

SUFIS AND MULLAHS: SUFIS AND THEIR OPPONENTS IN THE PERSIANATE WORLD

COLLECTED ABSTRACTS

Reminding the Scholars What It Means to Be Muslim: Themes of Religious Identity and Diversity in the Poetry of Sanā'ī of Ghaznah

– Nicholas Bolyston –

The genre of antinomian mystical lyric poetry, used by Persian poets through the centuries to criticize the attachment to the letter of the law rather than the spirit, emerges in the work of Sanā'ī of Ghaznah (d.1131). However, Sanā'ī's closest associations were not with Sufi circles but rather with the *'ulamā* and orators of Khurasan. Furthermore, Sanā'ī's critiques of the *'ulamā* are not limited to this stylized genre, but rather take diverse forms across his oeuvre. In this lecture I approach Sanā'ī's critique of the *'ulamā* across the genres of his poetry, situating it within the social and religious contexts of early 12th century Khurāsān. By focusing on themes of religious identity and otherness in his work I will explore how Sanā'ī brought a rigorous mystical and ethical critique of the *'ulamā* into their own circles.

Between Reform and Bigotry: the Gunābādī-Nī'matullāhī *Silsila* in Two Early Twentieth-Century Anti-Sufi Works

– Alessandro Cancian –

The *Radd al-ṣūfiyya* (Refutation of Sufis) became a sub-genre of Shi'ite religious literature during Safavid times, mainly animated by groups of religious scholars from Isfahan, Qum and Mashhad. The trend continued, under a number of pretexts well into the Qājār era, down to the 20th century, and continues today. This polemical verve has been directed to both Sufi practices and ideas, alternatively considered heretic, extremist, mildly Islamic, potentially leading to agnosticism or the abandonment of the Sharī'a, or representing a threat to the authority of the *'ulamā*'. As much as Sufism was and is a multi-faceted phenomenon, whose boundaries are not always easy to define, so is anti-Sufism. In this essay, I will present and examine two anti-Sufi works coming from authors with different backgrounds, the *Exposé of the Mystery* (*Rāz-gushā*), by an ex-Nī'matullāhī master who disowned his Sufi allegiance, 'Abbās 'Alī Kaywān Qazwīnī (d. 1938); and *The Truth of Mysticism* (*Ḥaqīqat al-'irfān*) by the *mujtahid* Sayyid Abū'l Faḍl 'Allāma' Burqī'ī (d. 1993). In doing so, I will specifically focus on the way the two authors have represented Gunābādī-Nī'matullāhī personalities, ideas and practices.

Title and Abstract to be announced

– William Chittick –

**When the Paradigm Breaks: Sufis and the ‘*Ulamā*
in Seventeenth-Century Central Asia**

– Devin DeWeese –

For a good part of its history in the Islamic era, Central Asia offers a distinctive contrast to the pattern of antagonism and hostility that often existed between Sufis and the ‘*ulamā*; it would be misleading to suggest that these two groups had, instead, a symbiotic relationship, or simply amicable relations, because for much of the 16th, 17th, and even 18th centuries, the Sufis *were* the ‘*ulamā*, and vice-versa. This pattern, indeed, can be traced somewhat earlier, and persists with only partly altered circumstances during the early 19th century. The reasons for this ‘coincidence’ of Sufi and juridical identities are not altogether clear; they may lie in the shared response, generally, of Sufis and jurists alike to the challenges of the Mongol conquest and the ideology of Chinggisid rule—which began a half-century earlier in Central Asia than elsewhere in the Muslim world, and extended far later (at least to the middle of the 18th century), or in the specific contrasts in the ways particular Sufi communities responded to Mongol rule (which served to ‘internalize’ the Sufi-‘*ulamā* tension within the world of Sufi groups more broadly—i.e., the tension between the Yasavī and Naqshbandī traditions—and thus ensured that criticism of particular Sufi views or practices came chiefly from other Sufis), or in internal patterns of training and organization that favored initiatic and instructional continuities within social networks framed chiefly in familial terms. What is clear, however, is that despite earlier patterns of hostility between Sufis and the ‘*ulamā* (e.g., Sufi reactions to the persistence of Mu‘tazilī strength in at least one region of Central Asia, down to the 14th century), and despite the emergence of hostility toward certain practices linked with Sufism among some learned circles in Central Asia during the 18th and 19th centuries, the often antagonistic relationship between Sufis and juridical scholars encountered elsewhere in the Muslim world is largely absent from Central Asia during the 16th and 17th centuries; it is difficult to find, during the 16th and 17th centuries, active participants in the enterprise of the ‘*ulamā* in Central Asia who were not also linked initiatically with one (or more) of the three major Sufi orders active in the region—the Naqshbandī, Yasavī, and Kubravī *ṭarīqas*.

This lecture will explore the shared Sufi-‘*ālim* identities of several figures in 17th-century Central Asia, a period for which studies of Sufi groups and of intellectual history more broadly are quite sparse; for some it is still possible to delineate the two distinct spheres of their activities—i.e., the Sufi careers of the ‘*ulamā*, and the activities of Sufi shaykhs in the realm of the ‘*ulamā—but in other cases even this distinction seems to lose significance. In particular, it will examine various groups and individuals active in Bukhara during this period, including especially the circles associated with Kamāl al-Dīn Faghānzavī and Muḥammad Sharīf Bukhārī.*

A Religious Approach to Anti-Clerical Persian Poetry

– Speaker to be Announced –

For the past several decades, a number of Iranian intellectuals and men of letters have largely misunderstood the anti-clerical references and rhetoric in the lexicon of the Persian poets. They have misconceived the poets' anti-clericalism as being by extension anti-Islamic, anti-Qur'ānic and antithetical to the teachings and traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad. On the basis of this misconception, they have gone on to argue that some of the supreme poets of the Persian language were in effect heretics and religious dissenters.

My discourse will open with a brief introduction to the basic ideas and teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, which are then juxtaposed and compared to similar notions in the authentic scriptures of other cultures, in which, I propose, all the great Persian poets essentially implicitly believed, endorsed and followed. My lecture then adduces clear examples from the great Persian poets confirming some of their key religious beliefs. In my conclusion I will argue that a large coterie of contemporary Iranian literati have engaged in deliberate strategies of misinterpretation of these poets and as a consequence, conveyed wrong impressions of the poets' religious faith and ideals to the younger generation of students of Persian literature.

Persian anti-clerical poetry, I will argue, is essentially engaged in a struggle against self-righteousness and therefore definitely opposed to religious hypocrisy and unctuous ostentation that is often found in the public exhibitionism of piety, which the poets understood to be but hollow and empty dissimulation that conveyed a sinister, perverse interpretation of religious truth. In other words, the poets were opposed to the 'internal heresy' and 'hidden hypocrisy' concealed under the veil of the outward religious profession and appearance of piety. However, the poets were not anti-religious in the sense of being opposed to genuine spirituality or religious truth *per se*.

Enemies of Mystical Love: Mullahs against Mystics in Persian Mystical Poetry

– Ali-Asghar Seyed-Gohrab –

*Listen to the tale of love from Ḥāfīz and not from the preacher,
Although he has adorned his words with many arts.*

Polemics between religious scholars and Sufis recur so frequently in Persian mystical poetry that one can certainly speak of a popular topos. In this paper, I will examine how mystic poets such as Sanā'ī, 'Aṭṭār, Sa'dī, and Ḥāfīz depict the religious figures distinguished variously as *wā'iz* (preacher), mufti, *faqīh* (jurisprudence) *qāḍi* (judge), as *dramatis personae* in their works. The orthodox religious antagonism against mystical love is as old as Sufism itself but the depiction of orthodox figures as *dramatis personae* in poetry probably starts with Sanā'ī, and continues in the works of Persian masters in the succeeding centuries, who add new traits, employing specific types of metaphors and imagery. On closer examination, one finds that these poets treat the preacher, the mufti and the judge differently, allotting different character traits to them, using novel metaphors, ingenious allusions and other literary devices.

‘Auspicious Events’? The Suppression of the Bektaşî Tarikat in 1826

– Roderick Grierson –

The debate that led to the suppression of the Bektaşîye in 1826 represents the most dramatic confrontation between the ulema and any of the Ottoman tarikats during the nineteenth century. It also implicated tarikats such as the Nakşibendî, Halvetî, and Mevlevî, and it transformed the relationship between ulema and tarikats in general until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire almost a century later.

The decision to suppress the Bektaşîye is often misunderstood because the religious nature of the dispute has been seen as little more than an excuse or disguise for agenda that were fundamentally political, economic, or military. The lecture will therefore reassess its significance, explaining why contemporary documents that were used to justify the execution or exile of Bektaşî shaykhs and the destruction or confiscation of Bektaşî tekkes as a defence of *Ehl-i Sünnet* should be taken seriously rather than ignored or reinterpreted.

I shall therefore provide a brief summary of the events of 1826 so that they can be understood by participants in the conference whose expertise lies elsewhere. I shall present in a handout, and in the published version of the lecture, modern transcriptions and English translations of the *hatt-ı hümayûn* that defined the Bektaşîye as *mülhid* and justified the suppression of the tarikat. I shall explain the problems that have resulted from an uncritical reading of the official chronicles of the period, such as *Üss-i Zafer*, *Târih-i Cevdet*, and *Târih-i Lütfi*. I shall examine the reasons why a tarikat that had been established and supported by the Ottoman state was finally denounced by the most prominent ulema as heretical, and I shall discuss the lasting impact of the suppression of the Bektaşîye on other tarikats throughout the final century of the Ottoman Empire.

At the end of the lecture, I shall ask why the events of 1826 resemble controversies or disputes in Iran and elsewhere. In other words, I shall consider what seems to be characteristic of a general tension or hostility between ulema and tarikats and what may have been specific to the Ottoman Empire, especially to the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century.

Situating Sufism in Islamizing Anatolia in the 14th & 15th Centuries)

– Ahmet T. Karamustafa –

Between the definitive weakening of Byzantine control over it following the Battle of Manzikert (1071) and its almost total incorporation into the Ottoman Empire during the last quarter of the fifteenth century, Anatolia was a politically fragmented land with an extremely complicated and diverse population. Inhabited by city-dwellers, villagers, and nomads –many of them immigrants or sojourners– from different ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds, this geographically heterogeneous peninsula was also the stage, during the period in question, for the twin processes of Islamization and Turkicization that ultimately altered its cultural topography in lasting ways. Sufi forms of especially Persianate Islam played distinctive and determining roles in these intertwined processes in practically all social and cultural settings, but particularly among Turkish speakers. In this talk, I will explore the attitudes of some prominent Turkish Sufis of the period.

towards the *'ulama* and other members of the learned elite who often owed their elite status to their proficiency in Arabic and/or Persian, indeed in works of Sufism in Arabic and Persian. The Turkish language works of such Sufi authors as Yunus Emre (d. 1320?), 'Aşık Paşa (d. 1332), Elvan Çelebi (d. after 1358-59), Kaygusuz Abdal (d. first half of 15th century) and the brothers Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed (d. 1466?) and Mehmed (d. 1451) display a full spectrum of attitudes towards scholars and scholarship, ranging from explicit rejection to avid espousal; as such, these works provide us with the opportunity to situate Turkish Sufis who functioned in the Turkish vernacular into the larger historical context of Islamic cultural history of Anatolia in particular and Sufi history in general. In the process, I hope to identify and describe in broad strokes the fault lines that often ran between Sufis who expressed themselves primarily, even exclusively, in the Turkish vernacular and other Sufi and non-Sufi Muslim learned elites who foregrounded their expertise in Arabic and Persian instead. The ultimate goal, which I am pursuing in a larger book project, is to lay bare the contours of early Turkish vernacular Islam.

Wisdom in Controversy: Bāyazīd's Challenges to Others and Himself

– Annebel Keeler –

It is said that the much-loved but controversial 3rd/ 9th mystic Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī (popularly known as Bāyazīd, d. 261/875) was banished from his home town seven times during his life. Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (d. 618/1221), in his hagiographical work, the *Tadhkīrat al-awliyā'*, explains that this was because things that Bāyazīd said were beyond the comprehension of the 'exotericists' (*ahl-i zāhir*). No doubt 'Aṭṭār was here referring to Bāyazīd's notorious ecstatic utterings (*shathīyyāt*), such as 'Glory be to me, how great is my majesty!' (*subḥānī mā a 'azama sha'nī*), or his replying to the question 'What is the Throne?' with the answer 'I am the Throne'.

We might assume that by *ahl-i zāhir* 'Aṭṭār had in mind the scholars of outward knowledge, that is, knowledge pertaining to the *sharī'a*, theological belief and so on. Indeed, in the collections of reports about Bāyazīd's life, we read of various occasions when he was criticised or questioned closely by an individual scholar (*'ālim*) or jurist (*faqīh*), and of Bāyazīd's rejoinders to such objectors. Moreover, we find among these reports several derisory comments that Bāyazīd made about such scholars, as when he said, 'People take their knowledge from the dead, but I take my knowledge from the Living, who never dies'; or 'The mystic (*'arif*) is above [the level] of what he says, while the scholar (*'ālim*) is below the level of what he says; [...] the mystic only looks at his Lord, while the scholar only looks at his *nafs*.' But scholars were not the only religious group to be mocked and challenged by Bāyazīd; we find him also targeting ascetics or renunciants (*zuhhād*), in particular, as well as devout worshippers (*'ubbād*), pious Qur'ān reciters (*mutaqarri'ūn*) and even mystics (*'urafā'*) – anyone, in fact, who turned their practice or state of being into a veil, or who made claims for themselves.

This might seem paradoxical, given some of the audacious claims that are reported from Bāyazīd, as for example: 'My punishment is more severe than His [God's]', or 'My banner is greater than his [the Prophet's]'. Such sayings, however, may be offset by his numerous statements of self-reproach, such as his repeatedly expressing the feeling that after long years of devotion and self-mortification he still finds himself to have a polytheist's girdle (*zunnār*) around his waist. Not surprisingly, 'Aṭṭār includes many such sayings in his biography of Bāyazīd, perhaps to counterbalance the controversial ones, even though he does provide explanations for the latter.

In this paper, I shall draw on some of the earliest sources on Bāyazīd's life, namely the *Kitāb al-Luma' fī taṣawwuf* of Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d. 378/988), the *Kitāb al-Nūr min kalimāt Abī Tayfūr* of Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Sahlaḡī (d. 476/1084), as well as later ones such as the *Tadhkīrat al-awliyā'* of 'Aṭṭār and the *Dastūr al-jumhūr* of Aḡmad b. Ḥusayn Kharaqānī (fl. 8th/14th century), and examine ways in which he challenged, on the one hand, the *ahl-i zāhir* and others with his controversial statements and critiques, and on the other, himself through his severe self-reproach and abasement. It will attempt to show how these were ways in which Bāyazīd seems to have manifested doctrines that a century later were to become firmly associated with the Way of Blame (*Malāmatiyya*). It will also consider his numerous, ostensibly blasphemous sayings (defined by Corbin as '*paradoxes*'). Were they all actually *shatḡiyyāt*, i.e. words uttered in a state of drunken ecstasy? Or did some of these constitute part of a powerful spiritual rhetoric, one through which Bāyazīd taught his followers about a path to God that was wholly uncompromising?

Ismā'īl Anqarawī on the Controversy of Music and *Samā'*

– Bilal Kuşpinar –

The seventeenth-century Ottoman State, as well recorded in the primary historical sources, witnessed a great deal of tension and even confrontation between two influential rivalry groups of the time, preachers and gnostics, on some of the crucial concepts and practices of the Sufis, especially on Mawlawīs' use of musical instruments and performance of *Samā'*. Many people from both sides had been involved in these confrontations at various capacities, either by giving moral support with their regular attendance to their respective congregations and listening to the discourses of their leaders or by composing books and treatises in defending their positions and thereby providing justifications for their legitimacy from their vantage point. Ismā'īl Anqarawī (d. 1631) was one of these prominent figures who, as we have shown in several of our writings, not only single-handedly introduced Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī's (d.1191) philosophy of Illumination to the Ottoman intellectuals through his Commentary on the *Hayākil al-Nūr*, but also took active part in the defense of the most central ritual of the Mawlawī Sufi Order, i.e. the *Samā'*. To this effect he composed at least two important treatises, one *Hujjat al-Samā'* (*The Proof of Samā'*) and the other *al-Risālah al-Tanzīhiyya fī Sha'n al-Mawlawiyya*. These two works have already been studied by some of the researchers in Turkey and made available in Turkish language. In this study we shall focus rather on how Anqarawī dealt with this crucial issue, what sort of role he played during this critical period, and what kinds of methods, sources and materials he employed in arguing and defending his position against his opponents.

Who Opposed Whom?

– Hermann Landolt –

The lecture will begin with a few general reflections about the topic of opposition and polemics in traditional Islam. It will first address the varieties of Sufi experience as opposed to the claim that ‘all are one’ (as made, for example, by the author of *Asrār al-tawhīd*). This question can be approached on various levels, from institutionalized forms of behavior (*adab*) to such elevated things as M.S. Hodgson’s ‘*ḥaqīqat*-mindedness’. This will lead to another question: was ‘*ḥaqīqat*-mindedness’ the privilege of the Sufis, or should we turn our attention to other factors shaping Islamic culture, such as the ‘philosophers’ and the Ismailis—and their internal differences or oppositions? These and related questions will be discussed more concretely by examining the example of three pairs of ‘opponents’: Two authors of a book with the same title (the Sufi Hujwārī and the Ismaili Sijistānī); two thinkers of the same *nisba* (Abū Ḥafṣ Suhrawardī and Yaḥyā Suhrawardī); two influential thinkers of the Mongol period associated with the same Sufi ‘order’ (‘Azīz- i Nasafī and Simnānī).

The Malāmātī Sufī Counterculture: Anti-clericalism in Persian Poetry from Nizārī to Jāmī

– Leonard Lewisohn –

*Paradise is a place where no mullah can be found;
Mullahs’ frenzy and mullahs’ fury there are not heard.
Let the world be free of the mullahs’ furore
So no one need ever heed their hysteric fatwas!
Whatever city in which the mullah makes his home,
There, you’ll never find one single seer, one single sage.*

—Dārā Shikūh

Sociologists have documented how during the 1960s-1970s a distinct “counter-culture” emerged in many Euro-American societies. This underground yet publicly disseminated culture espoused ecstatic and Dionysian values, was anarchic, romantic and anti-rational, scorning the reverence for ‘law and order’ demanded by our modern technocratic civilization. It was alienated from the work ethic and over-orderliness of mainstream society, being radically non-conformist and anti-authority. The historical origins of the 1970s’ counter-culture are indefinite and obscure, but many correspondences between the modern counter-culture movement and both nineteenth-century English Romanticism and Renaissance Italy can be found.

In this lecture, I will argue that the doctrines of the School of Blame (*maktab-i malāmātī*) in medieval Persian Sufi poetry shared much in common with the values and ideas of both the 1970s’ counter-culture and English Romanticism. On the one hand, the *malāmātī* counter-culture espoused the ideals of a ‘religion of love’ which disdained to affiliate itself with—while claiming to transcend—legalistic religion. The Sufis’ *secta amoris* idealized romantic extremism (*rindī*), erotomania (*‘āshiqī*), and advocated a

spirituality of love, believing that mortal beauty reflects and exemplifies divine loveliness, since only in the mirror of the former the latter can be contemplated. The poets indulged in a *carpe diem* exaltation of sensual pleasures, bacchanalian exuberance and antinomian excess. Their antinomianism, however, was never simply ‘blasphemy for the blasphemy’s sake’, but rather it was a counter-ethic of bacchanalian piety put at the service of *Eros*, the Sufi poets utilizing a *qalandarī* lexicon of the profane to scoff at religious cant and sanctimony.

This poetic counter-culture was also intensely anti-clerical, lampooning all rites and rituals relating to *Sharī‘a*-oriented clerical Islam, mocking the sanctimonious fundamentalist puritan, ultimately judging infidelity (*kufī*) as superior to displays of hypocritical ascetic piety. The Persian Sufi poets who raised aloft the flag of this *malāmatī* Sufi counter-culture typically glorified their “heresy” and filled their verse with invectives against the Judge (*qāḍī*), Preacher (*wā‘iz*), Puritan (*zāhid*) and Jurisprudent (*faqīh*), while overtly courting public blame, pursuing notoriety and vaunting their ill-fame (*bad-nāmī*).

Focusing on the anti-clerical lexicon of ten key Persian poets of the fourteenth and fifteenth century – Nizārī Qūhistānī (d. 721/1321), Amīr Khusraw Dihlavī (d. 725/1325), Maḥmūd Shabistārī (d. after 737/1337), Awhādī Marāghī (d. 738/1338), Khwājū Kirmānī (d. 742/1342), ‘Ubayd Zākānī (d. 773/1371), Kamāl Khujandī (d. 803/1400), Basāṭī Samarqandī (d. 814/1411), ‘Iṣmat-i Bukharā’ī (d. 829-30/1425-26), and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 898/1492) – in this lecture I aim to elucidate the key theosophical themes of this spiritual utopia inhabited by the rogues, reprobates and renegades of the Persian Sufi counter-culture, and hopefully explain what caused the grand Sufi sage and scholar Prince Dārā Shikūh (d. (d. 1070/1659) to exclaim: “Paradise is a place where no mullah can be found.”

Victims or Rivals? Persecution of the Ḥurūfīs and its Possible Reasons

– Orkhan Mir-Kasimov –

‘I testify that this person is a Ḥurūfī, and his father was a Ḥurūfī, and the Ḥurūfī school is wrong, and whoever belongs to it should be killed and his blood should be shed.’ This statement by a religious scholar at the anti-Ḥurūfī trial organised after the failed attack on the Timurid prince Shāhrukh in Herat in 830/1427 expresses the hostile attitude of the ‘mainstream’ Muslim clergy that is further attested in some bio-bibliographical works as well as in historical accounts relating the persecutions and executions of the Ḥurūfīs. What did the Ḥurūfīs, a mystical and messianic group founded in the second half of the 8th/14th century by Faḍl Allāh Astārābādī (d. 796/1394) do or say to elicit such an aggressive reaction? An answer to this question will be sought through the reading of available sources, including Ḥurūfī doctrinal and apologetic works as well as anti-Ḥurūfī writings. These readings bring forward a rather complex pattern of relationships between the Ḥurūfīs and the religious establishment. On the one hand, the Ḥurūfī case underscores the fact that the hostile stance of the ‘official’ religious scholars was often not primarily due to purely doctrinal or theological disagreements, but to political and intellectual rivalries. It is remarkable that some Sufi thinkers, such as Ṣā’in al-Dīn Turka Iṣfahānī (d. 835/1432) and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bistamī (d. 858/1454) also criticised the Ḥurūfīs while developing similar theories. On the other hand, after the death of its founder, the Ḥurūfī movement ceased to be a homogenous body. Its doctrine received various interpretations depending on regional groups and individual thinkers. Some of these groups may have

developed antinomian attitudes which were not explicitly contained in the original doctrine of Faḍl Allāh, thus attracting the disapproval of not only Sunni scholars, but also of moderate Ḥurūfīs. A particular case of the confrontation with the religious establishment partly inspired by Ḥurūfī tenets is the life and poetry of ‘Imād al-Dīn Nasīmī (d. 820/1417–1418). Nasīmī apparently combined Ḥurūfī ideas with the ‘ecstatic’ form of Sufism represented by Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj (d. 309/922), as well as the *malāmatī* kind of spirituality. This prominent figure symbolises the courage and self-sacrifice of a mystic who rejects with disdain any formal restriction in his passionate quest for ultimate enlightenment. The present lecture analyses the diversity of polemical and apologetic exchange between Ḥurūfīs and their critics.

Sobriety in a Drunken Universe: The Paradox of Junayd of Baghdad

– Speaker to be Announced –

Known as the ‘Leader of the Tribe’ of Sufis’, Abū’l-Qāsim al-Junayd (d. 297/910), is famous for his extraordinary piety, self-restraint and careful observance of the Canon Law of Islam or *Sharī‘a*. Yet there lies a paradox at the heart of his thought. The remark by Ja‘far al-Khuldī (d. 348/959), a disciple of Junayd and one of the main transmitters of his sayings, draws our attention to this paradox. “Junayd,” he asserted, “made a synthesis of knowledge (*‘ilm*) and mystical consciousness of states of being (*ḥāl*).” Khuldī’s remark is, I think, very telling from a socio-religious standpoint. On the one hand, Junayd was the founder of one of the main currents of Sufism, namely the ‘School of Sobriety’ (*ṣaḥw*), and on the other hand, he managed to maintain and cultivate friendly relationships with exoteric clerics and the official legalist circles during one of the most difficult junctures in the entire history of Sufism, in which pressure on and persecution of the Sufis at the hand of formalist *Sharī‘a*-minded legalism side was at its peak. In the intensely charged anti-Sufī political atmosphere of late ninth and early tenth-century Baghdad, the paradox – and genius – of Junayd lay in his successful unification of ‘knowledge’, which addresses the outward, worldly concerns of the exoteric class of Muslim clerics (*‘ulamā’ al-zāhir*), with the Sufis’ focus on their *état d’âme* or ‘mystical consciousness’ (*ḥāl*), that is, the interior life of spiritual practice and experience.

Junayd, it may be recalled, was an iconic figure in ninth and tenth century Sufism. His theosophical vision was unlike none of the Sufis of his day and age, and his statements about his fellow Sufis and their views about him reveal substantial differences between them. The very epithet: ‘Peacock of the Theologians’ (*tāvūs al-‘ulamā’*) given him by his contemporaries, attests in a way to his sense of superiority to his peers, if not self-righteousness. He managed not only to leave a significant legacy of written works behind, but sustain until the day of his death the central paradox of his life: the union of opposites between esoteric and exoteric approaches to the spiritual practice.

Although Junayd refused to don the garb of the Sufis, he remains one of the creators of their cryptic terminology, the famous *lisān al-ishāra* or ‘Language of Symbolic Allusion’ of the Sufis, later to be adopted and perfected by major figures in the history of Islamic mysticism such as Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj (d. 304/922) and Abū Bakr al-Wāsitī (d. 319/931). In fact, this cryptic symbolic language served Junayd well, for by using it he kept the company and maintained friendships with the major mystics of his day and thus, in Hujwērī’s (d. btwn. 465-69/1072-76) words, “stayed free from trouble and calamity”—the abstruseness of his diction being far over the head of ordinary religious scholars and exoteric clerics. He thus paradoxically maintained his own position among the official

religious elite of medieval Baghdad, and attained fame in subsequent centuries as one of the greatest Sufis of any day and age.

Sufis, Shahs and Mullas: A Consideration of Considerations of the Anti-Sufi Polemic in Seventeenth-century Isfahan

– Andrew Newman –

This paper will suggest that a rehistoricization of the traditional understanding of the anti-Sufi polemic in 16th and, especially, 17th century Safavid Iran may cast new light on this polemic generally, and its leaders and its targets in these years particular.

This rehistoricization process will entail the re-examination some of the key texts in the polemic produced over the period, some of that polemic's key events and various of the paradigms that continue to be referenced, and have long been valued, in discussions of later Safavid Iran and that polemic in particular. The latter include the 'Isfahan School of Philosophy', the migration of large numbers of Arabic-speaking scholars to Iran, the role of religious discourse in the 'decline' of the Safavids and the 'decline' itself. The discussion will also compare/contrast the discourse between the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. In the process, a variety of other dynamics and methodological approaches – for example, urban/rural, elite/subaltern, literate/illiterate – will also be referenced.

Essentialist paradigms continue to be referenced in explanations and discussions of the Safavid-period polemic and, by extension, those on offer in later periods as well.

Following on the above discussion, the paper will consider the degree to which reference to essentialist or more historically-specific, particularist factors are equally as, if not more, useful in discussions of trends and events in the late-Safavid period polemic. What do the latter reveal about both the nature and, perhaps as interestingly, the extent of that polemic – especially in comparison with other 'debates' that can be observed to have occurred over this important period of Iran's modern history – that have not been taken into account in discussions and explanations thereof offered in the literature to date? What, for example, would be the features of a discussion that resituated this polemic within the context of both broader historical trends, including the period's several other polemics, and a very wide range of specific events of the period? What implications does such an approach have for discussions about post-Safavid Iranian history?

Who Were Ibn al-Jawzī's "Deluded Sufis"?

– Erik S. Ohlander –

A well-positioned and influential religious scholar of sixth/twelfth-century Baghdad, the Ḥanbalite jurist, traditionist and preacher Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200) was a figure whose life, career, and literary output vividly represented what the great American historian of Islam Marshall Hodgson referred to as *jamā'ī-sunnī* sharia-mindedness. A prominent and consequential form of socio-religious identity, sentiment, and praxis which was widespread throughout the central and eastern lands of Islam in the late Abbasid period, the sharia-minded *jamā'ī-sunnī* conceptualization of the meaning, place, nature, and role of both the Islamic dispensation and the community which was constituted by it was one

which posited a type of exemplarism in which the Sunni ulama, as a self-constituting and self-policing sodality (supported largely by state actors through oftentimes decidedly public mechanisms of social validation), envisioned themselves as the corporate body par excellence of the *umma*, “heirs to the prophets” (*wurrāth al-anbiyā’*) who took it upon themselves to tend to the soteriological needs and desires of the Muslim masses.

Deeply informed by this conceptualization, Ibn al-Jawzī’s oft-cited heresiography *The Devil’s Delusion* (*Talbīs Iblīs*) takes to task diverse competitors—imagined or otherwise—to the Sunni ‘*ulamā*’s comprehensive claims to religious authority. Among the various sodalities taken to task in this work are those who Ibn al-Jawzī identifies as the *ṣūfiyya* (“Sufis”), a group whom he censures on both doctrinal and ritual grounds, accusing them of not only leading themselves astray, but more significantly corrupting the *umma* through gaining sway over its more innocent or gullible members. But who, exactly, did Ibn al-Jawzī have in mind when he spoke of the *ṣūfiyya*? Looking to answer this question, this paper probes the idea that the author had very particular and specific contemporaries in mind, his critique of the *ṣūfiyya* as a corporate body being rooted in certain intra- and inter-communal tensions resulting, in large part, from the increasing influx into Baghdad of Persian-speaking Sufis and ‘*ulamā*’ from points east over the course of the later fifth/eleventh through the end of the sixth/twelfth century. This influx, as is recoverable from the standard prosopographical and annalistic literature, occurred in such a way that both patronage networks and urban neighborhood alliances in Baghdad appear to have witnessed shifts which may have been perceived as disempowering by indigenous religio-scholarly elites such as Ibn al-Jawzī. In depending largely on the goodwill of fickle state actors whose fidelities were often open to change (due to matters of political expediency or otherwise) competition for patronage amongst the religious classes of the time was keen, something which was especially the case in the city of Baghdad in the waning days of the Abbasid caliphate. As the sixth/twelfth-century drew to a close in particular, Persian-speaking émigré Sufis—from wandering antinomian dervishes to more socially respectable Shāfi‘ite-Ash‘arite Sufi scholars and all those in-between—appear to have increasingly found themselves at odds with Baghdad’s Ḥanbalite establishment. Was this due simply to their increasing presence in Baghdad’s public spaces being seen as a challenge to the claims of religious authority maintained by well-positioned and state-supported sharia-minded *jamā‘ ī-sunnī* ulama such as Ibn al-Jawzī, or were other factors at play?

Keeping these observations and questions in mind, this paper looks to sketch out both the general dynamics and specific details informing the composition of Ibn al-Jawzī’s anathematization of the *ṣūfiyya* in the *Talbīs Iblīs*, exploring the idea that this particular portion of the heresiography might be read as being a specific denunciation of certain groups of Persian Sufis and their champions rather than a generic deprecation of Sufism as such. In addressing this matter, the paper will take into consideration the span of time from the emigration of disciples of Abū Sa‘īd b. Abī l-Khayr to Baghdad in the mid-fifth/eleventh century up to the case of arrival of Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī in the first quarter of the seventh/thirteenth, situating Ibn al-Jawzī’s polemic in the very center as a particularly visible reaction to a broader pattern of movements associated with shifts and changes in religious conceptualization and practice on the eve of the Turco-Mongol irruption and the beginning of the Later Middle Period of Islamic history.

The Life and Legacy of a Controversial Sufi Poet and Master: Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī (d. 635/1238) and His Exoteric Opponents

– Dr. Lloyd Ridgeon –

Abstract to follow

‘Ayn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī’s Critique of Religious Formalism

– Mohammed Rustom –

Scholars have been fascinated with ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī (d. 1131) for over five decades. Yet we surprisingly still lack an authoritative study of the main features of his thought. Close engagement with ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt’s writings reveals him to be a master of the outward and inward Islamic sciences, but also someone who was a strident critic of those whom he refers to as ‘religious formalists’ (*ṣūrat-bīnān*, lit. “form seers”). In this paper, we will first attempt to outline how ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt links this group of people to both “habit-worship” (*‘ādāt-parastī*) and “idol-worship” (*but-parastī*), which in turn are explicitly identified by him with religious legalism or “Shariatism” (*sharī‘at-varzī*), an expression which, incidentally, only occurs once in all of his writings.

It will be shown that it is not only the religious scholars (*‘ulamā*) who are on the receiving end of ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt’s deprecating remarks against Shariatism, but, rather, *any* individual who understands religion on a purely exoteric level. Looking to ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt’s works, we find that he normally tackles this problem in three contexts: (1) in his discussions centred around the inward meanings of the rites of Islam; (2) in his treatment of the problem of the alteration (*tahrīf*) of previous religious dispensations; and (3) in his letters to his students, who at times are themselves the objects his criticisms.

An attempt will then be made to demonstrate that ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt’s critique of religious formalism is a direct corollary of his theology of Iblīs or “Satanology”. In keeping with the basic insight in Islamic theology that God has two guises through which He reveals Himself, that of beauty (*jamāl*) and that of majesty (*jalāl*), ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt attempts to show how these two seemingly antithetical concepts are intimately related to one another by virtue of their corresponding to the two principles responsible for the emergence of the cosmic order and the human condition, namely the light of the Prophet Muḥammad and the darkness of Iblīs respectively.

We have here a metaphysics of light and darkness that is of the first order, and in which the devil is seen not only as a tragic, fallen lover, but as someone who forms a vital piece to the puzzle of a cosmic plan which necessitates that his darkness off-set and complement the light of the Prophet Muḥammad. On this reading, the ‘religious formalists’ account for the outward and “dark” aspect of religion, which is personified by Iblīs, whereas those who have penetrated the inner meaning of religion account for its inward and “luminous” aspect, which is personified by the Prophet Muḥammad.

Anti-Sufi Polemics in Early Qājār Iran: Aqā Muḥammad Bihbahānī (d. 1801) and his *Risāla-yi Khayrātiyya*

– Oliver Scharbrodt –

With the revival of the Ni‘matullāhī Order in late eighteenth-century Iran, the confrontation between *uṣūlī* ‘*ulamā*’ and Sufis gained new momentum. While the relationship of official Iranian Shiism towards organised Sufism had been strained since the rise of the Safavids, the firm establishment of *uṣūl*-ism among Shii ‘*ulamā*’ and the Sufi revival in the late 18th century initiated a polemical discourse between both groups over the definition of religious orthodoxy.

This paper discusses the earliest manifestations of *uṣūlī* anti-Sufi polemics at the turn of the nineteenth century by focusing on the writings and activities of Aqā Muḥammad Bihbahānī (d. 1801) who was one of the fiercest anti-Sufi ‘*Alīm*’ of early Qājār Iran and earned the epithet ‘Sufi-killer’ (*sūfī-kush*) for his implication in the murders of several leading Sufis. In his major anti-Sufi polemic, *Risāla-yi Khayrātiyya*, he anathematised Sufis and Sufism and provided the religious justification for their persecution. The branding of Sufis as standing outside the pale of orthodox Shi‘ism in his treatise will be discussed which proved to be instrumental in shaping anti-Sufi discourse in Qājār Iran.

The writings and activities of Bihbahānī give evidence of the polemical discursive struggle over the definition of religious orthodoxy in early Qājār Iran. Bihbahānī’s anti-Sufi writings and activities were, however, not solely concerned with definitions of religious orthodoxy. He and other *uṣūlī* ‘*ulamā*’ competed with Sufis over patronage by the young Qājār dynasty. For this reason, Bihbahānī corresponded with members of the Qājār court, including Fath ‘Alī Shāh, in order to gain political support for his anti-Sufi stance. Thereby, Bihbahānī played an important role in the success of the *uṣūlī* ‘*ulamā*’ in gaining patronage by the young Qājār dynasty which initiated the commitment of the Qājārs to the *uṣūlī* brand of Twelver Shi‘ism. The Sufis – with the exception of the reign of Muḥammad Shāh – were left in a marginalised position, branded as heretics and religious dissidents by the religious and political establishment.

Sufi Themes and Anti-clerical Rhetoric in Pre-modern Panjabi Poetry

– Christopher Shackle –

The classic pre-modern poetry composed in the local languages of Pakistan like Panjabi and Sindhi continues to form the most vital part of the country’s living cultural heritage. Like so many characteristic manifestations of Indo-Muslim culture, this poetry displays a notable mixture of Persianate and Indic elements. On the one hand, it is marked by a strong literary influence from Persian, which was the main literary language of the region for many centuries until it was replaced following the British conquest by English and Urdu. At the same time, it relies for much of its core content on themes drawn from local tradition which themselves also naturally reveal the influence of Indic cultural and aesthetic norms.

Most of the great classics of these languages are of more or less direct Sufi inspiration. As such, both the lyrical and the narrative poetic genres of pre-modern Panjabi and Sindhi literature provide numerous illustrations of the use of local materials

to explore many of the characteristic themes of Persianate Sufi literature, having at their centre a combination of a strongly idealized concept of spiritual love with a powerfully anti-clerical rhetoric which both continue to resonate today in much of Pakistani society as well as more widely in India.

This lecture focuses particularly on the two great classics of Panjabi poetry. The Sufi lyrics by Bullhe Shāh (d. 1758) combine a passionate devotion to the poet's spiritual guide and harsh criticisms of the exterior Islam of the Mullahs with repeated reference to incidents from the romantic legend of the beautiful Hīr and the buffalo-herdsman Rānjhā, which tells how their love, set in the pastoral society of western Panjab, is thwarted by the social norms enforced by tribal elders and the teachings of the allied representatives of orthodox Islam. The same legend receives fuller treatment in the long narrative *Hīr* (1766) by Bullhe Shāh's contemporary Vāris Shāh which remains the most popular of all Panjabi poems. Here the pure passion of the young lovers is supported by the spiritual authority of the great Five Pirs of the Panjab, but is opposed by the unfeeling opposition of the functionaries of orthodoxy, allowing the poet to turn the considerable resources of Panjabi invective against the Mullah and the Qazi.

Sayings of the Shi'ite Imams on Sufism

– Speaker to Be Announced –

The primary reference of the majority of those Shi'ite clerics who refuted the validity of Sufism are certain Shi'ite traditions (*Hadīth*) ascribed to the Shi'ite Imams. Although these traditions were apparently uttered by way of refutation of Sufism, one still needs to investigate the authenticity of these traditions. Most of these sayings appeared in Shi'ite texts written during Safavid era, and there are no trace of them in early Shi'ite texts. This lecture tries to investigate these traditions by examining their contexts and contents. I will also explore the sources that they were taken from so as to clarify the root of the historical animosity between Shi'ite clerics and Sufis.

Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's Critique of *Malāmatīs* and Others

–Sara Sviri –

Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī is one of the most prolific and original Muslim mystics of the 3rd/9th century. He can hardly be named *ṣūfī*, as he belonged to the Formative Period of Islamic mysticism during which this term had not yet designated Muslim mystics at large. Retrospectively, however, he became – though not unanimously – a distinguished member of the Ṣūfī hagiographic tradition. His main and lasting contribution to the Islamic mystical culture is his doctrine concerning the Friends of God, the *awliyā'*. This is evidenced, for example, in *Kashf al-mahjūb*, in which the compiler, al-Jullābī al-Hujwīrī (d. ca. 465/1073), discusses *wilāya* in the section devoted to “the Ḥakīmīs”, the followers of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. Influential, though controversial, was al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of “the Seal of the Friends of God” (*khatm/khātām al-anbiyā'*), an elevated figure that exists timelessly, according to him, alongside the Seal of the Prophets (*khātām al-anbiyā'*). It may well be that it was this radical doctrine, with its Shi'ite-like overtones, which had stirred up the hostility and charges against him. This, as he recounts

in his autobiographical text *Buduww sha'n*, culminated in his temporary banishment from his hometown of Tirmidh.

Who were the accusers? What was the local politico-religious background for their accusations? Rather than offer speculative answers to these questions, I wish to highlight al-Tirmidhī's own critique against some of the spiritual and devotional trends of his time in the regions of Khurāsān and Transoxania. This critique he articulated clearly and explicitly in his own writing without mincing words. It was particularly levelled against two trends: first, the ascetics, *zuhhād* (i.e., the wool - *ṣūf* -wearers) and second, the *malāmatīs*, i.e. those among the devotional groups in Nīshāpūr (then the capital of Khurāsān), whose spiritual practices revolved around incurring blame on their selves.

These two trends reveal polar attitudes in the arena of efforts (*mujāhada*, *mujāhadat al-nafs*). The ascetics practiced self-denial by means of conspicuous acts such as wandering, fasting, begging and the like. Conversely, the so-called *malāmatīs* exerted effort in hiding all traces of spiritual behaviour. Thus they shunned practices such as wearing special garments, audible *dhikr*, listening to music (*samā'*), indulging in ecstatic manifestations and the like. Some of them went as far as exhibiting blameworthy acts in order to avoid any praise and prestige. Hence their name.

What initiated al-Tirmidhī's critique of these polar trends and of those who upheld them? What does it say about the religious and spiritual scene in his time and place? What implications, if any, did his critique bear upon later generations of Muslim mystics? I shall elaborate on these themes in my presentation.

Enraptured Sufi or Shi'ite Philosopher: Majdhūb 'Alī Shāh, Champion of Theological Reconciliation between Sufism and Shi'ism

– Reza Tabandeh –

Majdhūb 'Alī Shāh (1172/1759–1238/1823) was one of the greatest Ni'matullāhī masters who flourished during the Qājār dynasty. He became master of the Ni'matullāhī Sufi Order after a crucial period during which previous masters had succeeded in rapidly spreading their mystical and ecstatic beliefs all over Persia and converting a large mass of the populace to Sufi teachings. These masters accomplished this despite all the opposition and persecution that they had faced from fundamentalist Shi'ite clerics, who were politically and socially the most influential class in Persia. The clerics had always been able to turn the political powers against the Sufis to a certain extent, such that Āqā Muḥammad 'Alī Bihbihānī (d. 1216/1801) succeeded in persecution of number of Sufis and thus became notorious as the "Sufi-killer." During this time, although subject to criticism, Majdhūb magnificently managed to avoid prosecution by his fundamentalist foes.

Majdhūb was well versed in Shi'ite theosophy and jurisprudence, and his treatises and scholarly disputes attracted many scholars and influential members of the nobility and intelligentsia. 'Abd al-Ṣamad Hamadānī (d. 1216/1802), the author of *Baḥr al-Ma'ārif*, was initiated by Nūr Alī Shāh (d. 1212/1797), and his guide to initiation on the Sufi Path (*dalīl-i rāh*) was Majdhūb.

Majdhūb 'Alī Shāh was able to bring the Ni'matullāhī order out of its isolation through his writings and preaching, which led to the initiation of some influential people. His literary contribution to Shi'ite Sufism was enormous. His philosophical and seminarian knowledge helped him create an atmosphere of dialogue with Shi'ite clerics. He was the true heir of Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. 787/1385), Maytham Bahrānī (d.

1280/678) and all other Shi‘ite-Sufi philosophers who had tried to maintain their adherence to the philosophy of the Ibn ‘Arabī while reconciling it with Shi‘ite theology. This lecture will explore how Majdhūb ‘Alī Shāh brought Shi‘ite theology and Sufi philosophy to a point of reconciliation by drawing a clear line between what he conceived of as ‘true Sufism’, which is the reality of Shi‘ism, and pseudo-Sufism, which did not adhere to the path of the Shi‘ite Imams.

Sufi or not Sufi – That is the Question: Re-examining the Sufi-Ismaili Symbiotic Relationship Thesis

– Shafique N. Virani –

“They must be slain,” “attack them and snatch the wealth from their hands,” “their property and children are to be distributed as booty,” “may Almighty God abase them and curse them!”

Thus, spewing fire and brimstone, Jalāl-i Qā’ inī advised Sultan Shāhrukh (d. 850/1447) on how the Ismailis in his territories should be treated. His *Counsels to Shahrukh (Nasā’ih-i Shāhrukhī)*, one of the most important sources for the Ismailis of Quhistan after the Mongol invasions, is contained in a hitherto unpublished manuscript in the Imperial Library of Vienna. Sultan Shāhrukh, Tamerlane’s son and successor, had sent Qā’ inī “to exterminate, suppress . . . kill, banish and expel the [Ismaili] community from Quhistan.” In his memoir, Qā’ inī is less concerned with the question of whether the Ismailis should be massacred than with the legal nicety of whether this should be done because they are apostates (*ahl-i riddat*), rebellious (*ahl-i baghy*), or non-Muslims against whom war was required (*ahl-i harb*). An adherent of the Ḥanafī school of Sunnī Islam, he was charged by Sultan Shāhrukh with the task of suppressing “heretics” (*bad-madhabān*), who presumably included not only the Shī‘a, but perhaps even non-Ḥanafī Sunnīs. One of the most frightening aspects of his tirade is its vilification of those in his own religious community who wished to live in peace with the Ismailis. He threatens the lives of these moderates with the same dire fate as those whom he deemed heretics. In a remarkable aside, Qā’ inī observed that a group of people in Quhistan appeared as Sufis but were really Ismailis. While earlier scholars have frequently supposed that Ismailis of this period safeguarded their lives by practicing *taqiyya* as Sufis, this is the first positive evidence we have of the fact.

Ground-breaking research by the late French orientalist Henry Corbin and his Russian contemporary Wladimir Ivanow established as axiomatic the symbiotic relationship between Sufism and Ismailism in the aftermath of the Mongol conquests. This association was believed to have continued relatively uninterrupted from the middle of the thirteenth century until modern times. Later authors such as Hamid Algar, Nasrollah Pourjavady, Peter Lamborn Wilson, Marshall Hodgson, Leonard Lewisohn and Farhad Daftary have repeated and further elaborated upon the basic hypothesis advanced by the two earlier scholars. In essence, the currently accepted view of the relationship is that after the Ismailis lost their mountain fortress of Alamut to the Mongols, they assumed the guise of Sufism, ostensibly to avoid persecution. Hodgson extends the thesis beyond that elaborated by others, asserting that Nizārī Ismailism eventually merged into the Sufi

tarīqahs. While not denying the validity of the symbiotic relationship thesis in a few recorded instances, this paper calls into question the presumptions used as evidence for the universal application of such a theory. Even the works of authors such as the Persian poet Nizārī Quhistānī (d. 720/1320), invariably quoted in support of the symbiotic relationship thesis, may be read in a manner significantly at odds with such an argument. Interestingly, the most convincing testimony that the Ismailis of this period dissimulated as Sufis, the aforementioned treatise of Jalāl-i Qā'inī, seems to have been overlooked by most scholars. In the light of such newly discovered sources, and with a re-evaluation of previously known materials, it can be demonstrated that the relationship between Sufism and Ismailism was much more multifaceted than has been assumed, with precaution against persecution by the prevailing political and religious authorities being but one aspect in the equation. While in some regions and times the cloak of Sufism was adopted, on other occasions the Ismailis self-consciously distanced themselves from the Sufi point of view and Sufi interpretations of faith, though they shared an esoteric *weltanschauung* and vocabulary with the Sufis.

Sufi-Hanbali Dialogue: Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī and the Meaning of Piety

– Saeko Yazaki –

The relationship between Sufism and Hanbalism has a complicated history. While the latter has produced famous Sufi scholars, such as ‘Abd Allāh Anṣārī (d. 481/1089) and ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561/1166), some notable Hanbali thinkers, such as Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200) and Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), have been often considered hostile to Sufism. This paper addresses the complexity of Sufi-Hanbali relations through an exploration of *Qūt al-qulūb* (“The Nourishment of Hearts”), an early guidebook on mysticism and morals written by the Muslim preacher Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (d. 386/996), as well as an examination of the influence of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) on the *Qūt* and Ibn Taymiyya’s view of al-Makkī. The *Qūt* elucidates the ethical system in Islam by focusing on the concept of the heart as a metaphysical entity reflecting God and can be regarded as an encyclopaedic treatise on piety. In this work al-Makkī shows great respect for Ibn Ḥanbal, who is among the most frequently cited authorities, relies on his approach to Hadith and draws on his *Kitāb al-wara’* (“The book of piety”) in his account of proper behaviour.

Like al-Makkī, Ibn Taymiyya also attaches great importance to the heart as being the root of belief. Although in his *Majmū‘ fatāwā* (“Collection of Legal Opinions”) Ibn Taymiyya criticises al-Makkī for his use of questionable Hadith and treatment of dubious issues, he prefers the *Qūt* to *Ihyā’* to the *Ihyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn* (“The Revivification of the Religious Sciences”) by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), who heavily relied on the *Qūt* in his writing of the *Ihyā’*. Ibn Taymiyya claims that al-Makkī is “more knowledgeable” than al-Ghazālī in general, including on Ḥadīth and Sufi sayings, and his words are “undoubtedly more apposite, better and less heretical” than those of al-Ghazālī. Ibn Taymiyya shows his wide knowledge of the mystical tradition and in his *al-Ṣūfiyya wa’l-fuqarā’* (“The Sufi Way of Life and the Poor”) emphasises the importance of morality as set out in the Qur’ān and Sunna for a truly pious believer. Through exploring a little-studied area of the treatment of Ibn Ḥanbal by al-Makkī as well as that of al-Makkī by Ibn Taymiyya, this paper attempts to address the meanings of piety and the understandings of the essential components of religion in the writings of the three

authors. It also hopes to contribute to the growing literature on the complexity of Sufi-Hanbali relations.