

SUFISM

**REINTERPRETATION OF SUFI THOUGHT AND
PRACTICE BY KHAWAJA YUSUF HAMADÂNÎ**

*This work is dedicated to the 915th anniversary of
Khawaja 'Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduwānī and the 700th
anniversary of Khawaja Bahāuddīn Naqshband*

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FATKHIDDIN MANSUROV



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PREAMBLE

Sufism is the purification of the heart from immoral habits according to the will to reach eternal happiness and peace, to reach out to the level of maturation in morality through saving the heart from negative things, recognition of own and self thoroughly. The Sufi orders can be defined simply as the systematic form of Sufism. Sufism aims to nourish the metaphysical side of a human being. Therefore, the most crucial purpose of Sufism is to provide the flourish of faith in the hearts, in terms of the key principles of the Qur'an and Sunna. In other words, the most attractive, brilliant and wealthy way of sainthood is adhering to Sunna that is following Prophet (PBUH) by concentrating on the prototypical personality of the prophet of Islam. Sufism, which consists of all activities regarding disciplining people's minds and hearts, purifying their spiritual and inward being from unpleasant feelings and worldly pleasures, and teaching them about the transience of this world, started to dominate.

A variety of factors might be associated with the formation of Sufism in Islam. The spread of Islam, unstoppable invasion of neighbouring lands by Arabs, and formation of different groups that had been deprived in Islam can be given as some of many examples. However, Sufism emerged as an individual branch of Islamic sciences and developed in parallel with other branches of Islamic Sciences. The only difference of Sufism from other branches is that it is a science that can be understood by practising. That is why there are some misunderstandings related to Sufism based on Sufi thoughts and practice. The main purpose of this study is to minimize the misunderstandings of Sufism and shortcomings in the application based on the prominent Sufi scholar, Khawaja Yusuf Hamadānī's teaching.

Khawaja Yusuf Hamadānī played a significant role in the formation of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* Sufism that extends to our present time to the nurturing great scholars of all time. Hamadānī taught his views and visions of Sufism to his students and fostered his people during a time where Sufism was flourished and welcomed by the public. Therefore, his teachings were welcomed with great enthusiasm in Central Asia. Yusuf Hamadānī explained the religion of Islam and illuminated his teachings through the light of Sufism. He encouraged people not to go for an ascetic life and not to be away from society, but advised people to do their job, take care of their families, righteously earn their living, and undertake their responsibilities. However, his life works and significance in the teachings of Sufism has not been specifically studied in-depth. His contributions and his comprehensive understanding of Sufism have yet to be studied extensively. Therefore, this research is the first broad-based independent study on Khawaja Yusuf Hamadānī and the reinterpretation of Sufi thought and practice based on his teachings. Furthermore, the study is considered as one of the significant research works conducted on Sufism periods in Central Asia, since new information and conclusions have been proposed to the existing literature, due to consideration on Hamadānī's life and works.

Moreover, he would always attempt to practice his religion completely and never neglect any laws of Islam, *ṣahw* and *tamkīn* were his main principles, and he held such thoughts and feelings that did not approve of being drunk spiritually and miracles which are experienced by some other Sufis. Finally, this study has great potential to be a reference for further research that might be conducted on History of Sufism, Islamic History and other related areas.

PREFACE

Sufism normally deals with the process of purifying heart or soul. It includes discussion on thought and practices of the Sufis on how to worship Allah the Almighty, spiritual exercises practiced by the Sufis, psychological phases, methods of spiritual training, the formation of Sufi orders and so forth. Hence, this discipline gives a great deal with human soul or in other words, in the development of human spirituality that will impact mental, emotion and physical.

Like other disciplines of knowledge, Sufism also goes a long period of development from the period of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) until now. Although some have maintained that there is nothing of the Sufism about the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), yet his early religious teaching and practices, as recorded in the Qur'an, contradict that contention. Essentially, it is the realisation of the Prophet Muhammad's spiritual message through the inward content of the Qur'anic revelation. It also reflects the aspirations and religious practices of the Prophet, his companions and their successors who chose the hard-ascetic life at a time when most of their contemporaries had chosen the softer life of the world. It used to develop a detailed technique of spiritual ascetic, whose stages, progress and aims require the existence of the entire metaphysical system which goes by the name of gnosis (*al-irfan*).

Almost without exception, the earliest figures seem pronouncedly ascetical, among them were al-Hasan al-Basri (d. 110/738), Malik ibn Dinar (d. 131/748), Ibrahim ibn Adham (d. 161/779), Rabi`ah al-`Adawiyah (d. 169/787), Dawud al-Ta'i (d. 165/783), al-Fudayl ibn al-`Iyad (d. 187/803) and many others.

Then around the middle of the third-century A.H./ninth century A.D., the phase of asceticism gradually changed to the theosophical phase. However, some of the figures were still predominantly ascetical, like the earlier, but the same numbers were mystics. The mystical teachings and religious experiences of the Sufis were expressed in various forms and styles. During this phase, several doctrines of Sufism were developed by the most eminent and famous Sufis. At this time also, two broad tendencies had emerged within the Sufi movement, which have come to known today as the schools of Khurasan and Baghdad that reflects intellectual and spiritual aspects. In fact, they had no organisational coherence, but they were held together through the influence of the great masters and informal communication.

Although a change can be seen throughout this century as mentioned above, some of the figures are still predominantly ascetical, such as Abu `Abd Allah al-Harith ibn Asad al-Muhasibi (d. 251/869). He was regarded as one of the most eminent Sufi from the school of Baghdad. He laid much emphasis in his teaching on asceticism which combined the quest for interior moral perfection with the observance of Muslim law and theological clarification of the principles of belief. He believed that service to Allah the Almighty is the principal object of human life and love of Allah should be expressed in love of His commandments and acceptance of their sovereignty in daily life.

By the early fourth-century A.H./tenth century A.D., the development of Sufism was grounded in philosophical and metaphysical conceptions of God's being. Some of the Sufis combined ascetic renunciation with the spiritual development leading toward union with Allah, such as al-Husayn al-Nuri (d. 295/907-908). Another Sufi figure of the school of Baghdad was Abu al-Qasim al-Junayd al-Baghdadi (d. 298/910). In his works, al-Junayd plainly refers to mystical experience. As al-Muhasibi's disciple, he continued his master's efforts to integrate Sufism with other aspects of religious life. He laid stress up in renunciation and purification of the heart by the

fulfilment of Allah's will in daily life. His influence on the subsequent development of Sufism was very great, particularly in his teachings, which were regarded as moderation.

In the fifth-century A.H./eleventh century A.D., the Sufis made more efforts to compose books on Sufism as had been mentioned by Ibn Khaldun. In this century, there was the most eminent and greatest figure in the history of Sufism, who had a great influence on his contemporaries and later periods until nowadays. He was Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Tusi al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111). He says that through his study of Sufism, he had come to realise that knowledge of the way to Allah was not the same as the experience of that way. Moreover, he adds that Sufism consisted not of words, but actual experience. He also says that the attainment of the world to come depends on one's detachment from this present world and the directing of one's whole life to Allah.

From the end of the fifth-century A.H./tenth century A.D. to the seventh-century A.H./thirteenth century A.D., important changes in Sufi concepts once again reinforced the trend towards coherent religious groups. A changed concept of the relations between masters and disciples paved the way to a more formal type of organisation. In the fourth-century A.H./ninth century A.D. and fifth-century A.H./tenth century A.D., a Sufi disciple gathered with others in the presence of a master to take lessons from him. By the sixth-century A.H./eleventh century A.D. he was a disciple who owed total obedience to his master and considered him as a healer of the soul. These groups had their own pious methods, rules, practices and doctrines which were attributed to their famous earlier master to whom they were connected by a spiritual chain (*silsilah*). During these centuries and after that, many Sufi orders (*tariqah*) and fraternities appeared not only in the Arab and Persian world but also throughout the Islamic world including Central Asia. These orders are normally situated at

centres known as *zawiya*, *ribat* and *khanqah* or the Sufis would gather at a certain place for the *halaqah*.

Up until now, Sufism is still developing on its own, either as a discipline of knowledge or as Sufi orders. Despite this proliferation of Sufi orders, the Sufi path has been identified by most scholars as a threefold process: firstly, the *Shari`ah* (Divine Law), which are to acquaint oneself and to meticulously follow the legal rulings of the *Shari`ah*; secondly, the *Tariqah* (Sufi order), to engage in various spiritual exercises (such as *dhikr*) recommended by the Prophet (PBUH) and the established adepts of Sufism; thirdly, the *Haqiqah* (Truth), that is the attainment of a spiritual consciousness or inner enlightenment that witnesses that all things ultimately come from and belong to Allah the Almighty.

Nowadays, many books have been published on the spiritual life in Islam, especially concerning Sufism. Each of them has touched a different facet because the phenomenon of Sufism is so wide and its appearance is so variable. In fact, Sufism is largely dealing with the principle of the disciple's initiation, the different methods of spiritual education, the exercises practised in the Sufi orders, the psychological phases of the progress, the formation of orders, and their sociological and cultural. Thus, nobody can describe it fully and all the facets are rewarding fields of research to those who want to venture in the discipline.

Many studies have been done on Sufi figures to understand their contribution to the discipline of Sufism in knowledge development as well as to their impact on the society in human development. The present book written by Fatkhiddin Mansurov offers an elucidation on the most outstanding Sufi figure in Central Asia, specifically in the City of Merv, Khawaja Yusuf Hamadani. The book comprises six chapters. The first chapter expounds the development of Sufism from the early phase to the formations of Sufi orders including the background of social, cultural and spiritual life in Central Asia before the presence of Khawaja Yusuf

Hamadani, while chapter two deals with the explanation of his biodata. Chapter three covers the first main point of writing the book. An in-depth study of Khawaja Yusuf Hamadani's thought on Sufism has been successfully highlighted by producing the reinterpretation of his views on several topics discussed in the field of Sufism. The chapter, then followed by chapter four which clarifies Khawaja Yusuf Hamadani's Sufi practice by presenting a new look to his Sufi practices. In chapter five, the book explicates how Khawaja Yusuf Hamadani's teachings influenced the formation of Yasawiyya and Naqshbandiyya *Tariqah*. In dealing with printed data on the thought and practices of Khawaja Yusuf Hamadani, the author of this book has made significant contributions to the academic world in Sufism because he has successfully translated an epistle of Hamadani, *Risalah Dar Adab al-Tariqah* (The Epistle of Sufi Order's Proprieties) from Persian to English. The last chapter sums up the findings of which are the thought and practices of Khawaja Yusuf Hamadani had significant impact on Sufism development in Central Asia, especially on the development of Sufi orders, Yasawiyya and Naqshbandiyya *Tariqah*.

A description of the outstanding Sufi figure, Khawaja Yusuf Hamadani in this book is designed to be accessible to Muslims and non-Muslims in general, and to Sufi scholars as well as Sufi wayfarers (*salik*) to understand the teaching of Sufism and Sufi orders in an accurate view as worked out by the true Sufi figure such as Hamadani.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

app.	appendix
art./arts.	article/articles
b.	born
bk./bks.	book/books
c.	copyright
ch.	chapter
dept./depts.	department/departments
d.	died
e.g.	for example
ed./eds.	edition/editions/editor
et al.	(et alia): and others
etc.	(et cetera): and so forth
ibid.	(ibidem): in the same place
id.	(idem): the same
ms/mss.	manuscript/manuscripts
n.d.	no date
n.p.	no place/no publisher
p./ps.	page/pages
par./pars.	paragraph/paragraphs
sec./secs.	section/sections
trans.	translator/translated by
vol./vols.	volume/volumes
v./vv.	verse/verses
vs.	(versus): against

TRANSLITERATION

Arabic	Latin	Word	Transliteration
ء	'	سأل	Sa'ala
ب	B	بدل	Badala
ت	T	تمر	Tamr
ث	Th	ثورة	Thawrah
ج	J	جمال	Jamāl
ح	Ḥ	حديث	Ḥadīth
خ	Kh	خالد	Khālid
د	D	ديوان	Dīwān
ذ	Dh	مذهب	Madhhab
ر	R	رحمن	Raḥmān
ز	Z	زمزم	Zamzam
س	S	سراب	Sarāb
ش	Sh	شمس	Shams
ص	Ṣ	صبر	Ṣabr
ض	Ḍ	ضمير	Ḍamīr
ط	Ṭ	طاهر	Ṭāhir
ظ	Ẓ	ظهر	Ẓuhr
ع	'	عبد	'Abd
غ	Gh	غيب	Ghayb
ف	F	فقه	Fiqh
ق	Q	قاضي	Qāḍī
ك	K	كأس	Ka's
ل	L	لين	Laban
م	M	مزمز	Mizmār
ن	N	نوم	Nawm
ه	H	هبط	Habaṭa
و	W	وسل	Wasala
ي	Y	يسار	Yasār

THE PRIMARY SOURCES AND RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS ON KHAWAJA YUSUF HAMADĀNĪ

To date, there is limited information about Yusuf Hamadānī's works and teachings. This is a review of the available literature. The existing sources are in two categories. The first one is related to his life and miracles (*karāmah*), as mentioned in the classical sources of his own time and the following periods by the Sufi and biography writers. The second category is the scientific papers by modern research regarding Hamadānī's life, his works, and Sufism in Central Asia.

CLASSICAL SOURCES

Abū Sa'd 'Abd al-Karīm Muḥammad al-Marwazī al-Sam'ānī (d. 562H/1167M). *Kitāb al-Ansāb* (Sam'ānī, 1999) is one of the important resources written by al-Sam'ānī who lived nearly in the same period as Hamadānī. This source offers important information of more than two thousand scholars and Sufis. In the author's own expression, he started writing the book in the year 550H/1155M in Samarqand. The biographies of the Sufis as well as important stories of the mentioned scholars, are given with *sanad*. This work constitutes as one of the main references for the study as it contains important and reliable information about the life of Yusuf Hamadānī.

Khawaja 'Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduwānī (d. 574H/1179M). There are three small manuscripts that belong to Khawaja 'Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduwānī as given below. They have focused

on the life of Hamadānī as well as his ethics, portrait, advice and miracles. These manuscripts are stored in the Fund of Manuscripts of the Oriental Institute at the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan and were found and studied during our research done in the Academy. All three manuscripts which have been studied are associated with Hamadānī's closer student 'Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduwānī. The fact that the manuscripts were given different names can be explained by assumption that they were privately copied by different copywriters. Otherwise, it is unlikely for the author to write manuscripts on the same topic but with different names. Although there is some minor difference among them, in general, they are almost the same. We will discuss the main differences in the three manuscripts about the life of Hamadānī. The first one is *Maqāmāt-i Yusuf Hamadānī* (Ghijduwānī, n.d. (a)). This is an important epistle containing *akhlāq*, behaviours and words of Yusuf Hamadānī and is attributed to Ghijduwānī, one of Hamadānī's important successors. Some of the information in this epistle has been subjected to different interpretations due to its contradiction with other sources. Fuad Koprulu is one of the important contemporary researchers of Sufism, who after discussing some aspects of the writing says that the epistle which enlivens Hamadānī has been written by 'Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduwānī, but, the present copy has been subjected to some alterations due to deterioration via going through the hands of different manuscript writers (*mustansikh*) (Koprulu, 1981).

The original manuscript of the *Maqāmāt-i Yusuf Hamadānī* is in Tashkent. There are differences in opinions about the author of this work and it is due to the variance of the information given in this manuscript from some high level Sufistic sources (Tosun, 2002).

Said Nafisī, who has published this writing under the name "*Risālah Ṣāhibiyyah*" (Ghijduwānī, 1953), has no doubt that the author is Ghijduwānī. Additionally, one copy of this manuscript is included in *Harīrīzādah Kamāl al-Dīn Afandī's*