Gnosis is knowledge resulting from piety and spiritual journey. The knower can witness a thousand manifestations of Al-Haq everywhere. According to him, the universe is nothing but a mirror, and when one looks into it, they witness the manifestation of Al-Haq.

The knowledge directly and without mediation obtained from Allah is called inspiration (ilham). Inspirational knowledge occurs either by the divine address coming to the heart or by witnessing the unseen world. Knowledge obtained through inspiration does not come through thinking but flows into the heart through grace. The source of inspiration is either directly from Allah or through an angel. Indeed, the verse "By the soul and He who proportioned it, and inspired it with its wickedness and its piety" (ash-Shams, 91/7-8) indicates this.

Another name for reaching Sufi knowledge is "kashf" (unveiling). Kashf is the revelation of the hidden through the lifting of the veil. It means to become acquainted with the unseen realities by living and contemplating them. On the other hand, "mukashafa" is the observation of the spiritual realm by lifting the veil of the body and senses. The impurities of the material senses hinder the heart from seeing the spiritual realm. When this veil is removed through asceticism, struggle, and purification, the unseen realm begins to be seen, and this is called kashf.

Kashf and mukashafa provide hidden information about the unseen and divine realm that the Sufi cannot obtain

through the mind and sensory organs. The goal of mukashafa knowledge is to provide heart-based knowledge about topics such as human, existence, and Allah beyond the means of reasoning, observation, and inference.

Al-Ghazali sees the knowledge provided by the sense of certainty (*yaqin*) through spiritual pleasure and divine unveiling as the knowledge acquired by Sufis. Al-Ghazali names this knowledge as “ilm al-mukashafa.” According to him, the knowledge provided by the sense of certainty flows into the heart through inspiration, spiritual pleasure, and divine unveiling. Harith al-Muhasibi, one of the authors who influenced Al-Ghazali, also mentions that looking at things with “*ibrah*” or consideration will ultimately lead to divine inspiration and unveiling with the help of Allah. This knowledge is given to the hearts of the devoted by Allah directly, without any intermediary. This divine knowledge is an inspiration whose entry into the heart is unknown. Al-Ghazali refers to this kind of knowledge as “ilm al-mukashafa.”

Those who possess knowledge and wisdom acknowledge that knowing Allah through reason is not possible; one can only know Him when He introduces Himself. This happens through purification, obedience, and spiritual elevation, resulting in the knowledge, inspiration, or divine knowledge coming to the heart from Him. In a sense, Sufis consider inspiration and unveiling as sources of knowledge, sometimes even more than reason.

Al-Ghazali asserts that the knowledge obtained through the feeling of certainty is a form of knowledge that he could

not obtain through various methods. In many of his works, Al-Ghazali examines the issue of knowledge and dedicates a section named “The Unveiling of the Wonders of the Heart” in his major work, “Ihya’ Ulum al-din”. In this section, he discusses the issue of knowledge and states the following:

“The heart possesses the ability to receive the manifestation of the sublime truth present in everything. The truths of knowledge are reflected from the preserved tablet (lawh al-mahfudh) mirror to the mirror of the heart. The curtain between these two mirrors is sometimes lifted by hand, sometimes by the wind that moves it. Occasionally, breezes of grace blow, and the curtain in front of the heart’s eye lifts, allowing some of the things written in the lawh al-mahfudh to be reflected in the heart. This process sometimes occurs during sleep, and through this, a person may know some things that will happen in the future. The complete lifting of the curtain signifies death because, in death, the hidden truth of things is revealed. However, sometimes, even in a waking state, the curtain may be lifted from the middle through Allah’s hidden favor. Extraordinary knowledge comes to the hearts from behind the curtain of the unseen. This can happen suddenly, like a lightning bolt, or sometimes sequentially, but in a limited form. The prolonged duration of this state is rare. However, the lifting of the curtain is not within the person’s control.

Sufis prefer knowledge gained through inspiration rather than acquired through study. According to them, the path involves struggling against the ego, getting rid of bad qualities, severing all worldly attachments, and turning completely

towards Allah. Whenever a person does this, Allah turns towards their heart, illuminates it with the light of knowledge, showers His mercy upon it, light shines therein, the chest expands, and the secrets of the spiritual realm become apparent. The veil that had previously covered it is lifted by divine mercy, and divine truths begin to shine within. The only task a believer can perform is to purify their soul, prepare themselves, and focus their attention to await the favors that divine mercy will open to them.

A Sufi who makes such preparations isolates themselves in a room, engaging only in worship and obedience. They sit there with their heart detached from the world, focusing on a single occupation. They occupy their mind with nothing other than Allah. During seclusion, they continue to remember Allah by saying, 'Allah, Allah,' and their heart joins in this remembrance. Eventually, without their tongue moving, they start to remember with their heart. They patiently continue this remembrance until only the meaning of the remembrance remains in their heart. When a Sufi reaches this point, and their will is sincere, their determination is strong, they are not driven by desires, and the allure of the world does not distract them, then, in that case, the lights of truth will shine in their heart.

The prevailing view among Sufis after Al-Ghazali is that knowledge based on unveiling (*kashf*) and inspiration (*ilham*) is fundamental. Ibn Arabi states, 'Sufis receive knowledge from the same source that brings revelation to the prophets.'"

D- SOME SUFISM ISSUES

I- KARAMAH, RU'YA, AND RIJAL AL-GHAYB

1- KARAMAH (Extraordinary States)

Honour, generosity, favor, and benevolence are some of the meanings of “karamah” in Arabic. The manifestation of extraordinary states in a believing servant is called “karamah.” Sunni scholars unanimously agree that karamah is real. The one who is given karamah should be a righteous believer with faith. Extraordinary occurrences seen in people without faith are not considered karamah but are attributed to coercion, magic or deception.

Miracles displayed by prophets are called “mujiza.” However, a miracle is shown by a prophet to affirm his prophethood during disputes or debates with adversaries. A prophet has the ability to display a miracle whenever he wishes, and the manifestation of a miracle is obligatory. Karamah, on the other hand, is concealed, and its manifestation is not obligatory. Both miracle and karamah, like all actions, belong solely to Allah.

Friends of Allah cite the following verses as evidence in response to those who reject karamah, such as the Mu'tazilites:

a. Maryam's mother had devoted her to Allah. When she was born, they placed her at the door of the temple. The care of her was taken over by Zakariya عليه السلام, the husband of her aunt. Zakariya would find provision every time he entered to visit Maryam. When asked where it came from, he would answer, 'It is from my Lord.' This was because Allah provides sustenance without measure to whom He wills. (Ali Imran, 3/36-37)

b. When Maryam gave birth to her son Isa, she was told, "Shake the trunk of the palm tree towards you; it will drop fresh, ripe dates upon you." Maryam shook the tree, and fresh dates were poured onto her from a dry trunk. Such extraordinary favors bestowed upon Maryam were not due to prophethood; they were, at most, considered as her miracles. (Maryam, 19/25)

c. In the story between Prophet Musa عليه السلام and Khidr, Musa, a prophet, was guided for a while by Khidr, whom Allah referred to as "one of Our servants." Through the divine knowledge given to him, Khidr solved certain mysteries. As Khidr was not a prophet, this was considered a form of karamah. (Al-Kahf, 18/78-82)

d. Asaf ibn Barhiya, the vizier of prophet Sulayman, brought the throne of Bilqis to him in a very short time. This event is narrated in the Quran in Surah Maryam (19/38-40). Asaf, who brought Bilqis's throne to Jerusalem, was not a prophet but a member of prophet Sulayman's community. This event could only be considered as a karama.

According to Sufis, besides the verses, there are hadiths supporting the legitimacy of karamah:

a. In the story of Jurayj who was falsely accused by a harlot attempting to seduce him, a child bore witness against her in the court. This led to the acquittal of Jurayj. (Anbiya 48; Muslim, Birr 48)

b. Three friends among the companions of Rakim who were caught in a rainstorm during a journey and sought refuge in a cave were saved by praying. (Bukhari, Adab 5)

c. The Prophet's informing about a cow that spoke when loaded heavily: "I was created not for this but for farming." (Muslim, Fada'il as-sahaba, 1)

In addition to these, some companions' karama-like events are narrated in hadith books and Sufi classics, such as al-Luma', al-Taarruf, Al-Risala al-Qushayriyya, and Kashf al-Mahjub.

Sufis generally divide miracles into two categories: *kawnî* (phenomenal) and *hakikî* (real).

aa. *Kawnî karâmah* involves displaying extraordinary feats, such as flying in the air, walking on water, or knowing the thoughts of the heart.

bb. *Hakikî karâmah*, on the other hand, is an extraordinary manifestation related to knowledge, gnosis, and morality. It aims to positively develop the disciples' states, effectively influencing people's undesirable traits and instilling good qualities through wisdom, knowledge, chastity, and affection. This type of miracle is also referred to as scientific and spiritual miracles. Attaining an understanding of Allah's essence, attributes, names, and actions is considered a scientific miracle.

The miracles respected by Sufis fall into this category. However, what the general public admires is *kawni karamah*. People desire to witness such miracles in their spiritual leaders or saints. When unable to witness them, they might fabricate and attribute miracles to them. The saying “The shaykh doesn’t fly; it’s the disciple who makes him fly” conveys this understanding.

Sufis generally emphasize the importance of steadfastness rather than *karamah* from the early periods. They view true *karamah* as “compliance with the sharia and living according to the sunnah.” The saying attributed to Bayazid Bistami, “If you see someone sitting in the air, do not believe him until you see his commitment to Allah’s commands and prohibitions, and his adherence to the sunnah.” Since the secrecy of *karamah* is essential, Sufis define *karamah* as “*hayz al-rijal*” (the menses of men). Just as women conceal their menstruation, the men of God, the *rijal*, also conceal their *karamas* in the same way. Just as a woman who does not experience menstruation is not considered a woman, a saint without *karamah* is not considered a saint. *Karamah*, being hidden, and, more importantly, leaning towards the real rather than the natural, is present in the knowledge and lives of Sufis.

Some Sufis consider *karamah* as a spiritual obstacle and veil on their path, expressing concern that it might be a divine deception (*Makr al-Ilahi*). For instance, Abu Hafs al-Haddâd, who went on a spiritual retreat with his disciples, thought to himself: “I wish I had a sheep so that I could slaughter it and offer it to my guests.” As soon as this thought crossed his mind,

a deer comes running down from the mountain and lays its head on Haddad's lap. Seeing this, Haddad starts crying and says, "I thought I had fallen into a situation similar to the arrogance that is accepted as a divine deception."

2- RU'YA (Dreams)

A dream refers to the thoughts and events that occur in the mind during sleep. Sufis especially consider dreams as one of the paths to knowledge, particularly during the journey of spiritual development, extracting signs and evidence for spiritual progress from the dreams they see. The evidential nature of dreams is mentioned in the Qur'an, such as the dream of Ibrahim ؑ sacrificing his son (as-Saffat, 37/103), the dream of Prophet Yusuf where eleven stars prostrate to him, the dream of the Pharaoh of Egypt, and the dream of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ about the conquest of Mecca, all of which came true. The truthful dreams seen by prophets are considered equivalent to revelation. The issue lies with dreams seen by other people.

The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, "The dream of a believer is one forty-sixth of prophethood", indicates that the truthful dreams of believers are akin to the truthful dreams seen in the first six months of prophethood. Hadiths stating that while the door of prophethood is closed, the door of truthful dreams is always open have been considered as evidence in Sufi circles that dreams can be a means of acquiring knowledge. Sufi classics like the *Al-Risala al-Qushayriyya*, *At-Taarruf*, and the *Ihya* of Al-Ghazali have dedicated special sections to dreams. The Prophet's narration of his own

dreams and his interpretation of the dreams of his companions encouraged Sufis to take an interest in the subject of dreams. Al-Ghazali considered the nature of dreams as part of the subtleties of the science of unveiling (Ilm al-mukashafa) and did not find it appropriate to disclose them. Sleep and dreams are siblings of death, and some of the things known through death can be revealed through dreams.

Dreams can be of three types: dreams from Allah, from an angel, and from the devil. A dream from Allah is clear and does not require interpretation. A dream from an angel needs interpretation. Dreams from the devil are best to be ignored as they are confused and mixed, so they have no origin or source. There is no need to interpret such dreams.

Ibn Khaldun, in his “Muqaddima,” states the following about dreams and their interpretation: “A dream, while one is asleep, occurs when the soul, detached from external sensations and engaged in internal forces, suddenly perceives its spiritual essence, understanding it with a spiritual perception, and gains awareness of the information reflected from the unseen to its essence. The human soul presents to the imagination the unseen information it perceives directly, and the imagination puts these meanings into similar patterns. When these meanings are put into similar patterns, interpretation becomes necessary. If the speaking soul, by dissociating itself from materialism and analyzing the forms it received through external sensations and stored in its memory before perceiving the meanings from the unseen, interprets and combines these forms, the dream becomes mixed.” (Muqaddimah)

Ibn Khaldun, on one hand, asserts that perceiving the unseen is permissible and possible during sleep, particularly in relation to dreams and their interpretation. On the other hand, he aligns with Al-Ghazali, stating that this is also possible outside of sleep. He argues that when the information obtained in dreams is strong, and the inspirations do not resemble each other and are free from similitudes of analogy, there is no need for interpretation.

Some Sufis considered dreams as a source of knowledge. Even certain Sufis like Ibn Arabi and Ismail Hakki of Bursa went so far as to claim that even hadiths could be directly received from the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through dreams. The hadith “Whoever sees me in a dream has truly seen me, for Satan cannot impersonate my form” (Muslim, Ru’ya 1) serves as evidence for them.

When dreams were seen as a source of knowledge, dream interpretation became a science and art. In some Sufi orders, the spiritual ascent of the seeker is followed through the dreams they see. While some orders attach great importance to dreams, others do not value them much, considering them not from the means of knowledge. For instance, the Naqshbandis and the Malamis do not give much significance to dreams, saying, “Leave dreams, look at the vision.”

In conclusion, since dreams are not a source of knowledge, they cannot change religious judgments. It would be incorrect to act based on dreams alone or to consider dreams as evidence. Dreams have highly relative and variable characteristics, making them susceptible to exploitation. In recent

times, some individuals attempt to use dreams, whether theirs or someone else's, as a stepping stone to gain spiritual status, power, or societal respect. Therefore, relying solely on dreams opens the door for a person to pursue things they do not deserve and may never deserve. While I do not completely reject dreams, considering all the painful experiences we have collectively gone through in recent years, I do not find it correct to act based on dreams and consider dreams as evidence.

3- RIJAL AL-GHAYB (Men of the Unseen)

The men of the unseen are referred to as the friends of God or unknown companions of the Truth. Those special friends of God who are characterized by the secrecy of friendship with Allah. Certain hadiths narrated by Hakim Tirmidhi, who combines knowledge of Sufism and hadith, and from hadith scholars like Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and some Sufis using different expressions, have come to form the basis for the mystical figures known by Sufis as the *abdal*, the *qutb*, the *ghawth* and the *awtad*, among others.

“From my Ummah, there will always be forty noble ones (*nujaba*’); when one dies, another will take his place. Thirty of them have the heart of Ibrahim...” (*Khatm al-awliya*) *Abdal* is the plural of “*badal*,” which means substitute. They are considered as substitutes for the great prophets. “They are those whom Allah has made the earth submissive to. They are the cause of the order in the world. It is believed that they have authority and organize the affairs of humans. The superior among the saints are called “*awtad*” (pillars). Above them are the “*ruwas*” (mountains). In times of calamity, the recourse

of people is to the awtad, and the recourse of the awtad is to the ruwas. Ruwas are the distinguished saints, and they are governed by the ruwas. According to another classification, the two individuals who come after the qutb (pole) are called the two imams. One is called “imam al-yamin” (imam of the right), and the other is called “imam al-yashar” (imam of the left). The imam al-yamin adheres to the qutb’s rulings, and the imam al-yashar adheres to his truths. The imam al-yashar takes the place of the qutb. The qutb and the two imams form a trio.

Women can also be part of this community. The Abdal receive their name because they substitute their material existence for the sake of meaning, their egos for the sake of spirit, and their perceived existence for the sake of true existence.

Qutb: Linguistically, it means the pivot of a millstone. In Sufi terminology, it refers to the greatest saint. The head of all the men of the unseen, the one who holds authority over the entire universe.

Ghawth: In times of distress, he is the refuge and assistance sought from the qutb. When Sufis are in trouble, they seek refuge in the ghawth by saying, “Come to us, O Ghawth!” The Ghawth extends a helping hand to those seeking assistance. Shaykh Abdulqadir al-Jilani was famously known as “Ghawt al-Adham.”

Apart from these, there are also the “nujaba,” whose number is mentioned as eight in one narration and forty in another, and the “nuqaba,” whose number is stated as ten or three hun-

dred, who are those chiefs who possess awareness of the inner worlds of individuals.

Generally, it is accepted that the stations of the men of the unseen, also known as rijal al-ghayb, will not remain vacant; gradually, someone will be elevated to replace the one who has passed away. In conclusion, it should be mentioned that the matter of the rijal al-ghayb is not a matter of creed that every Muslim must believe in.

Although the term “Abdal” has a broad usage in Sufism, since the 14th century, it has gained widespread usage, especially among the Sufi orders that carry Alawi motifs and are Alawi in terms of sect. Some have tried to give the impression that this concept is exclusive to those orders, but this is not correct.

II- SILSILA – IJAZA

1- SILSILA (Spiritual Chain)

Since Sufi education is realized through the coming together of individuals through the path of spiritual transmission (iqas), which involves the transfer of knowledge along with the states, it necessitates the presence of a spiritual guide (murshid). The characteristic of this spiritual knowledge having a continuation from the authority of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has made it essential to seek a spiritual “silsila” (chain) in the guides of this path.

The term “silsila” refers to the chain of teachers reaching back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the Sufi orders. In the

early centuries, there was a necessity for a chain of narration in Islamic sciences such as Qur'anic commentary (tafsir), hadith, and jurisprudence (fiqh). Especially those narrating opinions and views in the sciences of hadith and tafsir generally emphasized attributing their ideas and views to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through the companions. However, as Islamic sciences began to be recorded in writing from the 3rd century onwards, the necessity for a chain diminished.

From the 6th century onwards, the chain (silsila) became less emphasized in the sciences of tafsir, hadith, and jurisprudence. However, due to the nature of Sufi teachings, the practitioners of Sufism did not abandon the tradition of the spiritual chain. In fact, they transformed the originally oral tradition of the chain, which was narrated verbally in the early centuries, into a written form over time. While other scholars gradually abandoned the tradition of the chain, Sufis, due to the importance they attached to their knowledge, continued to preserve this tradition. Some even claimed that this tradition was something “new” and later concocted.

In Sufism, there are two spiritual chains (silsilas) that have continued from the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to the present day. One goes through Abu Bakr ؓ, and the other reaches Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through Ali ؓ. The chains associated with other companions have got lost over time. Silsila is considered a channel of “divine inspiration” (faydh al-ilahi) coming from Allah through the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and this kind of inspiration is called “faydh al-isnadi” or “fuyudhat al-silsila al-jalila.”

Silsila is considered a spiritual lineage. The Qur'an, with the verse "The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are their mothers" (al-Ahzab, 33/6) and the verse stating that believers are "brothers" (al-Hujurat, 39/10), likened the Islamic community to a large family. Also in Sufi orders, where the shaykh is the father, the shaykh's wife is the mother, and the disciples are brothers and sisters. The genealogy of this spiritual family is the silsila, reaching back to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Those who do not know their silsila are like those who do not know their "shajara" (family tree). It is believed that such meticulousness strengthens the sense of belonging among the followers of the Sufi order.

All Sufi orders have a "silsila," but in some silsilas, it seems historically impossible for some of the individuals involved to have met. In such cases, it is said that the meeting took place through the "uwaysi" tradition. The uwaysi tradition refers to the meetings of people in the unseen realm where no physical meeting was possible.

The belief that the source of the blessings (faydh) of the individuals in the silsila is the persons mentioned in the chain has led to the mentioning of their names in various forms, sometimes in poetry and sometimes in prose, at different times. While all Sufi orders attach importance to this, the Naqshbandis in particular call their Sufi ceremonies "Hatm-i hâcegân." the respectful recitation of the names of the individuals in the Sufi order's silsila. During this, certain chapters of the Qur'an and verses, prayers and salutations, and the

remembrance of the oneness of Allah (tawhid) and the lafz al-jalalah are recited.

The mention of names has significant benefits in connecting the heart of the wayfarer (salik) to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through his shaykh. Contemplation of death (tafakkur al-mawt) and spiritual connection (rabitah), which involves visualizing of the Sufi disciples sat in a “half-moon” shape from the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to their shaykh and then to the disciple himself, and the disciple humbling himself in the last link of the chain, is considered a spiritual meeting and encounter. This situation opens the heart of the seeker through the path of “faydh al-isnadi” and contributes to spiritual ascensions.

Some works have been written to determine the silsilas of the Sufi orders, and these are called “silasila-nâme” or “tomar.” Silasila-nâme is also used for those silsilas that include a member of the Prophet’s family (ahl al-bayt).

2- IJAZA (Authorization)

In order to prevent individuals without competence and those who have not undergone spiritual training from making claims of spiritual leadership over time, Sufi shaykhs and members of the Sufi orders have introduced the requirement of “ijaza” (authorization). Ijaza is the written or oral permission given by shaykhs to individuals who have completed their own spiritual journey and proven their qualification to train disciples. If the permission is documented with a written certificate, it is called an “ijaza nâme” (authorization certificate). As the inheritance of shaykhdom from father to son began to

prevail after the 17th century, leading to a decline in Sufi education, the requirement of an “ijaza nâme” became common for shaykhs of Sufi lodges. A wayfarer (sâlik) who receives authorization from a shaykh is considered a “khalifa” (successor), and they are permitted to open their own lodge.

There were two types of authorization certificates for succession (khilafa): one is limited to the shaykh’s lifetime, known as “khilafat al-naqis,” and its validity ends with the death of the shaykh. The other type is “khilafat at-tammad,” which allows the successor to take the place of the shaykh even after the shaykh’s death. For both receiving guidance (irshad) and obtaining authorization, it is necessary to undergo spiritual training from a qualified guide (murshid) who himself has authority from an uninterrupted spiritual lineage (silsila).

After the establishment of the Majlis al-Mashayikh (Council of Shaykhs) in 1866, authorization certificates gained even more significance, especially in the appointments of shaykhs, proving to be a crucial aspect of the process.

III- ISTIMDAD - TAWASSUL – TAWAJJUH

1- ISTIMDAD (Assistance)

“Istimdad” means to seek aid or to ask for help. “istighathah” is also a call for help and seeking assistance. Both words refer to the same concept. Undoubtedly, the source and the ultimate refuge for all kinds of help are Allah the Almighty. Directly seeking help from anyone other than Allah is not permissible. In Sufism, seeking istimdad/istighathah from the Prophet, a spiritual guide, or similar spiritual figures is not

a direct request for help from them. Instead, it is a means to benefit from their spiritual status and ranks in the divine presence. Phrases like “Madad Ya Shaykh,” “Madad Ya Abdulqadir,” “Madad Ya Ghawth al-‘Adham,” and “Madad Ya Hadrat Hudayi” express the spiritual love for these figures.

Human beings, by nature, have a need for refuge. A child seeks shelter and closeness to their parents, a student to their teacher, and a disciple to their spiritual guide. Istimdād is an expression of this longing for refuge.

The term “*insan al-kamil*” refers to someone who has been perfected with the character of Allah and His Messenger, adorned with perfect attributes, and favored by God. This person is a recipient of spiritual influence because they reflect the divine attributes. It is crucial to understand that real influence belongs to Allah; the disciple or individual is a manifestation of this influence. Therefore, when a seeker or disciple seeks *istimdad*, *istighathah*, or *isti’anah* (help) from their spiritual guide or a revered figure, they are, in reality, presenting their request to Allah. In the belief of unity of existence, all actions belong to Allah, and power belongs solely to Him.

From this perspective, there is no Shariah-based danger in *istimdād*. However, if someone seeks something not from Allah but from the person, they are seeking help from, it would be impermissible and lead to associating partners with Allah (*shirk*).

Istimdād is considered acceptable, whether seeking help from the living or the deceased, as long as one does not attribute any independent power or existence to them. Sufis use a narration as evidence for *istimdād* and *istighathah*: “When

one of you loses something or finds himself in a place where he has no one to seek help from, let him say: ‘O servants of Allah, help me,’ for indeed, Allah has unseen armies.” (Al-Mudathir, 74/31)

Sufis also use the concept of *isti’anah*, which implies seeking help from the deceased, alongside *istimdād* and *istighathah*. Some even cite the narration: “When you are confused in your affairs, seek help from the people of the graves (*isti’anah*).” (Aliyyul-Qari, *Sharh al-Musnadi Abi Hanifa*, I, 227) Without delving into the debate over the authenticity of this hadith found in some tombs, it is essential to discuss its meaning.

The “people of the graves” refer to those who prepare for death by contemplating death itself. When a person becomes overwhelmed by worldly affairs, reflecting on the state of those in the graves and contemplating death can help refocus and seek aid from Allah by thinking about the condition of the deceased. The remembrance of death protects one to some extent from being deluded by worldly pleasures, as emphasized in the hadith: “Frequently remember the destroyer of pleasures, death.” (Tirmidhi, *Qiyama* 26)

In some Sufi orders, there is a practice where the seeker, during the remembrance (*dhikr*) session, seeks *istimdād* (assistance) by visualizing spiritual grace flowing from the heart of their spiritual guide to their own heart. Indeed, in the Naqshbandi tradition, the process of *istimdād* during *dhikr* is described as follows: “The one seeking the essence of *dhikr* sits with crossed legs, closes their mouth, closes their eyes, suppresses all sensations and activities, turns their attention to the

spirituality of their guide, and seeks istimdad from them.” (see Al-Risala al-Bahaiyya, Istanbul 1328, p. 25)

2- TAWASSUL (Means of Approach)

Tawassul can be explained as approaching something or someone as an intermediary or means for the sake of Allah, seeking intercession and using a medium. The following Quranic verse is considered evidence for the permissibility of tawassul: “You who believe, fear Allah and seek the means of nearness to Him...” (Al-Ma'idah, 5/35). Additionally, two hadiths support tawassul:

Umar Ibn al-Khattab ؓ used to do tawassul to seek rain with the Prophet Muhammad's uncle, Abbas, saying, “O Lord, when faced with drought, we used to seek your intercession through our Prophet. You would bless us with rain. Now, we seek intercession through his uncle. Grant us rain and water.” (Bukhari, Istisqa 15)

A person whose eyes were closed came to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and said: “O Messenger of Allah, my eyes are closed; pray to Allah for me.” The Prophet instructed him, “Perform ablution, pray two rakats, then say, ‘O Allah, I seek nearness to You through the intercession of Your Prophet Muhammad. O Muhammad, I seek your intercession for the opening of my eyes. O Allah, accept his intercession for me.’ After this, the Prophet added, ‘Whenever you have a need, do the same.’ The man's eyes were opened after this incident.” (Ibn Majah, Iqama 5)

Tawassul can occur through acts of worship and deeds or by making the Prophet Muhammad, saints, and righteous individuals as intermediaries. There is no doubt at all about the legitimacy of using acts of worship as a means to draw close to Allah when it leads to His pleasure. The permission for making the Prophet Muhammad an intermediary is evident from his own statements and the second hadith. Accepting saints and righteous individuals as intermediaries is generally based on the first hadith. For example, in the interpretation of the verse about approaching Allah through intermediaries, Ismail Hakki of Bursa points to these views (*Ruhu'l-beyân*, II, 388). The controversial aspect lies in using the deceased as intermediaries in tawassul. Sufis accept that even after their departure to the afterlife, the spiritual presence of prophets, saints, and righteous scholars can be approached. Tawassul primarily aims to draw closer to Allah and seek His approval. Seeking the fulfillment of a wish or seeking relief from affliction by approaching the spiritual presence of prophets, saints, or righteous individuals falls within the scope of tawassul.

In the understanding of tawassul or the use of intermediaries, the multitude of worship and obedience is not a guarantee of entering paradise. Entering paradise and closeness to Allah occur purely by His mercy and generosity. Neither paradise nor closeness can be achieved without His favor. Therefore, seeking from Allah through acts of worship and obedience, as they draw the servant closer to Allah, also opens the gates of paradise. In the Sufi perspective, the idea that “my deeds will save me, and I am sufficient” is incorrect because

acts of worship are not the price or reward for paradise; they are only an excuse if it is the will of Allah.

3- TAWAJJUH (Spiritual Transmission)

Tawajjuh is inclination or turning towards something. It is generally used to express turning towards God and establishing a spiritual connection. It is used to signify a disciple directing themselves towards their spiritual guide and attaching their heart to them. It is used to indicate the act of a spiritual guide placing their disciple directly in front of them, gazing at them without speaking, signifying an intimate and silent communion. In the context of this kind of tawajjuh, a narration is mentioned in Sufi circles: “Whatever Allah has filled my chest with, I have poured it into Abu Bakr’s chest in the same way.” (Mawsu’at Atrafi al-Hadith, IX, 156). This statement is often cited in Sufi environments to describe the spiritual connection between a spiritual guide and their disciple.

In the aspect of tawajjuh where the spiritual guide influences the disciple through their gaze and breath, preparing them for a spiritual ascent, it is likened to the concentrated sunlight through a magnifying glass, which ignites the substances it touches. By focusing all the spiritual power and influence onto the heart of the disciple, the guide prepares them for spiritual advancement.

In Naqshbandi Sufism, the appropriate form of tawajjuh from the disciple to the guide is known as “rabt al-mahabbah” (the connection of love). The disciple directs their inclination towards the spiritual guide through love, and the spiri-

tual influence of the guide manifests within the inner being of the disciple. By eliminating human weaknesses and qualities, the disciple gradually assimilates into the color of their guide. The resulting heart-to-heart connection, personality transfer, and assimilation are born out of this love.

Additionally, in Naqshbandi tradition, there is another form of tawajjuh called “tawajjuh al-Qalbi” (heartfelt inclination). During the remembrance of the Divine names, the seeker contemplates the meaning with the eye of their heart. They turn their heart towards understanding this meaning. As a result, the angelic realm manifests to them. Through this process, the seeker becomes transient in their own attributes, and they remain eternal with the attributes of the One they remembered. Union and annihilation (*fana*) are realized through subtle remembrance, and eternal existence (*baqa*) in Allah is thus completed.

IV- RABITAH

“Rabitah” is a Sufi concept and issue that is widely discussed and debated, both in favor and against. The term “rabitah” conveys the meanings of connection, attachment, and union. In the Qur’an, variations such as “ribat,” “murabatah,” and “rabt” are used. “Ribat” signifies standing guard on the frontier or the place used for guarding. It carries both a physical and metaphysical, as well as a mystical, meaning. Additionally, derived from this root, the words “rabitah” and “rabt” can also mean asceticism or a monk. Ragib al-Isfahani (d. 502/1108) explains in his Qur’anic lexicon, “al-Mufradat,” that in the verse (Ali Imrân, 3/200), “O you who have believed, persevere,

compete in patience, and be stationed (stand guard) and fear Allah that you may be successful,” the word “murâbatah/ribat” has two meanings. One is standing guard against the enemy in Muslim military camps, and the other is staying vigilant against the self by waiting for the next prayer after performing one. (Al-Mufradat, Cairo 1970, p. 271)

Although Rabitah is often associated with the Naqsh-bandiyya Sufi order, it exists in all Sufi orders. In fact, “rabitah” is considered a “cross-cultural common feature” because it involves benefiting from the elevated actions of ideal heroes, merging with those heroes, and following their path. Rabitah is a human interaction, manifesting the positive or negative impact of physical, social, moral, spiritual, and ethical personalities on others. Every field of knowledge and art has its master and expert, serving as a role model for its members.

Rabitah is, in a sense, seen as a manifestation of the desire to imitate and emulate in Sufi education. The natural inclination to imitate, starting with imitating parents in childhood and progressing to imitating teachers and ideal personalities, is inherent. However, the imitation referred to here is not the imitation of passing fads but rather the assimilation. Simple imitations are fleeting, like passing trends, whereas assimilation is the advanced form of imitation, involving acceptance and gradually making it a habit.

Rabitah is the sought-after bond of love to be established with individuals possessing perfected character. It involves becoming one with the lover and the beloved. This condition is formed by unconsciously adopting the behaviors of loved

ones. The actions of those we love play a crucial role in shaping our character because we embrace them without prejudice and become one with them through identification. Just as gravity is the principle for stars, the Earth, and the sun, “love” is the equivalent us.

In Sufism, to cultivate the ideal individual, *rabitah* places a perfected model in the hearts of disciples. Proverbs such as “Every brave heart conceals a lion,” “Grapes ripen looking at each other,” “Stand next to a lame horse, either because of its character or its water,” and “He who lies down with the blind learns to see” express the effects that can result from persisting in this spiritual and physical closeness that is referred to as *rabitah*.

Approaching the topic from a psychological perspective, psychology acknowledges the presence of the “contagion property” in energetic characters considered as examples. Powerful individuals are always a source of inspiration for the weak, essentially compelling them to follow in their footsteps. The ability of a commander to set an army in motion when taking a step forward is the best example of this. Powerful individuals and great leaders, like magnets, attract and influence individuals with similar characters. The leadership displayed by powerful individuals is contagious; everyone wants to imitate them, and the admiration felt for them enhances mental capabilities. It instills resistance against the self, which hinders spiritual elevation.

1- THREE TYPES OF RABITAH

a. *Tabie Rabitah*: The natural bond of love that a person feels for their children and close relatives.

b. *Sufli Rabitah*: The heartfelt connection, interest, and love felt to a degree of dependence on worldly matters, which are not religiously commanded and may even be disapproved of.

c. *Qudsi Rabitah*: To connection of love for Allah and His Messenger or for the righteous servants of Allah due to their righteousness.

This third type of *rabitah* is the *rabitah* in Sufism. It involves establishing a spiritual connection with a perfected spiritual guide who possesses divine and intrinsic qualities, has reached the level of witnessing and realization, and maintaining a heartfelt connection. This connection includes cherishing the mentor's presence, imagining their appearance, demeanor, and spirituality in both their presence and absence, and striving to emulate their conduct. The crucial aspect of *rabitah* is to preserve the mentor's appearance and demeanor in one's imagination, not just a photograph. The disciple should focus their attention on the mentor. This preservation of appearance and demeanor in the imagination eventually leads to being adorned with the mentor's ethics and characteristics, termed "*fana fi al-Shaykh*."

The goal of *rabitah* in Sufism is the "*rabitah al-hudur*" or the connection with the presence of Allah. It aims to perpetuate the feeling that the seeker is constantly in the divine presence, as if always seeing Allah before them. Achieving

this is very challenging, if not impossible, because Allah is not a tangible being. Therefore, there is a need for a tangible object that can concentrate the worshipper's focus and facilitate their concentration. In Sufism, this object is the spiritual guide (shaykh) in the form of a perfected human being, who is a manifestation of Allah's perfect manifestations. The seeker must first connect their heart to this perfected human being, then to Prophet Muhammad, and ultimately to the Almighty. According to this situation, there are three levels of *rabitah*.

2- THREE LEVELS OF RÂBITAH

a. *Râbitah* of the Beginners: According to the hadiths "A person will be with those whom he loves" (Bukhari, Adab 96) and "Among them are those who try to resemble any group" (Ibn Hanbal, II, 50), the etiquette shown in the presence of the spiritual guide (*murshid*) should also be maintained in their absence. This includes adopting the mentor's characteristics (*fana fi al-shaykh*).

b. *Rabitah* of the Intermediates: Acting as if in the presence of the Prophet Muhammad at every moment of life, integrating with the exemplary ethics known as the "*uswat al-hasanah*" (exemplary model) of Prophet Muhammad (*fana fi al-Rasûl*).

c. *Rabitah* of the Accomplished: Achieving the "*rabitah al-hudur*" (connection with the presence of Allah) with the sense that "Wherever you are, He is with you" (Al-Hadid, 57/4) and realizing the secret of the verses "We are closer to him than (his) jugular vein" (Qaf, 50/16) through divine contemplation (*fanafillah*).

In a narration by Sufyan bin Uyaynah, it is stated: “Divine mercy descends when the righteous are mentioned” (Abu Nuaym, Hilya, VII, 285). Divine mercy is not solely invoked by remembering the righteous; rather, it is the sincere desire to follow them, the eagerness to emulate them, and the aspiration to rectify one’s faults that activates action and activity in an individual. The source of good deeds lies in the good desires and intentions in the heart. Remembering the righteous and meditating on their virtuous character creates the motivation for such desires, making remembrance a means to divine mercy. Just as remembering the righteous leads to emulation and, consequently, to divine mercy, the desire to think about and emulate their beautiful ethics produces the same result.

3- EVIDENCES OF RABITAH ACCORDING TO SUFIS

While Sufis view rabitah as a natural occurrence, they cite certain verses of the Quran as evidence. Some of these verses include:

a. “You who believe, fear Allah and be with those who are true.” (at-Tawbah, 9/119) Regarding the concept of companionship in this verse, Ubaydullah Ahrar (d. 895/1490), one of the spiritual leaders of the Naqshbandi order, explains: The command to “be with the truthful” implies a continuous companionship. Companionship can be of two types: real and legal. Real companionship is being physically together with the truthful in the same gathering, with a great sense of heart tranquility. Legal companionship, on the other hand, is being together with them in a mental, intellectual, and heartfelt sense by imagina-

tively envisioning their appearance and demeanor when physical proximity is impossible.

b. “You who believe, fear Allah and seek the means of nearness to Him and strive in His way.” (Al-Ma’idah, 5/35) The term “means” (wasilah) in this verse is absolute and therefore general. Since rabitah is considered a means to closeness to Allah, it has been put forward as evidence for rabitah. It is known that a wasilah is anything that can be utilized to approach Allah. Considering righteous individuals, who are known for their proximity to Allah and are mentioned in the hadith as “those whose faces will be remembered when seen” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd 4), as a means to Allah is both an act of intercession (tawassul) and rabitah. There are permissions in hadiths for seeking intercession through righteous individuals. The reported case of Umar رضي الله عنه seeking intercession through Abbas رضي الله عنه, the uncle of the Prophet, is evidence of this.

c. “Say, ‘If you love Allah, then follow me and Allah will love you and forgive you your sins.’” (Ali Imran, 3/31) The term “follow” in the verse is achieved through seeing (ru’ya). Seeing has both a physical and a spiritual aspect. Physical seeing is through the eyes, while spiritual seeing is through the heart. Rabitah is nothing other than spiritual vision. When a person engages in rabitah with their spiritual guide, through the silsila (spiritual chain) to which they are connected, it is believed in Sufism that they are considered to have seen Prophet Muhammad.

d. “And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him. She closed the doors and said, ‘Come, you.’ He said, ‘(I seek) the refuge of Allah. Indeed, he is my master, who has made good my

residence. Indeed, wrongdoers will not succeed. But she desired him, and he would have inclined to her had he not seen the proof of his Lord. And thus, We averted from him evil and immorality. Indeed, he was of Our chosen servants.” (Yusuf, 12/23-25)

In the interpretation of this verse, Zamakhshari explains the term “burhan” as follows: The intention of the term “burhan” here is when the image of Ya‘qub ﷺ appeared suddenly before Yusuf’s eyes, and with surprise, Ya‘qub pointed at him with his finger in his mouth, saying, “Be careful, turn away from her.” Seeing this image vividly in front of his eyes, Prophet Yusuf gathered himself and refrained from wrongdoing. (see: Abu al-Qasim Jārullah, al-Kashāf, Qahira 1385, II, 312) As explained in Zamakhshari’s interpretation of this verse, rābita is like Yusuf envisioning the image of his spiritual guide in his eyes and heart, just as Yusuf saw the image of Ya‘qub.

Expressing salutations and blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to create a bond of love in the heart is also a form of rābitah. When Hasan ؑ asked his uncle Hind bin Abi Hala about the features of the Prophet Muhammad’s appearance, saying, “I want you to describe him to me so that I can form a heart connection with him by considering his characteristics” (Tirmidhi, Shamāil, 17-181), it can be seen as a form of heart connection and rābitah.

In conclusion, rābitah is not a form of polytheism that introduces the spiritual guide as a third entity between the servant and Allah; instead, it is the disciple’s emulation of the model personality in front of them and maintaining a heart-to-heart connection with them.

CONCLUSION

Sufism represents a spiritual dimension of religious life, expressing the profound aspect of spirituality, and stands as a significant element and institution within the 14 centuries of Islamic culture and civilization. It is recognized for contributing to self-awareness and the interpretation of life for the entity called human. With its arguments, Sufism offers a different perspective on understanding and living Islam.

In the early 1970s, when we were students at Istanbul Graduate Institute, our venerable teacher Mahir İz used to say to us about this course: “Studying Sufism should achieve one thing: preventing accidents that may arise from making vehemently critical speeches against Sufi individuals you will encounter during your duty or among your congregation in the mosque.”

Indeed, making critical speeches against all Sufi institutions and communities in a generalized manner reduces our impact. Avoiding falling into such a tactical mistake by taking this course or reading such a book would, like my late teacher believed, be a significant gain.

I personally believe that people’s interest in Sufism and Sufi orders is somewhat related to natural inclination and upbringing, and partly a matter of destiny. However, I am of

the opinion that those who provide guidance services in society evaluating Sufism as if it were an entirely new religion, by confronting this community in their speeches and writings, close off all communication channels.

Sufism and Sufi orders are institutions where the human element dominates, especially in terms of guidance and communication. Where there is a human, mistakes can certainly occur despite all attention and sensitivities. Moreover, errors that are not related to established principles are things that can be forgiven. Correct and incorrect judgments are often relative; an action or behavior that seems very good to one person may appear entirely wrong and faulty to another. Therefore, it is necessary to examine whether there are errors related to the clear rulings and established principles of Islam. Are prohibitions considered permissible? Are obligations being ignored? These need to be assessed.

The fact that the majority of the terminology and concepts used in Sufism are derived from the Qur'an, Sunnah, or legitimate practices in life demonstrates that the source of Sufism is natural and intrinsic. Additionally, throughout history, Sufi institutions such as orders, lodges, *zawiyas*, and organizations like *futuwwa* and *ahilik* have played crucial roles in the spread, practice, and preservation of Islam, a truth acknowledged by everyone, regardless of their stance.

The expression "Dervish State," used by the English historian Pall Wittek for the Ottoman period, illustrates the influence of Sufism and Sufi institutions from the state's elites to the common people, from madrasas to the army.

Similar to others, the presence of some deficiencies and mistakes associated with the human element in Sufi institutions is not a surprising matter. Certainly, “all Sufi institutions or members of Sufi orders are not without flaws.” It is necessary to look at the situation with this perspective as well.

During the periods when Sufism institutionalized, the state allowed these institutions to establish self-control mechanisms and, through central centers called “*âsitâne*,” supervised the *tekkes* in the provinces. In periods when the state became more centralized, a governance and oversight mechanism called “*Majlis al-Mashayikh*” was established in Istanbul. There are two fundamental dimensions to the supervision of lodges and *zawiyas*:

- 1- The path and method they follow in guidance activities,
- 2- Whether the endowments of Sufi lodges are used in the direction specified in the endowment.

During the tumultuous years corresponding to the inter-regnum period in the early centuries of the Ottoman Empire, the rebellion initiated by Shaykh Bedreddin, who gained significant influence, posed a prolonged threat to the state. Consequently, the government, having learned from bitter experiences, became more cautious in its dealings with followers of Sufi orders. While it did not outright oppose Sufi institutions, it did not hesitate to take action against those who committed mistakes or engaged in religious and political wrongdoings approved by the religious authorities. Indeed, evidence of this is seen in the execution of certain adherents of

the Malamis and other Sufi orders for doctrinal or sometimes political reasons. Additionally in the early 19th century, closing both the Janissary Corps and Bektashi lodges, which seemed to be interconnected like meat and nail, is an example of this.

Since Sufism culture is generally centered around humans, the works written by Sufis and mystics touch the inner worlds of people. In particular, the encounter of works written by Sufis such as Rumi and Yunus Emre with the masses directs the level of piety towards the heart and moral aspect.

It cannot be said that the balance between worship and love is managed very well in religious life. The fact that the sciences that teach the pillars and conditions of worship emphasize worship while almost ignoring love, and some Sufis, prioritizing love and neglecting worship, have led to some deviations. The correct approach is to read the balance between worship and love as stated in the divine hadith: “My servant approaches Me with the deeds I have obligated upon him. This process of approach continues with voluntary acts of worship. Finally, I love him. When I love him, I become the eyes with which he sees...” (Bukhari, Al-Riqaq, 38)

In Turkey, on November 30, 1925, with Law No. 677, tekkes (Sufi lodges) and zawiya (small Islamic spiritual retreats) were closed, and Sufi activities were banned. However, the spiritual needs of people did not cease. Just as in a country where you close all medical faculties and do not train doctors, the need for physicians will not cease. Consequently, health officers, health workers, barbers, hairdressers, and even veterinary professionals, among many related occupations, stepped in to

fill this void. The same happened in Turkey after the closure of tekkes. Many unqualified, incompetent, and inadequate individuals tried to exploit people's spiritual needs by taking on the role of a spiritual guide (murshid). Because legitimate and competent spiritual guides were banned, they were replaced by new emerging exploiters, and people fell victim to these exploiters. The true nature of the FETÖ (Fethullah Terrorist Organization) incident in Turkey could only be understood by many after the treacherous coup attempt on July 15.

Considering all that has happened, a new mechanism should be established to control and supervise the community and Sufi structures in our country. On the one hand, opportunities should not be provided for secret plans of power and authority behind closed doors, while, on the other hand, the efforts of those who follow a righteous path should be facilitated.

Sufism and spiritual life are needs according to the interests and inclinations of individuals, but I believe that it is the duty of the state, the Directorate of Religious Affairs, and the theological academia to manage this need correctly and inform people accurately.

If this book in your hands can shed light in this valley for our esteemed readers and dear students, we say, "Alhamdulillah ala kulli hal, siwa al-kufri wa ad-dalal: Praise be to Allah in every circumstance, except for disbelief and misguidance; for all conditions, thanks be to Allah."

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