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One thing that, in all fairness to Qushairi, must be pointed out regarding this last comment of his is that in spite of his mode of expression being very much like that of the Malabads, the Carmathians, etc., against whom Hujwiri wishes to warn his readers, Qushairi does not mean to maintain that ‘anaa is the actual ‘anaa of the mortal self and baqqi is its actual baqqi in the Real as the Carmathians, etc., maintained. Qushairi, on the other hand, maintains, as would be clear from the comments from him quoted earlier, what in substance is maintained by Hujwiri himself.

Although there are scores of such pairs and groups of terms as have been discussed above, what has been said so far should be enough to give us some idea at least of what type of men the early Sufis were, and what went into making them what they were. If, on the other hand, we were to go into a detailed study of their mode of life we will not be able to do justice to it without taking into consideration not only their basic attitudes, as has been done so far, but even the specific applications of these to each and every little detail of their daily lives. The early Sufi was involved in his Creator in a relationship, an extremely pale example of which is the relation of the maddest love between two human beings. As the lover thinks of nothing, dreams of nothing, sees nothing, and feels nothing but his beloved and of his beloved all the time, a Sufi thinks of nothing, dreams of nothing, sees nothing, and feels nothing but his beloved and of his beloved, that is, his Creator. The result is that when one studies the lives of these Sufis, one finds that they take not even a single step in their lives without feeling sure within themselves that this and nothing else will please Him. How they should walk when they tread the earth, how they should talk when they mix with their fellow-men, how they should dress, what they should eat, what they should drink, what they should do when they get up in the morning if they go to sleep at all—each and every little detail of everything relating to these matters is prescribed for them. And the basic principle underlying all such prescriptions is that even the maximum of obedience, service, sacrifice, devotion, and love is not enough; so they should always regard the maximum as the minimum, and constantly strive for a devotion more thorough and a love more intense. It is this burning desire to lose oneself in the Creator on an ever-increasing scale in everything, major or minor, over the whole period of one's life, which distinguishes the early Sufi from everybody else.

Early Sufis (Continued)

Chapter XVII

EARLY SUFIS (Continued)

Although space does not allow us to go into the detailed study of the lives of the early Sufis we may yet give a brief biographical account of some of them who made a definite contribution towards the general doctrine which we have described in the preceding chapter.

A

SUFIS BEFORE AL-‘ALLĀJ

1. Hasan of Basrah (21/642-110/728)

Hasan of Basrah belonged to the class of those who did not see the Prophet but his Companions (Sa‘bah) and the Companions of his Companions (Tābi‘īn). Although he took no active part in politics, yet in his fight against the Umayyads, he was sympathetic towards Imam Husain.

Hasan represented a tendency towards otherworldliness, piety, and asceticism in which the element of fear of God predominated. In a letter to ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, the Umayyad Caliph, he said, "Beware of this world, for it is like a snake, smooth to the touch, but its venom is deadly. . . . Beware of this world, for its hopes are lies, its expectations false." Later on, in the same letter, he praised hunger and poverty as symbols of the righteous and looked upon wealth as an evil which distracts people from their rightful goal. He regarded piety as the quintessence of true religion. According to him, it has three grades. The first is that a man should speak the truth even though he is excited through anger. The second grade of piety demands that he should control his bodily organs and refrain from things which God has forbidden. The third and last stage of piety is that he should desire only those things which lead to God's pleasure (ridā'). A little of piety is better than prayer and fasting of a thousand years. It is the lust for this world and avarice that destroy piety.

Hasan was so much overcome by fear and was seldom seen laughing that when he sat he appeared as if he were sitting before an executioner. He was ever conscious of his sins and the fear of hell. He thought he would consider himself fortunate if he would be delivered from hell after tribulations of a thousand years. Someone asked him how he felt himself in this world. He replied

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4 Ibid., p. 19.
5 Ibid., p. 21.
6 Ibid.
Imagine a people in a boat which has capsized and everybody is trying to save himself by clinging to broken pieces of wood. Such is the real position of man in this world. 7

2. Abu Hāshim of Kūfah (d. 168/776)

Abu Hāshim belonged to Kūfah. There were people before Abu Hāshim who were famous for their asceticism (zuhd), piety (warrū'), engagement in the science of practical religion, trust in God, and love; but it was Abu Hāshim who first of all came to be called by the name of Sufi. The first monastery where the Sufis began to gather for exchange of ideas and mutual discussion about their mystic experiences was established by some wealthy Christian in Ramla in Syria where he had observed some Muslim saints engaged in mystic exercises in the open.

According to Sufyān Thaurī, Abu Hāshim knew the subtlety of riḍā' (showing off) more than anybody else. Abu Hāshim once said that it was far easier to pull down a mountain with the help of a needle than to remove vanity and arrogance from one's heart. On seeing a judge coming out of the house of a minister, he remarked: May God protect people from knowledge that does not lead to the benefit of the heart. 8

All these incidents point to the fact that, according to Abu Hāshim, inner transformation of the heart was the essence of Sufism.

3. Ibrāhīm b. Adham (d. 169/777)

Ibrāhīm b. Adham, whom Junaid of Baghdaḏ called the key to Sufism, also advocated asceticism which, according to him, involved otherworldliness, celibacy, and poverty. For him a true saint is one who covets nothing of this world, nothing of the next, and devotes himself exclusively to God. 9 In the same strain he told a questioner who had asked him about his occupation that he had left the world to the seekers of the world and the hereafter to the seekers of the hereafter, and had chosen for himself the remembrance of God in this world and the beatific vision in the next. 10

He advocated celibacy and poverty as the prerequisites of true asceticism. According to him, who adopts poverty cannot think of marriage, for it becomes impossible for him to fulfil the needs of his wife. When a Sufi marries, he enters, so to say, a boat, but when he gets a child, his boat sinks and his asceticism disappears. 11 A certain man was bewailing his poverty. Ibrāhīm b. Adham remarked that he had paid nothing for this poverty of his. The man was surprised and asked: Is poverty a thing to be bought? Ibrāhīm said: Yes, I chose it of my own free-will and bought it at the price of worldly sovereignty and I am ready to exchange one instant of it with a hundred worlds. 12

In Ibrāhīm b. Adham we meet with the practice of courting blame (malāmah) for the purpose of self-discipline. Once he was asked if he was ever happy in his life by attaining his heart's desire. He replied: Yes, twice. He related two different events when people not knowing him mocked and jeested at his cost. 13

He referred to the principle of tawakkul (trust in God), but in his case it was a moral principle as enunciated in the Qur'an, which does not exclude earning one's livelihood by one's own efforts.

4. Shaqiq of Balkh (d. 194/810)

Shaqiq of Balkh was a pupil of Abu bin Adham. He developed and perfected the doctrine of tawakkul. 14 The story of his conversion to Sufism is revealing. Once in the course of his trade he went to Turkestan and visited a temple of idol-worshippers. Shaqiq told the people there that their Creator is omnipotent and omniscient and they should, therefore, be ashamed of worshipping idols which are powerless in providing them anything. The idol-worshippers told him: If your Creator is omnipotent and all-knowing, why have you come into this distant land for seeking livelihood? Can He not provide you in your own town? On hearing this Shaqiq gave up the world, went to Khurasan and became an ascetic. 15

Shaqiq interpreted tawakkul as negation of earning one's living. He once remarked that the efforts put in by man in seeking livelihood are the result of his ignorance of God's ways of dealing with men and, therefore, to work hard in order to win bread is unlawful (harām). 16

5. Ḥarīth Muḥāṣibi (165/781–243/857)

Ḥarīth Muḥāṣibi started his life as a theologian and belonged to the school of Šāfī'i. He advocated the use of reason and employed the technique of the Mu'ṭazilīs in controversies with them and was thus a precursor of the AḥāRITEs. His career resembled that of Ghazālī's in some respects. Both had a complete theological education, were well versed in philosophical and religious problems of their day, and were later on converted to the Sufistic Path, partly under the stress of circumstances and partly as a result of their inner moral

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7 Ibd., p. 28.
8 Jāmi, Naṣṣāh al-UNS, pp. 31–32.
10 'Atṭār, op. cit., p. 65.
11 Ibd., p. 62.
12 M. Smith, Readings from the Mystics of Islam, pp. 19–21.
13 Hājwī, op. cit., p. 68; see also 'Atṭār, op. cit., pp. 65–66. The events related in the two books are different, but they lead to the same conclusion.
15 Ibd., p. 127.
16 Ibd., p. 129.
strain. Muḥāṣibī’s book Wāṣyā, which again served as a prototype for Ghazālī’s Muqaddimah, relates the events which revolutionized his life. The first thing that struck him was the division of the Muslim community into numerous sects and sub-sects each claiming the monopoly of salvation. He devoted a great part of his life to discovering the clear way and the true path amid these divergences. He met all kinds of people who claimed to know and follow the truth, but in almost every case he failed to be convinced; most of them were busy in worldly gains. “I looked to knowledge for guidance, thinking deeply and considering long. Then it was made clear to me, from God’s Book and the Prophet’s practice and the consensus of believers, that the pursuit of desire blinds a man and so prevents him from seeking the right path, and leads him astray from truth.” This conviction led him to self-examination (muhāṣebah, which brought him the title Muḥāṣibī),17 self-discipline, and moral transformation. He realized that the path of salvation consists in the fear of God, compliance with His ordinances, sincere obedience to Him, and the imitation of His Prophet. When he tried to search for the ordinances in the life and conduct of the saints, he was again struck by differences. Of this much, however, he was assured that only those people can be sure guides who, knowing God, labour to win His pleasure. But at first it proved almost impossible for him to find such men and yet he continued his quest, for it was a matter of life and death for him. Finally, through God’s grace he was successful in his search and came across people who were models of piety: God opened unto me a knowledge in which proof was clear and decision alone, and I had hopes that whoever should draw near to this knowledge and make it his own would be saved. When this enlightenment dawned upon him, the course of future action was clear. “I believe in it in my heart and embraced it in my mind and made it the foundation of my faith.”18

In spite of his conversion, his attitude towards mysticism was marked by his intellectual approach. His famous disciple Junaid of Baghdaḏ relates how he used to discourse with him on different topics of mysticism. Muḥāṣibī would come to Junaid’s house and ask him to come out with him. Junaid would protest at being dragged from solitude into the world of allurement. But Muḥāṣibī would press him to ask whatever question came to his mind. This questioning and answering proved very stimulating to him and when he returned home he would put the entire discussion in a notebook.19 Here we see the picture of a great Sufi teacher who approached his subject in the intellectual spirit of a great scholar.

An important contribution of Muḥāṣibī to the science of mysticism is his definitions of station (maqām) and state (ḥāl) and his inclusion of satisfaction (riḍā) among the states. Station, according to him, is the particular position

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17 Ibid., p. 146.
19 Ibid., pp. 48-47.

Early Sufi (Continued)

which a seeker attains after making necessary efforts to reach it; it involves all the obligations pertaining to the stage. State (ḥāl), on the other hand, is something that man receives through God’s grace without involving any effort on his part. In short, station belongs to the category of acts, while state belongs to the category of gifts,20 as stated in the preceding chapter.

Satisfaction (riḍā) is an attitude of mind which also, according to Muḥāṣibī, a man is able to attain through divine grace and not through his own efforts. He says, “Satisfaction is the quintessence of the heart under the events which flow from the divine decree.”21

With regard to the problem whether an attitude of poverty (jauḥ) or wealth (ghinā) is preferable for a mystic, Muḥāṣibī holds that the latter attitude is better. He argues that wealth is an attribute of God, whereas poverty cannot be ascribed to Him and, therefore, an attribute common to God and man is superior to an attribute that is not applicable to God.22 Similarly, his attitude in the controversy as to whether presence (ḥujjūr) or absence (ghināb) is preferable for the mystic, is that presence is superior to absence, because all excellences are bound up with presence. He says that absence from one’s self is a preliminary stage on the mystic Path which gradually leads to presence before God, and the Path becomes for him an imperfection after he has arrived at the goal.23

6. Rābī’ah al-‘Adawīyyah of Baṣra (85 or 99/713 or 717-185/801)

Rābī’ah al-‘Adawīyyah of Baṣra was a famous woman mystic, well known for her advocacy of disinterested love for God. She was born into a poor home, stolen as a child, and sold into slavery. But her devotion to a life of piety and prayer enabled her to win her freedom. She decided to adopt a life of celibacy in spite of many offers of marriage by renowned mystics of her time. Once her companion suggested to her in the spring season to come out of the house to behold the works and beauties of God. She replied: Come you inside that you may behold their Maker. Contemplation of the Maker has turned me away from the contemplation of what He has made.24

Rābī’ah’s main contribution to mysticism was her doctrine of disinterested love of God which served both as a motive and a goal for her. With most of her contemporary mystics the guiding motive for asceticism and other-worldliness was the fear of hell or the reward of paradise. Rābī’ah, on the other hand, tried to emphasize that a man who claims to attain union with God should be oblivious of both. ‘Aṭār relates that once some mystics came to Rābī’ah. She asked: Why do you worship God? One said: There are seven stages in

20 Ḥujjūr, op. cit., p. 181.
21 Ibid., pp. 179, 190; see also ‘Aṭār, op. cit., p. 145.
22 Ḥujjūr, op. cit., p. 21.
23 Ibid., p. 249.
24 ‘Aṭār, op. cit., p. 46.
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hell, and everybody has to pass through them; therefore, in fear and dread of them, I worship. Another replied: The eight stages of paradise are places of great delight and a worshipper is promised complete rest there. Râbi‘ah replied: He is a bad servant who worships God for fear of punishment or desire of reward. They asked her: Why do you worship if you have no desire for paradise? She replied: I prefer the Neighbor to the neighbour’s house (i.e., paradise). She added that God is worthy of worship even if there is no motive of fear or reward.25 It is related that one day Râbi‘ah was running with fire in one hand and water in the other. People asked her the meaning of her action. She replied: I am going to light fire in paradise and to pour water on hell so that both veils may completely disappear from the pilgrims and their purpose may be sure, and the servants of God may see Him without any object of hope or motive of fear.26 In the following verses, she distinguishes the two kinds of love, selfish and disinterested:

In two ways have I loved Thee: selfishly,
And with a love that worthy is of Thee.
In selfish love my joy in Thee I find,
While to all else, and others, I am blind.
But in that love which seeks Thee worthily,
The veil is raised that I may look on Thee.
Yet is the praise in that or this not mine,
In this and that the praise is wholly Thine.27

The object of this disinterested love, according to Râbi‘ah, was union with God. She says: My hope is for union with Thee, for that is the goal of my desire.

7. Dhu al-Nūn Miṣrī (180/706-245/859)

Dhu al-Nūn Miṣrī is regarded by most biographers as a renowned mystic. He was the first to give expression publicly to his mystic experiences.28 Like other early mystics, he practised asceticism of extreme type,29 regarded the temptations of self as the greatest veil,30 and looked upon seclusion as indispensable for the promotion of sincerity in a Sufi.31 According to him, there are


Early Sufi (Continued)

two different paths for the mystic to follow. The first path, lesser in degree, is to avoid sin, to leave the world, and to control passion; the second path, higher in degree, is to leave all besides God and to empty the heart of everything.32

Dhu al-Nūn interprets tawakkul (trust in God) as opposed to reliance on intermediate causes and the use of planning.33 It demands solitude and complete break with the world and its people, and total and full reliance on God.34 Repentance, according to him, is essential for everybody; the common people repent of their sins, while the elect repent of their heedlessness. Repentance is of two kinds: repentance of return (inâdâb) and repentance of shame (istîhîd). The former is repentance through fear of divine punishment, the latter is repentance through shame of divine clemency.35

Dhu al-Nūn distinguishes knowledge from certitude (yaqîn). Knowledge is the result of sensory perception, i.e., what we receive through bodily organs, while certitude is the result of what we see through intuition.36 In another context he says that knowledge is of three kinds: first, knowledge of the unity of God and this is common to all believers; second, knowledge gained by proof and demonstration and this belongs to the wise, the eloquent, and the learned; the third, knowledge of the attributes of Unity and this belongs to the saints, those who contemplate the face of God within their hearts, so that God reveals Himself to them in a way in which He is not revealed to anyone else in the world.37 It is this knowledge which is called gnosis (mârifah), the idea of which, it is claimed, was first introduced into Sufism by Dhu al-Nūn. The core of gnosis, according to him, is God’s providential communication of the spiritual light to one’s heart.38 The gnostics see with direct knowledge, without sight, without information received, without observation, without description, without veiling, and without veils. They are not in themselves; but in so far as they exist at all, they exist in God. Their movements are caused by God and their words are the words of God which are uttered by their tongues, and their sight is the sight of God which has entered into their eyes.39 Thus, with Dhu al-Nūn the highest achievement of the mystic is to get super-intellectual knowledge known as gnosis which involves complete unconsciousness on the part of man. In one of his statements quoted by ‘Aṭṭâr, he says, that “the more a man knows God, the more is he lost in Him.” It appears that he had in his mind the mystic state which his contemporary, Bâyazîd of Bistâm, designated as fana'.
Bāyaḍīd Biṣṭamī was a Persian Muslim whose ancestors were Zoroastrians. In his early life he was a jurist and was reckoned among aṣṣāb al-rā'i, the followers of Abu Ḥanīfah, but later on he turned to Sufism. His teacher in mysticism was a Kūra. It is related that he associated with a mystic Abu ‘Ali of Sisod, who taught him the doctrine of annihilation in unity (fan'ī fī al-tauḥīd) and in return Abu Yazid taught him the doctrine of monotheism as embodied in the Qur’ānic chapters, Fatīhah and Ikhlas. He was familiar with the Indian practice of “watching the breaths” which he described as the gnostic’s worship of God.

For thirty years Bāyaḍīd wandered in the deserts of Syria, leading a life of extreme asceticism—scarce sleep, food, and drink. He once said that a mystic can reach his goal only through blindness, deafness, and dumbness. He seemed to be very scrupulous in the observation of Islamic injunctions and would not tolerate any deviation, however small or insignificant it might be.

In Bāyaḍīd’s utterances we notice a distinct tendency towards monism. He tries to reach the divine unity by the process of abstraction (tajrīd) till he is devoid of all personal attributes and feels himself as well as others submerged in the One. In this state of unity he gave expression to his experiences which remind one of the an al-Ḥaq of Hallaj. “I went from God to God, until He cried to me, ‘O thou I.’ “Glory to me! How great is my majesty.” “When I came out of my self, I found the lover and the beloved as one, for in the world of thought, all is one.” For twelve years I treated the self (nafs) in me as a smith does with his material, heating and beating alternately in the fire of penance and with the hammer of blame (ma’dmah) till it became a mirror. For five years I was busy in polishing this mirror with different kinds of religious practices. For one year I looked within myself, and discovered a girdle of infidelity (zunudr) round my waste. For another five years I tried to remove that girdle till I recovered my true faith. Then I found everything dead before my eyes and God alone living.” What is ‘ṣūra? It is I. What is Chair (fursī)? It is I. What is the Tablet or the Pen? It is I. What are prophets like Abraham, Moses and Muhammad? They are I. Explaining it further, he remarked that whoever becomes annihilated in God finds that whatever is, is God. His negativism (tajrīd) is illustrated by the following quotation: “Nothing is better for man than to be without aught: having no

asceticism, no theory, no practice. When he is without all, he is with all.”

A mystic should be in a domain where neither good nor evil exists; both good and evil belong to the phenomenal world; in the presence of unity there is neither command (amru) nor prohibition (naḥl).

Bāyaḍīd is the first Sufi who gives a detailed description of his mystical experience and calls it by the name of ascension (mi’rāj), a practice which was later followed by ibn ‘Arabi and others. We give below a few passages from the account as given by ‘Attar in his Tashkhirah.

“When I attained the stage of indifference (īṣābsha) towards the things of this world and was lighted up by the light of God, several mysteries were revealed to me. I looked from God towards myself and found that my light was utter darkness in comparison with God’s light, my loftiness was utter lowliness; it was all purity there and all darkness here. But when again I looked, I found my light in His light, my loftiness in His loftiness, and that whatever I did I did through His power. His light shone in my heart and I discovered that in truth all worship was from God and not from me, though all the time I had thought that it was I who worshipped. I felt perplexed and received the explanation: All that is, is I and not I. I looked from God towards God and saw Him as the only reality. I remained in this stage for some time, left all efforts and all acquired knowledge. Grace from God began to flow and I got eternal (nūḥ) knowledge. I saw that all things abide in God.

“Then I was given wings and I began to fly in the air and saw strange and wonderful things. When He noticed my weakness, He strengthened me by His strength and put the crown of honour on my head. He opened the gate of the avenue of divine unity (tausūh) before me. Then I stayed in the stage of malakūt till the apparent and hidden aspects of I-ness vanished. A door was opened into the darkness of my heart, and I got an eloquent tongue to express tāsuḥ and tajrīd (abstract unity). Now, my tongue came from God, my heart felt the effulgence of His light, and my eyes reflected His creativity. I spoke through Him and talked through His power. As I lived through Him I became eternal and immortal. When I reached this stage, my gestures and my worship became eternal; my tongue became the tongue of unity (tausūh) and my soul the soul of abstraction (tajrīd). It is He who moves my tongue and my role is only that of an interpreter: talker in reality is He, and not I. ‘My soul passed through all the world of the unseen. Paradise and hell were shown to it but it paid no attention to them. It traversed the different spheres where it met the souls of prophets. When it reached the sphere of the soul of Muhammad, it saw millions of rivers of fire without end and a thousand veils of light. If I had put my foot into them, I would have been burnt. I lost my senses through awe and fear. I tried hard to see the ropes of Muhammad’s tent, but could not till I reached God. Everybody can reach God according

49 Ibid., p. 9.
50 Jami, Naḥṣah al-Uṣūs, p. 59.
51 Ibid., p. 60.
52 ‘Attar, op. cit., p. 92; see Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. XII, p. 12a.
54 Ibid., p. 90; see Hujwīrī, op. cit., p. 217.
56 Ibid., p. 92.
57 Ibid., p. 92.
58 Ibid., p. 112.
to his light, for God is with all; but Muhammad occupies a prominent position, and so unless one traverses the valley of tauhid, one cannot reach the valley of Muhammad, though as a matter of fact both valleys are one."

9. Junaid of Baghdad (d. 298/910)

Junaid of Baghdad was well versed in theology, jurisprudence, and ethics and was acclaimed as a leader in the science of Sufism by the Sufis of all schools. He was perhaps the first mystic who explicitly expressed his indebtedness to 'Ali for his mystic knowledge, for 'Ali, according to him, possessed an abundance of both exoteric and esoteric knowledge ('ilm and iskand). He studied law under Abu Thaur and associated with Harith Mubāsibī and discussed different problems of Sufism during walks with him.

Junaid advocated the principle of sobriety (sabr) as opposed to that of intoxication (sukr). According to him, intoxication is an evil, because it disturbs the normal state of a mystic and leads to the loss of sanity and self-control. In this connection, the conversation between Junaid and Hassām, when the latter after leaving the society of 'Ali b. 'Uthmān al-Makki came to Junaid seeking his company, is illuminating. Junaid refused to accept him as his disciple because, as he said, association demands sanity which was lacking in him. Hassām replied: O Shaikh, sobriety and intoxication are two attributes of man, and man is veiled from his Lord until his attributes are annihilated. Junaid replied: You are in error. Sobriety denotes soundness of one's spiritual state in relation to God, while intoxication denotes excess of longing and extreme of love, and neither of them can be acquired by human effort.

This advocacy of the doctrine of sobriety made Junaid a model Sufi who was acceptable both to the mystics and the theologians, and it is for this reason that we find in him an advocate of religious law. Nobody could raise any objection against him with regard to his apparent behaviour (zāhir) which was in perfect consonance with the Sharī'ah, or with regard to his inner state (batin) which was in perfect harmony with the principles of mysticism.

According to him, the only one who can truly traverse the Path (farā'ah) which walks with the Book of God (al-Qurān) in his right hand and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet in his left hand. He preferred to wear the dress of the 'ulamā' rather than mystics and in spite of constant requests by his disciples and others he would not like to change it for the woolen garb (khirṣah) of the mystics.

According to him, the only safe path open to the people is the path laid down by Muhammad, for true and sure knowledge is the knowledge revealed by God in the Qurān and enunciated by the Holy Prophet, as embodied in the Sunnah. Tauhid, according to Junaid, is the separation of the eternal from that which was originated in time, for, as he puts it, God cannot be comprehended by any of the categories of our phenomenal existence. Explaining it further, he says that true belief in unification is “that one should be a figure in the hands of God, a figure over which His decrees pass according as His omnipotence determines, and that one should be sunk in the sea of His unity, self-annihilated and dead alike to the call of mankind to him and his response to them, absorbed by the reality of the divine unity in true proximity, and lost to sense and action, because God fills us in Him what He has willed of Him, namely, that his state should be as it was before he existed.” According to Junaid, the efforts of man in search of truth throughout human history have been directed towards fulfillment of the covenant entered by man in the presence of God and to return to the state in which he was before he was born.

Most of the pantheistic Sufis look upon Ibīs as their teacher in unification and regard his refusal to bow down before Adam as a testimony of his strict unitarianism. In his conversation with Ibīs, Junaid asked him the reason for his refusal and received the same reply. But Junaid does not become an “advocate of the devil” like other pantheistic mystics, and points out his (the devil’s) mistake in taking cover under God’s will (maṣūlah) in order to violate His command (amr). Junaid said, “You lie. Had you been an obedient servant, you would not have transgressed His command,” thus stressing the strictly monothetic position that moral behaviour is the sine qua non of a truly religious life which consists in total obedience to God’s command (‘ubūdiyyah). He defines ‘ubūdiyyah as the state in which a man realizes that all things belong to God, that He is the cause of their being and existence, and to Him alone they will all return.

Trust in God (tawakkul), according to Junaid, is to maintain your relation with God now, as you had before you came into existence; it consists neither in acquisition (kash) nor in non-acquisition, but in putting your heart in tune with God’s promise. Repentance involves three stages: first, the expression of regret at the wrong done; secondly, the resolve to avoid doing that wrong for ever; and, thirdly, to purify oneself of all dross, evils, and impurities.
and Turkestân (as far as Māsin-Turzan), with a kind of apocalyptic goal (seeking the hiding-place of the Ṯalqānīyin, the future Ansār al-Mahdi). Then he performed his last hajj; on the Yaum 'Arfa'i, he dedicated himself, at the Wafqah, as a substitute for the shabibān (just as some Shī'ahs think of the Martyr of Karbala as shabibān 'ašām). Back in Baghdad, he began an extraordinary way of talking in the streets, about his desire of dying as sacrificed by the law for the sake of the Law (huwwa 'antam musājādūna, wa ana shabīdū). It was in the last days of Mu'tazid's Caliphate that a decree (furūq) was given against al-Hallāj for his queer way of proving his love for God by offering his life, by a Zahiri lawyer ibn Dāwūd (d. 297/910), the author of a charming anthology about pure love (Kitāb al-Zāhrūl). But another lawyer, ibn Suraj, a Shāfi'i, saved him by pleading that mystical utterances were not to be judged on juridical grounds. It is said that one day al-Hallāj uttered the famous words ana al-Haqiq (I am the Creative Truth), a kind of eschatological cry (named siyāk bi al-Haqiq) in the Holy Qur'an. "Blasphemy," said the lawyers. Al-Hallāj himself explained it in verses: "Oh! the secret of my heart is so fine that it is hidden from all living beings. . . ." Involved in the Sunni plot of the Caliph ibn al-Mutazz, al-Hallāj was prosecuted; he remained hidden in Susa near the tomb of Prophet Daniel, the "announcer of the Last Day," but was arrested in 301/913. The first trial under 'Alī bin 'Isa, the "good vizier," was suspended through the influence of ibn Suraj, and al-Hallāj was merely kept as a prisoner in the royal palace for nearly eight years and eight months. Afraid of Hallāj's influence on the Court of the Caliph Muqtadīr, two Shī'ah leaders, the sakār ibn Rašīd Naubahkhi and his rival Shalāmahgani, succeeded in persuading the vizier Ḥamd bin al-Abbās, through his Shī'ah financial supporters, to reopen the trial on two charges. The first of these charges was that he was a Qārmaṣṭan agent of the Fātimids. It is true that Hallāj on grounds not political but spiritual did share with the Fātimids belief in the apocalyptic significance of the year 290 of the Hijrah, for in the esoteric alphabet 290 means "Maryam" or "Fatī." The second charge was that with the Qārmaṣṭan rebels he advocated the destruction of the Ka'bah and Mecca. It is also a fact that, while in Mecca, Hallāj did write to his disciple Shākir, "Destroy your Ka'bah," meaning in esoteric language "Do sacrifice your life for the sake of Islam as I do." The Qādiri Abu 'Umar Ḥanmādi, a Mālikī, insisted on taking this allegorical letter in an unjustifiable literal sense. And al-Hallāj was condemned to death, and "crucified" (maqṣūb, cf. Qur'an, vi, 154) on 24th of Dhu al-Qa'dah 309/26th of March 922. Curiously enough, this year 309 is the Qur'ānic year of the "Awakening of the Seven Sleepers" (Qur'an, xviii, 25), celebrated by the Islamicītī Fātimid propagandists as the year of the coming out of the Mahdi from the cave of concealment (but al-Hallāj's disciples explained it mystically).

Al-Hallāj's crucifixion has been looked at by the Sunni Sufis as the height (mi'rāj) of saintship; and many beautiful utterances are ascribed to al-Hallāj while on the stake, Naṣr Qūshūrī, the high chamberlain, put on mourning
clothes publicly with the approval of the Queen-Mother, Shaghāb. And some Sufi witnesses, Qannād and Shibli, acknowledged his death as the seal of a most saintly vocation.

Though it was proclaimed after the year 309/922 that al-Hallaj had been executed in compliance with the unanimity (ijma') of the jurists (fuqaha'), yet a respected lawyer, his friend ibn 'Aţā, had objected to this verdict and was killed for that. Ibn 'Aţā's death nullifies this so-called ijma'. The memory of al-Hallaj slowly spread its fame with beauty. Among the Shāfi'is, ibn al-Musliham, the very day he was appointed as vizier (437/1045), was seen coming to al-Hallaj's place of crucifixion (masāfir al-Hallaj) and praying—a silent act of rehabilitation. Sufis have kept their creed ('aqa'id) as a motto in their exoteric books (e.g., Kalâbâddi and Qushairi); and they have his name "understood" in their esoteric ismād (with his friend Shibli and Naṣr-ābāddi). Farid al-Dīn 'Aţār celebrated al-Hallaj's martyrdom as the "apex" of Sufism, and the great painter Behzâd painted it for Saiqara in Herât.

Independent Muslim philosophers, Baţkhi, Manṭuqī, abu Ǧâyûn Taqī, and abu al-Hasan Dālāmī, set off the metaphysical originality of al-Hallaj's spiritual experiences. In spite of his adversaries classifying him among the adepts of existential unity (wahdat al-wujūd), al-Hallaj has been proved to be a vindicator of cognitive unity (wahdat al-ghwâd). 'Abd al-Qâdir Ğilâni, Râhîm Bâqî, and Fakhr al-Dīn Fârîsî have given convincing explanations of the doctrine on Unity, in spite of the subtleties of ibn 'Arabî's school. Jalâl al-Dīn Râmî, and after him the great mystics of Of Tiyâna, 'Ali Hamdâni, Makkûlî-1-i Jâhânîyân, Gisudardâs, Ahmad Sirhindî, and Bedîî have considered al-Hallaj to be a believer in cognitive unity (ghwâdî). In his Jâvâd Najmeh, the great poet-philosopher of Pakistan, Iqâbîî, stated that al-Hallaj was a kind of "Promethean" personage. L. Massîgîon also heard him say this when Iqâbîî gave him the privilege of a visit to him in Paris in 1351/1932.

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Chapter XVIII
‘ABD AL-QâDIR JILÂNI AND SHIÎHÂL AL-DÎN SUHRÂWÂRDI

A
‘ABD AL-QâDIR JILÂNI

Shaikh 'Abd al-Qâdir Jilâni (476-561/1087-1166) was born at a period when Malikshâh the Saljuq (465/1072-1091) ruled over a vast Muslim Empire. This period is famous for great patronage of learning. It was during this period that the great Nizâmîyyah University was founded in Baghdâd by Nizâm al-Mulk. But after Malikshâh's death in 485/1092, fight for succession started which brought about anarchy and disorder in the country. In 513/1119 Sanjar succeeded in securing the throne and was crowned at Baghdâd. But after his death in 552/1157, there was once again the same anarchy and disorder. Constant wars between the different factions of the Saljuqs destroyed the peace and security of the Empire.

But there are two events which stand out prominently. They contributed much towards the disintegration of the social and political structure of the Muslims of this period. The first was the rise and gradual spread of the group of people called Assassins under the leadership of Hasan bin Şubhaj. Thousands of people, great and small, fell to the dagger of these fanatics. The second was the starting of the Crusades. The first Crusade lasted from 488/1095 to 493/1099. The Christian hordes succeeded in occupying